

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

RECORD OF OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION

Item	Worcestershire Integrated Sexual Health Services
Date of Decision	22 February 2024
Decision Maker	Lisa McNally, Director of Public Health
Brief Description of Decision	To award the contract for Worcestershire Integrated Sexual Health Services directly to Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust in accordance with regulation 32(2)(b) of the Public Contracts Regulations. For the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2029.
Reason(s) For Decision	<p>Worcestershire County Council has a Statutory requirement to arrange for the provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Worcestershire. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 and associated legislation stipulates that Local Authorities have a mandated responsibility to commission open access Sexual Health Services for everyone present in their area covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing and treatment, and notification of sexual partners of infected persons: and • Free contraception and reasonable access to all methods of contraception. <p>The Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust have been commissioned to provide sexual health services under the current contract for seven and a half years. They have established pathways, processes and relationships which have been built up over that time. The sexual health service receives the highest patient satisfaction scores within the Trust.</p>
Alternative Options Considered and Rejected	<p>The option to complete a full market tender was rejected based on the following</p> <p>The last national strategy for Sexual Health was published in 2013 by the Department of Health. This strategy was due to be reviewed and updated in 2022/2023 however the publication of the new strategy has been delayed until 2024. The new strategy will help to shape future sexual and reproductive health models with key areas of national focus to run alongside our local priorities. To proceed with an open tender procurement of a high value local contract outside of the expected national framework would risk the service being out of alignment with national requirements with potential serious financial, clinical, and reputational consequences. Both commissioner and provider play key parts in the existing Worcestershire Integrated Care System (ICS), and we are able to work together to co-design</p>

	<p>and make changes to the service based on the new strategy. This will also be alongside co-commissioning with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) who are responsible for termination services, vasectomy services, GP, and pharmacy services as part of the wider sexual health system.</p> <p>The Trust have been commissioned to provide sexual health services under the current contract for seven and a half years. They have established pathways, processes and relationships which have been built up over that time. The sexual health service receives the highest patient satisfaction scores within the Trust. A change of provider through open market tendering may lead to a need for new premises, new staff and new pathways to be established. Although current staff would fall under TUPE regulations, they may decide they do not wish to move or may leave their current roles due to uncertainty, as happened during the previous tender. This would not only impact the ability to provide a future service but also is likely to impact the current service.</p> <p>If a new provider was not able to mobilise in time, recruiting sufficient staff arranging suitable premises and obtaining required equipment and tests then the sexual health service in Worcestershire would come to a stop, breaching our statutory duty, and causing significant risk of harm to our residents.</p> <p>A market intel report has been produced. Within the West Midlands, 13 out of 14 LA contracts are provided by the local NHS Trust. Some as a lead provider and some in partnership for smaller service elements such as online testing.</p> <p>This is not a service that can be ceased, nor can the Authority directly deliver; therefore requires commissioning, preferably in collaboration with partners as there are different responsibilities for the commissioning of Sexual Health in Worcestershire. To ensure an improved sexual and reproductive health system and seamless joined up services for residents a direct award to the Trust will enable integration across the full range of NHS services.</p>
<p>Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments carried out</p>	<p>The JIA reference is #590</p> <p>Full Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments have all been carried out. There were no negative impacts identified following the completion of these assessments.</p>
<p>Any Conflict of Interest declared by a consulted Cabinet Member/ any dispensation granted</p>	<p>No Conflict of Interest declared</p>
<p>Signature</p>	<p>Lisa McNally</p>

Reference/Date Published	03/2024
Delegation check	Yes
Legal / Finance Check	CT / PR
Monitoring Officer Review needed	No