

Name of decision maker:	Councillor Brian Ayling
Portfolio:	Service & Performance Improvement
Date of Portfolio Holder Decision:	

Title of Decision:	OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH – APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTOR
Part I	
Decision made and reasons:	<p><u>Decision</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Hertfordshire County Council be appointed as our supplier of Occupational Health services from 1 October 2008 until 31 March 2009. 2. To note that this contract operates under a tendering exception given that it involves partnering with another public authority and is below the tendering thresholds set out in Procurement Standing Orders. 3. To note that a review of this contract will take place to determine the provision of Occupational Health services post 1 April 2009 and that this will be reported to Cabinet in January 2009. <p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>In May 2008, the Council's Occupational Health Adviser resigned from her position at short notice. The decision not to appoint another permanent Occupational Health Adviser was taken at this point mainly because there appears to be a skills shortage in these posts and an appointment would have taken a significant amount of time.</p> <p>This led the Council to be in a vulnerable position, so for an interim measure to ensure continuous service, an arrangement was implemented which saw the Council working in partnership with Watford Borough Council's Occupational Health Provision (Bupa).</p> <p>To date, many different occupational health providers have been considered, which included private organisations and partnership working with other Local Authorities. It is considered in order to move this service forward in a more sustainable way, that the Council partners Hertfordshire County Council for a trial period of seven months. Hertfordshire County Council currently have an 'in house' occupational provision, which consists of Occupational Health Advisers and Occupational Health Physicians based in the new Apsley offices. A proposal has been put forward from Hertfordshire County Council, which is: financially acceptable, offers a comprehensive service, locally based and supports partnership working.</p> <p>This trial period will enable the Council to assess the effectiveness of the service and provide a platform for making a more informed decision on appointing an efficient permanent occupational health solution with greater resilience.</p>
Reports considered:	<p>The Council has considered a number of reports relating to Absence Management and approved policies as necessary. The impact of the proposed decision regarding Occupational Health services directly contributes to the Council's overall policy objectives.</p>
Implications:	
Financial:	There is sufficient budget in place to service the contract.
Legal:	

The Council's Procurement Standing Orders permit tendering exceptions where another public authority is appointed as the supplier and the value of this contract is below the £50,000 threshold.

Value for Money:

It is essential that the Council maintains an Occupational Health service in order to screen new employees and undertake medical assessments in respect of existing ones that fall within the purview of the Absence Management Policies. By procuring the service from Hertfordshire County Council, it embraces shared working in accordance with the Pathfinder and joint working initiatives and, moreover, it brings a greater resilience to Dacorum's operations.

In the event that Occupational Health services can be procured from another public authority as opposed to directly employing someone, there is the potential for savings in terms of pension and other ancillary employment costs.

Risk:

Hertfordshire County Council is a large authority with a sustainable Occupational Health service. Dacorum gain additional resilience from joining in with these arrangements.

The trial that is proposed in the "reasons" section above will provide an adequate opportunity for the service to be fully tested in order to inform the proposed Cabinet report in January 2009.

Procurement:

Section E of the Council's Procurement Standing Orders provide two tendering exceptions that apply to the award of this contract. These are:

E1 – The contract is less than £50,000 in value

E5 – The service is being supplied by Hertfordshire County Council.

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders Consulted:

Sally Marshall, Director of Finance & Corporate Services
David Martin, Head of Resources
Karen Winser, Senior HR Manager
Matthew Rawdon, HR Team Leader

Monitoring Officer: No comments to add

Section 151 Officer: No comments to add

Options Considered and reasons for rejection:

The concept of appointing our own Occupational Health officer has been considered, but Human Resources are of the professional opinion that there is unlikely to be sufficient applicants of a suitable calibre from which to select. Accordingly, the procurement of this service from the market is appropriate and, moreover, there is the potential for a partnership with Hertfordshire County Council which offers value and contributes towards this Dacorum's obligations under the Pathfinder scheme.

Portfolio Holders Signature:

Date:

Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:

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Date Decision Record Sheet received from portfolio holder: 17 September 2008	
Date Decision Published: 18 September 2008	Decision No: PH/045/08
Date of Expiry of Call-In Period: 25 September 2008	
Date any Call-In received or decision implemented:	