

Report for: Cabinet Member Signing – 12th February 2024

Title: Variation and Extension of Housing Related Support Contract - Community Navigator Service for Older people in Haringey (Reach & Connect)

Report
authorised by: Denise Gandy - Assistant Director, Housing Demand
denise.gandy@haringey.gov.uk

Lead Officer: Maddie Watkins, Head of Housing Related Support
maddie1.watkins@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1. This report seeks Cabinet Member approval to implement Contract Standing Order 10.02.1b, to vary and extend the contract for the Community Navigator Service for Older People in Haringey (Reach & Connect) with Public Voice for a period of 2 years, from 1 May 2024 to 30 April 2026.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That pursuant to Contract Standing Order 16.02 the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning approves the variation and extension of contract for the Community Navigator Service for Older People in Haringey (Reach & Connect), held by Public Voice, as allowed under Contract Standing Order 10.02.1b as follows:

- Year 6 (1 May 2024 to 30 April 2025) – £352,585
- Year 7 (1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026) - £342,585
- Which is a total extension value of £695,170

2.2 The aggregated value of the contract period from 1 May 2019 to 30 April 2026 is £2,736,610.

2.3 Funding for this extension will be from the Council's Housing Related Support general fund budget, in Housing Demand.

2.4 The contract was re-negotiated with Public Voice for the duration of the variation and extension period as shown in 6.14 below.

3. Reasons for decision

3.1 The service enables older people in the borough to continue living independently in their own homes and prevent escalation in care needs and hospital admissions.

3.2 Performance has been evaluated as good throughout the contract period. Performance returns are completed and submitted on time and targets are met. There is a demonstrable need for this service in Haringey and the services are evidently delivering positive outcomes for older residents. Therefore, it is in residents and the Council's overall interest to continue to provide these much-needed older people services in Haringey.

4. Alternative options considered

4.1 Do nothing: It would be possible to leave the contract to cease at the end of this contract period, however there is continued high demand for this service, and it continues to achieve positive outcomes for vulnerable people. Therefore, it would not be in the council's interest to end this contract at this time.

4.2 In-house provision was considered and was found not to be suitable for delivery of this service, as there is not currently the expertise within the Council to provide this service.

4.3 Consideration was given to the completion of a procurement exercise via an open tender process. However, this option was discounted because the Council was able to enter into negotiations with the current provider and use the option to extend the contract which was agreed by Cabinet in March 2019.

5. Background information

5.1 The Housing-Related Support programme funds supported accommodation, floating support, health, and specialist advice services for housing vulnerable people in Haringey. There are currently over 60 contracts for a wide range of resident groups including: older people; people with mental health needs; learning and physical disabilities; young people; survivors of domestic violence; people with substance misuse issues; those at risk of re-offending and those at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping.

5.2 Housing Related Support for older people is a preventative and early help provision designed to prevent homelessness, reduce isolation and de-escalate and/or manage social care needs.

- 5.3 Haringey has a total population of 254,900. 49.5% of the population are male and 50.5% are female.
- 5.4 A key finding from the 2011 Census is that 22,400 of the population are 65+. This is 8.8% of the total population. This is proportionately less than both London (11.1%) and England and Wales (16.4%).
- 5.5 In March 2019, following an open tender process, Cabinet agreed the award of contract for the Community Navigator Service for Older People in Haringey (Reach & Connect) to a partnership of 4 organisations led by Public Voice. The other providers are:
- Mind in Haringey
 - Haringey Association for Independent Living
 - Wise Thoughts.
- 5.6 The contract commenced from 1 May 2019 to 30 April 2022 and with an option to extend for two (2) further period of two (2) years each. The service was delivered by 8 Community Connectors (2 from each organisation), providing 2000 hours of support per quarter.
- 5.7 In March 2022 Cabinet Member approved the first contract variation and extension of from 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2024 with 3 organisations led by Public Voice (Wise Thoughts was no longer in the partnership) and 6 Community Connectors. There is one further option to extend the contract for another 2 years .
- 5.8 The annual contract values are:
- Year 1 – 01/05/19 - 30/04/20 - £389,760
 - Year 2 - 01/05/20 - 30/04/21 - £436,670
 - Year 3 - 01/05/21 - 30/04/22 - £421,670
 - Year 4 - 01/05/22 - 30/04/23 - £391,670
 - Year 5 - 01/05/23 - 30/04/24 - £401,670
- 5.9 The aim of the Community Navigator service model is to provide proactive universal, brief, targeted, housing-related support that enables older people to live long, active, healthy and independent lives by providing:
- a holistic person-centred approach that recognises housing support as a platform to address a wide range of other needs
 - fair and equal access to the service for all vulnerable older people

- universal drop-in, individual and group support providing information, signposting and capacity building support
- targeted brief interventions to enable especially vulnerable older people to manage challenging experiences such as returning from hospital, moving home, bereavement and victimisation
- safeguarding of vulnerable adults and protection from abuse, neglect and hate crime

5.10 Haringey Circle is a membership service set up to connect and inspire over 50's in Haringey. It provides activities and events to help over 50's lead fulfilled lives and to reduce social isolation and loneliness. The percentage of the salaries for two Haringey Circle staff are included in the Reach & Connect budget.

5.11 In September 2023 Haringey Circle advised that they have ceased the membership scheme and that activities are free for Haringey residents from 1 September 2023. Haringey Circle has applied for Charity Status and are awaiting a response from the Charity Commission. The Housing Related Support funding towards Haringey Circle's staff salaries will cease on 31 March 2024.

5.12 There was provision in the original bid for a price negotiation in the event that the option to extend was exercised; the price was not expected to be higher than the submitted Year 5 price which is £401,670.

5.13 The aggregated negotiated contract value over the 2-year extension period is £695,170. Staffing on the contract is reduced from 283.5 hrs/week to 264.5 hrs/week.

5.14 Commissioning has undertaken regular contract monitoring and has received and reviewed performance data which demonstrates that targets are met and requisite outcomes are delivered.

5.15 In 2022/23, 2305 older people were supported with signposting, brief interventions and telephone befriending. 25.8% needed support around financial problems with the increased cost of living and 25.5% with isolation and loneliness.

6. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 6.1 The service directly links to **Priority 2 – Enable all adults to live healthy, long and fulfilling lives:**
- All residents will be as healthy as possible for as long as possible.
 - Health related quality of life will improve over time (including mental health and wellbeing).
- 6.2 The service contributes to the boroughs emerging work to develop an integrated Older People and Frailty Strategy, in particular in the aim to prevent hospital re-admissions for falls and other preventable issues linked to frailty.

7. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

7.1 Finance

- 7.1.1 The proposal seeks to extend and vary the existing Community Navigator Contract which is due to end in April 2024.
- 7.1.2 Under the current arrangements, this contract has a value of £2,041,440 over the course of 5 years. If the proposal is accepted, there will be an additional cost of £695,170 for 2 years (£352,485 in Year 6 and £342,585 in year 7) with the total contract value stated at £2,736,610.
- 7.1.3 Presently, this contract is funded through the General Fund (GF) and coded to C11470 – HRS (Supported Housing), which will continue being the case if the contract is extended. All contracts sitting in this area have been projected to their respective end dates, and there is belief that the budgets in C11470 (£3,537,534) is more than sufficient in absorbing the costs.
- 7.1.4 As a result, there is limited financial risk in extending this contract.

7.2 Procurement

- 7.2.1 This provision was advertised and tendered as required by Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulation 2015 (“the Regulations”).
- 7.2.2 Whilst a contract modification during term usually requires a new tender process, the contract extension was provided for in the original tender process and may be implemented in line with Regulation 72(1) a.
- 7.2.2 The requested contract extension and variation are in accordance with the requirements of Contract Standing Orders 16.02 and 10.02.1b.

7.2.3 The contract extension provides added value to service users as the social circle set up to alleviate loneliness and isolation will now be free to service users. It is also good value for the Council due to the reduction in cost negotiated by the Commissioning Team , consequently, the cost of the 2 year extension is some 13% less than originally anticipated and well within the forecasted budget.

7.2.4 Housing Related Support commissioners have evaluated that the supplier has provided a good service which meets performance target and outcomes and will continue to monitor the contract throughout its duration.

7.3 Legal

7.3.1 The Head of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.3.2 The services are Schedule 3 services (social and other services) under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and are above the threshold where the modification rules set out in Regulation 72 applies to this contract.

7.3.3 Legal Services has been advised that the provision for this extension was included in the original procurement documents in clear, precise and unequivocal review clauses. The Council may therefore avail itself of the safe harbour set out in Reg 72 1 (a).

7.3.4 The extension and variation would normally be approved by Cabinet under CSO 10.02.1 b) as the value is over £500,000. In between meetings of the Cabinet, the Leader may take any such decision or allocate to the Cabinet Member with the relevant portfolio (CSAO 16.02).

7.3.5 The Head of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) confirms that there are no legal reasons preventing the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Private Renters and Planning from approving the recommendations in this report.

7.4 Equality

7.4.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

- 7.4.2 The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.
- 7.4.3 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.
- 7.4.4 This decision is to approve the variation and extension of contract for the provision of housing-related support for older people. This will lead to improved quality of life for older people in Haringey by supporting their housing-related needs, including vulnerable older people with specific needs by virtue of sharing the protected characteristics of disability, sex, sexuality, and race. There are no known equalities concerns with the service delivered by Public Voice.
- 7.4.5 The objective of the proposed decision is to maintain levels of housing-related support available to older people in the borough, leading to improved mental and physical health and a better quality of life for this group. The proposed decision therefore represents a measure to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity by meeting the needs of older people living in Haringey.
- 7.4.6 As an organisation carrying out a public function on behalf of a public body, Public Voice will be obliged to have due regard for the need to achieve the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as stated above. Appropriate contract management arrangements are established to ensure that the delivery of the service does not result in any preventable or disproportionate inequality. This includes quarterly meeting with Public Voice where the delivery of the service and equalities considerations (for example protected characteristics of service users) are monitored.

8. Use of Appendices

None

9. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985