



To: Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Kevin Price
Report by: Alan Carter – Head of Strategic Housing
Relevant scrutiny committee: Housing 30/06/15
Scrutiny Committee
Wards affected: All

Cambs HIA - Renewal of Shared Service Agreement and Extension of Coverage of Service to cover East Cambridgeshire District Council.

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

Cambs HIA has been in operation for three years as a shared service between the City Council, South Cambs DC and Hunts DC. The current shared service agreement terminates at the end of March 2016. The City Council is the lead authority.

At the same time as renewing the agreement there is the opportunity to accept East Cambs DC as a new partner.

HIAs are seen as high value/low cost services that contribute significantly to the health and social care prevention agenda.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve;

- a. the renewal of the shared service agreement in respect of that Cambs HIA until 2018.19 inclusive,
- b. the extension of the service to cover East Cambridgeshire District Council.

Note – The same approvals are being sought from the current partners to Cambs HIA – South Cambs DC and Huntingdonshire DC - and the prospective new partners East Cambs DC.

3. Background

Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (Cambs HIA) was set up as a shared service in 2012.13 between the City Council, South Cambs DC and Hunts DC.

The Cambs HIA enables the Council to meet statutory duties under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 to award Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) assisting vulnerable people carry out essential adaptations subject to qualifying conditions. The HIA service also assists people to maintain, repair and improve their homes to make them safe and suitable. Discretionary Repairs Assistance Grants or loans help owner occupiers and private tenants with repairing responsibility to carry out essential repairs to their homes

Cambs HIA works with people of all ages, who may be living with complex conditions or are terminally ill. The service also offers a wide range of information and has an extensive network of contacts about useful services.

The main client group is people who own or privately rent their homes.

The shared service arrangement has been successful for the Council as the number of people benefiting from the service has been maintained and the quality of the service has improved and has become more consistent. At the same time the General Fund no longer subsidises the revenue cost of the service. This represents a saving of approximately £40,000 a year.

Key performance data is shown in the Appendix but headline figures for 2014.15 for the City Council are;

Number of enquiries - 216

Number of Disabled Facilities Grants completed - 64

Number of Discretionary Repairs Assistance Grants completed – 33

HIAs are seen as high value/low cost services that contribute significantly to the health and social care prevention agenda. The County Council and the local agencies therefore support Cambs HIA with considerable revenue funding. The continuation of the service and its extension of the service across East Cambs DC will be welcomed by the County and the local health agencies as well as offering a consistency of service to the local ageing population and enhance the robustness of the service to the benefit of all partners.

The current shared service agreement terminates at the end of March 2016. The City Council is the lead authority.

Each current partner can terminate its involvement in the shared service agreement or agree to renew the agreement.

At the same time as renewing the agreement there is the opportunity to accept East Cambs DC as a new partner. The Appendix is the Business Case for Cambs HIA to be extended to cover East Cambs DC.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The operation of Cambs HIA is funded through a combination of fees charged to the capital adaptation and repair works that it project manages and revenue funding from the County Council and CCG.

The following is a summary of the budget for Cambs HIA for 2015.16

Income (£)	
Fees	310,000
County Council	186,650
CCG	47,280
Total	543,930
Expenditure (£)	534,910
Surplus	9,020

The table below serves to demonstrate that Cambs HIA will be at no greater financial risk by extending the service across East Cambs DC. Indeed, if East Cambs become a partner this will facilitate a restructure that would result in an improved financial position.

Scenario (£)	Income	Expend	Surplus	Comment
CHIA -3 partners	543,930	534,910	(9,020)	2016/17 projected deficit £5,780 2017/18 projected deficit £21,010
CHIA – 4 partners on joining	688,000	679,036	(8,964)	2016/17 projected deficit £9,740 2017/18 projected deficit £28,950
CHIA – 4 partners with restructure	688,000	661,676	(26,324)	2016/17 projected surplus £8,110 2017/18 projected deficit £10,590

The figures in the table are based on the following key assumptions:

- To be able to compare scenarios East Cambs DC became partners from April 2015.

- Local authority DFG and Repairs Assistance capital funding will continue at or close to current levels
- County Council Social Services and Health revenue funding will continue
- Private fee income and grants from other sources continue at 15/16 levels including ECDC

Note – Although the table above shows a deteriorating financial position under all scenarios this is based on the worst case assumptions. Clearly mitigating steps would be put in place around cost savings or income generation to avoid the service moving into deficit.

Set up costs of up to £18,786 to facilitate the extension of the service to East Cambs DC will be met by them. This includes ICT equipment at the East Cambs DC satellite office plus office facilities and equipment for the extended operation. Liability for costs related to staff who do not transfer to Cambs HIA are not included in this figure and would also be the responsibility of East Cambs DC.

(b) Staffing Implications

Three officers employed by East Cambs DC would be the subject of TUPE transfer to the City Council if approval is given to proceed with the extension of the service to East Cambs.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

DFGs and Discretionary Repairs Assistance Grants are means tested grants by statute and therefore are available to those on lower incomes.

An EQIA was completed when the shared service was set up and the essence of the service and its core customer base has not changed.

(d) Environmental Implications

Cambs HIA offers advice to its customers on the availability of other grants and loans available to improve the energy efficiency and warmth of their homes.

(e) Procurement

There are no procurement implications associated with this report.

(f) Consultation and communication

Consultation on this proposal has mainly been with key stakeholders ie senior officers representing East Cambs DC the County Council.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no community safety implications associated with this report.

5. Background papers

None.

6. Appendices

Appendix -

***EXTENDING THE SHARED HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY SERVICE
(CAMBS HIA)***

7. Inspection of papers

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

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