

CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH - 27 April 2016

PROVISION OF HEALTH VISITING SERVICE

Report by Director of Public Health

Introduction

1. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 (Statutory Instrument 2015 no.921) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/9780111128053> specifies that the local authority shall provide or shall make arrangements to secure the provision of a universal health visitor review to be offered to or in respect of an eligible person. A universal health visitor review must as far as reasonably practicable, be provided to the eligible person when the eligible person is
 - (a) a woman who is more than 28 weeks pregnant;
 - (b) a child who is aged between one day and two weeks;
 - (c) a child who is aged between six and eight weeks;
 - (d) a child who is aged between nine and 15 months; or
 - (e) a child who is aged between 24 months (two years) and 30 months (two years and six months)
2. Every child is entitled to the best possible start in life and health visitors play an essential role in helping to achieve this. By working with, and supporting families during the crucial early years of a child's life, health visitors have a profound impact on the lifelong health and wellbeing of young children and their families. They also lead on the delivery of the 0 to 5 years elements of the Healthy Child Programme in partnership with other health and social care colleagues.
3. Over the last five years the health visiting service has undergone rapid growth and transformation¹ which includes the 4-5-6 model – 4 levels of service, 5 universal mandated health reviews and 6 high impact areas.²
4. The current commissioning arrangements for Health Visiting Services in Oxfordshire were put in place by the NHS and the contracts with current providers of these services cease on 31 March 2017.
5. Oxfordshire County Council currently has no in-house provision of health visiting services. In order to guarantee continuation of the mandated health

¹ Health Visitor Implementation Plan 2011—2015

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213759/dh_124208.pdf

² Best start in life and beyond: Improving public health outcomes for children, young people and families. Commissioning Guide 1, PHE, January 2016

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/493617/Service_specification_0_to_19_CG1_19Jan2016.pdf

reviews provided by health visiting services Oxfordshire County Council will need to put in place contract to commence 1 April 2017.

6. Oxfordshire County Council procurement process would be followed to commission these services

Legal Implications

7. The Council has a statutory obligation to “take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area” (s2B National Health Service Act 2006 (“NHS Act 2006”) as amended by s12 Health and Social Care Act 2012). Regulations 2015/921 further imposes a mandatory obligation on the Council to “provide, or make arrangements to secure the provision of, a universal health visitor review.
8. The Council therefore has a mandatory duty to provide health visiting services and the procurement of a service provider to provide such services would fulfil this duty. Any procurement process must comply with relevant procurement legislation on competitive tendering for public contracts.

Financial and Staff Implications

9. Public Health has a ring fenced budget which is approximately £32 million in 2016/2017. The grant allocation specifies that a proportion must be spent on 0-5 services.
10. Money is already committed to paying for health visiting services within the Public Health budget so this does not represent a new spend. This information is already reported to the Cabinet.
11. Contract arrangements need to be in place for 1 April 2017, as there can be no break in service provision. The current provider is aware of the contract end date and the need to re-procure services. There is sufficient time (10 months) to procure and award a new contract.

Equalities Implications

12. The Health Visiting Service is a universal service provided to all women in the antenatal period and then up until the child is 5 years old.

RECOMMENDATION

13. **The Cabinet Member for Public Health is RECOMMENDED to approve the Public Health Directorate commission health visiting services in Oxfordshire to secure provision as mandated by the Health and Social Care Act.**

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