



To - Health & Social Care Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting - 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2015

Notes of - Committee Administrator

## **IMPROVING STANDARDS OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE – RECOMMISSIONING OF HOMECARE SERVICES**

### **Background**

1. At the last meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panel, Members considered a briefing note on Lancashire County Council's (LCC's) proposals to re-commission homecare services for older adults and people with a physical disability.
2. This included a proposal to reduce the number of homecare providers with LCC contracts from over 130 to less than 30 and would affect 5,800 homecare customers.
3. The primary purpose of the project was to drive up the quality of care, with improved terms and conditions for staff and improved monitoring, training, investment and relationships with providers.
4. The first phase of the project had been to carry out a review of the current homecare system.
5. This had been followed by the development of a commissioning plan. The recommendations for re-procurement had been approved by County Council Cabinet in January, 2014.
6. Phase three involved a two stage competitive tender process to choose home care providers to join a new Framework under which County Council would place new business.
7. The Panel was advised that this phase was running to schedule and it was expected that new contracts would commence from 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2015.
8. The final phase would be the Business Transition which would involve management of the change from the current arrangements to the new configuration of home care service and providers, established via the procurement process.

## **Update**

9. Since the last meeting of the Panel there have been significant changes in relation to the homecare framework.
10. During the statutory standstill period, it had become clear that the above mentioned process was vulnerable to challenge and, in the event of a successful challenge, the likelihood was that the process would be set aside and the County Council would be required to conduct a new process.
11. It was therefore determined that a further process was in both the County Council's and the relevant service provider's best interests.
12. LCC has therefore taken the decision to discontinue the procurement of the homecare framework.
13. For the time being, there will be no changes to existing homecare services. New and existing service users will be unaffected by the decision.
14. A new procurement process will commence in the next three months and is anticipated to be concluded in summer 2016 with the appointment of framework providers.
15. It is the County Council's intention to apply many of the same principles to the revised framework, such as zoning of business, limiting market share and reductions to the number of providers contracted to the Council.

## **Further information**

16. Although a decision has been made to discontinue the current procurement process, many of the key principles will remain the same in the re-procurement.
17. Therefore, a response to the questions raised at the last meeting has been provided by LCC, as shown at Appendix A. The response can be seen in bold italics and reflects the current position.

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**Questions put to Lancashire County Council regarding the Recommissioning of Homecare Services (Answers in bold italics)**

- An update on complaints statistics.

***Whilst we have had a small number of complaints from unsuccessful providers, we have not received any complaints from service users or carers as far as I am aware.***

- Is it just the LCC contracts that will have improved terms and conditions for staff?

***Yes we can only mandate terms for organisations under contract with LCC.***

- More information on any changes with regard to travelling to and from clients.

***Travel time is and always has been paid by LCC to providers; we allow 15% of each commissioned hour to be attributed to travel time. Although travel to some service users is likely to exceed this, this is balanced by the majority of service users visits being in close proximity and the expectation that providers manage how visits in the same area are scheduled to achieve economies in respect to travel. Fewer providers should mean less providers sending carers to the same area and fewer carers crossing paths on their way to deliver care on the same street.***

- Was a decision on who to award contracts to made by LCC elected members on 14th September as planned?

***Yes, Cllr Martin approved award of contract on the 14<sup>th</sup> September, however during the statutory standstill period before formal award of contract a decision was taken to discontinue the procurement***

- Who will manage those agencies no longer with an LCC contract?

***Agencies no longer under contract to LCC will manage themselves in the same way any other care provider taking private business only would do. LCC will still respond to Safeguarding issues if required under its statutory duties regardless of whether we commission directly with that organisation***

- Who will monitor those agencies no longer with an LCC contract?

***All agencies delivering homecare are required to register with the Care Quality Commission, who are responsible for quality standards and undertake routine inspections of all services***

- What will happen to any clients of those agencies no longer with an LCC contract if the agency was to go bankrupt?

***LCC would support both private and LCC funded service users to secure alternative provision***

- Of the 30 contracts to be issued, we have been advised that only 5 will be issued to Burnley and Pendle. Is this still the case?

***Yes, there will be 5 agencies covering Burnley and Pendle under contract with LCC***

- Are the carers only dealing with high level needs? If so, what about others needing a lesser level of care?

***No, the contracted agencies will be required to meet the needs of all service users assessed as eligible for support by LCC, further to this we will place a requirement on the contracted providers to offer their services to private customers referred to them by LCC at the same rate LCC pays, which should prevent private service users being overcharged.***