

## **Contract for Information Advice and Guidance Services Lot1 – The Provision of a North Yorkshire Information and Advice Service**

**REPORT TO** Corporate Director of Health and Adult Services (HAS) in consultation with Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration and the Executive Member for Public Health, Prevention and Supported Housing, including Sustainability and Transformation Plans.

**DECISION DATE** 11 February 2022

### **SUPPORTING ANNEX**

*This report includes a supporting Annex which contains exempt information as described in paragraph 1, 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).*

### **PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Authority extend the contract for 2 years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. This is permitted under the original contract.

### **BACKGROUND TO SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATION**

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is a trusted and recognised public facing organisation, which provides holistic advice and information covering a broad spectrum of topics including debt, housing, unemployment, benefits, and bankruptcy. North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) is the major funder and the CAB also receives funds from 6 out of the 7 district councils, Craven being the only one which doesn't contribute funds, but offers accommodation in lieu of the service in that District.

CAB is a consortium of three local Citizens Advice; Citizens Advice Craven & Harrogate Districts, Citizens Advice Mid-North Yorkshire (Hambleton, Richmondshire, Ryedale, and Selby & District), and Citizens Advice Scarborough & District. They provide free, confidential, and impartial legal advice, information, and support across North Yorkshire and work with over 200 partners.

The people the CAB support are the most vulnerable in our community. They are five times more likely to be on low incomes; many have mental health problems; many are in insecure employment and/or live in rented accommodation.

Since 2010, the majority of North Yorkshire's advice charities have closed and, other than the Welfare Benefits Unit (who don't provide legal representation), it is now the only organisation providing free information and advice at this level and at a time when it's badly needed.

Local offices also deliver services funded nationally through various funded projects including Help to Claim, Help through Hardship, and Pension Wise.

The service was an initial term of 5 years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. There is an option to extend the contract for 2 years and it is proposed to utilise this extension from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

The CAB meets all KPIs, attend all contract monitoring meetings and routinely and reliably provided quarterly reports and extensive updates in relation to their performance and service offer overall. It is forward thinking, innovative and proactive in relation to the services it provides, paying due regard to patterns and trends presented by customers. During the pandemic, it has successfully created and applied different ways of working in order to ensure service delivery was uninterrupted.

The proposed extension has been through the council's governance process and a gateway 4 report has been submitted and approved by the Procurement Assurance Board. The report is included in the annex and appendix one.

## **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE**

The two year extension is provisioned for in the contract, as there are no other changes we are making to the contract this is a legally compliant extension.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the Authority extend the contract for 2 years from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

## **REPORT AUTHORS**

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