

**Report of Head of Public Health**

**Report to Director of Public Health**

**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

**Subject: Extension of contract for a 24 month period with Leeds Irish Health and Homes for the Irish Older Peoples Project DN386584 in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rule 21.2 (contract extensions)**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- Following an extensive review of project delivery and engagement with older people, Leeds Irish Health and Homes were awarded a contract to deliver the Irish Older Peoples Project (IOPP). This began on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 for an initial period of three years, with provision for extensions for up to a total of 24 months. The value of the contract is £50,000.00 per annum.
- The IOPP takes a community health development approach to identify and respond to the health needs of the older Irish population in Leeds.
- The IOPP develops and delivers a variety of activities and support focusing on healthy ageing, providing opportunities to benefit the social, physical and mental wellbeing of older Irish people. The projects and activities are appropriate to the needs of both men and women respecting their cultural and religious needs, promoting independent living, reducing social isolation, improving their health and wellbeing, whilst maintaining their privacy, dignity and right to choose, thus improving quality of life. A key role of this project is to provide information and signposting to other relevant services, networks and activities.
- The initial contract period is due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

## 2. Best Council Plan implications (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

- This provision addresses the health and wellbeing priorities of “*Reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the poorest the fastest*” and “*Supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles*”.
- This provision supports Leeds to be an ‘Age Friendly’ City by ‘Promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included and respected’ and ‘Helping older people participate in the city through fulfilling employment and learning opportunities’.
- This provision also supports the Leeds system wide work to minimise harm by reducing physical contact whilst promoting mental health for over 60s during and as we recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 3. Resource implications

- The cost of the contract extension is met by revenue Public Health funding and there is provision within the Public Health budget for this contract extension.
- In light of the council’s current financial situation, it is acknowledged that efficiencies may be required in future on this contract and these would be the subject of a contract variation.

## Recommendations

The Director of Public Health is recommended to approve the extension of two years to the existing contract with Leeds Irish Health and Homes for the Irish Older Peoples Project, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and to the value of £100,000.00 (£50,000.00 per annum).

### 1. Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to extend the Leeds Irish Health and Homes (LIHH) contract for a period of two years to deliver the Irish Older Peoples Project (IOPP) as set in the original contract.

### 2. Background information

2.1 The older Irish community are considered a vulnerable and isolated population in Leeds because they suffer from high levels of; economic inactivity, low paid work, smoking rates, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Coronary Heart Disease.

2.2 Leeds Irish Health and Homes were originally awarded grant funding, for a period of two years commencing in 2017, to fund a service designed to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable older Irish people in the most deprived and isolated neighbourhoods across Leeds. Following a positive review and evaluation of the outcomes achieved during this initial two year period, Leeds Irish Health and Homes were awarded a contract to continue to deliver the service on the basis of being

identified as the only provider with proven links and history with the target communities and expertise in identifying and responding to the needs of these communities. The contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 for an initial period of 3 years, with provision for extensions for up to a total of 24 months. The initial contract term expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

2.3 LIHH have a history of successfully delivering a wide range of activities and support specifically designed to help improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable older Irish people in the most deprived and isolated neighbourhoods across Leeds. They have proven links and expertise with these communities who may be difficult to engage by other services and are aware of and able to respond effectively to the cultural and religious needs.

2.4 The aims of the IOPP are:

- To promote mental wellbeing and reduce social isolation by engaging in activities and developing local independent groups/networks.
- To promote healthy ageing by providing a range of opportunities to engage with and empower people in physical activity, nutrition, falls prevention, reducing the impact of winter
- To support older Irish people to live independently by building their confidence, self-esteem and self-resilience.
- To support older Irish people to feel confident and have the skills and knowledge to manage long term conditions.
- To support older Irish people to feel confident and have the skills and knowledge to access services and remove disabling barriers.
- To encourage participation to ensure Irish older people have a voice and influence in decision making.

2.5 A key role of this service has focussed on provision of information and signposting about other relevant local services, networks and activities to help improve this population's health and wellbeing. It also aims to support the community to engage and connect with other broader Public Health/Adults and Health commissioned services that provide wider support to communities. There are opportunities moving forwards to increase the number of other organisations and services LIHH are able to connect with.

2.6 The service has also collected and collated insight on the health needs of the older Irish population particularly those who may not identify as 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> generation Irish due to the existing positive relationships with the community. LIHH continue to adapt delivery to meet these needs as new findings emerge.

### **3. Main issues**

3.1 Analysis of the information collected during the two years of service delivery from April 2019 until present from contract monitoring meetings and submitted returns has been used to inform this decision. The key findings are:

- The IOPP is performing well and is - continuing to meet and exceed key performance indicators despite the additional work they are doing during the pandemic, providing regular evidence of good quality, reflective practice and engaging with broader public health issues, campaigns and services to meet the needs of the target population.
- LIHH are engaging over 350 older people on an annual basis with over 80% being aged 55 and older and 99% identifying as either Irish or of Irish heritage. The majority of service users report living alone with 88% of service users living in the 10% most deprived areas of Leeds.
- On average, half of service users declared a health condition that negatively affected the quality of their lives. The majority reported conditions and problems relating to mental health (37%), followed by 10% declaring a physical condition and 8% for both dementia and arthritis. Many also report concerns with alcohol and, isolation, dementia and arthritis. 27% report more than one health condition.
- By delivering one to one support, organising events, facilitating groups (including online) and providing befriending support through the volunteer network, LIHH continue to identify and address needs. LIHH use co-produced Ageing Well wheels adapted for the target service user to identify needs and provide appropriate support to meet these needs. The ageing well wheels provide the opportunity for a service user to self-assess a range of wellbeing issues both before and after engagement with the service (pre and post intervention). This provides LIHH with a tool to monitor outcomes and impact of services delivered.
- Wellbeing wheels are analysed and demonstrate how service user self-reported health across a variety of domains has changed over time. This varies per quarter however typically demonstrates improvements in health and wellbeing including increasing and improving friendships/networks and relationships, looking after yourself, managing your money, home and neighbourhood and being active and independent.
- Ongoing reviews through contract monitoring with the service has continued to provide opportunities to make recommendations to improve service delivery. These have included increasing outreach and further developing referral and signposting pathways with other organisations. LIHH have expanded their network and receive new service user referrals from a number of sources. These include Adult Social Care, Time to Shine Projects, Forward Leeds and mental health support through Livewell Leeds.
- LIHH have engaged well with other organisations and campaign opportunities to ensure communities have benefitted from broad public health related topic areas. This has included engaging with; International Day for Older People, Mindfulness, Time to Talk (positive conversations around mental health), World Mental Health Day and the ongoing key messages and resources to support people to stay safe and well during the COVID-19 pandemic (including national lockdown, Hands, Face, Space and Keeping Well at Home)
- LIHH submit quarterly case studies demonstrating the impact they are able to have on their service users.

- Funding awarded to this contract also provides LIHH with opportunities to demonstrate match funding for larger pots of money (including from the Irish Government) and smaller pots of money (e.g. lunch clubs grants and COVID-19 grants) to support project delivery.

3.2 Throughout 2020, COVID-19 has had a large and negative impact on service users in terms of poor health, bereavement, loss in confidence, social isolation, loneliness and deconditioning.

3.3 The IOPP has successfully responded to the challenges this brought ensuring vulnerable service users receive the support they need. At the beginning of the pandemic, the service put a call out to other Irish associations and clubs within the city to come together to respond to the needs of the community. Eleven organisations came together under the banner 'We are many groups but one community' and through this 80 volunteers were recruited. Volunteers have been able to help support the community in many ways including delivery of food parcels, telephone support, delivery of exercise classes and transporting service users to have their COVID-19 vaccination.

3.4 The IOPP was able to quickly amend service delivery and move to support through online groups and events, supporting those who were digitally excluded to access resources to help. LIHH created a digital timetable of activities and mindfulness timetable to follow the Celtic calendar and meet service users' cultural needs. Online groups have included music, painting, digital support, fitness, poetry reading and a live Christmas day broadcast.

3.5 Officers have supported the provider to develop a business continuity plan over the pandemic and the organisation is best placed to support the community through the recovery period, ensuring that the strong relationships, built with the community and partners are maintained.

3.6 Approval is therefore being sought to extend the contracts for the full 2 years that are available. If this decision is not taken, the provision will end in March 2022, which will remove a valuable preventative health service from the city for vulnerable older people from a culturally diverse background. Approval is being sought to extend for two years instead of one in order to provide assurance to the provider and stability of provision in times of change such as during the covid recovery period.

3.7 Officers have reviewed the performance framework to ensure that it is still fit for purpose and accurately representing the work of the service. Officers will also work with the service to discuss relevant insight and changes in the community to ensure minor amendments may be made to the specification to reflect these. Any changes to the specification will not change the scope or nature of the provision.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

4.1.1 Consultation has taken place with the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, the Director of Public Health, Public Health Programme Board and Procurement and Commercial Services (PACS) as well as LIHH.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 An updated Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Screening has been completed in relation to this decision and is attached for information as a background document. There are no issues to be addressed.

## **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 These services support the delivery of the Best Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing and Age Friendly Leeds priorities.
- 4.3.2 They contribute to the Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016-21 priorities including 'An age friendly city where people age well', 'Strong engaged and well connected communities', 'Get more people, more physically active, more often', 'A strong focus on prevention' and 'Promote mental health and physical health equally'.
- 4.3.3 This provision relates to the aims of the 'Leeds Health and Care Plan' which aspires for Leeds to be a 'healthy and caring city for all ages, where people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest'.
- 4.3.4 It is also relevant to 'Supporting people to live longer and have healthier lives', people are supported by high quality services to live full, active and independent lives' and 'inequalities in health are reduced' which is a key aspiration of the Leeds Vision 'to be the best city in the UK by 2030'.
- 4.3.5 The service also supports the system wide work to minimise harm through social contact and improve mental wellbeing in the over 60s as a response to the COVID-10 pandemic.

### Climate Emergency

- 4.3.6 The services operate in local communities to ensure easy access for service users, and therefore minimising the need to travel and encouraging the use of public transport. This helps to reduce carbon emissions and environmental pollution which contributes to city actions to better manage air quality.
- 4.3.7 Through preventing ill health, the provision helps to ensure we better manage our use of resource intensive (and high footprint) health and care services.
- 4.3.8 The service specification requires that all legislation, guidance and good industry practice in environmental management and the objectives of the Council's sustainability policies are met. Officers from Adults and Health work with the providers through the established contract management process to ensure the service is proactively seeking to minimise its carbon footprint and thereby support the Council in achieving its ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.

## **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The cost of the contract extension is met by revenue Public Health funding and there is provision within the Public Health budget for this contract extension.
- 4.4.2 In light of the council's financial position, it is acknowledged that efficiencies may be required in future on this contract and these would be the subject of a contract variation.
- 4.4.3 The recommendation relating to the extension is in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rule 21.2 as it is in accordance with its original terms and proves to deliver Best Value.

- 4.4.4 There have been no uplifts for the past three years, and it would not be possible to make efficiencies at this stage without a detrimental impact on this service which addresses key Public Health priorities.
- 4.4.5 The third sector providers have proved good value for money, as they utilise Council funding as a platform for attracting other sources of funding, and thus deliver higher levels of activity than we could otherwise achieve within the funding envelope.
- 4.4.6 The service will continue to be contract managed by officers in Adults and Health Directorate. Robust contract management processes allow for the on-going monitoring of quality, performance and value for money.

#### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 4.5.1 The value of the decision relating to the budget is £100,000.00 and as such is a Significant Operational Decision and is not subject to Call In.
- 4.5.2 There are no grounds for treating the contents of this report as confidential within the Council's Access to Information Rules.
- 4.5.3 Although there is no overriding legal obstacle preventing the extension of this contract under CPRs 21.2, the contents of this report should be noted. In making their final decision, the Director of Public Health should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for the Council.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 The approval of a 2-year contract extension will enable continuity of service provision and increased surety for the providers. This will help to retain staff and enable continued innovation.
- 4.6.2 Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to identify and mitigate identified risks including regular contract management meetings, overview of contract risk and reporting to the Public Health Programme Board where appropriate.

### **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 A contract extension is required to ensure continuity of the current service which is high quality, performing well and meeting the original aims of the contract. The service supports the Leeds priority to be an 'Age Friendly City' by 'Promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active, included and respected' and 'Helping older people participate in the city through fulfilling employment and learning opportunities'.
- 5.2 Throughout the two year extension period, the contracts will continue to be robustly contract managed to ensure that performance, quality and value for money is being achieved for the Council.

### **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Director of Public Health is recommended to approve the extension of two years to the existing contract with Leeds Irish Health and Homes for the Irish Older Peoples Project, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and to the value of £100,000.00 (£50,000.00 per annum)

## 7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>

None.

---

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.