

CABINET MEETING – 13 FEBRUARY 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Sunderland Home Improvement Agency (HIA) – Procurement of a Handypersons and Minor Alterations (HPMA) Service

Author(s):

Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to:

- I. To seek Cabinet's approval to procure a HPMA Service for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further period of 12 months, at the sole discretion of Sunderland City Council, at an estimated cost of £198,500 per annum. The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) will act as the 'hub' for the service and will directly manage the service provider.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is asked to approve:

- 1) The procurement of a HMPA service for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further period of 12 months, at the sole discretion of Sunderland City Council.

In accordance with the Constitution, Cabinet approval is required in relation to procurements exceeding £250,000 in value.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework *Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The provision of minor alterations is a mandatory requirement via provisions in The National Health Service and Community Care Act (1990) and The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970).

The HPMA service has been in place for the last four years with a locally based social enterprise called Sunderland Community Furniture Service (SCFS). The contract has proved very successful in terms of delivering a high quality service within timescales and to budget.

The contract for a HPMA Service will ensure that the Council is responding to the current policy context by externally commissioning a service that delivers excellent service standards for local people.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be considered

There are no alternative options for consideration

Impacts analysed:

Equality Privacy Sustainability Crime and Disorder

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? Yes

Scrutiny Committee:

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, HOUSING AND ADULT SERVICES

Sunderland Home Improvement Agency (HIA) – Procurement of a Handypersons and Minor Alterations (HPMA) Service

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet's approval to procure a HPMA Service for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further period of 12 months, at the sole discretion of Sunderland City Council, at an estimated cost of £198,500 per annum. The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) will act as the 'hub' for the service and will directly manage the service provider.

2.0 Description of the Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the procurement of a HMPA service for a period of 36 months with an option to extend for a further period of 12 months, at the sole discretion of Sunderland City Council.

3.0 Introduction/Background

3.1 Sunderland HIA

Sunderland HIA was launched in October 2007 by bringing together existing services to provide a one-stop shop that has resulted in a more co-ordinated and customer focused approach to support people to live independently. The HIA offers a broad range of services to support this aim including repair works to achieve decent homes for vulnerable households living in the private sector, the delivery of minor and major adaptations using Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), energy efficiency advice and measures, and the provision of a HPMA Service.

3.2 HPMA service

In November 2008 Cabinet gave permission for the HIA to integrate two services – the handypersons service that had previously been delivered by SCFS through a voluntary sector grant arrangement and the minor alterations service that had previously been delivered by the Community Equipment Service (CES) within the Council. The aim of joining the services was to create a more joined up, flexible approach to service delivery that resulted in an improved customer journey.

- 3.3 The contract commenced in March 2009 and has been delivered successfully for the last four years. Statutory timescales for the delivery of minor adaptations have been consistently achieved. The merging of the two services has allowed a degree of flexibility so that resources have been shifted to meet demand where appropriate. SCFS have also engaged in additional areas of the work as a by product of the contract such as winter warmth initiatives and falls prevention projects

4.0 Current Position

- 4.1 An informal evaluation of the current service has been carried out and concluded that combining the Handyman and Minor Alterations service has proved to be a great success. The service has been delivered in a cost effective and timely manner, a local social enterprise has been supported, the customer journey has been improved and added value has been achieved. Customer feedback from clients who have used the service confirms that the measures carried out have a positive impact on their health and well-being and support them to remain living independently in their own homes.
- 4.2 The current contract ends on 31st March 2013 and it is anticipated that the new contract can be in place by April 1st 2013.

5.0 Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 The HPMA service has been in place for the last four years with a locally based social enterprise called Sunderland Community Furniture Service (SCFS). The contract has proved very successful in terms of delivering a high quality service within timescales and to budget.

The contract for a HPMA Service will ensure that the Council is responding to the current policy context by externally commissioning a service that delivers excellent service standards for local people.

There are significant benefits to the service being provided external to the council. SCFS have been able to apply for funding streams that would not have been available to the council

6.0 Alternative Options

- 6.1 The evaluation considered alternative options for delivering the service including bringing the service into the council or withdrawing the service altogether, however the preferred option was to re-procure the service from an external provider.

7.0 Relevant Considerations/Consultations

- 7.1 The views of the Commercial and Corporate Services and Corporate Procurement have been incorporated in this report.

Financial - The annual cost of this agreement is £198,500

Legal Implications – The provision of minor alterations is a mandatory requirement via provisions in The National Health Service and Community Care Act (1990) and The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970)

Equality – The impact on equality was analysed using an equality risk matrix and this has determined that this is a high risk area.

Sustainability – A sustainability impact assessment has been carried out and it has shown that this is a significant area which will be addressed in the procurement process.

Procurement - The Head of Corporate Procurement has been consulted in respect of the procurement procedure.

8.0 Background Papers

8.1 No background papers were relied upon in the preparation of this report.

