

Report to: Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Date of meeting: 20 April 2023
By: Director of Public Health
Title: Recommissioning of Specialist Sexual Health Services (SSHS)
Purpose: To inform the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health of the proposed re-procurement of Specialist Sexual Health Services (SSHS) and request the approval of this re-procurement.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Lead member is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the re-procurement of Specialist Sexual Health Services; and
 - 2) Delegate the award of contract to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to award the contract.
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1. Background

- 1.1 Specialist Sexual Health Services (SSHS) are currently provided by East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) via a contract variation ending in March 2024.
- 1.2 SSHS have been subject to a service redesign as a result of a formal public consultation. The redesign focused on a channel shift in services to a stronger online service offer. The consultation responses were positive. A result of this remodel is a reduced contractual value for the SSHS.
- 1.3 The current contract started on 1 April 2016 with an original end date of 31 March 2021, with a value of £2,770,756 per annum.
- 1.4 The COVID-19 pandemic started in March 2020, with resultant impacts affecting the re-procurement timetable. Under the Procurement Regulations 2015, emergency contract extensions were put in place up to 30 September 2022.
- 1.5 The SSHS contract was advertised for re-tender in 2021 as a 3 year contract, with an option to extend for a further two years, with a total value of £11,300,000 or £2,260,000 per annum.
- 1.6 The tender for this contract on the open market in 2021 resulted in no submissions despite significant interest and two providers having registered their intention to bid. Feedback from the potential providers, post procurement, was that staff restructure costs and accommodation issues may have been a concern, along with the procurement occurring amidst the challenges posed to health services by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.7 The accommodation requirement has subsequently been reviewed and revised and the current provider has been requested to complete a staffing review during the current extension period. It has been recognised that there may be a potential need for non-recurrent set up costs due to the staffing review.

- 1.8 Following this attenuated re-procurement, the current provider ESHT was approached and an extension of the current contract via a contract variation was negotiated until April 2024.
- 1.9 Procurement for the new SSHS will be undertaken in collaboration with NHS England (NHSE) Specialist Contracts, who commission the HIV treatment and care services, and the Lewes prison sexual health and HIV treatment and care in-reach services. These services are interlinked with the SSHS, and national guidance is that they are collaboratively commissioned as a 'bundle'.

2. Supporting information

2.1 Proposed new contract details:

- contract length, 1 April 2024 - March 2029
- annual value £2,260,000; and
- total contract value £11,300,000

2.2 The SSHS is the largest and most central contract within the wider East Sussex County Council (ESCC) commissioned sexual health system. Non SSHS provision includes GP and Pharmacy Public Health Local Service Agreements, remote online services, a sexual health website and elements of HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

2.3 The procurement process should commence with an advert in May 2023, and is part of the Adult Social Care and Health 2023-24 procurement plan.

3. Conclusion and reasons recommendations

3.1 As the specialist sexual health service is now ready to be re-procured, the lead member is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the re-procurement of Specialist Sexual Health Services; and
- 2) Delegate the award of contract to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health to award the contract.

DARRELL GALE

Director of Public Health

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None