

**LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY  
BOARD**

**28 JUNE 2024**

**PROBATION HEALTH TRAINERS SERVICE**

**Background**

1. The Probation Health Trainer (PHT) Service has been delivered locally since 2019 and supports adult offenders on community orders or on licence following release from prison to make changes towards a healthier lifestyle. By offering individualised assistance, the service helps clients access various health and wellbeing services, including GP and dental care. Health trainers work with clients on a one-to-one basis to assess their health and lifestyle needs, develop Personal Health Plans, and provide ongoing support for sustained behaviour change towards improved wellbeing. Referrals into the service are predominantly received from the Probation Service.
2. The service was jointly commissioned by Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council, with a total contract value of £167,500 per annum (County £67,500 and City £100,000) which commenced April 2022. Separate contracts are in place for each of the Local Authorities. The service is provided by Ingeus and the initial term of the contract ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 (there is an option to extend for a further 24 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027).
3. It is not a statutory duty for the County Council to provide specific services for individuals on release from prison.
4. The County Council has a statutory duty to take appropriate steps to improve the health of people living in Leicestershire, including the provision of health improvement information and advice and support services aimed at preventing illness.
5. Evidence from Revolving Doors Agency, the Home Office and Public Health England (now Office for Health Improvement and Disparities) identifies the mortality rate for prisoners is 50% higher than the rest of the population. People leaving prison are therefore one of several populations of concern for the County Council in terms of their health and wellbeing.

**Proposal**

6. A service review was undertaken in autumn 2023. This included engagement with service users and stakeholders, mapping of similar services across the region, a review of performance, and a review of the evidence of effectiveness.
7. In 2022/23, 40 individuals had a personal health plan completed and out of those, 19 (47%) achieved their plan. In 2023/24 119 had a personal health plan completed and out of those, 88 (74%) achieved their plan. The personal health plans consist of the Probation Health Trainer carrying out onward referrals and signposting to the relevant services. The three main health concerns that were identified from the personal health plans are: mental health support, access to benefits and GP registration. There are existing routes into these services that could be supported through signposting by the Probation Service.
8. Other services are available that could support with the health needs of this population and provide routes into the range of services needed including the RECONNECT service, Public Health services such as First Contact Plus, Local Area Co-ordinators and Turning Point.
9. The Local Authority is under significant financial pressure currently with a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) requiring savings from Public Health commissioned services.
10. Based on the review of existing provision, the proposal is to decommission the service when the contract ends on 31st March 2025.
11. One of the key risks in allowing the contract to end is that a population at higher risk of poor health outcomes will no longer have the same level of support. Although there is no direct replacement service being put forward, individuals can continue to receive support from a combination of services, including the Probation Service and the RECONNECT service, and greater focus can be put into strengthening pathways into existing public health services. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed to explore the impact in more detail and will be further updated following the engagement process.

### **Engagement**

12. Engagement with key stakeholders commenced in May for a period of 8 weeks. Key stakeholders include service users, probation service staff and staff providing the service. The engagement will primarily be in the form of a short questionnaire with the provider assisting with completion of the engagement questionnaire where required.
13. Following this engagement period, a report will be prepared for the Cabinet in September, with a summary of the engagement findings and a recommendation for them to consider.

### **Recommendations for the Board**

14. To note the contents of the Report for information.

**Officer to contact**

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