

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 September 2023

The Recommission of the Shared Lives



Councillor Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care said,

"We want everyone in Staffordshire to lead the best and happiest lives they can.

"For some adults requiring a helping hand, the Shared Lives service offers them the chance to get the care they need while sharing the home of specially trained carers and their families.

"With the existing contract due for renewal, we want to recommission this important service to ensure people continue to receive the care they need and we continue to provide best value for the public purse."

Report Summary:

Shared Lives is a regulated care service. People with assessed eligible social care needs share the home of a specially recruited and trained carer and their family. The Shared Lives service offers long term placements as well as short breaks, day opportunities and home from hospital placements. The service supports individuals to reach their potential and live healthy, safe, independent and fulfilling lives in their own communities.

The Council's current Shared Lives service contract is due to expire on 31 March 2024. The contract value is up to £1.3 million annually dependent upon utilisation. The recommendation is to recommission the service to provide continuity of care for individuals and ensure an ongoing good quality service that offers value for money.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approves procurement of the Staffordshire Shared Lives service via a competitive tender in order to appoint a suitable provider who can offer a good quality service and value for money.
- b. Delegates approval for the contract to be awarded to the successful provider to the Director of Health and Care.

- c. Approves extension of the current Shared Lives service contract for up to 12 months in the event of an unsuccessful procurement, to enable the Council to consider alternative options.



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Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

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Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

1. Shared Lives is a regulated care service. People share the home of a specially recruited and trained carer and their family. Shared Lives carers can care for a maximum of three individuals at any one time dependent on family situation, accommodation and the preferences of the individuals involved. Most carers support one individual.
2. The Shared Lives service offers long term placements as well as short breaks, day opportunities and home from hospital placements for individuals aged 16 and above. This includes older people, people with mental health needs including dementia, people with a physical or sensory impairment, learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and people with complex needs. Most of the individuals currently accessing the service have a learning disability and associated needs.
3. The Shared Lives service supports people to reach their potential and live healthy, safe, independent and fulfilling lives in their own communities. The service contributes to the Council's range of services to support

people with assessed eligible adult social care needs. It offers greater choice and control, a less restrictive environment, and a more cost-effective alternative to residential care and Supported Living. Most other local authorities have a similar service.

Current Shared Lives service

4. The Council currently has a Shared Lives service contract with PSS UK LTD, which is due expire on 31 March 2024. The service currently supports 78 people at a forecast cost of £1.3 million in 2023/24.
5. The number of people using the service has been fairly static over the last 2-years, however the number of active carer households has increased, creating vacancies to accommodate new referrals. In quarter 1 of 2023/24 the service received 11 referrals with 6 placements successfully matched. 7 carers were successfully recruited by PSS with 2 carers returning to the service and reactivating their support.
6. The Shared Lives service supports individuals to meet the outcomes detailed in their support plans. These range from developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships, accessing, and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering, making use of the home safely, maintaining a habitable home environment and making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community. The service also supports people to identify options for independent living, with some exiting Shared Lives and moving into their own home.
7. The current contract includes two elements:
 - a. **A management fee.** This pays for management staff who are responsible for recruitment and training Shared Lives carers, matching of individuals with carers and their families, supervision of carers including regular monitoring visits, resolution of problems and disputes, risk assessment and crisis intervention. The management fee is paid per placement to incentivise increased activity in the service. In 2023/24 the management fee is forecast to cost £0.3 million.
 - b. **Payments to Shared Lives carers.** These are set according to the level of need of the individuals, as shown in Table 1. In addition, carers are paid rent and household costs by the individuals. In 2023/24 payments to carers are forecast to cost £1 million.

Table 1: Payments to Shared Lives carers 2023/24

Payments to Carers	Level of Need		
	Low	Medium	High
Long term placements per week	£279.29	£327.17	£375.05
Short breaks per week (includes home from hospital placements)	£375.05	£422.92	£470.80
Day Opportunities - 4 hours	£39.89	£47.88	£55.86
Day Opportunities - 8 hours	£71.82	£87.77	£103.74

8. The Shared Lives service was rated 'Good' in all five domains by the Care Quality Commission at the most recent inspection on 26 March 2019. No concerns have been raised over the quality of the service provided. There are few complaints and frequent compliments.

Feedback

9. Frontline social care practitioners have given the following feedback about the service:

- a. The Shared Lives service provides consistently good outcomes for people. Case examples were shared of individuals that have moved on to live independently following successful Shared Lives placements.
- b. They are not all aware of the Shared Lives service, in particular the opportunity to use it for home from hospital placements.
- c. The referrals and matching process can be long and protracted, at times individuals' needs have changed or become more urgent and an alternative placement type must be sourced.

10. We are seeking feedback from people who use the service and carers in order to inform the service specifications and tender process.

Considerations for recommissioning

11. The objectives of recommissioning would be to:

- a. Appoint a suitable provider who can offer a good quality service and value for money. This will be achieved through the competitive procurement outlined below.

- b. Ensure continuity of the Shared Lives service for people and minimise any disruption to individuals' lives. There will be no substantial changes to the service specification or budget.
- c. Create opportunities for expansion of the Shared Lives service. This will be achieved by:
 - i. Raising awareness among frontline social care practitioners.
 - ii. Streamlining the referrals and matching process.
 - iii. Reviewing payments to Shared Lives carers and other benefits in order to incentivise recruitment.
- d. Ensure that people using the Shared Lives service are linked to opportunities and support in their local communities in order to maximise their independence.

Procurement

12. The indicative timescales for procurement are as follows:

Specification and evaluation criteria finalised	October 2023
Tender launches	October 2023
Tender closes	November 2023
Evaluation of bids	November 2023
Moderation of bids	November 2023
Award recommendation	November 2023
Standstill	January 2024
Contract award	January 2024
Service implementation (mobilisation, TUPE and carer transfers if applicable)	January – March 2024
Contract commences	1 st April 2024

- 13. The contract would be three-years with the option to extend for a further two years in 12 monthly increments.
- 14. If the contract were awarded to a new provider, the expectation is that TUPE would apply to the management staff. The tender documentation would stipulate a budget, with any the cost of any TUPE implications on the incoming provider needing to stay with the funding available.
- 15. The Shared Lives carers would be unaffected as they are self-employed. Most importantly there would be no disruption to the support for people using the service and their homes would not be affected.
- 16. There is a small risk that a provider cannot be appointed through the procurement process. In this event the procurement recommendation is

to extend the current Shared Lives service contract with PSS UK LTD for up to 12 months to enable the Council to consider alternative options. In this event, a direct award exception report or regulation 72 report would be developed, and approvals sought. However, options may also include in-house provision or provision by Nexxus Care.

Legal Implications

17. The Shared Lives service would enable the Council to continue to meet peoples assessed eligible adult social care needs under the Care Act 2014.
18. Procurement would be carried out in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and therefore ensure the Council complies with its legal and commercial responsibilities.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

19. There is currently no specific MTFs savings target for Shared Lives. The Shared Lives would be recommissioned within the existing budget. There may be opportunities for savings through expansion of the service and diversion of people from residential care.
20. Should the Shared Lives not be recommissioned then alternative services would be required which would almost certainly be more expensive, creating a cost pressure of £1.5 to £2M annually.

Climate Change Implications

21. This report recommends recommissioning of a Shared Lives service that is delivered from carers family homes. It would have no net impact on construction of buildings and infrastructure, use of energy or generation of waste. Shared Lives carers are encouraged to support individuals to access public transport. Carers and the incoming service provider will also be encouraged to support active travel.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Community Impact Assessment

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