

Report of:	Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health, Public Protection and Digital Inclusion Director of Public Health
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	24 January 2023
Title:	Re-procurement of a Bereavement and Suicide Postvention Support Service (South Tees)
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Strategic priority:	Vulnerability
Key decision:	Yes
Why:	Decision(s) will incur expenditure or savings above £150,000 and have a significant impact in two or more wards
Urgent:	No
Why:	Not Applicable

Executive summary

This purpose of this report is to seek approval for Middlesbrough Council to undertake re-procurement for a Bereavement and Suicide Postvention Support Service with a view to commence 1st April 2023 for a period of 3 years with an option to extend dependant on funding.

A Bereavement and Suicide Postvention Support Service has been commissioned through the public health grant since 2016. The current contract will expire 31st March 2023 with no remaining options to extend.

Retention of bereavement and postvention support provision is required to promote the emotional and mental wellbeing of bereaved people of all ages across our borough to enable them to understand their grief and cope with their loss. To support those bereaved or affected by suicide, to support recovery and to prevent adverse outcomes, including suicide and suicidal ideation and healthy recovery of the affected community

The demand for bereavement services and specific suicide postvention bereavement support continues to be consistently high and is a key area of action in the Preventing Suicide in England Strategy and the Tees Suicide Prevention Implementation Plan – “To provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide”

Relevant Officers from across Middlesbrough Council have considered and inputted into the paper.

Purpose

1. To seek approval for Middlesbrough to undertake re-procurement of a Bereavement and Suicide Postvention Support service across South Tees with a view to commence the new service on 1st April 2023 for a period of 3 years with optional extension of a further 2 years subject to funding.

Background and relevant information

2. Since April 2016, Cruse Bereavement Support Ltd has been the commissioned provider of Bereavement Services (specialist bereavement and suicide postvention support) to provide emotional and wellbeing support to people bereaved of all ages. The contract commissioned through the public health grant is due to expire 31st March 2023.
3. Bereavement support services promote the emotional and mental wellbeing of bereaved people of all ages to enable them to understand their grief and cope with their loss. Postvention describes interventions developed by, with, for people who have been bereaved or affected by suicide, to support recovery and to prevent adverse outcomes, including suicide and suicidal ideation and healthy recovery of the affected community
4. Research shows that bereavement by suicide is linked to a number of negative health and social outcomes. This includes depression and an increased risk of suicide and suicide attempts. The wide reaching impact of each suicide means that being bereaved or affected by suicide is not an uncommon experience. Estimates vary on how many people are affected by each suicide, ranging from six to 60 people. Support after suicide should be available to people throughout the deceased individual's social network, as well as to health professionals and others affected by the suicide.
5. Provision of timely information and support to those bereaved is a key preventative measure to improve resilience and minimising suicide contagion or the development of complicated grief reactions.
6. The demand for bereavement services and specific suicide postvention bereavement support continues to be consistently high and is a key area of action in the Preventing Suicide in England Strategy and the Tees Suicide Prevention Implementation Plan – "To provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide".
7. Local and nationally there has been an increase in excess deaths and Covid-19 related deaths, as well as complications that covid-19 restrictions brought to the grieving processes. This has caused an increase in demand for specialist bereavement support services, alongside increasing complexity in the difficulties faced by those who are grieving the loss of someone close to them.
8. The new contract will introduce an enhanced element of support to those bereaved where drugs and alcohol may have been a factor.

What decision(s) are being recommended?

9. That the Executive:
 - Approves for Middlesbrough to be part of a re-procurement of a South Tees Bereavement and Postvention Support Service with a view to commence the new

service on 1st April 2023 for a period of 3 years with 2 year optional extensions.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

10. Current contract with incumbent provider will end 31st March 2023 and there are no remaining options to extend. Request to re-procure and retain a bereavement and suicide postvention support offer for our local residents of all ages
11. A South Tees contract with shared specification and pathway referral ensures economies of scale and options for access to support.
12. The demand for bereavement services and specific suicide postvention bereavement support continues to be consistently high and is a key area of action in the Preventing Suicide in England Strategy and the Tees Suicide Prevention Implementation Plan – “To provide better information and support to those bereaved or affected by suicide”

Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended

13. See above.
14. Option of ‘do nothing’. We would not have a specialist bereavement service that can support local people of all ages and provides effective and timely support for those bereaved or affected by suicide.

Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Legal

15. The legal processes, procurement processes and documentation used for the re-procurement will be that of the lead authority, Middlesbrough Council, and all commission partners agree to this.

Strategic priorities and risks

16. The key risks identified for the re-procurement of bereavement and postvention services across South Tees are:
 - Procurement strategy not agreed by all parties.
 - Lack of market interest, which may require negotiation with the incumbent provider
 - Re-procuring in a short timescale
17. The funding that Middlesbrough contribute to the South Tees Bereavement Support service is not enough to commission a bereavement and postvention service in isolation and this is a service area where the councils need to collaborate to benefit from economies of scale.

Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection

18. Equality Impact Assessment not required as a universal service with equitable access for all who need it, therefore there is no specific equality/diversity implications.

Financial

19. Bereavement and suicide postvention support services will be funded through the ring fenced Public Health Grant for Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland. The maximum annual cost for South Tees Service is £69,160.00. The maximum value of contract for South Tees (5 years including 2 years optional extension) is £345,800.00

Middlesbrough Finance Business Partner

The proposal (assuming 5 years) consists of £175,800 from Middlesbrough and £170,000 from Redcar & Cleveland. I can confirm Middlesbrough Council has allocated £35,160 per annum from the Public Health Grant (5 x £35,160 = £175,800).

Accountant, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council Redcar & Cleveland confirms approval of the proposal by the budget holder. £29,000 per year for 3 years has been allocated from the Public Health Grant from 1/4/2023 with the option for 2 years extension. The budget holder has confirmed their intention to fund the DARD project £5k per year from 1.4.2023 (for 3 years with the option to extend for 2 further years) from RCBC Public Health Earmarked Reserves.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Service specifications and all procurement documentation completed	Mark Adams	December 2022
Tees Valley Collaborative contract completed between participating authorities (Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland)	Mark Adams	January 2023
Procurement advertised via Procontract (open quotation)	Mark Adams	January 2023
Procurement evaluation process undertaken	Mark Adams	February 2023
Contract awarded and mobilisation commences	Mark Adams	March 2023
South Tees Bereavement and postvention Service commences	Mark Adams	1 st April 2023

Appendices

1	None
2	
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Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report