

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Young People's Services

Wednesday, 10 April 2024 at 1.00 pm

Council Chamber - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 17 April 2024 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public



Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

April 2024

Committee Officer: jack.ahier@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 15 May 2024

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to speak must be submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting. Requests to speak should be sent to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk .

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9 am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

4. Family Safeguarding Plus Model (FSPM) - Domestic Abuse. (Pages 1 - 12)

Cabinet Member: Children, Education & Young People's Services
Forward Plan Ref: 2024/047
Contact: Caroline Kelly, Lead Commissioner Start Well
Caroline.kelly@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Kerrie Evans, Commissioning Officer Start Well,
Kerrie.evans@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) **Agree the commissioning and procurement of the Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner service and to Award Contract.**
- b) **Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Head of Procurement and Contract Management, to award a Contract with a value of up to £805,568 per annum for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner service for a term of 3 years and 5 months following a successful procurement process.**
- c) **Agree the extension to Contract for the Family Solution Plus Model for the Substance Use Adult Facing Practitioner service, via the Public Health Community Alcohol and Drug Service Core Contract with Turning Point for a term of 3 years and 8 months with a value of £517,344.**
- d) **Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Head of Procurement and Contract Management, to finalise the required Contract documentation for the extension of the Family Solution Plus Model for the Substance Use Adult Facing Practitioner service.**

5. Renewal of Language contracts: Interpretation, translation and BSL (Pages 13 - 18)

Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People's Services

Forward Plan Ref: 2023/203

Contact: Louise McMartin, Joint Senior Commissioner Start Well,

louise.mcmartin@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Corporate Director for Childrens Services

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) **Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal, to award contract following the completion of the procurement process for the recommissioning of Interpretation and Translation Services, to enable a new contract to be in place for 1st August 2024.**

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

Members Code – Other registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships

- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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Divisions Affected – N/A

**DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN,
EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

10 April 2024

**COMMISSION AND PROCURE
THE FAMILY SOLUTIONS PLUS MODEL
DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE - ADULT FACING PRACTITIONERS**

AND

**EXTEND THE EXISTING CONTRACT
THE FAMILY SOLUTIONS PLUS MODEL
SUBSTANCE USE SERVICE - ADULT FACING PRACTITIONERS**

Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) Agree the commissioning and procurement of the Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner service and to Award Contract.**
- b) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Head of Procurement and Contract Management, to award a Contract with a value of up to £805,568 per annum for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner service for a term of 3 years and 5 months following a successful procurement process.**
- c) Agree the extension to Contract for the Family Solution Plus Model for the Substance Use Adult Facing Practitioner service, via the Public Health Community Alcohol and Drug Service Core Contract with Turning Point for a term of 3 years and 8 months with a value of £517,344.**
- d) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Head of Procurement and Contract Management, to finalise the required Contract documentation for the extension of the Family Solution Plus Model for the Substance Use Adult Facing Practitioner service.**

Executive Summary

2. The Family Safeguarding Plus Model is designed to provide rapid, proactive support and intervention to children and their families impacted by domestic abuse, substance use and mental health. It is delivered by small multiagency teams who are trained in a range of highly effective interventions to address the complexity of the impact of the three vulnerabilities.

3. Deployment of the Family Safeguarding Plus Model, with its multi-disciplinary joint children's and adult team specialists, is required to enhance the support to adults and children for statutory children's social care work. The model operates to reduce the number of children subject to statutory intervention and offers an Adult Facing Practitioner service that provides specialist advocates responsible for supporting parents/carers with maximum impact and reach and aims to increase the pace and sustainability of parental change.

4. This report sets out the recommendation to re-procure the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service and to extend the Contractual arrangements for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service to align each of these services with the core Public Health commissioned Oxfordshire Community Alcohol and Drug Service Contract.

Background

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service:

5. Following the Directors Leadership Team (DLT) meeting 11th January 2024 Oxfordshire County Council agreed to re-commission the existing Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service. It was agreed to re-commission the service with a similar service specification and with an increased Contract value to take into account inflation and to increase the Adult Facing Practitioner capacity for both victim and perpetrator support.

6. The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service will offer an Adult Facing Practitioner service to provide a treatment intervention programme for low to medium level risk perpetrators and focused support to victims-survivors of domestic abuse, to protect and support children from the harmful impact of abuse.

7. The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service will replicate the leading Hertfordshire County Council Family Safeguarding Model and support service demand within Oxfordshire. This is with the clear definition that the model focuses on low to medium level risk perpetrators and with high level risk perpetrators being supported by statutory services: Police and Crime Commissioner through the DRIVE program (Thames Valley Police) and Probation.

8. The new Contract for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service will fall within the existing pro-rata Childrens Social Care budget of £805,568, which is inclusive of the pre-determined inflation and service on-costs. The Contract value will support the current capacity issues to achieve 8.5 FTE Adult Facing

Practitioner for Victims-Survivors support and 8.5 FTE Adult Facing Practitioner for Low-Medium Risk Level Perpetrators support.

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service:

9. Following the Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) meeting 11th January 2024 Oxfordshire County Council agreed to extend the existing Contractual arrangements for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service with the incumbent Service Provider: Turning Point.

10. The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service will continue to provide a vast range of intervention and support options tailored to meet the holistic needs of individuals who are a parent or have parental responsibility. The model will provide a service with enhanced and specific parent and carer support, that links into the Family Solutions Plus services. Each quarter the Substance Use FSP service completes over 500 home visits, more than 800 1-2-1 sessions with parents, 750+ drug tests and attends over 200 core groups.

11. The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service is part of the core Public Health commissioned Oxfordshire Adult Community Alcohol and Drug Service Contract. The core service contract includes delivery of the FSP service under an 'Optional Additional Services' clause that enables Oxfordshire County Council to require the delivery of the service according to the financial schedule in place.

12. The Contract extension for the Substance Use service will be inclusive of the pre-determined inflation and service on-costs. The Contract value of £517,334 will support the current capacity issues to achieve 8.5 Adult Facing Practitioners support together with a team leader and 0.2 Manager, and in turn will replicate the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Model. This contract value also includes the provision of consumable costs associated with service delivery, including items such as drug testing costs.

13. The proposal is for each of the two Contracts to align with the core Public Health Service:

- The new Contract for the Family Safeguarding Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service for a term of 3 years and 5 months to commence 1st November 2024.
- The Contract extension for the Family Safeguarding Plus Model for the Substance Use service for a term of 3 years and 8 months to commence 1st August 2024.

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Mental Health service:

14. Following the Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) meeting 11th January 2024 Oxfordshire County Council agreed to decommission the existing Contractual arrangements for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Mental Health Service service with the incumbent Service Provider: Oxfordshire MIND when the contract expires on the 31st July 2024. Subject to due process and any necessary approvals the service will be bought in-house and run by the OCC Clinical Psychology Team as

there was clear evidence the parents of families who's children either were on a Child Protection or Child in Need plan required clinical interventions to address their mental health needs. The contract with Oxfordshire MIND does not provide clinical interventions and Oxfordshire County Council already have Clinical Psychologists supporting families within the FSP service. Therefore the decision was made to increase the capacity of the in-house clinical team which also replicates the leading FSP model commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council.

Key Issues

15. Oxfordshire County Council did not fully implement the Hertfordshire County Council Family Safeguarding Model when it was first introduced to Oxfordshire County Council. The Council recognise the need to reinvigorate our whole approach and the need for closer fidelity to the model to bring it in line with the national developments of the Family Safeguarding approach and ensure that we deploy best practice, including using clinical interventions when engaging with families.

16. Oxfordshire County Council carried out a strategic review of the Oxfordshire Family Solutions Plus Model. A comparison was made between the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Model and the Oxfordshire Family Solution Plus Model.

17. It was concluded that the Family Solution Plus Model for the Substance Use service delivered by Turning Point meets national developments and is performing well.

18. It was concluded that the Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service was not performing in line with the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Plus Model, due to capacity issues within the contract.

19. The Oxfordshire Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service currently operates with fewer Adult Facing Practitioners to support victims-survivors and low to medium level risk perpetrators and risks impacting increased demand on Oxfordshire statutory Childrens Social Care services.

20. The Oxfordshire Family Solution Plus Model for Domestic Abuse has pockets of good practice, however, there are areas that require improvement. For example, the use of the Workbook, the supervision approach and ensuring all staff are trained in Motivational Interviewing (MI) and embedding this approach into their practice. These are fundamental to bring Oxfordshire's model in line with national developments and the Family Solutions approach. In addition, Oxfordshire requires more of a robust and automated way of tracking outcomes of children and their families that have had FSP involvement to clearly demonstrate the interventions undertaken and the outcomes achieved.

Procurement Process

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service:

21. Procurement will undertake a procurement exercise to re-procure the Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner Service. Publication of an Invite to Tender will be submitted to the open market for potential new providers to submit their bids.

22. The re-procurement of the Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner Service will factor in a suitable evaluation and moderation period, retaining the independent Cabinet date of 10 April 2024, DLT/Director approval to Award Contract 28th June 2024 and a mobilisation period (encompassing TUPE) of 87 days.

23. Once bids are received and the mandatory criteria met, qualified (those with the technical capability for the services being procured) evaluators will review and score the bids. The Service Provider that meets the quality and price thresholds and satisfies the Council will be Awarded Contract to deliver the new service from the commencement date 1st November 2024.

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service:

24. Commissioners will undertake work alongside Public Health, Legal and Procurement to extend the current Contractual arrangements with the incumbent Service Provider, Turning Point, ensuring that new Provider Selection Regime requirements are met.

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Mental Health service:

25. Commissioners have formally notified the current provider: Oxfordshire MIND of the decision to decommission the service on the 31st July 2024. Commissioners are working with the in-house clinical psychology team to implement the new service for 1st August 2024.

Economic and Financial Standing

26. All Domestic Abuse providers will need to complete Dun and Bradstreet credit report checks and an evaluation of Economic and Financial Standing before being awarded a contract.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

27. The re-tender of the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service and the extension of contractual arrangements for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service incorporates three of the key priorities set out by the Start Well Commissioning Team and aligns with four of the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, as below:

Priorities of the Start Well Commissioning Team

- Early intervention and prevention support to prevent children going into crisis.

- Improve access to services to reduce inequality.
- Support carers and parents to support children to thrive.

Priorities of the Corporate Plan.

- Priority 2 – Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire.
- Priority 3 - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.
- Priority 7 - Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.
- Priority 9 - Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefits.

28. To achieve the priorities set out above and to address the gaps identified in the Sufficiency Strategy, the Start Well HESC team are working with operational colleagues in Health, Social Care and Education on the following:

- OCC will work positively and collaboratively with existing and potential providers to develop a range of appropriate provision to meet the needs of Oxfordshire’s children within County (ensuring access to services, continuity of schooling, maintenance of support networks).
- OCC will share what we are learning about our children’s needs and features through the Valuing Care needs assessment tool, to identify what is needed from the local market to support those needs and that the needs assessment tool needs updating more regularly following the original placement request.

Vision and Strategic Objectives

29. The Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s Plan (2018-2023)¹ outlines a vision to make Oxfordshire a great place for children and young people to grow up in and to have the opportunity to become everything they want to be. To achieve this, our strategic objectives are:

<p>Be Successful To ensure children have the best start in life; ensure they have access to high quality education, employment and motivational training; go to school feeling inspired to stay and learn; and have good self-esteem and faith in themselves.</p>	<p>Be Happy and Healthy Services are available to promote good health and prevent ill health; learn the importance of healthy, secure relationships and having a support network; have access to services to improve overall wellbeing, and easy ways to get active.</p>
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¹ [Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan](#)

Financial Implications

30. Sustainable funding for the Family Solution Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse and Substance Use service is required to achieve service continuity and to provide focused support to families to reduce demand across Childrens Social Care.

31. Restriction to or a reduction to the required funding for Domestic Abuse re-tender and the Substance Use Contract extension would prevent Oxfordshire County Council from deploying a full comparative model that offers close fidelity to the intended Family Safeguarding Plus Model, that we believe Oxfordshire County Council wish to adopt.

32. Limitations to increased resource would result in disproportionate Adult Facing Practitioners vs service demands, and thus Adult Facing Practitioner interventions could not be increased to an adequate level, in turn interventions could not be fully integrated into plans for children and young people.

33. The Supporting Families funding currently supports FSP services and is due to end in 2025. There is no indication from the Government that this funding will be replaced. The contribution from the Public Health reserve is due to end in March 2025 (£0.300m in 2023/24 and £0.200m in 2024/25).

34. DLT approved the new FSP Model including the plan proposed by the Finance Business Partner to cover the additional cost by increasing the Budget by a combination of:

- In 2024/25, fund the £596k total additional cost pressure for all three services by virement from the Contract Uplift provision.
- Potential loss of funding of £400k in 2025/26 (Supported People Grant, £200k and Public Health Funding, £200k). Children's Services plan to explore options to invest in these services with statutory partners such as Public Health, the BOB ICB, Police and Probation. This combined model of funding is evidenced in other LA FSP models such as Hertfordshire, West Berkshire and West Sussex.

Comments checked by: Thomas James, Head of Finance Business Partnering (Thomas.James@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Legal Implications

35. The Council's powers and duties to engage in these activities are set out at Part III of the National Assistance Act 1948, the Care Act 2014, the Children and Families Act 2017 and the Children Act 1989.

36. The Council will conduct a fair and transparent competitive procurement process for the provision of the services, in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended).

37. The Council will ensure that the extension to the Turning Point contractual arrangements meet the Provider Selection Regime requirements that came into force on 1 January 2024.

Comments checked by: Jayne Pringle, Head of Law and LBP Contracts and Conveyance (Jayne.Pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Staff Implications

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse service:

38. The successful bidder for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Domestic Abuse Adult Facing Practitioner Service will progress their responsibility for the TUPE management arrangements, through the mobilisation stage of the implementation period.

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use service:

39. Approval of the recommendation to extend the Contractual arrangements for the Family Solutions Plus Model for the Substance Use Adult Facing Practitioner Service will provide the incumbent Service Provider, Turning Point, with a longer period of employment security for the remainder of the contract period with Public Health. This would further secure resource expertise. The National Benchmarking exercise completed by Public Health reported that the Substance Use Provider, Turning Point, in Oxfordshire have one of the lowest staff turnover rates in the sector, and the Provider reports that Oxfordshire Turning Point staff have the highest satisfaction score across the organisation.

40. In addition, the alcohol and drug treatment outcomes for the Oxfordshire Turning Point service are the highest in our Local Outcome Comparator group of similar LAs and amongst the best in the country.

The Family Solutions Plus Model for the Mental Health service:

41. The mental health FSP service is working with The Council on their exit strategy. The Lead Clinical Psychologist is beginning the recruitment process for the additional staff required to expand the service.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

42. The approved service Specifications have been diligently prepared for the specific needs of parents/carers impacted by domestic abuse and/or substance use.

43. The expectation of Service Providers is to deliver person centred support which ensures:

- Provision of experienced and skilled Adult Facing Practitioners to work with parent/carers and their families experiencing parental conflict.

- Specialist support for parents/carers experiencing domestic abuse and/or substance use issues.
- Adult Facing Practitioners work within the council's multi-disciplinary Children's Social Care team and are co-located across the 17 Oxfordshire locality teams.
- Provision of high-quality interventions, support, and safety planning, to the person who is at risk of, or a victim-survivor of, domestic abuse and/or to the person who is impacted by substance use issues.
- Inclusive and delivered in a sensitive way which considers individual needs in respect of age, gender, ethnic origin, language, culture, spirituality, religion or faith, sexuality, gender identity or disability.
- The root cause and triggers of children's safeguarding are addressed, and early help and meaningful interventions are provided when required.
- Improved family experience and outcomes from statutory intervention.

44. The approved Provider evaluation process includes the requirement for Service Providers to have an Equalities Policy. In accordance with the requirements of the ITT documentation, all successful Providers must self-certify that their organisation has an active Equality & Diversity Policy in keeping with the Equality Act 2010. All Providers must also self-certify that their organisation has no court, industrial or employment tribunal cases brought against them regarding unlawful discrimination within the last 3 years. In addition, the Quality & Improvement Team will carry out regular monitoring of services and include equality items in their reviews.

45. Public Health officers have completed a climate and equality impact assessment for the core Community and Drug Service contract including FSP since the contract was originally awarded and commenced in April 2020 and no evidence has been identified to suggest that by the Council approving the recommendation to extend the Contract this will lead to a negative impact on the community, environment, or its strategic partners within Oxfordshire.

46. The benefits to the Council in approving the extension to Contract will provide a continuity of support to individuals accessing the service and eliminate any potential service gaps.

Sustainability Implications

47. The Domestic Abuse evaluation process includes mandatory disclosure from providers to answer questions regarding their environmental management as well as that of their sub-contractors. At present a Climate / Environmental Policy is not required by providers. All successful providers self-certified that their organisation had no prior convictions of breaching environmental legislation, or had any notice served upon it within the last 3 years by any environmental regulator or authority.

48. These sustainability checks were also completed for the substance use contract provider Turning Point when the contract was awarded in early 2020.

49. Recruitment for all Adult Facing Practitioners mostly attracts a local workforce,

therefore limiting the amount of extensive travel time.

50. In line with the Council's policy, all Adult Facing Practitioners delivering the service will travel to the parents/carers home for 'home visits' reducing the need for parent/carers having to travel.

Risk Management

51. The Family Solution Plus Model review of the Adult Facing Practitioner service concluded that the Oxfordshire model did not deliver best practice in all areas and there was a requirement to reinvigorate our approach to bring the model in line with the fidelity of the Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding Plus Model.

52. The proposed approach is fundamental to bring Oxfordshire's model in line with national developments and the Family Safeguarding Plus Model. This will secure service continuity and provide support to new parents/carers who are impacted by domestic abuse and/or substance use issues.

53. The extension of contractual arrangements for the Family Solution Plus Model within the Substance Use service will provide stability and continued evidence-based outcomes to parents/carers and their children. This would mitigate against the need to resource a re-tender and offer the potential to secure continued funding for the service. There is a requirement to increase the Contract value to maintain the model and acquire the full 8.5 WTE Adult Facing Practitioners, and to be inclusive of consumable costs.

54. The Oxfordshire Family Solution Plus Model for Domestic Abuse delivers good practice in areas, however, there are areas that require improvement. The service currently operates with fewer Adult Facing Practitioners to support victims-survivors and low to medium level risk perpetrators and risks impacting increased demand on Oxfordshire statutory Childrens Social Care services. The proposed model will provide improved sustainability and provide Oxfordshire the opportunity to clearly demonstrate the interventions undertaken and the outcomes achieved. There is a requirement to increase the Contract value to acquire the full 17 WTE Adult Facing Practitioners, to support victims-survivors and low to medium level risk perpetrators.

55. Benefits

- Reduces the risks associated with care and support purchased in an emergency.
- Ability to negotiate costs prior to accepting the care and support services.
- Ability to be flexible when purchasing care and support to meet the various needs of children and young people, from block provision to bespoke complex needs accommodation and care packages.

56. Critical Success Criteria

1. New Service Provider for the Domestic Abuse FSP Service is accredited and fully compliant prior to working with Oxfordshire County Council.
2. Fidelity of the Family Solutions Plus Model in Oxfordshire
3. Continuity of services to deliver strong interventions and achieve good evidence-based outcomes to parents/carers and children.
4. A reduction in demand across Childrens Social Care (Children We Care For, Child Protection and Children in Need) and our Statutory Partners.

57. The benefits discussed above are very important to the Council and will make a noticeable difference (e.g., especially around accreditation and being fully compliant organisations).

58. Table of risks and mitigations:

	Risk	Impact 0-5	Probability	Mitigation
1	<p>Budget restriction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rise in demand and cost for both children’s social care and system partner statutory services such as the ICB, Police and criminal justice system. - Increased safeguarding concerns for families and could result in an increase in children entering care. - Increased complexity of children who are supported at the statutory end of social care. - Children staying in statutory services longer than is effective and repeat CIN & CP planning. - Rise in caseloads for individual social workers with poor staff retention. - Poor experience of services for children and families. 	5	medium	Fully costed model detailed and to be budgeted for.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to address the root cause and triggers for children's safeguarding. - Adults with Substance Use issues do not receive support in a timely way which could escalate their needs and prevent their ability to care for their child/children. - Could be politically sensitive. - Could result in redundancies to the voluntary sector. - Loss of multi-agency team ethos, this would move away from a FSP approach. 			
2	No Contract Award would potentially reduce financial savings	4	medium	Soft Market Testing
3	Sustainable funding not identified and impact to TUPE risk after 6-month contract extension ends	4	medium	Limit risk of no funding
4	Mobilisation not achieved due to workforce issues and delay to contract start date	5	medium	Clear contract mobilisation support

Report by Lisa Lyons

Corporate Director of Childrens Services

Annex: Nil

Background papers: Nil

Other Documents: Nil

Contact Officer: Caroline Kelly
Lead Commissioner – Start Well
Caroline.kelly@oxfordshire.gov.uk

March 27 2024

Divisions Affected – N/A

**DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN,
EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

10 APRIL 2024

**Recommissioning of Interpretation and Translation Services for 1st
August 2024**

Report by Corporate Director of Childrens Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED

1. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children's Services, in consultation with the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal, to award contract following the completion of the procurement process for the recommissioning of Interpretation and Translation Services, to enable a new contract to be in place for 1st August 2024.

Executive Summary

2. The Council has in place contracts to deliver interpretation and translation services to ensure that it meets its legal duty under the Equalities Act 2010, which requires organisations to provide information in the most appropriate ways so that people have access to the same quality of information and receive fair and appropriate services.
3. The Council currently uses interpreting and translation services in many areas. The highest users of translation, telephone and face to face interpreting are Children's teams. Whereas Adult services are the highest users of Deaf or Deaf Blind interpreting. However, all services are used by staff and teams across the Council.
4. Through the commissioning of Interpretation and Translation services, the council seeks to ensure the availability of services to meet the needs of people accessing Council services in Oxfordshire with language barriers which fall in to one or both of the following groups, they are deaf or have a hearing impairment and/or English is not their first language and they do not have sufficient English language skills. The current contracts for Interpretation and

Translation services will expire on the 31 July 2024. These contracts have been running for 5 years.

5. A review was carried out using current usage data, feedback from staff and engagement with providers providing these services.
6. As a result of the review a specification was developed to address the needs identified. This included the identification of key performance indicators, service model and qualification levels of interpreters and translators.
7. As part of the tender process 5 providers submitted bids to provide a Managed Service for Interpretation & Translation services. The preferred provider passed all checks.

Project Context

8. The Council has in place contracts to deliver interpretation and translation services to ensure that it meets its legal duty under the Equalities Act 2010, which requires organisations to provide information in the most appropriate ways so that people have access to the same quality of information and receive fair and appropriate services. All interpretation services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year and are accessed by Council staff on behalf of the person. The translation service is accessed by Council staff in order to translate documents for people they work with or members of the public.
9. Language barriers in Council settings can lead to problems such as delay or denial of services, underutilisation, and identification of preventive services. Difficulty in communication may also limit the ability of professionals to understand and thoroughly assess peoples' needs and support them effectively. Language services, such as translation and interpretation, can facilitate communication and improve social care service quality, peoples' experience, adherence to recommended care and support, and reduce inequalities in access to services. Without appropriately understanding people are unable to give informed consent to support and the intervention offered to them.
10. In 2023, there were 1200 people in Oxfordshire who were registered as being Deaf or hard of hearing. Of those 850 are aged over 65. The SEN Deaf and Hearing Support team currently supports 716 children and young people, although not all these children and young people use BSL in order to communicate or access learning. The 2021 Census tells us that Polish is the most spoken main language for those who don't have English as a first language both in Oxfordshire and at a national level. This accounts for 1.1% of the total population of England and Wales, and 1.2% in Oxfordshire. In Oxfordshire, Portuguese was the second most spoken language (0.8%), and Romanian was the third (0.8%). Oxford has the largest population of residents whose main language is not English (18%).

11. In the last 3 years 210 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) have arrived in Oxfordshire. The three main countries arrivals have come from are Afghanistan, Sudan, and Iran. Currently Oxfordshire is responsible for 103 UASC who are under 18 and have looked after children (LAC) status, and 135 UASC care leavers aged 18-25 years. Under the National Transfer Scheme Oxfordshire is responsible for 106 young people. Social workers undertake a thorough assessment of their needs upon arrival and require interpreters to support them during this assessment as well as on an ongoing basis with orientation and integration whilst they are learning English.
12. Demand for the Interpretation and Translation Services have increased over the last three years across the Council. A number of factors have contributed to this – the Covid Pandemic; Afghanistan refugee evacuation; the Homes for Ukraine programme; the National Transfer Scheme and a general increase in people contacting the Council for services, where English is not their first language.

Review

13. A full review of usage data over the last 3 years has been undertaken along with feedback from staff.
14. The review highlighted several issues with the existing interpretation services particularly face to face (in person) interpreting which was considered when developing the specification. Issues included -
 - a) Availability of interpreters for meetings, with cancellations occurring at short notice
 - b) Availability of interpreters for some languages, there are a number of languages which are difficult to fulfil for in person face to face interpreting.
 - c) High costs for translation materials
 - d) High level of internal staff resource to recharge costs to individual teams using the service.
 - e) High mileage claims and expenses from interpreters due to limited local interpreter pool.
 - f) Lack of local interpreters
 - g) Interpreters outside of Oxfordshire are not willing to travel a long distance for an hour booking.
 - h) Lack of qualified interpreters
 - i) Non-UK based linguists available to translate specific languages.
 - j) Other local statutory services such as Thames Valley Police pay higher rates.

Service

15. The contract awarded will cover the following services -
 - a) Telephone Interpreting

- b) Face to Face Spoken
 - c) Video Spoken
 - d) Face to Face Non-Spoken
 - e) Video Non-Spoken
 - f) Translation
16. The tender invited potential providers to bid for a call-off agreement under Lot 1c – Managed Service – Local Gov and Wider Public Sector ESPO framework to submit an offer of provision. This has enabled us to ensure the most competitive price for good quality services. The framework call-off fits well with the service requirements as it affords the flexibility that is needed for a contract that can be considered as zero value.

Strategic Outcomes

17. The services shall contribute to the following outcomes –
- a) Children, young people, and adult’s social workers complete assessments within statutory timescales.
 - b) Children, young people, and adults with language barriers are appropriately represented within assessment meetings, to ensure that accurate assessments are conducted to produce plans which meet the person’s needs.
 - c) Children, young people, and adults with language barriers can access appropriate mainstream and targeted services.
 - d) Targeted media campaigns with Public Health, Trading Standards and Coroners Service.

Financial Implications

18. The preferred provider met all the evaluation criteria and provided costings for each service.
19. The contract awarded will be 3 years with the opportunity to extend for up to an additional 2 years (subject to further Key Decisions process).
20. The budget for these services sit with individual teams within the Council. There are not dedicated budgets for these services, as they are all pay as you use services, so it is not possible to give a full contract value. A rate comparison has been completed using the current rates and the preferred bidder rates, it is possible to ascertain that, had the new contract been in place during financial year 22/23, we could have expected savings of circa 30% overall.

Service and Unit of charge	Current Rates	New Rates
Telephone (per minute)	£0.50	£0.40
Face to Face – In Person (minimum 1 hour)	£28 - £32	£22 - £23
BSL – In Person (min 2 hrs)	£180	£110
Translation (per word)	£0.09	£0.05

Comments checked by: Stephen Rowles (Assistant Finance Business Partner, Interim)
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Legal Implications

21. The basis of the Council's statutory duty to provide these services is set out at paragraph 1 above. The procurement of the new services has followed a competitive tendering process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which themselves ensure that the Council is compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended). Legal Services has assisted with the preparation of the terms and conditions of the proposed contract.

Comments checked by: Marina Lancashire (Locum Lawyer – Contracts)
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Staff Implications

22. There are no new or additional implications.

Equality & Inclusion Implication

23. As there are existing services, the recommissioning process and award of tender do not negatively impact on people in Oxfordshire.

Sustainability Implications

24. The tender evaluation process included mandatory disclosure from providers to answer questions regarding their environmental management as well as that of their sub-contractors. All providers self-certified that their organisation had no prior convictions of breaching environmental legislation, or had any notice served upon it within the last 3 years by any environmental regulator or authority.

Risk Management

24. As part of the recommissioning process, see below a summary of the Risks and Mitigations in place.

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation
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Limited number of providers that can deliver the Councils requirements	4	Medium	Stakeholder event at tender stage
No bids received	5	Medium	Stakeholder event at tender stage
Only incumbent submit bid	5	Medium	Stakeholder engagement event to be used to attract a wide variety of suppliers. ITT questions and specification to be clear and objective in order to ensure that providers don't over-offer at tender stage just so award can be secured
Quality of bids are poor	4	Medium	Stakeholder engagement to clarify questions. Strong specification and SMART ITT questions

Report by Lisa Lyons
Corporate Director of Children's Services

Annex: Nil

Background papers: Nil.

[Other Documents:] Nil

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22 March 2024