

## **Report to CABINET**

# **Health Improvement and Weight Management Service- Contract Extension**

### **Portfolio Holder:**

Councillor Barbara Brownridge, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing

**Officer Contact:** Rebecca Fletcher, Director of Public Health

**Report Author:** Dr Lois Hall-Jones, Acting Consultant in Public Health

**16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

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## **Reason for Decision**

To ensure that Oldham residents continue to have access to high quality health improvement services, including smoking cessation support and specialist weight management services. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to extend the contract with the current provider, ABL Health Ltd, for 2 years.

## **Executive Summary**

Local authorities have responsibility for improving the health and wellbeing of their local population and to reduce health inequalities across, including the provision of public health advice on smoking and tobacco, obesity and physical activity. Oldham's adult population is less physically active, smokes more, and carries more excess weight than the England average, which contributes to higher numbers of people with recorded diabetes, and deaths from smoking-related diseases, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Public Health, in collaboration with NHS ICB, commission a Health Improvement and Weight Management Service (HIWM Service). The service is currently delivered by ABL Health Ltd, under the service name of 'Your Health Oldham'. Your Health Oldham provide our specialist health improvement service through delivery of a range of interventions, including healthy weight, low level mental health and smoking cessation offers.

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There is a high demand for this service, and Your Health Oldham achieves positive health outcomes for the residents of Oldham. It therefore contributes towards the prevention of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other preventable health conditions, thus improving quality and longevity of life for the residents of Oldham, diverting pressure from NHS resources and addressing health inequalities.

## **Recommendations**

To extend the contract with ABL Health Ltd for 2 years

**Health Improvement and Weight Management Service- Contract Extension****1 Background**

- 1.1 Local authorities have responsibility for improving the health and wellbeing of their local population and for public health services. There is also a responsibility to reduce health inequalities across the life course, including within hard to reach groups, and to ensure the provision of population healthcare advice. As such, statutory duties for public health include the provision of public health advice on smoking and tobacco, obesity and physical activity for both adults and children.
- 1.2 Oldham's adult population is less physically active, smokes more, and carries more excess weight than the England average. These unhealthy behaviours mean Oldham has significantly higher numbers of people with recorded diabetes, and deaths from smoking-related diseases, cardiovascular disease and cancer.
- 1.3 In Oldham:  
17% of the adult population smoke.  
71% of adults, 22% of reception children and 39% of year 6 children are overweight or obese.  
31% are physically inactive (they complete less than 30 minutes of activity per week).
- 1.4 Smoking and dietary risks are preventable, yet contribute to one-third of all deaths in Oldham.
- 1.5 The King's Fund explains that in more deprived areas, unhealthy behaviours co-occur or cluster with patterns of multiple behavioural risks. This requires a more holistic approach to address health behaviours that encompass multiple rather than individual unhealthy behaviours.
- 1.6 Smoking prevalence, levels of obesity and physical activity levels are related to the wider socio-economic determinants of health. Addressing these risk factors will significantly improve population health, reduce demand on health and social care services and reduce health inequalities.
- 1.7 Public Health, in collaboration with NHS ICB, commission a Health Improvement and Weight Management Service (HIWM Service). The service is currently delivered by ABL Health Ltd, under the service name of 'Your Health Oldham'.
- 1.8 Your Health Oldham provide our specialist health improvement service through delivery of a range of interventions, including healthy weight, low level mental health and smoking cessation offers. This service has a specific focus on working with those most at risk of tobacco, dietary or physical inactivity-related harm and supports both individual adults and children, young people and families. The HIWM Service currently delivers the following:
  1. Single point of assessment and signposting for holistic health improvement support
  2. Community Stop Smoking Support
  3. Weight Management Support
  4. Physical Activity Support
  5. Post NHS Health Checks Support
  6. Targeted Community Health MOTs and support
  7. Alcohol Brief Interventions and support

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## 8. Mental Wellbeing Support

The service also currently delivers:

- Evidence-based training programmes to equip community facing staff with the knowledge and competence to support a population health approach
- A comprehensive Digital Offer to increase access, reach, engagement and motivation.

- 1.9 Your Health Oldham is a borough wide service that has a specific focus on working with the most socially disadvantaged, least likely to engage, and those groups who are most at risk of health behaviour related harms, with a view to reducing health inequalities. Specific groups include people living in the most disadvantaged areas, pregnant women who smoke and/or consume alcohol and/or carry excess weight, people with serious and/or long term mental health conditions, communities and groups with high smoking or obesity prevalence such as routine and manual workers, LGBTQ+ community, looked after children and care leavers, people from Black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities , with a particular focus on Oldham's South Asian communities, people with co-morbidities and people with Autism and/or Learning Disabilities ).
- 1.10 The HIWM Service also supports workforce health as part of the Oldham Wellbeing Matters programme and coordinates the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) Champions Network as well as providing workforce development and training opportunities for the wider health and social care workforce.
- 1.11 The service was collaboratively commissioned with the NHS as an integrated service offer. The contract is held by the NHS and there is a collaborative commissioning agreement in place between the Council and NHS. The contract started on 1 January 2021 and is a 5 year contract up to the end of December 2025, with an option to extend by up to a further 2 years.
- 1.12 In April 2025, Oldham Council announced a contract variation which comprised of an additional £36,000 per annum to offset pay, national insurance and inflationary increases, and an additional £100,000 per annum to increase capacity and resources to meet ongoing demand for Adult Weight Management. Simultaneously, the ICB reduced their contract value by £8,100 in response to mandated cost reduction targets.
- 1.13 The resulting contract value is £1,099,520 per annum, comprised of £836,000 from Oldham Council and £263,520 from NHS GM ICP for Specialist [Tier 3] Weight Management.

## 2 Current Position

- 2.1 There were 591 smoking referrals in the last quarter, which is the highest quarterly referral rate seen for smoking cessation since the start of the contract. Despite this, 88% of referrals were processed within 2 working days of receipt, against a target of 90%. 98% of eligible referrals attended an assessment within 4 weeks of referral, exceeding a target of 90%. As a result, 100% of families and individuals will receive personalized action and goal plans. 53% of referrals set a quit date.
- 2.2 There has been a long-standing challenge in meeting the demand for weight management services, resulting in prolonged waiting times for services. In response, the service have

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implemented an opt-in approach, with a digital offer during the waiting period. Despite this, the demand for weight management service exceeds capacity.

- 2.3. In the last quarter, 882 referrals were received and 30% were processed within 2 working days of receipt, against a target of 90%. 63% of eligible referrals attended an assessment within 4 weeks of referral, falling short of a target of 90%. However, 100% of families and individuals will receive personalized action and goal plans.
- 2.4 Oldham Council have responded to the insufficient capacity in weight management services with an additional £100,000 per annum investment. The activity described precedes the recent investment, therefore it is anticipated that waiting times for weight management services will reduce with additional capacity.
- 2.5 Once access to the service is achieved, clients receive excellent provision. Last year, 82% of clients lost weight and 73% quit smoking.
- 2.6 86% of those in targeted services, and 81% of those in specialist services, achieved 3 or more of the following outcomes:
- -positive changes in dietary habits
  - -increase in physical activity
  - -increase in self-motivation
  - -increase in self-esteem
  - -improvement in symptoms related to depression and anxiety
  - -improvements in health outcomes, such as blood pressure
  - -weight maintenance

### 3 Options/Alternatives

#### 3.1 Option 1- to extend the contract with ABL Health Ltd for 2 years

The service have been performing well in the context of a high volume of referrals. Targeting those with greatest need, they achieve positive changes which contribute towards a healthy weight and smoking cessation. This contributes towards the prevention of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other preventable health conditions thus improving quality and longevity of life for the residents of Oldham, and diverting pressure from NHS resources and addressing health inequalities.

#### 3.2 Option 2- to not extend the contract with ABL Health Ltd and cease the health improvement and weight management service

The service is reaching capacity for certain elements due to high demand, such as adult weight management. The service received 1475 referrals in the last quarter. Out of those, 882 referrals were for weight management. Therefore, ceasing this contract could result in high numbers of lost opportunities for people to receive support and change health behaviours. It could also result in increased demand on the rest of the system, in particular the NHS, as people try to access support to stop smoking, lose weight and/or move more from elsewhere. If people are not able to seek effective, evidence-based support, there is a potential that there will be greater demand on health and social care to support people living with preventable smoking or obesity related health conditions. For the NHS and wider public services, the lifetime value of a person stopping smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, and being physically active, is considerable.

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ASH estimate that the total additional spending on social care in Oldham as a result of smoking for adults aged 50 and over in 2021 was £5,960,600. This includes the costs of care for 425 individuals receiving home based care, and 87 individuals receiving state-funded residential care. If the health improvement service is removed, demand and costs for adult social care related to smoking would increase.

There is an important link between obesity and social care. Obesity is a contributory factor to the development of long term conditions such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In addition, severe obesity can result in physical and social difficulties which impact on social care. Diabetes UK have estimated that the total cost of caring for people with diabetes in adult social care settings in England is £830 million per year. Obese individuals are around nine times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than the non-obese population and around 85 per cent of diabetics are either obese or overweight (based on analysis of HSE 2011 data). It is therefore likely that a substantial proportion of these social care costs are associated with excess weight.

### 3.3 Option 3- to commence a procurement process

As an integrated service with specialist weight management services, this service delivers good value for money compared with other areas and delivers comparable or better outcomes than other providers. Not extending the contract and instead going out to the market is unlikely to provide better value for money.

## 4 Preferred Option

### 4.1 Option 1- to extend the contract with ABL Health Ltd for 2 years

The service delivers important health outcomes which contribute to the health and wellbeing of Oldham residents and address health inequalities. ABL performs well under significant demand, and delivers good value for money.

## 5 Consultation

### 5.1 NHS GM has been involved in this decision as a co-commissioner of the service.

## 6 Financial Implications

### 6.1 This report is seeking approval to extend the contract with ABL Health Ltd to deliver the Health Improvement and Weight Management Service (HIWM) in Oldham.

### 6.2 The contract price is £1.099,520 per annum and will run for a period of 2 years between 1st January 2026 and 31st December 2027.

### 6.3 Budgetary provision of £836,000 per annum is available within the Public Health base budget to cover the cost of this proposal, with the balance of £263,520 being met from the ICB.

### 6.4 There are no adverse financial implications as a result of this proposal

(Matthew Kearns – Finance Manager)

## 7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Legal Services supports the recommendation to extend the contract with ABL Health Ltd. This is a permitted extension in accordance with the Council's CPR's and Public Procurement Regulations. The Client Department should take note of the Procurement comments below and ensure that the correct process to extend the Contract as requested is followed and liaise with Legal Services regarding any contractual documentation. Sukie Kaur - Solicitor

## 9 Procurement Implications

- 8.1 The tender was originally completed in 2020 with the service starting in January 2021. It was an OJEU compliant open process. The initial contract was for 5 years and allowed for one extension of up to 2 years in the contract, which is the extension referred to in this paper. As this was done on an NHS Standard Contract the commissioner needs to be aware of clause C2 (below) which requires us to extend the contract giving 6 months written notice, so this should be no later than 31st June 2025.

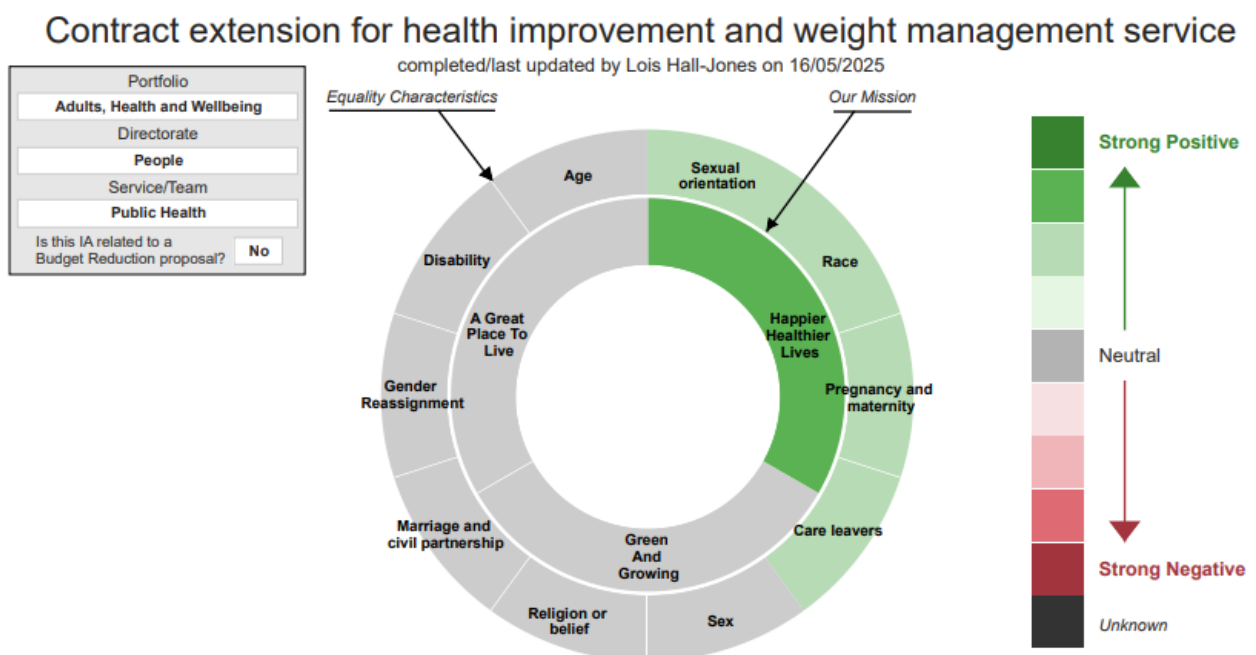
2. If the Commissioners wish to exercise the option to extend the Contract Term, the Co-ordinating Commissioner must give written notice to that effect to the Provider no later than 6 months before the original Expiry Date.

James England – Procurement Manager

## 9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

Yes

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Full report available upon request

## 10 Key Decision

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10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 HSC-09-25.

12 **Background Papers**

None