

Decision Maker: ADULT CARE AND HEALTH POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 27 June 2023

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: VIBRANCE DIRECT PAYMENTS SUPPORT AND PAYROLL SERVICE PROVIDER – CONTRACT MONITORING

Contact Officer: Vera Spicer, Commissioning Officer
Tel: 0208 4617844 E-mail: vera.spicer@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Kim Carey – Director of Adult Social Care Services

Ward: All Wards

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 Vibrance is the Council's Direct Payments Support and Payroll Service provider. The annual monitoring report is being presented in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which specify the requirement to provide updates for the Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on how the service performed in the previous financial year from April 2022 to March 2023.
 - 1.2 The current contract was awarded to Vibrance in November 2020. It started in April 2021 for a five-year period with the option to extend for up to two years to April 2028.
-

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee:

- 2.1 are requested to note the content of this contract monitoring report on the performance of Vibrance in delivering the Direct Payments Support and Payroll Service Contract.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: To ensure ongoing, suitable community-based provision for people using Direct Payments.
-

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:
(2) For adults and older people to enjoy fulfilled and successful lives in Bromley, ageing well, retaining independence, and making choices.
(5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Non-Recurring Cost
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Payroll service and Information, Advice & Guidance.
 4. Total current budget for this head: Please refer to contract award report ACH20-067– Part 2
 5. Source of funding: Council's general fund
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
-

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
-

Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): Around 500 people
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The London Borough of Bromley has a statutory duty to offer a Direct Payment to people who have been assessed as having an eligible social care and support need. Direct Payments (DP) are sums of money (personal budgets) paid to people who have been assessed by the local authority as meeting the eligibility criteria for social care and support services. Any person eligible for community based social care and support provided by the Council may choose to have this support made through a DP.
- 3.2 The Direct Payments Support and Payroll service supports the Council to meet its statutory duties as required by the Care Act 2014, the Care and Support (Direct Payments) Regulations 2014, Equality Act, Children Act 1989, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Children and Families Act 2014. Commissioned services must also conform to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and the Modern-Day Slavery Act 2015.
- 3.3 The Council is committed to promoting choice and independence for vulnerable residents living in the borough and who are eligible to receive support services; and believes that Direct Payments and the provision of independent support, advice and payroll services are key to achieving this.

Access to the service is by referral from Adult Social Care and Children's services. The client groups supported under this contract include:

- Adults with disabilities or Chronic ill health, aged 18 and over,
 - Adults with learning disability,
 - Adults with mental health issues,
 - Older people,
 - Children with disabilities aged 16 and 17,
 - A person with parental responsibility for a disabled child up to 18,
 - A client assessed as requiring support services under the Care Act 2014, the Children Act 1989 and the Children and Families Act 2014.
- 3.4 A DP allows people to receive cash payments from their local authority in place of care services and gives people more flexibility and greater choice and control on how their support service is arranged. A DP can be used to purchase the following:
- Personal Care,
 - Domiciliary Care,
 - Short Term Breaks,
 - Day Care,
 - Assistance to attend an activity,
 - Services including equipment to help meet people's assessed needs.
- 3.5 The service enables clients to maintain day to day control of their money and support packages; have the opportunity to make informed choices independently on how their eligible care needs are met, and how best to match available resources to meet their needs. The service must be flexible to meet the changing needs of clients.

Service Profile / Data Analysis / Specification

- 3.6 The Direct Payments Support and Payroll Service provided by Vibrance includes the following elements:

- Information, advice, and guidance related to being an employer and personal assistant support, including identifying training providers and funding for training.
- A range of payroll and managed holding accounts.
- Personal assistant recruitment and register service.
- Complete innovation care and support planning and brokerage service (must be agreed in advance)
- Disclosure and Barring Service and right to work checks for personal assistants.

Continuous Improvement and Value for Money

- 3.7 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are part of the performance monitoring and must be submitted on a quarterly basis. Contract Management meetings are held quarterly and the KPIs are used as a basis for monitoring performance and highlighting areas that may require improvement. The KPIs refer to quantitative activity that is carried out by the provider and this is monitored by the contract manager.
- 3.8 The provider has either met or exceeded the vast majority of their targets for the previous financial year (Appendix 1). On a couple of KPIs related to the period between referral and first visit or period between the first visit and the service user using their DP, they fell a bit short. This was due to either people wanting to identify their PA before going ahead with the meeting or due to the service user and representative availability.
- 3.9 In addition to the monitoring actions of the commissioning team, the robustness of performance oversight is supported by the Council's Contract Compliance Team. The Team monitors all the aspects and requirements of the contract using the Quality Assessment Form (QAF). The QAF provides both LBB and the provider valuable information, and if any areas of improvement are identified, action plans are drawn up with the provider and improvements monitored via repeat inspections.
- 3.10 More than 45% of the DP users in Bromley use a Personal Assistant, the highest percentage of any other borough where Vibrance works which stands at an average of 30%. There has been an initiative to increase the number of Direct Payments in the borough over the last year. LBB and Vibrance agreed a business plan to increase the number of personal assistants in Bromley.
- 3.11 The business plan included billboard advertising in Bromley and Orpington, promotion at job centres, leaflet distribution to promote the role, social media advertisements including a promotion detailing "A Day in the life of a PA". Vibrance also attended many recruitment events including a large Health and Social Recruitment event hosted by the Prince's Trust for young people across London.
- 3.12 LBB has a good working relationship with Vibrance which has been built over the duration of the contract thus far. An example of this is where the Commissioning Service were recently able to negotiate a significant saving on their contracted rate increase. This demonstrates the importance and benefit of good contract and relationship management between the Council and the provider.

4. SOCIAL VALUE, CARBON REDUCTION AND LOCAL / NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- 4.1 Social value formed part of the formal evaluation process for this contract. This service provides economic and social value by developing local employment opportunities, including work experience and apprenticeships for students and NEET young people. Vibrance has an active apprenticeship programme, they also offer volunteering opportunities through their peer support activity, enabling people to use their personal experience to empower others on a 1:1 and group basis. They also offer supported employment opportunities and have invested resources in developing better pathways for disabled people to achieve paid employment by developing skills in job carving and mentoring. They have their own online Personal Assistant register (www.linkmeup.org.uk) enabling people to promote themselves, their skills and their experiences. They champion better terms and conditions of employment for PAs (access to training, employment assistance programmes, and sick leave). On average they facilitate the employment of 10 people into new or additional employment each quarter in Bromley.
- 4.2 Vibrance has an embedded Environmental and Sustainability Policy which has been co-produced with people using their services. This includes reducing energy use and managing waste. Each service is required to develop their own local Going Green Action Plan. For their Bromley Direct Payment Service, their plan includes targets for using LED Lights, removal of paper bins to encourage recycling, guidance for purchasing equipment and reducing staff travel/mileage. Their Central Services Team are located in 'The Greenhouse' in Bethnal Green; this is part of the Ethical Property Group and has a BREEAM (www.breeam.com/) excellent rating.
- 4.3 Vibrance also works with voluntary and community sector partners as they seek to engage with all community groups and to challenge barriers that prevent people accessing services. They also invest in the principles of the Social Model of Disability and recognise the value of community connecting as a method of breaking down barriers for disabled people. They support opportunities that add social value by promoting positive community relationships and promote healthier communities.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT / USER SATISFACTION

- 5.1 Vibrance's most recent customer satisfaction survey was sent out in April 2023 by post and online. It asked for feedback on the service, staff and how Direct Payments and their support has enabled them to achieve the service user outcomes, outlined in the specification. The response rate was only 8.5% but still in line with previous years and with similar surveys by similar providers on SurveyMonkey. This could be because people generally lead busy lives, so usually respond to surveys if they have issues to raise. Vibrance are still analysing responses, but the feedback has been generally positive. Where it wasn't, it was either because service users answered the questions with "Neither agree, nor disagree" or because some service users had raised issues.
- 5.2 Vibrance will be addressing any issues raised by service users and will implement an action plan to improve their experience. They will also be looking to trial their multiple-choice answers and remove "Neither agree, nor disagree" option to encourage service users to express themselves and have their say regardless of whether it's negative or positive feedback.
- 5.3 Overall, the feedback relating to Vibrance was positive:
- 79% of new DP recipients agreed that Vibrance had explained our role in a clear and understandable way.
 - 73% agreed that Vibrance provided sufficient information and support to make informed decisions

- 87% strongly agreed or agreed that they find the Vibrance team to be polite
- 77% strongly agreed or agreed that they find the Vibrance team easy to contact
- 77% would recommend Vibrance Direct Payment Support to others

6. PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT ISSUES

6.1 Not Applicable

7. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Please refer to Transformation Policy above.

8. IT AND GDPR CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 N/A

9. STRATEGIC PROPERTY CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 N/A

10. PROCUREMENT CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 In line with 23.2 of the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules, an annual report must be submitted to the Portfolio Holder for all contracts with a value higher than £500k.

11. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 N/A

12. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 N/A

13. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

13.1 N/A

Non-Applicable Headings:	6-8-9-11-12-13
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Appendix 1 - Outcomes, Referrals and Key Performance Indicators

Appendix 1

DESIRED CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

NOTE: All the information below is to be recorded separately for children and adults. Conversation/contact must be made to the Care Management regarding any anticipated delays in the referrals process e.g. service user declining DP, joint visit with care management.

An Outcome Focused Service User Satisfaction Survey (based on the outcomes below) must be handed out at the initial meeting with service user for completion after their Direct Payments has been setup. By supporting clients to use Direct Payments, the Service is expected to deliver the following outcomes to clients and their carers.

Outcomes	Indicators	Evidence
1) I feel supported and enabled to exercise Choice and Control in meeting my needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Clients define and realise goals and aspirations through support planning, mutual support and provision of advice and information.</i> ▪ <i>Clients define when, how and by whom support is provided.</i> ▪ <i>People from black and minority ethnic communities are enabled to access services appropriate to them.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual person centred Support Schedules ▪ Outcomes of reviews ▪ Client feedback
2) My Health and wellbeing is supported and maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Quality of life is improved through access to appropriate individualised support</i> ▪ <i>Physical and mental well-being is positively maintained to their highest possible level.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Numbers progressing to higher level services ▪ Access to health related activities ▪ User feedback.
3) My Independence is actively promoted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Clients develop, regain or retain skills required for independence</i> ▪ <i>Clients acquire new skills e.g. staff management, organisational, financial;</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activity Schedules ▪ Support Schedules ▪ Client feedback
4) My family is supported in maintaining their caring role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Carers receive regular breaks and access to advice and information.</i> ▪ <i>Carers' are able to purchase service solutions that provide support tailored to meet their needs, life style and other commitments, supporting their ability to continue caring</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carers Assessment ▪ Feedback from carers (Via User satisfaction Survey)

DP Support & Advice Referrals

	Target	Qtr 1		Qtr 2		Qtr 3		Qtr 4		Total Yr
Number of referrals within Quarter		54	%	47	%	35	%	49	%	185
Carers		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children		25	46	14	30	13	37	9	18	61
LD		2	4	6	13	2	6	14	29	24
MH		1	2	0	0	3	9	0	0	4
Older people		14	26	10	21	7	20	9	18	40
Physical & Sensory		7	13	14	30	10	29	13	27	44
Personal Health Budget		0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	2
Not specified		5	9	4	9	0	0	2	4	11
Gender										
Male		30	56	21	45	21	60	26	53	98
Female		24	44	26	55	14	40	23	47	87
Not specified		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age										
Under 18		26	48	14	30	13	37	9	18	62
18-25		4	7	8	17	2	6	5	10	19
26-64		12	22	14	30	13	37	18	37	57
65 plus		12	22	11	23	7	20	17	35	47
Not specified		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of clients contacted within:										
3 days of referral	95%	51	94	47	100	34	97	48	98	180
5 days of referral		3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Over 5 days of referral		0	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	2
Number of clients visited within:										
10 days of referral	75%	34	77	23	64	16	59	22	76	73%
20 days of referral		10	23	8	22	6	22	3	10	21%
Over 20 days of referral		0	0	5	14	5	19	4	14	11%
Total Visits/Initial Meetings		44	81	36	77	27	77	29	59	130
Telephone Support only		7		7		4		12		30
Visit pending		1		4		4		11		N/A
Number of clients no longer requiring DP (referred in quarter)		0	0	10	21	5	14	3	6	N/A
Number of DPs set-up within quarter (at end of quarter)		42	N/A	32	N/A	29	N/A	40	N/A	143

Number of clients recruiting independently		25	60	19	61	15	52	20	50	79
Number of clients recruiting with support from Vibrance /through PA register		6	14	6	19	4	14	5	12.5	21
Number of clients accessing services / Self employed		11	26	5	16	10	34	15	37.5	41
Number of clients using mixed package (e.g. PA and agency)		0	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	2
Number of clients returning to the contractor for further assistance (see additional info)		25	N/A	29	N/A	40	N/A	34	N/A	128
PA recruitment										
Recruitment completed in less than 2 weeks from initial visit		24	77	17	68	14	74	25	100	80
Recruitment completed in between 2-4 weeks from initial visit		3	10	2	8	2	11	0	0	7
Recruitment completed in between 4-8 weeks from initial visit		2	6	5	20	2	11	0	0	9
Total PAs recruited in 8 weeks	95% within 8 Weeks	29	94%	24	96	18	95	25	100	96%
Number of PAs recruited to the register		6	N/A	6	N/A	7	N/A	5	N/A	24
Number of Active PA's on the register		52	N/A	38	N/A	41	N/A	41	N/A	172
Number of PAs leaving the register		0	N/A	14	N/A	1	N/A	1	N/A	16
Number of Compliments		0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	1	N/A	1
Number of Complaints		0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	1	N/A	1
Number of safeguarding alerts raised		0	N/A	0	N/A	1	N/A	0	N/A	1
Level of satisfaction from annual satisfaction survey	90%	75		75		75		77		n/a

	No.	Performance Indicator	Target	Monitoring Information	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Average Q4	Narrative (Q4)
INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE	1	Period between the initial referral and making contact with the service user	95% within 3 working days	Quarterly monitoring report	94%	100%	97%	98%	< 1 day	
	2	Period between referral and date of the first visit to the service user	75% within 7 working days (10 days in total from referral)	Quarterly monitoring report	77%	64%	59%	76%	10 days	Of 49 referrals, 29 have had initial visits. Of these 22 (76%) have been within 10 working days. The main reason for delay was due to SU/rep availability, or that people wanted to identify their PA before going ahead with the meeting.
	3	Period between first visit and service user starts using DP (when PA already identified)	75% within 20 working days	Quarterly monitoring report	88%	79%	80%	100%	2 days	
	4	Period between first visit and service user starts using DP (when PA needs to be recruited)	75% within 40 working days	Quarterly monitoring report	50%	67%	75%	100%	9 days	
	5	Number of complaints dealt with in compliance with the providers internal QA system and procedures	98%	Quarterly monitoring report	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	6	Number of complaints (IAG)	Less than 5 % of referrals in the quarter	Quarterly monitoring report	0	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	
	7	Safeguarding - the numbers and % DBS application and reference checks for LinkMeUp PAs	100% of PAs have DBS and at least one reference taken up	Quarterly monitoring report	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	All LMU PAs have DBS and 2 x references as part of sign up process
	8	Level of service user satisfaction	90% satisfied	Annual satisfaction survey	75	75	75	77	N/A	Taken from 22/23 survey (carried out Q4)
PAYROLL SERVICE	1	Period between set up notification and set up as an employer with HMRC	95% within 5 working days	Quarterly monitoring report	96%	97%	97%	96%		
	2	Number of complaints dealt with in compliance with the providers internal QA system and procedures	98%	Quarterly monitoring report	N/A	100%	N/A	100%		
	3	Number of complaints (Payroll)	Less than 5 % of referrals in the quarter	Quarterly monitoring report	0	1	0	1		
	4	Level of service user satisfaction	90% satisfied	Annual satisfaction survey	75%	75%	75%	77%		Taken from 22/23 survey (carried out Q4)
	5	Accuracy level for payrolls processed including return to HMRC	95%	Quarterly monitoring report	100%	98%	99%	99%		
	6	Number of pension auto enrolments completed within legislative timelines	100%	Quarterly monitoring report	100%	100%	100%	100%		
SUPPORT PLANNING	1	Period between the initial referral and making contact with the service user	95% within 3 working days	Quarterly monitoring report	100%	N/A	100%	100%	1 day	
	2	Period between referral and date of the first visit to the service user	75% within 7 working days (10 days in total from referral)	Quarterly monitoring report	0%	N/A	100%	40%	11 days	Of the 5 referrals, 2 had first visits within 10 working days, of the other 3 referrals, 2 were delayed due to availability and 1 was put on hold until financial assessment completed.
	3	Period between first visit and support plan completed	75% within 20 working days (30 days in total from referral)	Quarterly monitoring report	0%	N/A	100%	100%	16.5	
	4	Number of complaints dealt with in compliance with the providers internal QA system and procedures	98%	Quarterly monitoring report	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	5	Number of complaints (Support Planning)	Less than 5 % of referrals in the quarter	Quarterly monitoring report	0	0%	0	0	0	
	6	Level of service user satisfaction	90% satisfied	Annual satisfaction survey	75	75	75	77	N/A	Taken from 22/23 survey (carried out Q4)