

CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & EQUALITY

4 OCTOBER 2022

SUPPLEMENTARY SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICE

Report by Corporate Director of Public Health & Community Safety

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to** approve the commission of a contract, via the appropriate procurement route, for a Supplementary Substance Misuse Service, to work alongside the core Community Alcohol and Drug Service.

Executive Summary

2. A number of additional grants, from the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities and Office of Health Improvement and Disparities, have been provided to Oxfordshire County Council Public Health Team to enhance substance misuse services, including the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG) and the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG). In August 2022 a new grant was announced, which will commence in November 2022, the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Housing Support Grant which Oxfordshire are eligible to receive. The income from these grants will fund this service.

The annual contract value will be over £500,000 and therefore is required to be entered in the Forward Plan, in accordance with the Access to Information Rules. This is a key decision and a delegated decision consistent with overall Council policy to deliver agreed strategy/plans within the area of responsibility and within approved budgets.

Background

3. Community-based alcohol and drug treatment and support services in Oxfordshire are provided by Turning Point, under a contract for £5 million per annum that commenced 1 April 2020, for a period of 4 years with the option to extend or a further 4 years to 31 March 2028.
4. Since the contract started, there has been a renewed national focus of the impact of drugs and alcohol leading to the new 10 year national plan [From Harm to Hope](#)¹. Also, it is recognised that the COVID pandemic presented a risk of increased morbidity and mortality for drug and alcohol users.
5. In response to the impact of COVID and the national response to homelessness during the pandemic, DLUHC [launched](#) the Rough Sleepers Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant² (RSDATG) in 2020 to provide extra resources for treating this sub population. Oxfordshire was identified as an area to receive this additional funding from November 2020.

¹ [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Extra help for rough sleepers with drug and alcohol dependency - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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6. Further additional funding in drug treatment was announced as part of the [investment to reduce drugs crime³](#), in 2021. This was released to local authorities as a “Universal Grant” to enhance drug treatment for individuals linked to the criminal justice system.
7. In line with the Harm to Hope 10 year plan, and continuing the previously announced investment to reduce drug crime, the [Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment And Recovery Grant⁴](#) (SSMTRG) was awarded to Local Authority Public Health teams in 2022.
8. In August 2022 the Council were informed that we are eligible to receive a new Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Housing Support Grant (SSMTRHSG) that will commence in November 2022 for a period up to 31 March 2025 which brings new expectations for enhanced delivery of community substance misuse services.
9. The government is proposing the introduction of a new set of rules which would govern the arrangement of healthcare services in England. The [Provider Selection Regime⁵](#) will move away from the expectation of competition in all circumstances and towards collaboration across the health and care systems, removing unnecessary levels of competitive tendering and barriers to integrating care, and promoting the development of stable collaborations. The Harm to Hope Plan states that substance misuse services would fall within these regulations, potentially removing the need for additional tendering for existing contracts including variations. The government has consulted on these regulations, but no commencement date has been announced.

Key Issues

10. To enable the delivery of supplementary services to meet the grant, and national OHID/DLUHC requirements, the Council must commission a contract by the appropriate procurement route for these services which will be combined under a Supplementary Substance Misuse Service, to work alongside the core Community Drug and Alcohol Service. The procurement route involving transparent competitive tendering must comply with the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules which ensure compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
11. The value of the community services under the existing three grants will be in the region of £2 million per annum.
12. Due to the value, this will be classed as a **key decision**, and the value is too high for an exemption from tendering under the procurement rules because a direct award would breach the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
13. If the Provider Selection Regime is introduced, this procurement will not be necessary. However, in case the PSR is not introduced in time, and due to the work required to successfully complete a procurement exercise, this work cannot be delayed.

³ [£148 million to cut drugs crime - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴ [Extra funding for drug and alcohol treatment: 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁵ [Provider Selection Regime: supplementary consultation on the detail of proposals for regulations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Corporate Policies and Priorities

14. Continued development of drug and alcohol services is clearly defined in the national drug strategy Harm to Hope 10-year plan. Governance for strategic development of services will fall under the remit of the new formed [Combatting Drugs Partnership](#)⁶, a multi-agency partnership group overseeing the local implementation of strategic plan delivery. The initial steps to form this partnership are underway, with a chair, membership and footprint agreed.
15. The support of rough sleeper's and those with a housing need, with substance misuse services is one of the strategic priorities in the current Drug and Alcohol Partnership Strategy. (Appendix 1)
16. The Supplementary Substance Misuse Service will support Oxfordshire residents with substance misuse problems including those who are rough sleeping and at risk of homelessness. Therefore, it will contribute to the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 by tackling health inequalities and prioritising the health and wellbeing of residents.

Financial Implications

17. The grants income, some of which is indicative at this point for 22/23, has a value in the region of £2 million. It is anticipated this will have a similar value in the next two years, 23/24 and 24/25
18. The maximum funding envelope for this contract will be £4 million per annum, for the provision of substance misuse services funded by external grants which include the current grants names above. In recognition of the rapid development of substance misuse services following the launch of the national Harm to Hope strategy as well as current inflationary cost pressures, further funding of up to £2 million could be available and is included within the funding envelope.

Comments checked by:

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(Finance)

Legal Implications

19. There are no legal implications other than those set out in this report.

Comments checked by:

Jonathan Pool, Solicitor, Jonathan.Pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Legal)

Staff Implications

20. The Live Well Improve and Enable Substance Misuse Team will carry out the procurement process (within programme allocations already agreed) supported by additional staff funding in the various grants. Procurement and Legal staff time will

⁶ [Drugs strategy guidance for local delivery partners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/drugs-strategy-guidance-for-local-delivery-partners)

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Background papers: Nil

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