

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Extension of the Short Breaks Framework and Market Development Contract.
Date of decision:	29 January 2020
Decision maker:	Director for Children & Families
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>In the decision made by cabinet on 15th September 2016 regarding the recommissioning of short breaks for disabled children, (https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=4389) authority was delegated to the Director for Children’s Wellbeing, following consultation with the director of resources and cabinet member for young people and children’s wellbeing to finalise procurement documentation and award service contracts for short breaks.</p> <p>On the 28th March 2017, the cabinet member for young people and children’s wellbeing approved the new offer for short breaks for disabled children: http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=4544.</p> <p>Contracts under the New Short Breaks Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) were put in place for 3 years (up to 31st March 2020) with the provision to extend for up to a further two years (to a maximum of 31st March 2022).</p> <p>Under the corporate scheme of delegation, Commissioning for children’s services including schools, early years, colleges, adult learning, social care and vulnerable children may be undertaken by the Director for Children and Families</p> <p>Placements may be awarded under the short breaks framework by the Director for Children and Families (The Children and Families Scheme of Delegation, line 138).</p> <p>The Council’s corporate Contract Procedure rules ‘Guidance Notes’ (2018) state that: ‘where a contract provides for an extension, the service director shall be consulted prior to the extension of a contract with an aggregate total value of less than £100,000’.</p> <p>Current usage forecasts indicate that the aggregated value of each contract, including the proposed extension period, will not exceed £100,000. The recommended decision to extend the framework contracts is, therefore, in line with the corporate guidance.</p>
Ward:	All wards
Consultation:	A telephone survey of the families accessing short breaks was undertaken in 2018 (125 respondents). Results highlighted that the majority of parents (69%) were very happy with the short breaks support received (rated 8 or more out of 10). In fact, 40% of respondents gave a rating of 10/10.

	<p>In terms of outcomes being achieved, the majority of parents reported that the short breaks provision helped their child to have fun, take part in interesting activities and have new experiences, were safe, and developing positive life and social skills.</p> <p>Most of those surveyed were confident that their child was safe, and having fun with skilled carers, and the provision enabled them to get on with normal activities, spend time with other children/ family, and felt less pressured.</p> <p>The potential of extending current arrangements has been discussed with current providers. Although one of three providers contracted through the DPS has confirmed that they do not wish to continue beyond March 2020, others have confirmed that they would be happy to continue for a further year. A further three providers have expressed interest in Joining the DPS in the coming months.</p>																								
<p>Decision made:</p>	<p>Extend contracts secured through the Short Breaks Dynamic Purchasing System for up to a further 2 years from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022.</p> <p>The Director for Children and Families award any new contracts secured through the dynamic purchasing system for a further two years up to March 2022.</p> <p>It is expected that placements made per annum though the DPS will mirror the current financial year forecast at £145,000 if further providers join the DPS.</p> <p>Funding from the commissioned short breaks budget for placements made through the Dynamic Purchasing system is confirmed by finance.</p>																								
<p>Reasons for decision:</p>	<p>As demonstrated by the chart below, the number of disabled children across Herefordshire accessing short breaks provision has increased each quarter in all areas since the implementation of the new model:</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Children and young people receiving short breaks (April 2017 - Sep 2019)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>2017/18</th> <th>2018/19</th> <th>2019-20 (Q1 & 2)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Individual CYP</td> <td>111</td> <td>~185</td> <td>197</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Targeted allowance</td> <td>63</td> <td>~115</td> <td>153</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Direct payments</td> <td>55</td> <td>~70</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Daytime support</td> <td>23</td> <td>~40</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overnight support</td> <td>12</td> <td>~20</td> <td>23</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	2017/18	2018/19	2019-20 (Q1 & 2)	Individual CYP	111	~185	197	Targeted allowance	63	~115	153	Direct payments	55	~70	71	Daytime support	23	~40	40	Overnight support	12	~20	23
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	<p>At present, around 60% of short breaks commissioned provision are secured through the DPS. Spot purchase arrangements are in place where the complex needs of children cannot be met by providers on the framework (16%), where family choice has resulted in alternative arrangements (14%), or capacity/ eligibility criteria of current provision means alternative options are secured (9%). In addition, short breaks are provided through direct payment arrangements, and through the in house Sleepover scheme.</p> <p>Current arrangements have highlighted that, due to the breadth of needs of children and families accessing short breaks, across ages, localities and with varying social care and health needs, the short breaks offer needs to continually evolve. More recently this has included sourcing providers with experience of delivering care within the family home, providing domiciliary care, and providing staff with specialist skills and training to meet complex needs. Ongoing work with new providers in the local market will ensure that there are a range of providers with the necessary skills and experience to meet individual requirements.</p> <p>The DPS offers a flexible approach to commissioning and enables providers to join at any time. At present there are three new providers considering joining the framework (two daytime providers and one overnight provider).</p> <p>This will ensure that the council is able to minimise the number of packages being secured through spot purchase arrangements.</p> <p>A full review of Short Breaks provision is scheduled for 2020, to determine the future model of support in Herefordshire. This will enable the council to consider whether current arrangements provide the best opportunity to meet needs efficiently and effectively; or whether a different commissioning approach is required. Taking up the extension option for up to two years will enable sufficient market engagement and co-production with families to be undertaken.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>It is expected that placements made per annum through the DPS will mirror the current financial year forecast at £145,000 if further providers join the DPS.</p> <p>Funding for placements made through the Dynamic Purchasing system is confirmed by finance.</p> <p>The limited local market in relation to short breaks provision presents a risk to ensuring that the breadth of needs and types of support required are sufficiently met. Continual work with local existing/ potential providers is expected to mitigate this risk in the shorter term. In the longer term, a review of provision involving families and providers will determine most appropriate future commissioning models.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>End the current DPS (do not use the option to extend) and develop alternative models of meeting short breaks duties. Whilst there are still some specific needs that can be challenging to meet through the current short breaks offer, the flexibility provided by the DPS</p>

	<p>enables commissioners to continually source alternative provision which can respond to the needs of families requiring short breaks.</p> <p>A review of short breaks provision is scheduled for 2020 to consider the advantages and limitations of the current offer, which will inform future models of delivery. This option is therefore not recommended.</p> <p>Extend for one year only. Given potential developments over the coming months, including new providers joining the DPS, it is appropriate to undertake a review in 2020 to determine whether this approach to commissioning provides the best quality and value of service. Once this exercise is concluded, an extension up to March 2021 will enable sufficient time to undertake necessary market engagement and development activities, alongside co-production of the future model to be implemented from April 2021. It is therefore recommended that contracts are extended for two years.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>n/a</p>

Signed

Date: 29 January 2020