

CABINET MEETING – 9 JUNE 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Proposed commissioning intentions for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy from 1st December 2022 – 31st March 2028

Author(s):

Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities

Purpose of Report:

To seek Cabinet's approval to the proposed commissioning intentions for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy from December 2022 to March 2028 as set out in this report.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to authorise the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care, to undertake all necessary steps to:

- (a) extend the Council's existing contracts with Community Pharmacies in Sunderland for a period of 12 months between 01st December 2022 and 30th November 2023 including revising the scope of the services from 01st December 2022 to remove supervised consumption and harm reduction schemes;
- (b) procure and award new contracts for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy for the period 1st December 2023 to 31st March 2028 to include:
 - Smoking Cessation Services
 - Provision of Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Varenicline
 - Provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraception, C Card and Chlamydia/ Gonorrhoea screening
 - Provision of Healthy Start Vitamins; and
- (c) vary the existing substance misuse contract with Change Live Grow (CGL) to include the provision of supervised consumption and harm reduction services.

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 proposal to implement these commissioning intentions aims to ensure that the wide range of health improvement interventions that can be provided by Community Pharmacies in Sunderland are improved and maintained into the coming years. It also seeks to achieve further integration within the local health and care system to help improve public health outcomes, deliver local Health and Wellbeing Board Priorities, the objectives of Sunderland's City Plan and local Public Health outcomes.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

There are 2 potential alternative options as follows:

- (i) Do not implement the commissioning intentions for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacies in Sunderland. The proposals have been designed to help maintain and improve service delivery and to improve integrated delivery of services to local residents, as a result it is not recommended to implement alternative commissioning intentions.
- (ii) Recommission the existing contracting arrangements on their same terms with Community Pharmacies. This is not recommended as viable improvements in the delivery of these services are available that can improve public health outcomes if implemented – for example integration with other key areas of health and care delivery.

Impacts analysed;

Equality

X

Privacy

N/A

Sustainability

N/A

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? Yes

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

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

**PROPOSED COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES IN
COMMUNITY PHARMACY FROM 1ST DECEMBER 2022 – 31ST MARCH 2028**

Report of the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet's approval to the proposed commissioning intentions for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy from December 2022 to March 2028 as set out in this report.

2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)

Cabinet is requested to authorise the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities in consultation with the Executive Director of Corporate Services and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care, to undertake all necessary steps to:

- (a) extend the Council's existing contracts with Community Pharmacies in Sunderland for a period of 12 months between 01st December 2022 and 30th November 2023 including revising the scope of the services from 01st December 2022 to remove supervised consumption and harm reduction schemes;
- (b) procure and award new contracts for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy for the period 1st December 2023 to 31st March 2028 to include:
 - Smoking Cessation Services
 - Provision of Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Varenicline
 - Provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraception, C Card and Chlamydia/ Gonorrhoea screening
 - Provision of Healthy Start Vitamins; and
- (c) vary the existing substance misuse contract with Change Grow Live (CGL) to include the provision of supervised consumption and harm reduction services.

3. Introduction/Background

- 3.1 As Sunderland continues to experience poor health outcomes around sexual health, substance misuse and tobacco related harms, it remains imperative to ensure that Public Health Services such as those undertaken by Community Pharmacy are sustained. Doing so will help to deliver local Health and Wellbeing Board Priorities, the objectives of Sunderland's City Plan and local Public Health outcomes.
- 3.2 Community Pharmacies offer accessible points of contact for local residents, with outlets in a wide range of locations such as high streets, shopping centres, supermarkets and alongside other healthcare services. As such, they provide significant opportunities for the delivery of public health interventions for local residents close to their homes or in locations that are convenient for other reasons, such as being close to workplaces.
- 3.3 Provision of public health services through Community Pharmacy is long-established and has covered interventions to help with outcomes such as reducing prevalence of smoking, reducing unplanned pregnancies and reducing transmission of infectious diseases.

- 3.4 Within Sunderland, the Council currently contracts with most Community Pharmacies for the delivery of elements of its range of public health services. These arrangements have been in place in their current form from 1st December 2017 and will expire on 30th November 2022.
- 3.5 This has proved a successful way to make a wide range of health improvement opportunities available for local residents. As a result, the commissioning intentions laid out in this report have been established to enable the continuation and further development of service delivery following the end of the existing contracts.
- 3.6 These intentions aim to modernise service delivery in some areas, for example by making available a wider range of evidence based smoking cessation products or additional emergency contraception products. Additionally, where possible they aim to integrate delivery with other areas of the health and care system and continue to improve accessibility and equity.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The Council currently commissions the following services from Community Pharmacies in Sunderland:
- a. Smoking Cessation Services – these aim to provide behavioural support and access to appropriate smoking cessation medications for those that wish to give up smoking tobacco.
 - b. Provision of Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Varenicline to support smoking cessation.
 - c. Supervised consumption of opioid substitutes – this helps to improve treatment outcomes for those with substance misuse issues and reduces risk of medications being diverted or taken by somebody other than the service user.
 - d. Harm Reduction (including Needle Exchange) – this helps to reduce risk of transmission of communicable diseases by ensuring that those that need to can access sterile injecting equipment. It also enables provision of key harm reduction information and helps reduce drug-related litter.
 - e. Provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC), C Card and Chlamydia/Gonorrhoea screening – provision of these services in community pharmacy provides an accessible way to help reduce unwanted pregnancies as well as transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.
 - f. Provision of Healthy Start Vitamins – this supports the national Healthy Start scheme by making free vitamins available for mothers and their babies.
- 4.2 In each case, provision of services via Community Pharmacy offers good levels of accessibility for residents within their local communities or wherever they choose to access them.
- 4.3 The services are put in place using contracts entered into between the Council and Community Pharmacies. Participating pharmacies can apply to be a party to the flexible procurement arrangements and deliver one or more services where they have appropriately trained and competent staff available. Current contracts with Community Pharmacies are in place until 30th November 2022. Additionally, during the life of the flexible procurement arrangements, additional services can be considered and added if a need arises.

- 4.4 Each service is funded on the basis of activity; that is per intervention and/or product provided. This helps to ensure that payments to participants reflect the overall level of activity carried out within each pharmacy. In total and across all pharmacies during the 2021/22 period, payments totalled approximately £460,000. There were some reductions in activity during the early phases of the Covid-19 pandemic due to prevailing guidance to reduce face-to-face contacts and wider restrictions on movement. However, most areas have now recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

5. Proposed Approach for Contracting from 1st December 2022

- 5.1 Community Pharmacies remain a key part of public health service delivery as they enable dispensing of medicines that are often required alongside other interventions. Additionally, they form a valuable part of local communities both in terms of the services and products they offer as well as supporting the local economy.
- 5.2 There continues to be ongoing need for each of the services listed at section 4.1 to help improve outcomes relating to smoking, substance misuse, unplanned pregnancy and child and maternal health. As a result, it will be both necessary and preferable to establish replacement contracting arrangements with community pharmacies when the current contracts come to an end. Also, contracting arrangements must include the flexibility to add new schemes should the need arise.
- 5.3 However, to ensure that these services offer the most current approaches, each must be reviewed to identify any necessary updates to products offered that will ensure better compliance with prevailing clinical guidance. For example, new smoking cessation products have become available since the current contracts were put in place as well as emergency contraception products that can be used more flexibly.
- 5.4 Discussions have taken place between the Public Health team and the current provider of specialist substance misuse services, Change Grow Live (CGL) to identify whether it would be advantageous to integrate the commissioning of pharmacy services for substance misuse (supervised consumption and harm reduction) into their existing contract. Potentially, doing so would offer the following benefits:
- a. As the substance misuse service issues all prescriptions that are dispensed for that purpose, day to day contact between the service and community pharmacies is constant. Therefore, they may be better placed to develop supervised consumption schemes that meet the needs of the service user, prescriber and dispenser.
 - b. Also, as the substance misuse service is contracted to provide training and necessary equipment to pharmacies for the provision of the harm reduction scheme, they may be better placed to develop that scheme to ensure it meets the needs of both the service user and community pharmacy.
- 5.5 In order to achieve this change, the Council would need to remove the supervised consumption and harm reduction schemes from the scope of its future commissioning plans for Community Pharmacy. Alongside this, it would need to vary the existing contract for specialist substance misuse treatment service to include the relevant requirements for supervised consumption and harm reduction in community pharmacy and put in place appropriate funding.

- 5.6 These services are currently commissioned using the NEPO (<https://www.nepo.org/>) procurement portal. This enables community pharmacy providers to access relevant documentation and upload applications to provide the services. During the summer months of 2022, the NEPO portal is to be replaced by a newly developed system known as OPEN. This system offers benefits in terms of both functionality and usability, however the transition to OPEN will coincide with the procurement of these services.
- 5.7 Due to the large number of community pharmacies that will be applying to deliver the services there is significant risk to disruption of services if the procurement is carried out during the initial implementation of OPEN. It is therefore proposed to extend the contracts for a further period of 12 months from 1st December 2022 to 30th November 2023 to enable them to be maintained and subsequently re-procured during 2023.
- 5.8 Therefore, the following is proposed:
- a. Review and revise current service specifications for all existing Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy to ensure they are in line with current evidence and guidance and appropriately priced.
 - b. Extend the existing contracts from 1st December 2022 to 30th November 2023.
 - c. Remove schemes for Supervised Consumption and Harm Reduction from scope of direct commissioning arrangements from 1st December 2022, to enable the transition to commission them via the existing provider of specialist substance misuse services via a contract variation. The substance misuse treatment contract is for a period of 5 years from July 2021 (with 2 x 12 month optional extensions). The proposed value of the variation to include supervised consumption and harm reduction services cost would be £270,000 per annum, which is approximately 7% of the total contract price. If commenced on 1st December 2022, this proposed variation would operate for a period of 5 years and 6 months, which equates to £1,485,000 for the whole term of the contract.
 - d. Commission a new framework for Public Health Services in Community Pharmacy for the period 01st December 2022 to 31st March 2028 to include:
 - Smoking Cessation Services
 - Provision of Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Varenicline
 - Provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraception, C Card and Chlamydia/ Gonorrhoea screening
 - Provision of Healthy Start Vitamins

6. Reasons for the Decisions

- 6.1 The proposal to implement these commissioning intentions aims to ensure that the wide range of health improvement interventions that can be provided by Community Pharmacies in Sunderland are improved and maintained into the coming years. It also seeks to achieve further integration within the local health and care system to help improve public health outcomes.

7. Alternative Options

- 7.1 Potential alternative options to implementing the commissioning intentions are:
- (i) Do not implement the commissioning intentions for Public Health Services in

Community Pharmacies in Sunderland. The proposals have been designed to help maintain and improve service delivery and to improve integrated delivery of services to local residents, as a result it is not recommended to implement alternative commissioning intentions

- (ii) Recommission the existing contracting arrangements with Community Pharmacies on their same terms. This is not recommended as viable improvements in the delivery of these services are available that can improve public health outcomes if implemented – for example integration with other key areas of health and care delivery.

8. Impact Analysis

8.1 A summary impact analysis for the proposed extensions is provided below.

8.2 By their nature, the services outlined here aim to reduce inequalities by providing accessible interventions to those that are most likely to experience disadvantage.

- (a) **Equalities** - An equalities impact assessment has been carried out in respect of the proposals. A copy of the assessment is included in Appendix 1. The key findings are as follows:
 - (i) It is anticipated that the proposal will have a positive impact people of all ages, for example by reducing smoking in pregnancy, reducing unplanned pregnancies, and preventing illnesses related to smoking.
 - (ii) It is anticipated that the proposal will have a positive impact on pregnancy and maternity as it will help reduce tobacco use during pregnancy.
 - (iii) Evidence shows that the most deprived wards in Sunderland have the highest smoking, cardiovascular disease and teenage pregnancy rates, it is anticipated that the contract will help ensure that preventative interventions are available within these areas. This will have a positive impact on changing behaviour and preventing ill-health.
- (b) **Co-operative Values** – Implementation of the contracts via will support the aim of reducing health inequalities in Sunderland by continuing to offer support to those communities that have highest levels of need in an accessible way.
- (c) **Financial Implications** – The cost of the services will be met from within the annual public health revenue budget which is funded from the public health grant.
- (d) **Legal Implications** – The estimated value of the proposed individual contracts with community pharmacies are below the applicable threshold (£663,540) for the “Light Touch” procurement regime for social and other specified services as contained in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“PCR”). As a consequence, the proposed contracts are below threshold and can be directly procured through the NEPO portal as proposed which will satisfy the Council’s core procurement obligations of transparency, equal treatment and proportionality.

Further, the proposal to extend the existing substance misuse contract to incorporate the provision of supervised consumption and harm reduction services is not considered to be a substantial modification to the existing

contract. In particular, the proposal will not render the existing contract materially different in character; will not introduce new conditions that would have otherwise had a material impact on the original procurement process had they been included at that time; will not change the economic balance of the contract in favour of the provider; and will not extend considerably the scope of the existing contract.

As a consequence, it is considered that the proposed variation of the substance misuse contract is not substantial and is therefore a lawful modification pursuant to Regulation 72(1) (e) of the PCR.

- (e) **Policy Implications** – The scheme aims to support the shared values within the Sunderland Healthy City Plan, in particular focusing on prevention, tackling health inequalities and equity.
- (f) **Health & Safety Considerations** – There are no current identified Health & Safety Considerations associated with the proposal, however, should these emerge as part of work streams undertaken these shall be fully considered.
- (g) **Procurement** – Corporate Procurement have been consulted regarding the alternative approach to implementing the contract. The proposal is in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. All work will be undertaken in consultation with the Corporate Procurement team.