



To: Executive Councillor for Housing  
Report by: Alan Carter  
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community 10/7/2014  
Services  
Scrutiny  
Committee  
Wards affected: Abbey Arbury Castle Cherry Hinton Coleridge  
East Chesterton King's Hedges Market Newnham  
Petersfield Queen Edith's Romsey Trumpington  
West Chesterton

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY (Cambs HIA) -  
EXTENSION OF CONTRACT  
Not a Key Decision**

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**1. Executive summary**

The City Council has a shared service agreement with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council to provide a joint home improvement agency service. The agreement expires at the end of March 2015. The shared service known as Cambs HIA has been a successful venture in sustaining services previously delivered independently by the respective district councils at a reduced cost. The Government has introduced the Better Care Fund which presents opportunities to develop Cambs HIA further. The report recommends that the current shared service agreement be extended until March 2016 to allow these opportunities to be considered and accommodated.

**2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended:

Agree to extend the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency Shared Service Agreement to the end of March 2016.

**3. Background**

Home Improvement Agencies (HIA) assist people who are elderly or vulnerable, who have disability needs, or who are on a low income to remain in their own homes in greater comfort and safety. They do this by

providing practical or financial advice and support to repair, maintain or adapt homes.

A thorough review of HIA services in Cambridgeshire was carried out over a two year period from 2007. After much deliberation, the outcome of the review was a decision to work towards a shared service for Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambs HIA was set up from April 2012. A countywide service was considered but due to existing contract obligations in the Fenland and East Cambridgeshire districts, it was decided not to pursue this option at that time.

The following is a link to the Cambs HIA web-site that includes more information on its role and objectives.

[www.Cambshia.org](http://www.Cambshia.org)

On the web-site and enclosed with this Committee report is a copy of Cambs HIA Annual Review which provides summary service and performance data.

The services provided by Cambs HIA facilitate positive health and wellbeing outcomes for residents that are central to the 'preventative' agendas of social care and health sector agendas.

The Government has recently introduced a programme called the 'Better Care Fund'. This aims to drive systemic change and efficiency in the way that social care and health services interact to prevent poor health and earlier than necessary hospital admissions or longer than necessary hospital stays. For Cambridgeshire, in effect, £38m of existing funding is to be uncoupled from health services and offered for 'transformational' preventative services. The new services are due to start from April 2015. The nature of Cambs HIA services, particularly (but not exclusively), its services for older people, make it a central for consideration under the Better Care Fund. Although the Cambs HIA service can evolve

The request to extend the existing shared service agreement that governs Cambs HIA to the end of March 2016 will allow any opportunities brought about by the Better Care Fund to be considered and accommodated.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

In revenue terms Cambs HIA made a surplus of £8,308 in 2013.14. For the City Council this translates as movement from a position where the

Council's previous independent service was being subsidised by the General Fund by about £40,000 a year (direct financial comparison is difficult).

The service is budgeted to break even again in 2014.15 and the financial risk in extending the contract to the end of March 2016 is low.

(b) **Staffing Implications** (if not covered in Consultations Section)

There are no staffing implications in extending the contract to the end of March 2016.

(c) **Equality & Poverty Implication**

An EQIA was carried out when Cambs HIA was set up. There have been no significant changes to the service since. The service will review its Business Plan in the context of the Better Care Fund and the EQIA will be up-dated accordingly.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

There are no particular environmental implications in extending the contract to the end of March 2016.

(e) **Procurement**

There are no procurement implications in extending the contract to the end of March 2016

(f) **Consultation and communication**

The Cambs HIA Manager and other senior officers of the City Council are directly involved in the Better Care Fund.

A part of its communications strategy a presentation was given by the Cambs HIA Manager to the Local Health Partnership Board.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no particular community safety implications in extending the contract to the end of March 2016.

## **5. Background papers**

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None.

## **6. Appendices**

None.

## **7. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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