

ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

23 August 2010

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Phil Homsby, Strategic Commissioner, Older People
Leigh Keeble, Development Officer
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

**8. Advocacy Contracts – Hartlepool Mind and
Hartlepool Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) –
*Strategic Commissioner, Older People***

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To seek the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services approval to make an exception to the Contract procedure Rules in respect of the social care contracts for Hartlepool MIND and Hartlepool CAB.

Issues for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The contract with Hartlepool MIND for a Learning Disability Advocacy Worker had commenced on 1 April 2008 and terminated on 31 July 2010. The contract with Hartlepool CAB for representational advocacy had commenced on 1 April 2009 and terminated on 31 July 2010. A tender exercise had been held and 6 tender submissions had been received. Initially 5 of these tenders had failed to reach the performance and quality stage of the assessment, therefore the evaluation panel had decided there was insufficient competition. All 6 tenders had been resubmitted and evaluated and the contract eventually awarded to Developing Initiatives Supporting Communities (DISC). However, in order to allow the department time to make the necessary transition arrangements to the new service it was proposed that short term contracts for Hartlepool MIND and Hartlepool CAB were entered into

for a maximum of a further three months. An update in relation to these contracts was provided to the Portfolio Holder i.e. that DISC would be taking over referrals from MIND from 1 September 2010 and from the CAB from 1 October 2010.

The background of the DISC organisation was clarified for the Portfolio Holder. He expressed concern that if local voluntary organisations did not receive support from the Local Authority then this may jeopardise funding from other sources. The Strategic Commissioner clarified that the Council's Contract Procedure Rules had to be adhered to although discussions were ongoing with a view to revising these.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder agreed to make an exception to the Contract Procedure Rules and allow the council to enter into contracts with Hartlepool MIND and Hartlepool CAB for a maximum of 3 months as outlined in section 3 of the report.

9. North Regional Association for Sensory Support (NRASS) – Strategic Commissioner, Older People

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To seek the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services approval to make an exception to the Contract Procedure Rules in relation to the contract with NRASS for provision of services for people with sensory loss.

Issues for Consideration

On 28 September 2009 NRASS commenced a one year pilot service on behalf of the Council to provide:-

- A drop in centre at Hartlepool Central Library providing low level interpretation/translation services for people with sensory loss
- Signposting to appropriate agencies for help support and guidance for issues including housing related issues, welfare rights, carers allowance, medical appointments, attendance allowance, communication support and utility enquiries
- Telephone support to arrange appointments
- Intensive individual communication, advocacy and welfare rights support on a spot purchase basis services to people

with sensory loss

During the period it has been operating, the service had been monitored and shown to be well utilised. The Department's view is that the service should continue for a further 3 years at an annual cost of £10,000. It was anticipated that any new service should also include provision of interpreting services at the Life Chances Partnership Board which meet 6 times per year. The report detailed the various communication methods used by deaf and hearing impaired people in Hartlepool and that NRASS were able to provide translators/interpreters who could communicate with services users regardless of their communication method. The importance of having a provider with local knowledge was stressed.

The Portfolio Holder stated that he felt that the service represented extreme good value for money.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder agreed to make an exception to the contract Procedure Rules to allow for the Council to enter into a contract with NRASS.

10. Annual Complaints Report 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010 – Development Officer

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To present the fifth Annual Complaints Report of the former Adult and Community Services Department on complaints and representations for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010. The Annual Report was attached as Appendix A to the report. The Annual Report provided information on the complaints and the representations framework. It drew together information in relation to complaints that had been received and dealt with during the reporting period. Complaints relating to Community Services come within the Authority's Corporate Complaints Framework which was also reported to the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder.

Issues for Consideration

Since 1 April 2009 a single complaints process was introduced. This replaced the three stage process previously adopted for adult social care complaints. The appendix outlined the timescale for resolution of complaints and detailed the process.

A total of 27 complaints had been received although one of these had been withdrawn. This had increased by 15 from the previous year and the Portfolio Holder commented that these were mainly from older people and those with physical disabilities and sensory loss. Complaints from those with learning disabilities had decreased. A number of these complaints had been in relation to hospital discharges and these would be jointly approached with the health trust. Clarity was given on who would receive the complaint should it be in relation to services which were paid for by the service user.

It was pointed out that the number of complaints was very small percentage wise in relation to the amount of contacts. Resolution of Complaints often meant alterations in procedures or working practices to prevent a repeat of any failure in service quality.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder received the report.

The meeting concluded at 10.42 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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