

## **Slough Borough Council**

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| <b>REPORT TO:</b>                   | Cabinet  |
| <b>DATE:</b>                        | 19th June 2023   |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                     | Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) procurement   |
| <b>PORTFOLIO:</b>                   | Councillor Anna Wright - Lead Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing<br><br>Councillor Paul Kelly - Lead Member, Education, Children's Services, Lifelong Skills and Governance              |
| <b>CHIEF OFFICER:</b>               | Marc Gadsby, Executive Director People (Adults)  |
| <b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>             | Vicky Tutty – Group Manager People Strategy and Commissioning<br><br>Jane Senior – Associate Director People Strategy and Commissioning  |
| <b>WARD(S):</b>                     | <u>ALL</u>   |
| <b>KEY DECISION:</b>                | YES  |
| <b>EXEMPT:</b>                      | Public   |
| <b>DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL IN:</b> | YES  |
| <b>APPENDICES:</b>                  | Appendix 1 – Spend vs budget and savings delivered through recycling<br><br>Appendix 2 – NRS annual nationwide customer / prescriber survey results<br><br>Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment |

### **1.1 Summary and Recommendations**

Cabinet authority was given in June 2022 to agree to continued partnership working with local authorities and statutory health bodies across Berkshire to develop a new model for the delivery of community equipment services, led by West Berkshire Council. It was intended that a further report be brought to Cabinet recommending a commissioning approach and awarding a new contract. It was agreed that the People Scrutiny Panel would receive a report on the proposed new model.

This report provides information concerning the options that have been explored to enable the Council to meet its duty to support residents to be independent at home through the use of community equipment services and to reduce the need for long term high-cost care.

The report requests approval to utilise the call off facility in the Buckingham framework agreement for West Berkshire District Council to award a contract to NRS Healthcare on behalf of the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) Partnership.

## **1.2 Recommendations:**

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree to West Berkshire District Council awarding a contract to NRS Healthcare for a period of five years plus two optional extensions of one year each, subject to satisfactory performance, through utilising the call off option from Buckinghamshire Integrated Equipment Service Single Supplier Framework.
2. Approve the continuance of the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) Section 75 Agreement to allow the partnership arrangement currently in place to continue.

## **1.3 Reason:**

To permit the joint commissioning of a new provider of Community Equipment in partnership with local authorities and statutory health bodies across Berkshire, with a contract start date of 1 April 2024. This joint commissioning enables partners to deliver their statutory duties in a cost efficient and effective way to meet their best value duties.

## **Commissioner Review**

Commissioners are content with the recommendations.

## **Report**

### **2. Detail**

- 2.1 The procurement of a provider for the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) supports the following key priorities:

#### **Slough Corporate Plan 2022-25**

- A Council that lives within our means, balances the budget, and delivers best value for taxpayers and service users
- An environment that helps residents live more independent, healthier and safer lives.

#### **Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020-25**

Priority 2: Integration:

Increase the number of people living independently at home and decrease the proportion living in care homes

Increase the number of people who are managing their own health and care needs.

### Slough Health and Social Care Plan

More integrated and pre-emptive service offers

- Expand community and voluntary sector role in social care
- Improve strength based and personalised ways of working in social care.

## 2.2 Options considered:

| Option  | Pros   | Cons  |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Option 1</b></p> <p>Request that West Berkshire issue a contract extension on behalf of the six Berkshire and two health authorities for 24/25 to deliver the Berkshire Community Equipment Service to NRS.</p> <p><b>Not Recommended</b></p> | <p>This would ensure continuity of service delivery to local people provided by the Berkshire Community Equipment Service.</p> | <p>There is no current clear legal justification for issuing a contract extension.</p> <p>There is currently no appetite by the Section 75 partnership to explore a contract extension. The preferred option is to have a longer term arrangement in place.</p> <p>The costs could significantly increase for the extension year.</p> |
| <p><b>Option 2</b></p> <p>Directly purchasing and managing the equipment.</p> <p><b>Not Recommended</b></p>   | <p>Slough Council would be the direct contractor.</p>  | <p>There is insufficient capacity to undertake independent commissioning exercise and managing the contract.</p> <p>Slough would not benefit from the economies of scale available within the partnership arrangement</p> <p>There is a requirement to give 12 month notice of exiting the section 75 agreement.</p>                  |

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| <p><b>Option 3</b></p> <p>Agree to call off the Buckinghamshire Integrated Equipment Service Single Supplier Framework and issue a direct award to NRS Healthcare.</p> <p><b>Recommended</b></p> | <p>The Integrated Equipment Services Single Supplier Framework was established by Buckinghamshire Council in June 22 with the explicit aim of achieving value for money and followed extensive market engagement.</p> <p>The Framework allows for contracts of up to £350M (for the contract length – 5years + 2years) in value to be called off – which meets the requirements of the BCES partnership.</p> <p>By undertaking the single provider framework route, the partnership will avoid the costs and risks of going through a full procurement process. The estimated cost of a full procurement route, together with additional costs incurred if NRS Healthcare were not to be the chosen provider is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of current savings from sharing specials with Buckinghamshire (pa) = £93,000</li> <li>• Cost of paying for unique equipment lines transfer = £150,000</li> <li>• Estimated cost of running a full procurement process = £200,000</li> <li>• Total = £443,000</li> </ul> <p>It is intended that in the first year (1 April 24 – 31 March 25) of the contract that a saving of up to 5.4% reduction in spend can be achieved. This could potentially result in a saving of up to c.£600K across Berkshire depending upon demand for equipment.</p> | <p>This approach does not allow for a bespoke competitive process to be undertaken to test the market.</p> <p>Thorough market testing was undertaken as part of the Buckinghamshire Framework process. It identified that there are three providers delivering the service. Two providers made it through the prequalifying stage of the procurement process.</p> <p>It is unnecessary to undertake a competitive procurement due to the available option of the framework which demonstrates value for money</p> <p>Saving in cost of officer time, across six local authorities and two health trusts to do a full competitive procurement process.</p> |
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|   | Collaborative working across a wider footprint ensures greater economies of scale and efficiencies of service.  |   |
| <p><b>Option 4</b></p> <p>Procure the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) through an open tender</p> <p><b>Not recommended</b></p> | <p>It ensures full market engagement.</p> <p>It enables transparency and reduces any risk of challenge from other providers of community equipment.</p> | <p>The time to draft tender documentation as well as get approval from the different partnership organisations (Local Authorities and Health) within the Section 75 agreement mean that it is unlikely that the new service will be mobilised by the end of the current contract, therefore requiring a contract extension. This could lead to higher costs of the service.</p> <p>There are a limited number of suppliers in the market who could fulfil the requirements of the partnership.</p> <p>This route is likely to be more expensive and is unlikely to yield savings,</p> |

2.3 Option 3 is considered the most appropriate option to ensure that the most cost-effective solution is achieved which meets the requirement of all partners within the BCES partnership.

**Background**

2.4 The Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) provides a variety of equipment for adults, children and young people with long term conditions and disabilities. Following an assessment from a qualified practitioner equipment is provided on loan from the local authority. The equipment helps service users to maintain and maximise their independence, enables them and their carers to be safely supported at home as well as enhancing their quality of life.

- 2.5 Key elements of the service include
- Sourcing and storage of equipment
  - Delivery, installation, and collection (when no longer required)

- Decontamination, recycling of equipment for future use or safe disposal
- Maintenance and repair of equipment
- Technology enabled care (with optional monitoring)
- Customer care- call centre operations, complaints and feedback
- Safe and Well (for self-funders)
- Trusted assessor for assessment for basic equipment needs and technology enabled care devices
- Occupational Therapist assessment service
- Clinical oversight and advice
- Training in the use of equipment for all prescribers

2.6 The BCES delivers the specialist equipment to support residents of all ages who have an assessed need across the six Berkshire Local Authorities.

2.7 The partnership arrangements, including the governance arrangements, are contained within the Berkshire Community Equipment Service Section 75 Agreement. Participating organisations within the s75 Agreement are:

- West Berkshire Council – contract lead and host authority
- Slough Borough Council
- Slough Children First
- Wokingham Borough Council
- Reading Borough Council (and Achieving for Children)
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (Optalis and Achieving for Children)
- Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group (for East Berkshire)
- Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group

2.8 The Section 75 Agreement permits an authority to exit the arrangement upon giving 12 months notice, with detailed provision as to how any surpluses and deficits are managed.

2.9 NRS Healthcare is the current provider of the service and West Berkshire District Council have operated as the host authority and contractor during this period. Following extensive discussions, the Berkshire Community Equipment Service Steering Group are recommending that that West Berkshire District Council as lead authority utilise the call off facility in the Buckingham framework agreement and enter into a five plus two-year contract with the incumbent provider NRS Healthcare.

2.10 Key improvements, set out below, will be considered within the steering group to explore the following aspects of the contract to ensure value for money and share the reduction of costs as a result of the proposed procurement route through the utilisation of the single supplier framework:

- Consolidation of catalogues – using the Buckinghamshire Framework provides greater opportunities to review the current Berkshire catalogue and align it more closely across the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire area to get best value. This would further enhance the provider's ability to go to the market and negotiate lower prices for bulk purchases. Going forward there

are opportunities to make greater efficiencies by sharing staff and services across the providers operating area.

- NRS have just won the London consortium contract. This will enable even greater purchasing power and the ability to share resources in the future.
- Sharing of specials equipment (non-catalogue items) across a wider geographical area. Oxfordshire currently hold around 850 recycled specials – more than double that of Berkshire, which could potentially offer increased savings of circa £93,000 for Berkshire.
- Empower to seek lower prices – NRS continually scan the market for best value (without compromising quality with regard to current stock levels). Identifying close technical equivalents or substitute items that offer the same level of performance and durability (very good recycling rates to complement our financial model)
- Reducing failed deliveries – NRS continually scan the market for the best value (without compromising quality and with regard to current stock levels). Identifying close technical equivalents or substitute items that offer the same level of performance and durability (very good recycling rates to complement our financial model).
- Delivery to local boundary addresses – identifying a corridor where it makes economic and sustainable sense for the neighbouring authority depot to deliver due to their proximity to the destination address
- Continuous improvement – monitor evidence of internal improvements through the sharing of ideas and good practice among the depots to streamline processes and increase efficiencies.

## **Market Analysis**

### Current supply

- 2.11 The current service is successful and well embedded into professional practice in Health and Social Care across Berkshire. Over 670,000 items of equipment have been delivered and collected between 2017 and 2022 across Berkshire, serving over 157,000 individual clients. Over this period the contract has facilitated faster hospital discharges, reduced hospital admissions and care packages, increased care home avoidance, and supported informal carers.
- 2.12 The service has improved its performance year-on-year and the partnership remains robust despite the significant challenges during the Covid pandemic, global shortages of raw materials and shipping issues. Innovative services such as technology enabled care and trusted OT assessments have been put in place and support provided to other new initiatives across the county.
- 2.13 West Berkshire District Council coordinate monthly steering group meetings to review the performance of the BCES contract and discuss any issues. The Council receives comprehensive monthly reports that include activity of orders, costs and trends across the partnership.
- 2.14 The BCES service has been responsive to the critical needs of the Council supporting the move from analogue pendant alarms to a digital offer.

- 2.15 Information regarding the budget and spend for Slough Borough Council and Slough Children First for the last financial year 1 April 22 – 31 March 23 is contained at Appendix 2.
- 2.16 The annual NRS nationwide customer / prescriber survey results are contained at Appendix 3.

#### Supply market capability, capacity and competition

- 2.17 There are only three major providers that offer a community equipment service in the UK. They are NRS, Medequip and Millbrook. At the time of writing, NRS have just secured the London consortium contract. High start-up costs, economies of scale and service complexity act as barriers to entry for other businesses.
- 2.18 Previous commissioning exercises of the community equipment service saw only the three main suppliers bidding in 2017. In Buckinghamshire's recent procurement exercise, only two of the three main suppliers progressed beyond the pre-qualifying stage.
- 2.19 Market testing from both providers and other commissioning organisations indicate that longer contracts have potentially larger savings benefits. The intention is to award a five-year contract with a possible two twelve-month extension period(s) which are permissible within the terms of the Buckinghamshire call off agreement.

### **3.0 Implications of the recommendations**

#### Financial implications

- 3.1 NRS are proposing additional potential benefits to Berkshire Commissioners by aligning to the Buckinghamshire catalogue. Adopting this approach is expected to generate additional savings across the partnership however, the extent any will be made to individual partners will vary. This will be dependent on the extent the price paid for the items used by said partner changes relative to the activity and previous price paid.
- 3.2 NRS have also offered the potential for Berkshire to benefit from the following investments at nil cost to the partnership under the new contract including:
- a. Introducing a new service user portal
  - b. Employing new Community Engagement Lead post for the contract term to work with local businesses, schools and the voluntary sector as well as social value initiatives
  - c. Create specific local Berkshire websites for service users, Commissioners and other stakeholders
  - d. Enhancing prescriber training
  - e. Training all staff as Trusted Technicians and more as Trusted Assessors
  - f. Upgrading management information reporting and data analytics

There will be feedback on any savings achieved through the steering group and through monitoring of this contract.



3.3 Slough Borough Council fund their contribution to the BCES contract using multiple sources between the Adults and Childrens Directorates, as reflected in the following table:

| <b>Funding Source</b>                           | <b>Adults<br/>(People)<br/>£000s</b> | <b>Children<br/>- SCF<br/>(People)<br/>£000s</b> | <b>Total<br/>£000s</b> |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| General Fund Revenue                            | 251                                  | 10   | 261                    |
| Better Care Fund (Revenue Grant)                | 130                                  |  | 130                    |
| Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (Capital Grant) | 248                                  |  | 248                    |
| <b>Total Annual Funding</b>                     | <b>629</b>                           | <b>10</b>  | <b>639</b>             |

It has been agreed that the annual budget from 1 April 2024 will be £639k, with an additional £33k identified as part of the Transformation programme through generating efficiencies from the care and support budgets. This will be as an alternative to more expensive Packages of care by mitigating the use of additional care in the future. The spend on equipment exceeded the budget (Appendix 1). The increase in budget acknowledges the increase in demand for services as well as the complexity of needs of people accessing care and support from Adult Social Care.

3.4 This will be monitored utilising the ‘combined report’ (tracks all activity, orders and monitoring costs) ‘budget tracking’ and ‘trend and spend’ reports provided by West Berkshire monthly. The AD (People Adults) and the finance business partner will work with the budget holding Group Manager to ensure maximised financial controls are in place and savings are delivered through the recycling model.

3.5 Slough Children First fund their contributions to the BCES contract through the contract sum available to SCF from the Council. It has been agreed that the annual budget from 1 April 2024 will be £60,000 (highlighted above). This will be monitored by reviewing the monthly dashboard provided by West Berkshire. This includes spend per month, utilisation of equipment and recycling undertaken. The Commissioning Lead will be invited to the Steering groups held by West Berkshire.

#### Legal implications

4.1 The Council has a duty under Section 1 of the Care Act 2014 to promote the wellbeing of adults in care and need. The wellbeing principal applies in all cases where the local authority is carrying out a care and support function or deciding with regards to a person’s risk and support care needs. The provision of community equipment can be applied to the following wellbeing principles

- Personal dignity (including treatment of an individual with respect)
- Physical and mental health and emotional well being
- Control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over care and support and how this is provided)
- Participation in work, education, training or recreation
- Social and economic wellbeing
- Domestic, family and personal

- 4.2 Section 2 of the Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to provide or arrange for services, facilities or resources which will prevent or delay the development of, or reduce the needs for care and support of, adults in its area. In performing that duty, a local authority must have regard to:
- a) the importance of identifying services, facilities and resources already available in the authority's area and the extent to which the authority could involve or make use of them in performing that duty.
  - b) the importance of identifying adults in the authority's area with needs for care and support which are not being met (by the authority or otherwise).
  - c) the importance of identifying carers in the authority's area with needs for support which are not being met (by the authority or otherwise).
- 4.3 Section 5 of the Care Act 2014 allows for the provision of equipment to be put in place and for a statutory assessment to be paused for a period of time to assess the impact. Following a pause, the assessment can continue before a decision is made on eligibility.
- 4.4 The Council's duties under Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 require it to meet the assessed eligible needs of residents, including equipment and disability aids. This function supports residents to maintain and manage their conditions, to stay healthy and independent whilst maintaining choice and control over how they manage health and care needs. This service is integral to reducing pressures on social care by preventing care home admissions, facilitating discharge from hospital and supporting carers to carry out their caring role.
- 4.4 Duties in the Act include the following commissioning functions:
- Co-production with stakeholders in service design.
  - Market engagement and shaping to influence local services on offer and to address barriers faced by the market in service delivery.
  - Integration with local partners to achieve population-based outcomes to improve wellbeing.
- 4.5 The proposed procurement route, using the Buckinghamshire Framework, is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's contract procedure rules. West Berkshire District Council will be the contracting authority on behalf of the partnership. The partnership arrangement is governed by a s.75 agreement, which permits pooled funding and host authority arrangements. The partnership authorities will only be able to enforce the provisions of the contract through West Berkshire District Council, but the partnership is long standing and has worked well to date and therefore the risks of these are deemed acceptable.

## Risk management implications

5.1 A summary of key risks and mitigations for the Council are set out below:

| Risk  | Assessment of risk | Mitigation   | Residual risk |
|---|--------------------|--|---------------|
| Impact of increased volume of activity leading to further financial pressures | Medium / High      | <p>The Partnership has in place robust contract management processes, including arrangements to identify equipment that has been loaned for a significant period, or duplicate orders to ensure value for money.</p> <p>Management reports are sent out to local area commissioners and occupational therapy teams for on-going performance monitoring.</p> <p>This allows for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financial analysis and reporting to identify budgetary pressures early on – this allows for mitigating actions to take place.</li> <li>2. Early identification of new trends where items can be stocked via the catalogue for a better price.</li> <li>3. Ongoing activity to increase recycling of stock and therefore reduced financial costs.</li> </ol> <p>Team Managers review performance reports to ensure there is no oversubscribing.</p> <p>Prescribers and Managers attend regular training to ensure they have up to date knowledge regarding the equipment on offer as well as alternatives. This ensures appropriateness and clinical oversight where the offer is matched with need.</p> | Medium        |
| The Council is not directly party to the contract.                            | Medium             | <p>The S75 Agreement has been in place in respect to the current contract since 2017. There have been no issues regarding this arrangement.</p> <p>There are existing governance arrangements in place to successfully manage all concerns, risks and issues.</p>  | Low           |

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## 6.0 Equality implications

- 6.1 The Equalities Impact Assessment is shown in Appendix 3. As stated in the assessment, the equipment service will particularly benefit those with disabilities to return home after a hospital discharge or remain independent in their own home. The equipment service also supports the carers of residents that are eligible by providing reassurance.
- 6.2 A request has been made to West Berkshire to ensure that the new provider is able to evidence that due consideration is made to the equality implications and Equality Act duties.
- 6.3 The new service is largely anticipated to have a positive impact on the residents of Slough.
- 6.4 The equipment service supported 296 residents to facilitate hospital discharge and return home. This was the most common reason that residents were provided equipment.
- 6.5 Residents aged 80 – 89 were the largest group to use the digital monitoring service to access help. Women accounted for 64% of the residents accessing the digital monitoring service.

## 7.0 Procurement implications

- 7.1 The following sets out the procurement timetable for the service:

| Who            | Action   | Start date | Completed  |
|----------------|--|------------|------------|
| All            | Partners agree in principle route to market subject to internal decision-making process  |            | 31/03/23   |
| All            | BCES Partnership Project Group monthly meetings to agree service elements to be called off from Bucks Framework (i.e. specification) | 25/01/2023 | 30/06/2023 |
| All            | All Partners internal award approval sign off (Longstop date)  | 30/09/2023 |            |
| All            | Specification signed off   | 30/09/2023 |            |
| All            | Pricing schedule agreed  | 30/09/2023 |            |
| Lead Authority | Contract signed by provider and West Berkshire   | 30/10/23   |            |
| Lead Authority | New service mobilisation begins  | 30/10/2023 | 31/03/23   |
| Lead Authority | New service starts   | 01/04/2023 |            |

## 8.0 Workforce implications

- 8.1 There are no workforce implications

## 9.0 Property implications

9.1 There are no property implications.

## 10.0 **Background Papers**

None

## Appendix 1 – Budget / spend / savings through recycling

### Budget and Spend

Below is a table that provides detail on the annual spend of partners within the Section 75 agreement and the variance from budget. The financial implications advise that the budget has been increased for equipment services due to increased demand and greater complexity.

| Partner Organisation        | Cumulative total spend to this Period (12) | Budget             | Projected Spend based on average monthly spend excl S75 charge | Projected spend % variance from Budget |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|--|--|
| Bracknell Unitary           | £552,898                                   | £589,320           | £542,141   | -8.01%                                 |
| Reading Unitary Adults      | £830,530                                   | £822,000           | £819,773   | -0.27%                                 |
| Reading Unitary (BFFC SEN)  | £2,016                                     | £10,000            | £2,016   | -79.84%                                |
| Reading Unitary (BFFC OT)   | £69,821                                    | £82,500            | £69,821  | -15.37%                                |
| Slough Children First       | £54,940                                    | £55,000            | £54,940  | -0.11%                                 |
| Slough Unitary Adults       | £717,072                                   | £342,000           | £706,316   | 106.53%                                |
| WAM Unitary Adults          | £595,967                                   | £550,000           | £585,211   | 6.40%                                  |
| WAM Unitary Children        | £27,019                                    | £65,000            | £27,019  | -58.43%                                |
| West Berks Unitary Adults   | £963,728                                   | £1,184,170         | £952,971   | -19.52%                                |
| West Berks Unitary Children | £94,484                                    | £75,000            | £94,484  | 25.98%                                 |
| West Berks Unitary SEN      | £13,836                                    | £15,000            | £13,836  | -7.76%                                 |
| Wokingham Unitary           | £623,442                                   | £664,000           | £612,685   | -7.73%                                 |
| Wokingham Unitary DCT       | £81,914                                    | £100,000           | £81,914  | -18.09%                                |
| Frimley ICB (East)          | £2,453,790                                 | £1,961,000         | £2,416,141   | 23.21%                                 |
| BOB ICB (West)              | £4,437,109                                 | £4,477,796         | £4,399,460   | -1.75%                                 |
|                             |  |                    |  |  |
| <b>Totals</b>               | <b>£11,518,566</b>                         | <b>£10,992,786</b> | <b>£11,378,727</b>   | <b>-3.65%</b>                          |

The average budget for Local Authorities Unitary Adults services is £685,155.00

### Savings delivered through the recycling model






The BCES model allows for equipment to be recycled and used again. This delivers a savings against future equipment orders. The savings delivered through the recycling model are listed below for the last financial year (1 April 22 – 31 March 23)

Slough Unitary (Adults) - £254,947.42

Slough Children First - £7,688.73

## Appendix 2 – NRS annual customer / prescriber survey results 22/23 for Berkshire

As part of the contract, NRS seek feedback from customers regarding the service they receive. The expected targets are included in the KPIs for the contract and are discussed through contract management meetings with partners. The table below provides information from the latest survey undertaken by NRS and demonstrates that they are meeting the expected level of customer satisfaction. The Berkshire Community Equipment Contract will be discussed with the Co-production network.

| No | Performance indicator                                  | Target   | FY<br>2022/23<br>P1 - 12  | Total | Within target |
|----|--|--|---|-------|---------------|
| 1  | User overall satisfaction levels with service provided | > 95% satisfied or very satisfied                              |  97% | 97%   | + 2%          |
| 2  | Number of service users sampled over financial year    | > 300 service users sampled                                    |  398 | 398   | + 98          |
| 3  | Prescriber experience survey                           | > 10% response rate  |  15% | 15%   | + 5%          |
| 4  | Prescriber experience survey                           | > no average satisfaction rating less than 3 in every category |  0   | 5     | 5             |
| 5  | Number of complaints - quantity                        | < than 100   |  57 | 100   | 43            |

# Equality Impact Assessment

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|--|---|
| <b>Directorate: People Strategy &amp; Commissioning People (Adults)</b>                  |   |
| <b>Service: Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES)</b>                             |   |
| <b>Name of Officer/s completing assessment: Vicky Tutty</b>                              |   |
| <b>Date of Assessment: 13.04.23</b>  |   |
| <b>Name of service/function or policy being assessed: Voluntary and Community Sector</b> |   |
| 1.   | <p>What are the aims, objectives, outcomes, purpose of the policy, service change, function that you are assessing?</p> <p>The purpose of this Equality Impact Needs Assessment is to assess the possible effects of West Berkshire as lead commissioner for the BCES on behalf of a partnership of six Berkshire local authorities and two Integrated Care Boards (ICB's) to procure a new Berkshire Community Equipment provision to ensure contractual compliance when the current contract term ends on 31 March 2024.</p>  |
| 2.   | <p>Who implements or delivers the policy, service or function? State if this is undertaken by more than one team, service, and department including any external partners.</p> <p>Services are currently commissioned by West Berkshire as the lead commissioner on behalf of the partnership of six Berkshire authorities and two Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). The partnership, which includes Slough Borough Council is set up under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 which allows partners (NHS bodies and local authorities) to contribute to a common fund to commission health or social care related services.</p> <p>Current services are operated by NRS under contract.</p> |
| 3.   | <p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, who are the external/internal customers, communities, partners, stakeholders, the workforce etc. Please consider all of the Protected Characteristics listed (more information is available in the background information). Bear in mind that people affected by the proposals may well have more than one protected characteristic.</p> <p>The service modernisation programme and re-procurement will have the impacts as set out in the table below</p>   |



| <b>Characteristic</b>                  | <b>Positive ,<br/>Negative,<br/>Neutral or<br/>Unknown<br/>Impact</b> | <b>Rationale for Assessment</b>   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Age</b>                             | Positive  | <p>The Berkshire Community Equipment Service is available to all adults who meet the eligibility criteria for equipment.</p> <p>Slough Children First are part of the partnership that can order equipment through this contract to support children to remain independent.</p> |
| <b>Disability</b>                      | Positive  | The aim of this service is to support people to return home after a hospital admission or stay in their home and remain independent. People with a disability will positively benefit from this service as aids will offer alternatives to residential care.                    |
| <b>Gender Reassignment:</b>            | Positive / Neutral  | People seeking or having been through gender reassignment will be able to access and benefit from this service.   |
| <b>Marriage and Civil Partnership:</b> | Positive/ Neutral   | People who are in a marriage or civil partnership will be able to access and benefit from this service.   |
| <b>Pregnancy and maternity:</b>        | Positive/ Neutral   | Those who are pregnant will be able to access and benefit from this service   |
| <b>Race:</b>                           | Positive  | People of any race are able to access and benefit from this service.  |
| <b>Religion and Belief:</b>            | Positive / Neutral  | People of any religion and belief are able to access and benefit from this service.   |
| <b>Sexual orientation:</b>             | Positive / Neutral  | People of any sexual orientation are able to access and benefit from this service.  |
| <b>Other:</b>                          |   |   |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 4. | <p>What are any likely positive impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? You may wish to refer to the Equalities Duties detailed in the background information.</p> <p>Access to the Berkshire Community Equipment Service</p>  |
| 5. | <p>What are the likely negative impacts for the group/s identified in (3) above? If so, then are any particular groups affected more than others and why?</p> <p>There will be no negative impact.</p>  |
| 6. | <p>Have the impacts identified in (4) and (5) above been assessed using up to date and reliable evidence and data? Please state evidence sources and conclusions drawn (e.g., survey results, customer complaints, monitoring data etc).</p> <p>Data concerning uptake of provision will be monitored and assessed. Regular steering group meetings with the</p>  |
| 7. | <p>Have you engaged or consulted with any identified groups or individuals if necessary and what were the results, e.g., have the staff forums/unions/ community groups been involved?</p> <p>The recommissioning of the VCS has been considered by a project group comprising representatives from the following: People Strategy and Commissioning, People (Adults) Operations, Public Health, the Co-production Network, PCNs Frimley ICB and Public Health.</p> <p>Engagement has been undertaken with; Social Workers, Carers, Volunteers, the Co-production Network, the Communities team, Housing Needs, PCN Social Prescribers.</p> |
| 8. | <p>Have you considered the impact the policy might have on local community relations?</p> <p>Services will be tendered fairly and competitively. There should not be any impact upon community relations. The amount of available funding remains the same. The Community Grants programme aligns with health, social care, public strategic priorities.</p> <p>.</p>   |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 9.  | <p>What plans do you have in place, or are developing, that will mitigate any likely identified negative impacts? For example, what plans, if any, will be put in place to reduce the impact?</p> <p>Appropriate mobilisation period.<br/>A requirement to collect equalities data.<br/>Communications out.</p>  |
| 10. | <p>What plans do you have in place to monitor the impact of the proposals once they have been implemented? (The full impact of the decision may only be known after the proposals have been implemented). Please see action plan below.</p> <p>Robust evaluation of bids.<br/>Effective contract management.</p> |

|   |   |                            |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| <b>What course of action does this EIA suggest you take? More than one of the following may apply</b>   | ✓ | <b>Action<br/>Plan and</b> |
| <b>Outcome 1: No major change required.</b> The EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken   | ✓ |                            |
| <b>Outcome 2: Adjust the policy</b> to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better promote equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments would remove the barriers identified? (Complete action plan).  |   |                            |
| <b>Outcome 3: Continue the policy</b> despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality identified. You will need to ensure that the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and/or plans to monitor the actual impact (see questions below). (Complete action plan). |   |                            |
| <b>Outcome 4: Stop and rethink</b> the policy when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (Complete action plan).   |   |                            |

**Timetable for Implementation**

At this stage a timetabled Action Plan should be developed to address any concerns/issues related to equality in the existing or proposed policy/service or function. This plan will need to be integrated into the appropriate Service/Business Plan.

| Action              | Target Groups | Lead Responsibility | Outcomes/Success Criteria  | Monitoring & Evaluation | Target Date | Progress to Date |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Contract management | All           | Contract Management | Services delivered in accordance with the specification including collecting relevant monitoring data. | Quarterly               | June 2024   | NA               |
|                     |               |                     |  |                         |             |                  |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Name:</b> Jane Senior<br><b>Signed:</b> .....(Person completing the EIA)   |
| <b>Name:</b> .....<br><b>Signed:</b> .....( Policy Lead if not same as above) |
| <b>Date:</b> .....  |
|   |



**Annex 1** (*Partner Organisations*)

- (1) WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** of Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD respectively (“the Lead Council”); and
- (2) THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD** of Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF, and
- (3) BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL** of Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell RG12 1JD, and
- (4) READING BOROUGH COUNCIL** of Civic Offices Bridge Street Reading RG1 2LU, and
- (5) SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL** of Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough SL1 2EL and
- (6) WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL** of Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1BN (“the Partnership Councils”)
  
- (7) NHS NEWBURY & DISTRICT CCG** of 57-59 Bath Road, Reading RG30 2ba; and
- (8) NHS NORTH & WEST READING** of 57-59 Bath Road, Reading, RG30 2BA; and
- (9) NHS SOUTH READING CCG** of University of Reading Health Centre, 9 Northcourt Avenue, Reading, RG 2 7HE; and
- (10) NHS WOKINGHAM CCG** of Chalfont Surgery, Chalfont Close, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 5HZ; and
- (11) NHS BRACKNELL & ASCOT CCG** of King Edward VII Hospital, St Leonard’s Road, Windsor, SL4 3DP; and
- (12) NHS SLOUGH CCG** of King Edward VII Hospital, St Leonard’s Road, Windsor, SL4 3DP; and
- (13) NHS WINDSOR, & ASCOT MAIDENHEAD CCG** of King Edward VII Hospital, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3DP; and any successor organisations (“the Berkshire CCGs”)