

Report for: Cllr Lucia das Neves – Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care & Wellbeing

Item number: To be added by the Committee Section

Title: Direct Payment Peer Support, Personal Assistants Market Development, Recruitment and Matching Services – Contract Extension

Report authorised by: Jo Baty - Director of Adults Social Care

Lead Officer: Becky Cribb – Head of Adult Social Care Commissioning, Brokerage and Quality Assurance

Ward(s) affected: All

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

1. Describe the issue under consideration

This report seeks approval to extend the contract for the provision of Direct Payment Peer Support, Personal Assistants Market Development, Recruitment and Matching Services delivered by Disability Action Haringey for a further period of up to six (6) months, effective from 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026.

This extension is consistent with the provisions of the original contract and will ensure continuity of service while allowing sufficient time for the Council to consider and incorporate findings from the ongoing strategic review of Haringey's Direct Payment Offer before re-tendering the contract.

The value of the contract extension period is £100k. The aggregated total value of the contract will be £596k including the above proposed extension.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 For Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care & Wellbeing to approve, in accordance with Contract Standing Order (CSO) 18.02.2 and CSO 2.01 (d) the extension of the contract for the provision of Direct Payment Peer Support and Personal Assistants Market Development, Recruitment and Matching Services with Disability Action Haringey (DAH) for a period of up to six (6) months from 1

April 2026 to 30 September 2026 as outlined in the original contract. The aggregated value of the contract including the proposed extension will not exceed £596k .

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 In April 2024 Disability Action Haringey - the boroughs Disabled Peoples Organisation, and key strategic partner, was initially awarded a two-year contract with the option to extend for a further six months, to deliver Haringey's Peer-based Direct Payment (DP) Support and PA Market Development Services. Contract monitoring meetings have taken place throughout the duration of the contract between the provider and commissioner – and the DAH are providing a good service which meets contractual outcomes including the following key achievements:

Outcomes & Outputs (April 2024 – September 2025)

- DP holders increased from 600 to 730 (+21%), with 766 active users representing 23.5% of community clients.
- 275 new and existing referrals supported; 187 achieved outcomes linked to independence and wellbeing.
- 188 outreach sessions, 32 staff inductions, and 17 peer forums held (100+ attendees).
- 60 active Personal (care) Assistants in register, supported via drop-ins and training.
- 100% satisfaction reported for accessibility and quality; no complaints received.
- DAH secured external funding from Skills for Care and Big Lottery Fund to expand training and IAG provision.

Quality and Satisfaction

- 100% of clients reported being better informed and confident in managing their DPs.
- 100% rated service quality as “excellent” for accessibility and responsiveness.
- Zero complaints received since service inception.
- Case studies consistently evidence improved quality of life, increased autonomy, and greater participation in community activities.

Financial and Value for Money

- Contract value: £496.5k (two years).
- Expenditure to date: £372k with £27.5k underspend (5.5%) projected.

- Direct savings: £290k per annum through 76 new DP clients choosing care that costs £3.50/hr less than commissioned agency rates.
- Demonstrates strong financial efficiency alongside social value and community capacity building.

Spend Control panel approval (SP1369) was received on 28 October 2025

4.2 CQC Assessment and ASC Improvement Plan

The latest CQC assessment of Haringey's adult social care functions (Feb 2025) notes that Haringey's levels of Direct Payment users are in line with the national average — and that Haringey operates a dedicated Direct Payments team and a commissioned partner for DP support. However, the inspection also identified notable areas for development, including inconsistent exercise of choice, weaker information accessibility (especially for digitally or sensory-excluded groups) and challenges in market capacity to support self-directed care. In this context, the peer-based and independent model delivered by Disability Action Haringey addresses these gaps directly, strengthening choice, control and market capacity. The model is therefore aligned with inspection-requirements and supports ongoing improvement of Haringey's DP offer.

4.3 With the existing contract due to expire on 31 March 2026 approval is therefore sought to utilise the six-month extension period, as allowed within the original decision, to:

- Maintain continuity for DP holders and PAs;
- Continue achieving best value while embedding TLAP-aligned, independent practice; and
- Complete a commissioning review of the model and future options.

5. Alternative options considered

Do nothing: Failure to extend the current contract would result in significant disruption for existing and potential DP Holders living in the borough. This would place the Council at risk of failing to meet its statutory duties under the Care Act 2014; particularly in relation to enhancing well-being, independence, and quality of life for disabled individuals with eligible care and support needs, The Care and Support (Direct Payment) Regulations 2014, and Section 117(2C) of the Mental Health Act 1983.

Go out to tender: Considering the close proximity of the current contract expiry, procurement constrained timescales, and the ongoing strategic review of support services for DP recipients which will inform the future commissioning approach for this service—it is not considered feasible to undertake a full procurement exercise at this stage. Therefore, an interim continuation of the existing service delivery is deemed the most viable and pragmatic solution to ensure continuity of provision.

6. Background information

6.3 Haringey Council remains committed to promoting wellbeing, independence and choice by supporting residents to take greater control over how their care and support needs are met. Direct Payments (DPs) are the Government's preferred mechanism for achieving personalisation, as they enable individuals to commission care that best reflects their own priorities and lifestyles.

6.4 Disability Action Haringey (DAH) is a key strategic partner for the Council and as such represents the work we do with disabled residents across the borough, and supports the development of co-production, advocates for those furthest away from decision making, identifies gaps and areas requiring improvement in the delivery of services and support and proactively works with the Council to address them, both strategically and operationally.

6.5 DAH currently delivers two key services central to Haringey's personalisation agenda:

- Direct Payment Peer Support Service – provides independent, peer-based guidance to DP holders.
- Personal Assistant (PA) Market Development and Matching Service – supports recruitment, training and matching of PAs with DP employers.

Both are aligned with Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) principles of independence, peer leadership and co-production, ensuring DP holders receive impartial and empowering support. The model could not be replicated effectively in-house without compromising independence.

6.6 DAH also operates these services in alignment with ASC's locality model. Each borough locality is supported by an Independent Living and Direct Payment Officer (ILA), embedded within the Council's local teams to ensure seamless collaboration between DAH, Social Workers and the Direct Payments Team. Key features of the service include:

- Local drop-in and outreach sessions across community venues (Northumberland Park Resource Centre, Winkfield Centre, Haynes Dementia Hub, Ermine Road and Queenswood Medical Centre).
- One-to-one case support for DP holders, including budgeting, employment advice and peer mentoring.
- PA recruitment and matching, supported by DAH's dedicated PA Coordinator.
- Peer support forums, offering opportunities for mutual learning and confidence-building among DP holders.

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes'

This service will contribute towards the 'Adults, health and welfare' theme of the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024/26.

8. Carbon and Climate Change

This service specification outlines the requirements for the provision of a 'locality-based' support service across the borough. The service is delivered through dedicated teams or outreach workers based in each locality, ensuring that support is easily accessible to individuals within their communities without having to transport across the borough. Allocation of resources is based on identified needs and priorities within each locality, with flexibility to adjust staffing levels and service provision as required which helps to ensure that supplies are proportionate to the demand.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

9.1 Finance

The Better Care Fund (BCF) fully meets the Peer Support cost. It is proposed that no changes are made the Better Care Fund allocation for 2026/27. The current BCF allocation earmarked for the purpose of Peer Support will continue 2026/27 to cover the extension period April – September 2026.

9.2 Procurement

9.2.1 The provision of Peer Support by DAH falls below the threshold for the application of Schedule 3 (Light Touch Regime) under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

9.2.2 The proposed six-month extension of the contract is permissible under CSO 18.02.2 and aligns with the original contract terms. Approval may be granted in accordance with CSO 2.0.2.1(d), which requires Cabinet/Member authorisation for any variation or extension with an aggregate value of £500,000 or above, for the reasons outlined in section 4.3.

9.2.3 Commissioning conducts regular monitoring of the contract, and the service has been assessed as performing well, with notable achievements highlighted in section 4.1. The extension period will allow Commissioning to complete its strategic review of support services prior to initiating a formal tender process.

9.3 Legal

9.3.1 The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) was consulted in the preparation of the report.

9.3.2 Pursuant to the provisions of the Council's CSOs 18.02.2 and 2.01(d), Cabinet has power to approve the extension of a contract with an aggregate value of the contract is £500,000 or more.

- 9.3.3 Further to paragraph 9.3.2 above and pursuant to the Council's CSO 0.08 a decision reserved for Cabinet may be taken by a Cabinet Member with the agreement of the Leader and as such the recommendation in paragraph 3.1 of the report requesting approval from Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care & Wellbeing is in line with the Council's CSO so long as the Cabinet Member is taking the decision with the agreement of the Leader.
- 9.3.4 The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) sees no legal reasons preventing the approval of the recommendation in the report.

Equality

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.

The three parts of the duty apply 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. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

This report seeks an approval for Disability Action Haringey (DAH) to continue to provide support to the most highly vulnerable social care service users, including adults and young people with complex needs (and their carers) including people with physical and learning disabilities, and those with mental health conditions.

The Service Provider - DAH, actively contributes to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the local area. This includes offering apprenticeships, work experience, and volunteering opportunities, particularly targeting local disabled individuals. Additionally, the Provider is encouraged to create social inclusion opportunities, thereby enriching the fabric of the community and promoting holistic well-being. These initiatives are underpinned by the Social Model of Disability, aiming to foster inclusivity and empowerment within the community.

The service provider is committed to promoting equality and diversity in positive ways and to challenging discrimination in every area of its work. They provide a copy of their [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) on their website and make it available to staff, service users, volunteers and others upon request or as required. They actively seek feedback and suggestions from the people they support and who work for them in order to identify any priorities and develop ways to improve, and deal with any issues or concerns. Equality objectives are monitored and reported

quarterly to the Commissioner. There have been no known equalities issues with the service provider to date.

Equality Impact Assessments are carried out at committee level by DAH in relation to any new policies that are developed, new projects, or significant decisions that are made and any results are shared with stakeholders.

The decision to extend the contract for the existing provision will have a positive impact, advancing equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics; in particular adults with physical disabilities or mental health disorders and older people age 65+ with eligible care and support needs, an interim extension of the service will enable them to continue to have increased independence, choice and control of the care they receive.

10. Use of Appendices

N/A

11. Background papers

N/A