

Report

Cabinet Member for Social Services

Part 1

Date: 3 July 2018

Subject Delivery of NCC Safety at Home Service through partner arrangement with Care and Repair (Newport)

Purpose To seek approval of the NCC Care & Repair (C&R) partnering arrangement for the delivery of NCC's Safety at Home service, including a formal waiver to exempt the service under Contract Standing Orders.

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Summary An existing NCC/C&R partnering arrangement has been operating successfully for over 20 years, and is supported by a formal Service Level Agreement (SLA). However, a recent internal audit of Private Sector Housing's Adaptations Service identified an apparent absence of a formal official endorsement of the partnering arrangement.

C&R is a Welsh Government funded, non-profit-making organisation. Notably, the WG identifies and extols that C&R's work, client group and independence makes them ideally (and uniquely) placed to deliver local authority policy in terms of supporting older people. This report seeks formal endorsement of the NCC Care & Repair (C&R) partnering arrangement for the delivery of NCC's Safety at Home scheme, including a formal waiver to exempt the service under Contract Standing Orders.

Proposal To approve the appointment of Care & Repair (Newport) as the Delivery Agent for NCC's Safety at Home scheme (via formal waiver of Contract Standing Orders). Appointment to be reviewed after 4 years.

Action by Head of Regeneration Investment and Housing

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Strategic Procurement Manager
- Head of Regeneration Investment and Housing
- Housing and Assets Manager
- Strategic Director – Place
- Head of Law and Regulations – Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance – Chief Finance Officer
- Head of People and Business Change

Signed

Background

Care and Repair Cymru was founded nearly 30 years ago with the support of the Welsh Government (WG) and has a long-standing partnership with WG and local authorities. C&R is a 3rd Sector, not for profit organisation providing services to support older homeowners and private tenants to live independently in warm, safe, and accessible homes.

The organisation exists across the whole of Wales, with 13 agencies covering all local authorities. It is a unique service combining social care-related individual assessment, and values linked to dignity, care and respect, to the technical expertise required for managing building work. It is a citizen-centred and problem-led service that provides bespoke solutions informed by visits to the older person's home. The service is holistic in that C&R will refer on to other statutory and 3rd Sector providers (such as Age Cymru, Citizens Advice Bureau and South Wales Energy Agency) to ensure the strategic delivery of comprehensive solutions.

Since the time of its inception, support and funding for C&R has grown. Some 15 years ago the WG committed to providing annual capital and revenue funding for C&R Agencies across Wales. Additional funding is provided by other stakeholders such as local authorities and local health boards.

Importantly, C&R Cymru's status as trusted partners has seen them included in WG Steering and Implementation Groups, and identified specifically in numerous strategy and policy documents as providing an integral contribution to the delivery of local and central government strategic Housing, Health and Social Care Services. Significantly, WG Circular 20/02 '*Housing Renewal Guidance*' (*Annex E*), emphasises that C&R's work, client group and independence make it ideally (and uniquely) placed to deliver Local Authority (LA) housing/adaptations policy. Indeed, WG directs specifically that LAs carefully consider the role of C&R in their area and the scope for their involvement in delivering the authority's local policies. Notably, the WG also suggests a range of initiatives that LAs may wish to consider, including providing financial assistance for a Handyperson scheme to provide funding for labour and/or materials for works to the homes of targeted client groups such as older and disabled people.

The SAH scheme is deliberately designed to mirror the WG-funded Rapid Response Adaptations Programme (RRAP) – also delivered via C&R. This mixture of funding sources is consistent with WG's acknowledgement that collaborative funding solutions are required to deliver appropriate and sustainable initiatives to a vulnerable client group (elderly and/or disabled). The collaboration also extends into organisational governance, with LA and C&R subject to common reporting requirements (to WG) in terms of confidential client data (including: age; gender; medical; and financial information etc.).

NCC provides representation on the Newport C&R Board via the Housing Strategy & Development Manager and the Community Strategy & Partnership Manager. The Aneurin Bevan University Health Board is represented by the Clinical Lead Occupational Therapist for Adult Services and the Integrated Occupational Therapy Service Manager.

NCC has years long provided a minor adaptations service via its 'Safety at Home' (SAH) grant fund, using C&R as its delivery agent. Of note, during FY 16/17, 17/18 and 18/19 the C&R partnering arrangement has been crucial in the effective committal and delivery of WG's 'Enable' funding award NCC.

The NCC/C&R partnership is supported and governed by a formal Service Level Agreement (SLA) and assured by NCC performance management measures, including a customer satisfaction reporting. However, a recent internal audit of Private Sector Housing's Adaptations Service identified an apparent absence of a formal official endorsement of this long-standing partnering arrangement (i.e. why NCC has elected to partner specifically with C&R for the delivery of its Safety at Home scheme, as opposed to tendering for works via the open market).

Consequently, this report seeks formal approval of the NCC/C&R partnering arrangement for the delivery of NCC's Safety at Home scheme, including a formal waiver to exempt the service under Contract Standing Orders, as recommended by the Strategic Procurement Manager.

It is further recommended that the range of local performance management measures currently in place be extended so that NCC can assure itself of the continued business and value for money benefits of this approach. The existing and additional performance checks are as follows:

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MEASURES	
Existing	Time from referral to completion of work
	Number of completed and abortive cases
	CDM Construction phase plans
	Any related pieces of work or contacts made by C&R on behalf of the recipient
	CDM Construction phase plans
Additional	Referral Sources e.g. self, family, health professional, statutory sector etc.
	SAH: number of cases approved, number of cases completed
	SAH: total value of works completed.
	SAH: average value of completed grant
	SAH & RRAP: number & % of hospital discharge & prevention at home cases
	SAH & RRAP: technical Inspection % against target
	Client contribution totals (if any)
	SAH & RRAP: delivery time and averages
	SAH & RRAP: number of completed handyperson jobs
	Self-funded handyperson jobs: number of completed jobs
	Home Fire Safety Checks: number of completed checks
	Total number of visits (initial, subsequent & abortive) across all handyperson-eligible works
	SAH & RRAP: value and average value of job undertaken by handypersons

Notably, these local performance measures are in addition to those WG measures which are already in place.

The partnering arrangement, if approved, will run for a period of 4 years, at which point it will be re-submitted for Cabinet consideration/approval.

Approval to continue the partnering arrangement will have no direct impact on NCC staffing/resources.

Financial Summary

N/A – no financial implications.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Potential risk mitigation	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Presentational risk if NCC becomes the only LA in Wales to withdraw support & commitment to local C&R services.	High	High	Risk can be avoided through CSO waiver to enable continuation of the longstanding partnering with C&R.	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Timeliness of service delivery would be reduced due to the requirement for NCC PSH staff to tender for alternate supplier(s). There	High	High	Increase NCC PSH staff resources to: (1) expedite tendering processes; (2) enable supervision and	Cabinet Member for Social Services

is an associated timeliness risk if the alternate supplier(s) proved to be less responsive than C&R.			monitoring of works.	
Cost/vfM risks associated with alternate supplier(s): (1) Awarding business to a profit-driven organisation would introduce an additional 'margin' to the costs of works. (2) NCC resource costs would be increased due to the requirement for increased reporting requirements – compared to C&R (which is subject to WG governance/ reporting and at no direct cost to NCC).	Medium/ high	High	Increase NCC capital budget allocation to avoid reduction in volume of works delivered.	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Reduced quality of overall service – due to the loss of C&R's holistic/integrated service provision, which extends beyond simply the provision of works.	High	High	Increase NCC PSH staff resources to sustain the availability of an holistic/ integrated service provision.	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Evidencing performance and value for money	Med	Med	Robust application of the existing performance management measures supplemented and reinforced by aforementioned additional scrutiny measures.	Housing Strategy & Development Manager; Private Sector Adaptations Manager; Housing and Assets Manager.

There are no appreciable risks associated with the approval of continued NCC/C&R partnering arrangement via a waiver of Contract Standing Orders.

Formal endorsement of this longstanding arrangement will enable the continued and sustained provision of a high quality, bespoke service consistent with WG and NCC strategic intent.

Conversely, rejection of this submission (for Contract Standing Orders waiver) would trigger several material risks, as detailed in the table above.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- Corporate Plan
- Wales Audit Office Adaptations Review 22 Feb 2018
- Welsh Government Circular 20/02 'Housing Renewal Guidance' (Annex E)

Options Available and considered

Option 1. To approve CSO waiver, thereby enabling the continuation of existing NCC/C&R partnering and Safety at Home scheme delivery arrangements.

Option 2. To reject CSO waiver/C&R partnering, and implement an alternative approach – namely, procuring a supplier to support delivery of NCC’s Safety at Home scheme via tendering on the open market.

Preferred Option and Why

Option 1. To approve CSO waiver, thereby enabling the continuation of existing NCC/C&R partnering and service delivery arrangements.

This is the low risk, no (additional) cost option which NCC to continue to provide a proven and highly successful service that provides powerful VfM.

The Welsh Government’s clear acknowledgement and exhortation of C&R’s ethos, specialist role and status (as a provider of choice) is manifest in NCC’s long-standing commitment to collaborative working with C&R. Given the success of the extant arrangement and its compliance with the declared intent of the WG, it is pertinent to note the broader consideration of presentational risk were NCC to elect to withdraw from its current WG-endorsed collaboration with C&R.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial implications to the above report.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

The current partnership arrangements between the Council and Care & Repair Cymru for the delivery of minor adaptations under the Safety at Home grant scheme, effectively creates an agency contract for the provision of public works and services. In accordance with the EU procurement rules and the Council’s Contract Standing Orders, this type of contract would usually have to be the subject of competitive tendering, in order to establish fair competition and best value. However, because the grant funding is predominantly in relation to the minor adaptation work, then the total value of the work carried out under this arrangement over the 4 year period is unlikely to exceed the threshold for public procurement and, therefore there is no statutory requirement to tender the work in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The Council’s internal Contract Standing Orders would still require some competitive process, but this requirement can be exempted or waived in certain circumstances. In this case, there is clear justification for utilising C&R as the preferred contractor to undertake this work as it is a non-profit-making body, directly supported by Welsh Government, and specialising in the provision of a holistic, social-care assessment service in addition to undertaking the grant work. It could be argued that, on the basis of these holistic services, this SAH grant contract is an exempt contract under CSO’s because of its specialist nature and the fact that only C&R are able to provide the whole range of associated services. However, for the avoidance of doubt, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member formally waive CSO’s in this instance to allow the direct appointment of C&R as the delivery agents for the SAH scheme for the next 4 years. The decision to waive CSO’s in this case, and the reasons for doing this, will need to be reported to Audit Committee in due course.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

This partnership agreement considers the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The partnership agreement meets a number of aspects of the sustainable development principle.

Prevention: Specifically the Care and Repair service is in place to prevent people going in to hospital and to enable discharge from hospital.

Integration: As mentioned in this report this meeting a number of the Well-being goals and does not adversely affect any of the others. This also meets the Councils Well-being Objective “To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient” and does not adversely affect the others.

Collaboration: This partnership agreement is a collaboration between Newport City council and Newport Care & Repair. This agreement is also supported by other organisations including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

There are no HR issues in relation to this report.

Comments of Cabinet Member

Cabinet Member has been briefed on the report.

Scrutiny Committees

N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010

Care & Repair offers a unique service combining social care-related individual assessment, and values linked to dignity, care and respect, to the technical expertise required for managing building work. It is a citizen-centered and problem-led service that provides bespoke solutions informed by visits to the older person's home. The service is holistic in that C&R will refer on to other statutory and 3rd Sector providers to ensure the strategic delivery of comprehensive solutions.

Therefore, older and/or disabled people who receive support via NCC's Safety at Home scheme, have the added benefit (via C&R) of being offered an assessment/signposting to wider services. This holistic service, funded and overseen via WG, is not replicated elsewhere.

Therefore, of the two options available, option 2 (to reject CSO waiver/C&R partnering, and implement an alternative approach – namely, procuring a supplier via tendering on the open market) risks a relative negative impact on the elderly and/or disabled elderly compared to option 1 (to approve CSO waiver, thereby enabling the continuation of existing NCC/C&R partnering and service delivery arrangements).

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

N/A

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Safety at Home scheme provides adaptations that help people to live in their own homes for as long as possible and as independently as possible, improving their safety and quality of life more generally. The scheme is deliberately designed to mirror the WG-funded Rapid Response Adaptations Programme (RRAP) which is managed and delivered by C&R.

The co-ordinated approach to the minor adaptations service ensures a holistic approach to the delivery the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

A Prosperous Wales

In terms of minor adaptations service delivered by C&R to the residents of Newport, NCC's SAH funding (circa £300k per annum) is combined with funding from WG (£88k per annum) and £19k from ABHB – with all funding entering and supporting the local economy.

A Healthier Wales

As a preventative programme, the Safety at Home scheme helps to reduce the demand on the NHS and social care services which in turn can help to free up bed space for, and reduce delays to, the treatment of others. It can also allow individuals to take back more control of their life and maintain access to the community – thereby improving physical and mental health and wellbeing.

A More Equal Wales

A mixture of funding sources enables and supports the achievement of common wellbeing goals and is consistent with WG's acknowledgement that collaborative funding solutions are required to deliver appropriate and sustainable initiatives to a vulnerable client group (elderly and/or disabled). The collaboration also extends into organisational governance, with LA and C&R subject to common reporting requirements (to WG) in terms of confidential client data (including: age; gender; medical; and financial information etc.).

Adaptations to people's homes help people who for one reason or another are vulnerable and groups of people with protected characteristics. This includes older people, people with disabilities and health problems and also others who need to be prevented from becoming disabled e.g. through serious injuries from falls. The adaptations programme will help people below retirement age where a disability or health problem requires their home to be adapted.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

N/A

Consultation

Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

Background Papers

- Corporate Plan
- Wales Audit Office Adaptations Review 22 Feb 2018
- Welsh Government Circular 20/02 'Housing Renewal Guidance' (Annex E)

Dated: 3 July 2018