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HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

11 September 2017

For decision

COMMISSIONING ADVICE SERVICES **Head of Housing and Community Engagement**

Cabinet Lead: Cllr Leah Turner, Cabinet Lead for Communities and Housing

Key Decision: No

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present to Councillors a proposal to re-shape the provision of advice services across the borough, moving from grant funding to commissioning these services.

1.2 This paper outlines the model of advice services to be commissioned; a commentary on the current situation with Havant Citizen's Advice and proposes a way forward to implement the commissioning solution.

2.0 Recommendation

THAT Cabinet:

2.1 notes the timescale for commissioning services from the voluntary sector;

2.2 notes the change to delivery through commissioning of advice services from 2018/19 as outlined in section 3 below for a service up to the value of £114,300;

2.3 Havant Citizen's Advice be issued with a 6 month formal notice to terminate the current Service Level Agreement (SLA) which is good practice; and

2.4 power be delegated to the Head of Housing and Community Engagement to oversee the process in consultation with the Cabinet Lead for Communities and Housing.

3.0 Commissioning Services

3.1 The Council is looking to move from grant funding to commissioning services based on outcomes over the next 3 years with the first being Advice Services. In consultation with the Cabinet Lead, officers will develop a series of commissions and, working with the Procurement Service, invite commissions from organisations. Commissioning opportunities will be advertised on a commissioning portal in the autumn, and following evaluation, commissions will be entered into from April 2018

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- 3.2 There is a need to provide general advice services to residents within Havant. This advice needs to be available on-line, by telephone and face to face. As well as providing pre-arranged appointments, the service needs to be available on a drop-in basis. The service needs to be delivered at a time and place that meets the needs of the customers; this means services provided in areas of need and at times to include evenings and weekends.
- 3.4 The service provider does not need to be a Havant specific organisation; it may be possible for organisations who deliver services in other local authority areas to deliver within the borough. For example, Portsmouth advice services are provided by The YOU Trust, a national organisation which now operates for Portsmouth residents (<http://www.adviceportsmouth.org.uk/>).
- 3.5 There is an expectation that any service provider would work with other advice providers in the area to minimise duplication of services. For example, the service provider would be required to offer complimentary services to the Surgery Signposter advice service operating within GP practices.

4.0 Current Advice Provision

- 4.1 There are a number of organisations that provide advice services to Havant residents either through local or national provision. A list of those organisations can be found at Appendix A.
- 4.2 The only advice organisation that HBC fund is Havant Citizen's Advice, which delivers advice services to Havant residents.
- 4.3 As well as providing an outreach service in Hayling Island and at the Plaza, Havant Citizen's Advice operates out of the following locations in the borough:
- Leigh Park Community Centre
 - Waterlooville Library
- 4.4 Havant Citizen's Advice offers a broad range of advice services, a list of those services can be found at Appendix B.
- 4.5 Details of the provision of advice services at the various locations can also be found at Appendix B. Key points to note are:
- Appointments are only offered during the working day, Mon – Fri
 - No appointment based service on weekends or Bank Holidays
 - Most customers are required to book appointments rather than be seen at the point of contact
- 4.6 The Council's Housing and Benefits services advise clients that they can approach Havant Citizen's Advice, amongst other organisations, for independent advice, for example they may have been refused re-housing or may be being pursued for overpayment of housing benefits.

Funding Havant Citizen's Advice

- 4.7 Havant Citizen's Advice funding amounts over the past 5 years are as follows:

Year	Grant Amount	% reduction
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2013/14	141,200	nil
2014/15	141,000	nil
2015/16	127,080	10%
2016/17	127,380	nil
2017/18	114,300	10%

- 4.8 In addition to the core grant Havant Citizen's Advice receive from the council there is a historical arrangement in place which gives them allocated space within the Leigh Park Community Centre for which they only pay a Service Charge to the leaseholder of the building. There is no rent payable for their main space although they do pay separately for three additional rooms within the Centre.
- 4.9 As well as receiving funding from HBC, Havant Citizen's Advice receives external funding from the Big Lottery for specific project work which also contributes to their core funding.

Current situation

- 4.10 Contact between HBC and Havant Citizen's Advice is rare and whilst the Council has an appointed Cllr to this outside body the only other contact we have is usually at the time of reviewing the grant. A copy of their latest report is attached at Appendix C
- 4.11 The Service Level Agreement ended in 2008 and ever since has been held over on the same terms; in fact the current CEO of Havant Citizen's Advice appeared unaware of this SLA and has since been sent a copy.

5.0 Summary and conclusion

- 5.1 The decision relating to the service delivery and how our grant is spent is driven by Havant Citizen's Advice with no input from HBC.
- 5.2 There are other service providers in the vicinity that would theoretically be able to provide a service to residents.
- 5.3 Citizen's Advice services work within a local authority boundary and do not infringe on another Citizen's Advice area.
- 5.4 The commissioned specialist advice service will be developed with an implementation date of April 2018.
- 5.5 It would be financially prudent to challenge those applying for this Commission to deliver an extended service at a reduced cost.

6.0 Implications

Resources

- 6.1 In 2017/18, the Council has a budget of £114k to deliver an advice service. Due to the ongoing budgetary pressures the Council face it would be prudent to make

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financial savings through this process and enable some financial forward planning.

Legal

- 6.2 As neither party has signed a new Service Level Agreement, the conditions in the previous SLA still hold. The previous SLA does not contain a termination clause.

Strategy

- 6.4 The provision of advice services contributes to the Council's overarching aim of improving people's lives.
- 6.5 The commissioning of advice services meets the Council's aspiration to deliver alternative methods of service delivery.

Risks

- 6.6 There is a potential reputational risk to the Council if notice were to be served on Havant Citizen's Advice. Citizen's Advice organisations are well known nationally and are funded by local authorities. A change to this arrangement in Havant would attract media interest.
- 6.7 Advice can be taken from Portsmouth City Council and East Hampshire District Council who have both been through this process on how to mitigate the impact of negative publicity.

Communications

- 6.8 A full communications plan would be entered into should the decision be made to serve a 6 month notice on Havant Citizen's Advice.

For the Community

- 6.9 The provision of free of charge advice services is a service accessed by all across the community.

Integrated Impact Assessment

- 6.10 An Integrated Impact Assessment will be done as part of the preparation for commissioning.

Consultation

- 6.11 In developing a commissioning proposal for advice services the following people and organisations were consulted:
- Cllr Leah Turner, Cabinet Lead
 - Tracey Wood, Head of Housing and Community Engagement
 - Lydia Forbes-Mason, Communications Manager

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Signed off by:

Cabinet Lead for Communities and Housing: 30/8/17

Head of Housing and Community: 30/8/17

Head of Legal: 30/8/17

Head of Finance 31/8/17

Contact Officer:

Nicki Conyard

Community Manager

Ext: 446279

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Appendix A

ADVICE ORGANISATIONS

<p>Generalist advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age UK• Havant Citizen's Advice• HBC• Hampshire County Council• Off the Record• Portsmouth University – the general legal advice clinic• Rethink Mental Illness – Central Point• Silverline• Youth Tube <p>Debt & money advice services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debt Advice Foundation• Debt Support Trust• Frontline Debt Advice UK• Money Advice Service• My Money Steps• National Debt line• Payplan• Portsmouth University – the general legal advice clinic• Step Change• Work Out Your Money (CAB) <p>Relationship advice services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Off the Record• Relate <p>Consumer advice services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumer helpline (CAB)• Trading Standards <p>Safeguarding advice services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action on Elder Abuse• Aurora New Dawn• Broken Rainbow• ChildLine• Life Centre• Men's Advice line• Missing People• NSPCC• Police Protection Dept – safeguarding• Rape Crisis• Refuge domestic violence helpline• Respect Phone line• Rethink Mental Illness – Central Point• Samaritans• Southern Domestic Abuse Service• Swains Solicitors domestic helpline• The Hampton Trust• Victim Support	<p>Employment advice services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACAS• Enterprise First• Job Centre Plus• National Careers Service• Rethink Mental Illness – Central Point• Sector Skills Service• Solent Mind Employment Advice• The Wearsheaf Trust• Youth Tube <p>Housing Advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Havant Housing Association• Help to Buy South• Radian Housing Group• Shelter• The Guinness Partnership• The Housing Advice Service <p>Law & Rights Advice Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competition Pro Bono Scheme• Coram CLC• Fathers 4 Justice• Liberty Human Rights• NYAS• Ports Uni – the general legal advice clinic• Rights of Women• The Civil Legal Advice helpline <p>Health advice services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alzheimer's Society• Brook• Carers Centre• Carers Direct• Counselling directory• CQC• Gamblers Anonymous• Hampshire Care Choice• Hampshire Local Officer• HASAG• Healthwatch• Macmillan• MIND• National Gambling helpline• NHS 111• NHS lets talk about it• PAPAA• Ports Autism support network• Ports Hospital NHS Trust• Quit4life• Rethink Mental Illness – Central Point• Southern Health NHS Trust• Princess Royal Trust for Carers
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Appendix B

HAVANT CITIZEN'S ADVICE – AT A GLANCE ADVICE SERVICES DATES/TIMES

Advice services

- Benefits
- Money matters
- Employment
- Housing
- Relationships and family
- Macmillan
- Healthwatch
- Pensions
- Other (consumer, discrimination, education, immigration, health, government, legal, tax, travel)

2017 Service offer

	Leigh Park	Waterlooville	Hayling Island	Public Service Plaza
Monday	10am – 1pm weekly Closed Bank Holidays	10am – 2pm weekly Closed Bank Holidays		
Tuesday				10am – 2pm weekly
Wednesday	10am – 3pm weekly			
Thursday		10am – 2pm weekly 3pm – 6pm second and fourth Thursday of each month	10am – 2pm weekly	
Friday	10am – 1pm weekly			
Saturday				
Sunday				

No service offer on Bank Holidays