

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet
2024

17th July

Recommissioning of the Promoting Independent Living Service (Home Improvement Agency)

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Shirley Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis – Head of Community & Housing Services
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Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Living independent, active & healthy lives
Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet RESOLVE that:-

- 1) Approval is given to recommission the Promoting Independent Living Service;**
- 2) Authority is delegated to the Head of Community & Housing Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services and following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and Strategic Housing to agree the final process, timetable and evaluation model for the appointment of a new contractor to deliver the Home Improvement Agency service; AND**
- 3) To award the contract to the successful provider(s).**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Home Improvement Agency, known as Promoting Independent Living (PIL) service works closely with the other 5 Local Housing Authorities and Worcestershire County Council to provide a range of services including Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) and discretionary grants for Home Repairs Assistance, Dementia Dwelling Grants, Minor Adaptations and Hospital Discharge Grants.

- 2.2 Since April 2020 the PIL service has been delivered by Millbrook Healthcare, following a successful procurement exercise and this contract will end in March 2025.
- 2.3 The service within Bromsgrove delivered 77 Disabled Facilities Grants and 46 discretionary grants in 2023/24.
- 2.4 The Council has a mandatory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants to eligible residents and may provide other discretionary assistance through its Housing Assistance Policy.
- 2.5 Funding is received from the Government via the Better Care Fund (BCF), which is passported through to the Local Housing Authorities (LHA) from the County Council annually.
- 2.6 The current cost for the Council of delivering this service is £ £170,344 which includes a contribution to an Occupational Therapist, Housing Options and IT system within PIL.

3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 3.1 The current revenue and capital funding for the PIL service comes from the Better Care Fund. All six Local Housing Authorities contribute to the service, with the revenue contribution apportioned based on capital spend.
- 3.2 The current service also includes the County Council who contribute to the costs of running PIL to deliver information and advice, minor adaptations and a handyman service. However the decision has been made by the County Council to no longer fund the information and advice and handyman element of the service.
- 3.3 A “Promoting Independent Living” project team of Officers from across the Local Housing Authorities and Adult Social Care has been established to agree what services are within scope of the recommissioning and to develop an appropriate specification. This has been supported by a wider partnership group including Occupational Therapists, Neighbourhood Team representatives, the Integrated Care Board, Health and Care Trust and the Adult Front Door.
- 3.4 The Promoting Independent Living project team are overseen by a Strategic Governance Board and this Board has links into many other partnerships to ensure appropriate governance and co-design of services happens.

- 3.5 The project group has engaged the services of Foundations to support the recommissioning process. Foundations is the national body for Home Improvement Agencies, funded by the Government to provide support to LHAs. South Worcestershire procurement have provided the lead procurement role, supported by the Legal services at Wychavon DC.
- 3.6 The evaluation criteria will be based on the following questions;
- **Service Implementation** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to implement and deliver the service set out the specification.
 - **Partnership and Engagement** - demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of Partnership and Engagement
 - **Continuous improvement and innovation** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of continuous improvement and innovation.
 - **Staff Management** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of Staff Management
 - **Customer Service** - The bidder can demonstrate effective ability to meet the requirements of customer service.
 - **Additional Social Value** - The bidder is expected to showcase Additional Social Value stemming from this procurement process, exceeding the direct outcomes of the contract itself.
- 3.7 The below is the procurement timeline for the Service
- Meet the Buyer Event - June 2024
 - Tender / ITT published – August 2024
 - Tender submission deadline – end of September 2024
 - Marking / interviews –October 2024
 - Shortlisting of tenders –October 2024
 - Preferred supplier selected – November 2024
 - Contract award – December 2024
 - Pre-contract negotiations – December 2024
 - Project end – December 2024

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In 2024/25 the Council received £1,130,316 of BCF funding for the service and it is expected to be at least this amount for 25/26.
- 4.2 Approximately £930,000 per annum will be passported into the new PIL service contract and the rest is retained by the council towards staffing

costs, direct applications and the Occupational Therapist contract with the NHS Trust.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide DFGs and must have a Housing Assistance Policy in place to utilise the BCF funding flexibly.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.1 Living independent, active & healthy lives - The Worcestershire PIL service provides a range of service options to support the improvement of the health and wellbeing of the local population with the aim of adaptations being used to restore the use of the home so that people can regain or retain their independence and carry on living in the community. This is achieved with service elements supporting people in a flexible way to provide positive outcomes for people.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 The installation of more efficient equipment via DFG will reduce energy usage and provide higher levels of thermal comfort for dwellings benefitting from these measures thus reducing carbon emissions. The use of modern methods of construction will be considered for works where value for money can be demonstrated as well as carbon reduction.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.3 A previous Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken and has been reviewed and updated.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 It will be critical to identify an appropriate service provider to deliver this service at the same cost whilst still maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction. This risk will need to be managed through the specification and contract.

- 7.2 Not entering into a new contract would mean that the delivery of the statutory services would be at risk.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Background paper: Housing Assistance Policy

[Link to Housing Assistance Policy](#)