

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	2 September 2021
Subject:	Living Well Sefton Service Contract Extension		
Report of:	Director of Public Health	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

In April 2018 the Living Well Sefton Service (LWS) was awarded a contract to provide community-based health and wellbeing services to people living in the most deprived areas of Sefton. The contract was awarded for 3 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The current contract has a period of April 2018 to March 2022 plus an option of 2 further years.

In compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and dictated by the value associated with the proposed optional 2 years, approval will be required from Cabinet to approve the award for the optional 2-year contract period and retain the contracted service until March 2024, as is outlined in the current contract.

Consideration is now required on exercising continuation options as the initial 3-year award within the main contract is due to expire on 31st March 2022.

Recommendation(s):

(1) Cabinet to grant authority to exercise the option to extend the current contract for a period of two years from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The current contract is from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2022, with the option to extend for a further 2 years. Approval is sought by Cabinet to extend the current commission of the LWS Service by an additional two years to March 2024.

This option would provide the following;

- a longer period of service stability and continuity
- essential pandemic support
- recovery support
- enhanced focus on health improvement issues such as obesity, mental health and lifestyle behaviours which have been negatively impacted during the pandemic
- opportunity to enhance the partnership and whole system approach

- opportunity to develop integrated pathways such as the obesity pathway through the Integrated Care System (ICS) whilst maintaining local early intervention and prevention and maintenance of healthy weight. This would enable robust clinical and non-clinical pathway development through the ICS
- reduced costs to the Council from engaging in a procurement exercise

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

The available options are:

- Exercise one-year extension / continuation option. This option would provide a degree of continuity and stability. However, any continuity / stability derived from exercising this option would be limited to twelve months at which point the Council would still need to consider exercising the second extension / continuation option or re-tender the service.
- Conducting a full procurement exercise would not bring about any significant benefits for Sefton Council or for users for the LWS service.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The annual contract value is £940,000 and is funded from within the service’s budget for which sufficient provision exists. The additional 2 years will similarly be contained within this budget and includes pandemic support and recovery response.

The contract will include provision for variation and early termination by the Council for convenience in the event of further reduction in funding and the requirement for the Council to achieve an overall balanced budget.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no capital costs for the Council associated with this Service.

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): The proposals aim to offer maximum value for money while ensuring stability in the LWS. The cost of the service will be met within the existing Public Health budget allocation.</p>
<p>Legal Implications: No change - within existing contract terms</p>
<p>Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.</p>

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will

Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	N

The proposal to extend the contracts of the services in scope for a further 24 months will have a neutral impact on the climate emergency. It is a core service and the extension does not lead to any new resources which would impact the climate emergency – for example, there are no additional buildings to be used.

The service focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of people living in the most deprived areas in Sefton which will have overlaps to the environmental agenda – around active travel which will encourage people to walk and cycle and exercise outdoors.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:

The LWS is based on a model of 'progressive universalism'. The pandemic has created a wider need for support in areas beyond the initially defined most deprived wards which the service was originally designed to support. Local people will receive support however, services will remain targeted to those who need them or are identified as being at risk.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities:

The LWS is rooted in the community and is a partnership between Sefton CVS, May Logan Centre, Netherton Feelgood Factory, Brighter Living Partnership, Citizens Advice Sefton, Sefton Carers' Centre, Smoke Free Sefton and Active Lifestyles, in addition to 20+ Living Well Sefton Neighbourhood Partners.

The service has remained responsive and flexible to the needs of our communities since the pandemic started in the early spring of 2020 and the service will remain focused on rebuilding and supporting individuals to adapt to this transitional stage as we move through the next 2 years.

The service works with local people and partners to transform and integrate community support services, provide resilience grants and improve quality health and well-being outcomes. The focus remains on improving community support, signposting, access and improved user experience and helping to lead to improved outcomes for people living in areas of highest inequality.

Commission, broker and provide core services:

Place – leadership and influencer:

Not applicable

Drivers of change and reform:

Opportunity to develop integrated pathways such as the obesity pathway through the Integrated Care System (ICS) whilst maintaining local early intervention support. This

would enable robust clinical and non-clinical pathway development through an ICS
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Not applicable
Greater income for social investment: Not applicable
Cleaner Greener Opportunity to develop wider opportunities for active travel

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6476/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4577/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Sefton CVS hosts and coordinates the Living Well Sefton Programme, funded through Public Health, to contribute towards the reduction of health inequalities experienced by vulnerable groups and those living in our most deprived communities in Sefton. The service works in partnership with voluntary, community, faith partners and statutory organisations to enable improved access to services, information and advice for the community.
- 1.2 The LWS service is a partnership between Sefton CVS, May Logan Centre, Netherton Feelgood Factory, Brighter Living Partnership, Citizens Advice Sefton, Sefton Carers' Centre, Smoke Free Sefton and Active Lifestyles, in addition to 20+ Living Well Sefton Neighbourhood Partners.
- 1.3 Over the last 3 years, the LWS has developed a strong brand and continues to raise and increase awareness across partners. LWS has an established team structure including a Programme Manager, Deputy Programme Manager, Data and Intelligence Officer and Data Quality Officer. There are three Community Connectors in post covering North, Central and South Sefton who work with eleven Social Prescribing Link Workers, funded by the CCG.
- 1.4 LWS aims and objectives
 - Deliver high quality, cost effective and responsive service to support health improvement across the borough
 - Provide capacity building activity to a range of partners
 - Improve access to Living Well Sefton support via health & social care
 - Provide targeted, flexible and person-centred support
 - Support people in our most deprived communities to live longer, healthier lives contributing to an increase in healthy life expectancy
 - Develop alternative and innovative practice, to engage with vulnerable groups
 - Support individuals and communities to become more resilient
 - Improve health education through delivery, training & events
 - Support the development of peer and community led approaches
 - Develop innovative partnerships with community stakeholders
 - Increase training and support to build capacity across the workforce

2. Key service developments

Geographically focused delivery

- 2.1 At the initial stage of the pandemic in March 2020, Public Health worked with the Sefton Communities Cell and LWS to define how the LWS would be fit for purpose to respond to the acute phase of the pandemic. Public Health initiated a contract variation to ensure that the LWS could be immediately responsive to community need which included setting up shopping services to reach shielding residents, mobilising volunteers to deliver telephone befriending, responding to changing and emerging community need through signposting/shielding clients from Council lists to adapting the support available to existing LWS clients. Telephone befriending

became crucial and was often the only way to ensure vulnerable clients had support.

- 2.2 The COVID Wellness check was used widely by LWS Mentors, Social Prescribers, Community Connectors and volunteers to evaluate a client's wellbeing and practical needs to ensure they could stay safe and well. Community Connectors and Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLWs) were supporting clients by telephone and a shopping service was set up in Maghull by the Community Connector. The partnership working between LWS teams and the wider health teams within CVS, in responding to signposting and shielded referrals from the Council, ensured a joined up, responsive service quickly met the needs of the communities.
- 2.3 As LWS led on the community response for Shielding or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) residents, since Friday 3rd April 2020, 1,238 shielded residents or CEV residents have been provided with support, including 626 supported with shopping. This offer has also been extended, with informal online peer support groups for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents in North, Central and South Sefton led by each Community Connector.
- 2.4 Since 'going live' in March 2020, 1,833 signposting referral requests for help and support have been received for a wide range of services such as food shopping, picking up medications and social contact. Since the 1st April, 1,708 residents have been supported with shopping and 1,098 with prescriptions. LWS contributed to this response throughout. The prescription service has received 270 referrals, with 146 pickup and deliveries completed.
- 2.5 Partners continued with COVID response work, including overseeing volunteer led shopping services, befriending services and welfare checks. In addition to the clients recorded on the IWS system, a weekly average of 384 clients received support in these practical areas from our key delivery partners (May Logan, Feelgood Factory, Brighter Living Partnership and Sefton Carers' Centre) with a high of 507 clients per week in early July. Many of these clients were not previously known to the service and ongoing support was put in place when required, through the LWS partners and internal teams.

3. Additional achievements and successes

- 3.1 The Community Connectors and Social Prescribing Link Workers through Living Well Sefton have successfully developed and been pivotal to supporting residents of Sefton. They have established partnerships with Adult Social Care to assist Social Workers in supporting clients, providing advice, guidance, carrying out joint visits and taking referrals. Social Prescribers support Sefton GPs and the average weekly caseload per Link Workers is 9 clients. All GPs refer through EMIS managed referrals.
- 3.2 Delivery of general training for core partners and neighbourhood partners:
 - Domestic Violence Awareness, Bereavement Support, Carers Awareness
 - Smoking Brief Intervention Training, RSPH Level 2 Physical Activity
 - Suicide Awareness and Case notes best practice
 - 1451 people trained in Making Every Contact Count (MECC) which includes 55 people virtually and was adapted to support COVID specific

health behaviour change through healthy chats. The focus is on identifying, understanding and responding to health behaviours that may have changed/deteriorated, including poor mental wellbeing, loss of physical strength and mobility, weight gain and increased alcohol consumption

- 2 cohorts of Train the Trainer (level 3) have resulted in 12 staff and partners trained to deliver MECC level 1. The aim will be to target GP surgery staff when COVID restrictions permit.
- A survey monkey evaluation poll found 100% of attendees felt more confident having healthy chats with clients on the telephone specifically addressing health concerns.
- Understanding Health Promotion (accredited) training to partners.
- Bereavement Support was identified as a gap for those working on the frontline. LWS has purchased bereavement services through additional funding to support individual clients.
- Strengths Based Approach and Solution Focused training has also been provided by Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust including facilitated peer support sessions.
- Living Well Sefton has taken part in several social media campaigns to promote job and grant opportunities regularly.
- Programmes through the partners include 'Weigh Forward' with a focus around weight management and this links well to the 'MOVE IT' campaign.

Community Resilience Grant

More than 105 groups working in their local communities have been funded through this grant with a total of around £186,376 awarded. Each round has had a theme, and during the pandemic, themes relating to reducing social isolation, improving mental wellbeing or being active outdoors have been promoted.

Grants have supported community gardens, providing art and craft workshops, offering cooking classes to improve healthy eating and supporting people with hearing impairments to learn various ways of communicating.

A key component of the grant agreement is that the organisation agrees to receive MECC training which will benefit their community and utilise specialist support services as and when required. There is also an individual component to this grant which encourages individuals to apply for a £500 grant with an idea they have for improving their local area. They are supported by a partner of Living Well Sefton to deliver their project. So far 40 individuals have been successful and a total of £20,000 has been awarded.

3.3 Workplace Wellbeing Grants

These £500 grants are open to small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Sefton that have fewer than 250 employees (60% of which must be Sefton residents) and priority is given to those businesses which employ routine and manual workers.

There have been more than 55 applications to this fund and £27,500 has been awarded to workplaces to help their staff wellbeing.

Funding covers sessional work such as yoga; volunteer costs; equipment such as bike racks to encourage active travel to work; training courses with a wellbeing

focus and events to support the wellbeing of staff. It can also be used to refurbish facilities which contribute to the health and wellbeing of staff, for example decorating a break room or buying a table and chairs to encourage people to eat lunch away from their desks.

3.4 Neighbourhood Grants

The LWS offers neighbourhood partners access to a ring-fenced fund to provide projects that will address health issues identified within their locality. Projects have included a portable film projector and screen so it can be set up in different places within the neighbourhood to bring the neighbourhood together for a film event. It has also helped to extend a shopping service which was vital during the initial lockdown when vulnerable people needed support. To date, seven projects have been funded with nearly £16,000 awarded. With the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, plans are in place to fund COVID 19 recovery projects in each of the neighbourhood areas.

4. Future Delivery Focus

The service has remained responsive and flexible to the needs of our communities since the pandemic started in the early spring of 2020 and the service will remain focused on rebuilding and supporting individuals to adapt to this transitional stage as we move through the next year.

The pandemic has had obvious impact on lifestyle and behaviours associated with lockdown, poor mental health and the impact of financial and debt concerns on mental health, obesity and substance use. The contract extension will include a performance framework to ensure the service recognises these issues and relevant outcomes are core to delivery.

Partnership working through a whole system approach will be central to delivery as well as acknowledgement of opportunities within the new Integrated Care System and development of a tailored local approach.

Below are some additional key areas which will form part of the new performance framework:

- Support partners and communities to find a new normal, maintaining the achievements of the work from the COVID response, e.g. more online/virtual support opportunities, revisiting clients on the system, joint working across areas such as shopping provision.
- Multi agency pathway development to ensure there is a seamless approach which is fit for purpose, relevant and clinically robust where services such as obesity and smoking are concerned.
- Developing a virtual online offer, to include options for video calls and enable live streaming of groups so that those who may be housebound or who have limited mobility can still participate/be involved, addressing issues of social isolation and loneliness further.
- Supporting more robust preventative health approaches for key areas that were highlighted as detrimental to COVID recovery (obesity, smoking) and safeguarding people's mental wellbeing consistently through 5 Ways to Wellbeing, being embedded in all our programmes.

- Face to face and small group activity helping people to address health behaviours that may have been negatively affected by lockdown.
- Build in a transition phase to reduce self-reliance on services for clients who have become less active and potentially dependent on services such as shopping support.
- Recognition of the importance of environmental factors with the appreciation of the coastline, canals and woodland paths which may determine how our future grant round themes are established such as increasing walking and gardening groups.
- Build staff morale and retention across the partnerships by offering development opportunities, good work places and inclusive practice.
- Harness the neighbourhood partnerships which have become more embedded, strengthened and focused since the pandemic and take advantage of the skills and expertise within the delivery partners.
- Undertake quality assurance checks with delivery partners and developing an evaluation process for clients who have progressed through our services to support ongoing improvement through service user voice and feedback.

5. Summary

As we move from the response phase into recovery, the LWS will remain central to the community response and support those individuals and communities most in need.

The service was originally conceived to support the 20% most deprived wards; however, the pandemic has illustrated how the health inequalities gap is widening and dependency on services such as food banks and the CAB, highlight the far-reaching impacts of the pandemic which have had a significant and detrimental effect in our communities.

The contract extension will ensure services continually to be aligned to those in most need and will be reviewed, evaluated and redesigned to ensure operational delivery remains relevant and current.

The LWS as a key commissioned service is woven into the health improvement delivery element of the current public health service plan and will continue to deliver tailored support and intervention in line with community need to support the health and wellbeing for the people of Sefton in line with pandemic recovery in 2021 and beyond.