

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	22 nd March 2013
TITLE:	Healthwatch and Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)
WARD:	ALL
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report:	
Specification for the delivery of Healthwatch B&NES (Local Healthwatch) in Bath & North East Somerset	

1 THE ISSUE

This report describes the outcome of the process for procuring a provider for Healthwatch B&NES (Local Healthwatch), and the provision of an NHS complaints advocacy service (ICAS), both from 1st April 2013. The provision of a Local Healthwatch service and an NHS complaints advocacy service are statutory requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the information presented.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The value of the 3-year contract for Healthwatch B&NES is £246,000 over the life of the contract. £72,000 has been included in the Policy & Partnerships base budget for each year and there is Local Healthwatch Grant funding of £40,422 for both 2013-14 and 2014-15.
- 3.2 The value of the 1-year contract for the NHS complaints advocacy service is £42,289. This is funded from Independent Complaints Advocacy Services Grant funding of £43,157 for 2013-14.
- 3.3 The above Grant funding streams will be received by Adult Social Care, as part of the new Local Reform and Community Voices Grant, and transferred to Policy & Partnerships.

4 THE REPORT

- 4.1 Under the Health & Social Care Act 2012, each local authority is required to provide a Local Healthwatch service to act as an independent consumer champion for health and social care, which will enable citizens and communities to influence and challenge how health and social care services are delivered within their locality. Local Healthwatch will replace the Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) from 1st April 2013, but will carry forward and expand on their work.
- 4.2 The full specification for Healthwatch B&NES is contained in the appendix to this report.
- 4.3 The B&NES Local Healthwatch, known as Healthwatch B&NES, will have 2 seats on the Health and Wellbeing Board. This will ensure that the views and experiences of patients, carers and other service users are taken into consideration when local needs assessments and strategies are prepared, such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).
- 4.4 An invitation to tender for the provision of Healthwatch B&NES was issued on 13th November 2012, using the Council's Procurement Standing Orders process. Two responses were received by the deadline on 7th January 2013, and after having appraised the bids the assessment panel awarded the contract to The Care Forum. The Care Forum have been awarded contracts to deliver Local Healthwatch in Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire.
- 4.5 One of the additional requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 is that from 1st April 2013 each local authority makes provision for an advocacy service for complaints about any aspect of NHS services. Previously, this service (known as ICAS – Independent Complaints Advocacy Service) has been provided in B&NES by SEAP (Support, Empower, Advocate, Promote) under a direct commission with the Department of Health.
- 4.6 It has been agreed with our Audit and Risk Management department that the Council will commission SEAP to continue to provide the NHS complaints advocacy service for 12 months from 1st April 2013. During this time we will gain a better understanding of the requirements for an NHS advocacy service in B&NES, which in turn will enable a specification to be developed in order to tender for a supplier from 1st April 2014.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

6 EQUALITIES

An EqlA has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Cllr Simon Allen; services users; Chair and Deputy Chairs of the LINK.

7.2 Consultation was carried out in face to face meetings.

8 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

8.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Young People; Other Legal Considerations

9 ADVICE SOUGHT

9.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report.

Contact person	Susan Bowen 01225 477278
Background papers	Specification for the delivery of Local Healthwatch (Healthwatch B&NES) in Bath & North East Somerset
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	