

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to award the contract for an on-line financial assessment tool to Looking Local
Date of decision:	27.10.2022
Decision maker:	Corporate Director for Community Wellbeing
Authority for delegated decision:	Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation SA09 - Commissioning, quality assurance and contract management relating to all ages. Updated 29 September 2020
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Informal consultation with other local authorities currently using the same case management and finance systems software.
Decision made:	<p>To award a contract to Looking Local for the BetterCare Finance on-line financial assessment product through the G Cloud 12 Framework.</p> <p>The total contract value is £61,500 over a two year period. The below shows a breakdown of the costs:</p> <p><u>Year 1</u></p> <p>BetterCare Finance License fee: £22,500</p> <p>BetterCare Finance Analysis and Onboarding £16,500</p> <p>Total: £39,000</p> <p><u>Year 2</u></p> <p>BetterCare Finance License fee: £22,500</p> <p>Total: £22,500</p>
Reasons for decision:	<p>The government is changing how personal care is paid for from October 2023. It will introduce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new £86,000 lifetime cap on the amount anyone in England will need to spend on their personal care over their lifetime; only personal client contributions will count towards the cap • An extended means test, enabling state support for anyone with up to £100,000 of assets (current limit £23,250), and ensuring that anyone with assets under £20,000 will not have to pay anything for their care from their assets. They will still contribute towards their care from their available income. <p>Whilst the changes above become law in October 2023, local authorities can start to prepare by undertaking care and financial assessments from April 2023.</p> <p>The introduction of these reforms impacts on system and workforce capacity requirements for local authorities. Herefordshire Council must implement system changes in line with operational guidance issued by the Department for Health</p>

	<p>and Social Care and increase its workforce and operational efficiency as required to meet additional demands for assessments and commissioning care.</p> <p>It is recognised that there are opportunities for digital technology to supplement and enhance the process for conducting financial assessments and operational efficiency.</p> <p>Self-service provision can speed up the assessment process and frees up financial assessment officer time to deal with more complex cases and provide customer focus.</p> <p>Moving financial assessments earlier into the assessment process via a self-service model enables service users or their families to complete the form in their own time, and can inform people of any potential contributions upfront reducing stress through financial uncertainty.</p> <p>Where home visits are still necessary, officers can utilise the tool to record financial assessments, reducing paper usage, and time spent scanning and indexing documents.</p> <p>People eligible for help with care needs are likely to be eligible for other benefits. This product also ensures people are aware of benefits they are entitled to, giving them a direct route to apply for them via the BetterOff product that the council current uses.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>There is a risk that this system will not have the expected benefits, these have been mitigated through demonstrations by the provider and conversations with other local authorities who are in the process of implementing this system.</p> <p>There is also a risk that many people will not want or be able to use self-service, the operational efficiencies gained from those that do will free up financial assessment officer time to focus better on those customers that require more support.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing nothing, this is not an option as it is a legal requirement to implement the charging reforms. • Commence tender for replacement social care case management system, this is not feasible within timescales, consider post implementation. • Tender for on-line self- assessment and financial assessment products, this was also discounted because of the uniqueness of the product being able to link in with other systems that we currently use.
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>

Signed: Director Community Wellbeing

Date: 28th October 2022