

To: Executive  
16 November 2021

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## **COMMISSIONING OF ALL AGE ADVOCACY DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Executive approval for the Council's plan to procure an All-Age Advocacy service as per Annex 1 – Strategic Procurement Plan.

### **2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 For the Executive to approve the Strategic Procurement Plan (Annex 1) for procuring a provider for all age advocacy for Bracknell Forest residents.

### **3 Reasons for Recommendation(S)**

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 and The Children and Families Act 2014 place a duty on local authorities to provide access for residents of each local authority area to advocacy support to ensure each person's voice is heard in relation to their care and support. For Bracknell Forest this is through an adult advocacy contract, with spot purchases for children and young people (CYP) on an 'as needed' basis. The adult advocacy contract is being extended until 30 September 2022.
- 3.2 In line with BFC's People directorate, an all age advocacy provision will allow for streamlined advocacy support for CYP as they approach adulthood, avoiding the need for change at a challenging time of their life.
- 3.3 The procurement will ensure:
- Compliance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
  - The Council meets its Statutory Duties under The Care Act 2014 and The Children and Families Act 2014, which set out clear expectations for local authorities, including:
    - ensuring that people are able to access advocacy support to help them have their voice heard in decisions about their care and support
    - ensuring care and support decisions are reached that align with individuals' wishes
    - ensuring appropriate oversight of provision and the accountability of the provider

### **4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 As detailed in the Strategic Procurement Plan (Annex 1).

### **5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 An analysis of current usage was completed in April 2021. The key findings are detailed in the SPP.
- 5.2 Service Demand  
Demographically Bracknell has an increasing, ageing population with increasingly complex needs. Population data suggests a 3% increase in the 65+ population year on year with increasing associated needs such as deficits in Memory and Cognition. The Council's own records indicate a steady increase in the number of children looked after, which further indicate an increase in demand for CYP advocacy support.

- 5.3 Legislative changes under the Mental Capacity Act (amended 2018) are due for implementation during 2022 and indicate an increase in the number of people entitled to access advocacy support relating to their care and support needs.
- 5.4 Proposed changes to the Mental Health Act 2008 may also affect demands on for professional advocacy support; there are no firm decisions currently on how access to independent mental health advocacy may change.

## **6 Consultation and Other Considerations**

### **6.1 Legal Advice**

Comments are detailed in the Strategic Procurement Plan (Annex 1).

### **6.2 Financial Advice**

Comments are detailed in the Strategic Procurement Plan (Annex 1).

## **7 Consultation**

### **7.1 Principal Groups Consulted**

For the specification development, the project team consulted with operational adult and children's social care teams, as well as service users, the market and other local authorities already providing all age advocacy.

### **7.2 Method of Consultation**

Soft market testing undertaken in May sought initial views of the market. A survey of children looked after has been undertaken in September, and information gathered to reflect their voice; as similar approach will be carried out with adult service. A market engagement event in the autumn will further capture the market's views and promote the tendering opportunity.

Commissioning will continue to undertake further engagement with operational teams and service users in order to develop the service specification and potentially to be part of the evaluation team.

### **7.3 Responses Received**

Consultation has identified commitment and support for the project and an interest amongst the market.

### **7.4 Equalities Impact Assessment**

An initial impact assessment screening has been completed and is included in the Strategic Procurement Plan (Annex 1). This identified that a Full Equality Impact assessment was not required.

### **7.5 Strategic Risk Management**

The project identified some strategic risks that needed to be considered. These risks are detailed in the Strategic Procurement Plan (Annex 1).

### **7.6 Climate Change Implications**

As this is an extension and re-provision of existing services, analysis concludes that the recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of greenhouse gases or the environment.

### **Contact for further information**

Thom Wilson, Assistant Director for Commissioning - [Thom.wilson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Thom.wilson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk), 01344 354142

Penny Crane, Commissioner - [penny.crane@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:penny.crane@bracknell-forest.gov.uk), 01344 351609