

## Budget Option 2019/20 – 2020/21

### Cumulative Net Savings

**Reference:** ACH 6

2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000
0	20	20

**Director Responsible for Delivery**

Strategic Director Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder**

Cllr David Roche

**Finance Business Partner**

Julie Copley

**Proposal Description**

Proposed reduction in the contract value of the Healthwatch Rotherham contract.

**Details of Proposal (including implications on service delivery)**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 amended the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to make provision for a national Healthwatch England and for a local Healthwatch. This is a statutory service.

Healthwatch Rotherham is expected to be the local consumer champion for patients, service users and the public, covering both health and social care for all ages. Their statutory activities should include gathering local views and making these known to providers and commissioners, monitoring and scrutinising the quality of provision of local services, and a seat on the local Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Healthwatch contract is funded from a previously ring fenced grant allocation: Local Reform and Community Voices Grant of £183,917. The ring fence was removed in 2015/16. There is therefore no mandate as to the value of the contract since the removal of the ring fence.

A two year contract was issued following a competitive tender process during 2017/18 with a contract value of £174,150. The contract had a tapered value for year two, with the current value of £156,735 during 2018/19. The contract has an option to extend for one year to 31 March 2020 subject to agreement on a revised contract value.

It is proposed that the contract value is further reduced to £137,000 for 2019/20. This will be facilitated through a

	<p>negotiation with the existing provider with the option to extend on a revised contract value/service specification for the one year period. The service specification will be revised to more clearly articulate the requirements of both the Healthwatch and NHS Complaint Advocacy functions. There will also be a commitment to apply the emerging Healthwatch England framework when this is rolled out to ensure that the local offer is in line with the rest of the country.</p> <p>The changes to the original proposal for a £66,000 budget reduction have been recommended following consideration of feedback from the Council's budget consultation.</p> <p>A number of responses pertaining to Healthwatch were received via social media and through face to face events with the Council Leader/Chief Executive asserting opposition to the level of proposed cut to the Healthwatch budget. 45 letters were received (including one with 28 signatures) from a range of individuals and services supporting people of all ages including children and young people. The majority of the adverse impacts cited related to the potential loss of advocacy support and negative consequences that this would have on the wider community requiring support to make an NHS complaint.</p> <p>A detailed response was received from Healthwatch England. This provided constructive feedback with regard to expected Healthwatch functions and outlined challenges to potential organisational delivery within the financial envelope in the original proposal. The benchmarking information provided by Healthwatch England also helped inform the revision to the depth of the proposed reduction in the budget.</p>
<b>Implications on other Services (identify which services and possible impact)</b>	<p>The Healthwatch service is an all age offer and though the majority of activity is focused on adults there are also aspects that cover CYPS such as CAMHS and maternity services. This is reflected in the revised service specification which ensures that the functions for both Healthwatch and NHS Complaints Advocacy retain a commitment to all age support.</p> <p>The provider employs a small number of staff and has recently moved offices in order to reduce overhead costs. The revised level of funding should lessen the adverse impact on the Healthwatch Rotherham staffing deployment.</p>
<b>Support required from Corporate Services – Finance, HR, Legal, ICT (please specify)</b>	None required as the revised proposal can be made within the existing contractual arrangements.
<b>Reduction in Staffing Posts (FTEs)</b>	To be determined by the provider – no direct impact for the Council.
<b>Reduction in Head Count</b>	To be determined by the provider – no direct impact for the Council.

**Decision Maker :**

<b>Either Cabinet or Officer/Management Action</b>	
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