

DECISION RECORD ¹

Subject: Decommission outreach element of sexual health provision	
Staff Contact: Rob Bacon	Executive Member: Jim McManus
Tel: 01438-844135	Portfolio: Public Health

1. Decision

The Public Health Service will be decommissioning the outreach element of the sexual health service provided by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust.

2. Reasons for the decision

The outreach element of the service is set up to reach vulnerable people including people who access hostel provision, sex workers, drug and alcohol users, children looked after, in order to provide them with a sexual health service. The service consists of screening, treatment, health advice and contraception.

However the provider has experienced considerable problems in recruiting staff to deliver this element of the service, and was not fully implemented until April 2016. Since then, the provider has reported continually low levels of uptake from the vulnerable populations it is intended to provide for, mainly brought about by difficulties in accessing venues where vulnerable people could attend sexual health sessions. These people also experience other complex health and social issues, therefore, not deeming their own sexual health as important, which results in a lack of engagement with the services and support available.

The development of on-line Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing has also provided an alternative method for reaching people who may not regularly engage with sexual health services. Performance results from the first phase of on-line testing demonstrates that this an effective way in which to test people for STI's.

In response to commissioners' requests to find efficiencies and thereby reduce the financial value of the contract, the provider has proposed that this element of the service be decommissioned. If implemented in November 2017, this would achieve £833,000 across the lifetime of the contract, including any possible extension periods.

To mitigate this decommissioning, the sexual health service will still continue to provide a service to vulnerable populations. This will be achieved by working with partner agencies to create and develop a clear integrated care and support pathways and co-ordinated provision for vulnerable groups. The sexual health service will also maintain a presence at key community events (e.g. Herts Pride, Fresher Events) in order to offer STI testing including HIV and promote local services.

Alternative provision (specialist clinics e.g. for LGBT, new fortnightly clinic within the University of Herts) has already been established and on-line STI testing will be available from January 2018.

3. Alternative options considered and rejected ²

The Public Health Service considered not progressing with this decommissioning. However, this would not support the Council's ambitions to find significant savings from this contract.

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4. Consultation

(a) Comments of Executive Member^{3 4}

As the Council has a responsibility to children in care and care leavers, CLA health Teams and Children Centre management must be made fully aware of these changes.

The Executive Member agrees that continuing with a distinct and separate outreach service as outlined seems unnecessary and difficult to operate especially with a network of support on the ground.

(b) Comments of other consultees⁵

5. Following consultation with, and the concurrence of the Executive Member, I am proceeding with the proposed decision.

Signed:



Title: Director of Public Health Date: October 25th 2017

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6. Copies of agreed document to:

- All consultees
- Chairman, and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- hard & electronic copy (for public inspection both at County Hall and on Hertsdirect) Democratic Services Manager - Room 213 County Hall.

¹ for guidance see Chief Legal Officer's note "Taking Decisions"

² details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer at the time the decision was made

³ record any conflict of interest declared by any Executive Member consulted. If an Executive Member declares a conflict of interest DO NOT PROCEED without seeking advice from the Chief Legal Officer

⁴ If the matter has general significance for the Council and/or is, or is likely to be, controversial, then the officer shall consult the appropriate Executive Member before proceeding. In some cases it will be necessary to consult more than one Executive Member, and in some cases the Leader of the Council will need to be consulted

⁵ If the matter has local significance, but no general significance for the Council and no controversial aspects, the officer shall consult or inform the local member in writing (or by e mail) and proceed. It is essential that all officers responsible for delivering services ensure that local members are kept well briefed on issues affecting their areas.

