

17. BEFRIENDING SERVICE

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Social Policy seeking approval for the development of a new Befriending Service for Older People and the proposed process for the procurement of the service.

The Head of Social Policy explained that as part of the Reshaping Care for Older People the council allocated £720,000 in 2012/13 from the revenue budget as a contribution towards the overall strategy. Some of the funding was unallocated and some was allocated to specific proposals.

One of the proposals was the development of the Befriending Service for Older People for which an allocation of £160,000 was made for the next three years. The proposed service specification envisages a service delivered through a mix of channels including face to face support as well as telephone support, further details of which were summarised in the report.

It was envisaged when working at full capacity the Befriending Service would be able to engage with and support up to 400 older people per annum. A number of approaches would be used to assess the effectiveness of the service one of which would be the national community care outcomes which were built into the Single Shared Assessment Process. In addition annual anonymised service user surveys would be conducted to measure the Befriending Service overall effectiveness in delivering desired outcomes for older people.

Additionally because of the overall value of the contract it would be necessary to use the public sector procurement portal to facilitate the process and it was also proposed that a separate communication would be sent to local voluntary organisations using the Voluntary Sector Gateway.

It was recommended that the Council Executive approve the details of the proposed new Befriending Service for Older People and the proposed process for procurement of the service.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.