

North Yorkshire Council

Health and Adult Services

Executive Member Meeting

20th October 2023

REPORT TO Director of Public Health in consultation with
Executive Member for Health and Adult Services

6-month extension of Participation Support Service contract

1.0 Purpose Of Report

To seek approval to extend the current Participation Support Contract for a 6-month period. This would take the contract end date from 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024.

2.0 Background

The current countywide Participation Support Service has been established since 2012.

The aim of the service is to support people with a learning disability and/or autism to

- Speak up on issues that affect them and other people with a learning disability and/or autism, and coproduce solutions.
- Lead and contribute to the work of the North Yorkshire Learning Disability Partnership Board (NYLDPB).
- Take part in a range of coproduction and engagement activities as representatives of the Partnership Board.

The service is critical to developing and enabling the participation of people with a learning disability and/or autism in the Directorate's work as well as that of the Council more broadly. It is crucial to the delivery of the Directorate's requirements and ambitions around coproduction, as set out in the CQC Assurance Framework, HAS 2025 and HAS improvement themes. This links into the development and delivery of strategies including the Learning Disability Strategy and Autism Strategy, as well as supporting Public Health priorities through the coproduction of solutions to health and social inequalities.

The service is instrumental in involving people with lived / living experience to influence and improve practice and work hand-in-hand with the practice team to achieve this.

3.0 Issues

A 6-month contract extension is being requested to allow additional time to fully explore and consider the options of what a new Participation Support Service contract may look like to ensure best value for more and equity.

5.0 Performance Implications

Continue to work with the Directorate's Contracting team, to measure the contract's performance against the outcomes specified within the contract documents.

4.0 Financial Implications

The proposed financial envelope is accounted for within the Engagement and Governance budget.

5.0 Legal Implications

Procurement and Legal Services are involved in the contract extension request.

- The current extension options in the original contract have been exhausted and in addition we are looking to increase the fees by 3.10% for a 6-month extension (outside the scope of the original contract), so this would be an extension and variation to the original contract.
- The small increase in fees is unlikely to amount to a substantial change to this contract (although it is acknowledged that this along with the extension increases the value to 17% (but still under threshold). The modification above does not alter the overall nature of the contract.
- The risk of challenge is considered to be low, and the proposed extension is to allow the re-procurement of the service to take place without disrupting the service itself.
- As the contract is above £50k, we need to publish a decision record to this effect. A waiver is not required in this case as approval for a specific exception to the Contract Procurement Rules is not required.

6.0 Consultation undertaken and responses

The existing contract provider is happy to extend the existing contract for a period of 6 months until 30th September 2024.

7.0 Impact on other services/organisations

There is minimal impact on other services and organisations. Business will continue as usual for the duration of the 6-month contract extension.

9.0 Environmental impact

The 6-month contract extension will continue to offer digital/online participation options. This has the potential to have a positive environmental impact by reducing unnecessary journeys.

10.0 Risks

Relationships have been built with the people benefiting from this service. Removal of this service without an appropriate replacement is likely to have the following effect:

- Relationships and trust have been built over many years. These relationships and alliances would be lost, and this would be to the detriment of the people using the service.
- A network of friendships has been developed and without the participation support platform, there is a risk that people may become isolated, and their voices may be lost.
- People using the service have built skills (communication / resilience) by being involved in this service and it is considered important that people are supported to maintain these skills for the future. It is hoped that these people will engage in the new service once procured and it is important that NYC are able to support continuous engagement.

11.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Director of Public Health approves the proposal to extend the existing contact by 6 months.

Report author

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