

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 18 July 2023

Report Title

Carers Emergency Service, provided by The Rotherham Foundation Trust – contract extension proposal

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Care Act 2014 gives carers the legal right to recognition and entitlement to support in their own right. The Carers Emergency Service helps RMBC to meet its responsibilities and supports the Borough that Cares Strategic Framework 2022-25.

The Carers Emergency Service provides a domiciliary care service for a period of up to 48 hours (72 hours over a Bank Holiday period) in cases when substitute care is necessary as a result of any sudden or unplanned event meaning the informal carer cannot provide care and where it would be unsafe to leave the cared for person without support.

This support is available to Rotherham residents whose informal carer is registered on RMBC's [Carers Emergency Scheme](#).

Activation of the service is via Rothercare, RMBC's Community Alarm Service who then make contact with the provider to activate the service.

The current provider of this service is The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust – Integrated Rapid Response Team who deliver the service in line with the service specification. The current contract arrangements are working well.

The initial contract term concluded 31st March 2023 with an extension option available from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. In February 2023, a 6 month contract extension to 30th September 2023 was agreed to provide time for the development of Rotherham’s offer to unpaid carers, in line with the recently launched Carers Strategy. This work is making progress but will not be completed within the original timescale. The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Strategic Director of ACHPH approves a further 6 month extension, allowed by the terms and conditions, to allow the current service to continue to be provided whilst work is progressed and formalised on Rotherham’s offer to unpaid carers.

Recommendations

1. To approve a 6 month extension of the contract end date of 30th September 2023 to 31st March 2024, to enable The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust to continue providing the service.

List of Appendices Included

Background Papers

None.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Carers Emergency Service, provided by TRFT – Contract extension proposal

Carers Emergency Service, provided by The Rotherham Foundation Trust – contract extension proposal

1. Background

- 1.1 Unpaid carers make a significant contribution to society and there are circa 30,000 unpaid carers in Rotherham. The Care Act 2014 gives carers the legal right to recognition and entitlement to support in their own right. The Carers Emergency Service helps RMBC to meet its responsibilities and supports the Borough that Cares Strategic Framework 2022-25; to support carers in Rotherham to stay mentally and physically healthy and economically active for longer.
- 1.2 The Carers Emergency Service provides a domiciliary care service for a period of up to 48 hours (72 hours over a Bank Holiday period) in cases when substitute care is necessary as a result of any sudden or unplanned event meaning the informal carer cannot provide care and where it would be unsafe to leave the cared for person without support.
- 1.3 This support is available to Rotherham residents whose informal carer is registered on RMBC's [Carers Emergency Scheme](#). Carers registered to the scheme will be informal carers who undertake regular and substantial care of vulnerable adults and where it appears to be unsafe for the vulnerable adult to be left alone if the carer were unexpectedly unavailable.
- 1.4 Activation of the service is via Rothercare, RMBC's Community Alarm Service who then make contact with the provider to activate the service.
- 1.5 The current provider of this service is The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust – Integrated Rapid Response Team. The initial contract term was until 31st March 2023 with an extension option from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. In February 2023, the decision was made to extend for 6 months to 30th September 2023.
- 1.6 Service activity and quality:
In 2022-23 (1.4.22 – 31.3.23) the service has been activated for 22 individuals. The total number of caseload hours over this period was 927 hours, and a total of 124 care visits were made.

Throughout the period, the service has been delivered in line with the service specification.

- 1.7 The budget for the service is £23,000 per annum, paid as a block to secure staff time.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The initial contract term concluded 31st March 2023 with an extension option available from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. In February 2023, a 6 month

contract extension to 30th September 2023 was agreed to provide time for the development of Rotherham's offer to unpaid carers, in line with the recently launched Carers Strategy. This work is making progress but will not be completed within the original timescale and a further 6 month extension is being proposed. This would allow the current service to continue to be provided whilst work is progressed and formalised on Rotherham's offer to unpaid carers.

- 2.2 Should the recommendation to extend the contract not be approved, a competitive procurement exercise will need to be undertaken immediately which will be subject to a procurement process and mobilisation period to establish a new contract from 1st October 2023. However, previous attempts to seek quotations from the providers appointed to the Councils Home Care and Support FPS and other local providers resulted in no interest. As such a direct award was undertaken with The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust who identified some available capacity and resource.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1 (not recommended)** – Pursue a further competition through the Home Care and Support FPS to secure a provider to provide the service from 1st October 2023. This option is unlikely to achieve any significant benefit in terms of cost or service efficiency as the rates submitted by the providers may mean the service would overspend the allocated budget. Following the unsuccessful quotation process it is likely a similar process may lead to the same outcome should another quotation exercise be undertaken.

- 3.2 **Option 2 (recommended)** – Offer a 6 month extension of the contract to the incumbent provider effective from 1st October 2023, as allowed by the terms and conditions. This will ensure this service can continue to be provided to support carers. The budget would remain the same at £23,000 per annum (pro-rated) as the current contract is secured as a block commitment.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 Adult Care and Integration and the incumbent provider have been consulted and support this recommendation.

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust has indicated they are able to accommodate an extension of contract for a 6 month period and would like to discuss future arrangements to continue the service as part of determining the unpaid carers offer.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The contract extension will be agreed and issued to The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust immediately should the recommendations in this report be approved. The Council's Adult Care Strategic Commissioning Team will monitor the expected outcomes and outputs.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

6.1 The contract awarded to TRFT enables a maximum 12-month extension to enable the service to continue for a further period. Any associated procurement activity to replace the contract will need to be undertaken in compliance with the Councils Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and Public Contract Regulations (as amended).

6.2 The current contract of £23,000 is fully funded from the Better Care Fund and is included in the Section 75 Framework Agreement. There are no financial risks in extending this contract for a further 6 months to the end of March 2024.

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

7.1 As stated above, this contract allows for extension therefore the proposal, bearing in mind the circumstances set out in the report, is appropriate and compliant with the FPPR and Public Contract Regulations 2015.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 None for the Council

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The current contract arrangement provides an emergency domiciliary care service for vulnerable adults, when their informal carer cannot provide care as a result of any sudden or unplanned events. This recommendation would enable this service to continue. Any reduction in support may increase the demands on formal provision and Adult Care and Integration services.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Section 13 of the Equality Act 2010 protect carers from direct discrimination or harassment because of their caring responsibilities as a result of being associated with someone who is protected by the law because of their age or disability.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 This proposal has no additional impact on emissions.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Non provision of this service could lead to an increased demand on partner organisations for more expensive formal care services should an unpaid carer suddenly not be able to provide care due to e.g. sudden injury, illness or unplanned hospital admission.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Risks

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust does not accept the proposed 6 month contract extension.

13.2 Mitigation

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust has indicated that they would continue the service for a further 6 months.

14. Accountable Officers

Ian Spicer – Strategic Director, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

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