



Wells City Council

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Subject	CCS Sub Contract Agreement
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For consideration at	Full City Council
Date of consideration	24 th July 2025

Introduction and Background

As Councillors will be aware, Wells City Council has operated as the sub contract provider under CHARIS, since June 2023, delivering services to displaced people who are now located within Wells and the surrounding area.

This contract arrangement was applied at speed during Spring 2023, to accommodate the needs at the time of Ukrainians, fleeing war and violence in Ukraine. The Home Office offered funding to recompense the efforts of support to assist those refugees within communities, an agreement which spanned for two years until 30th June 2025.

In January 2025, under the guise of the previous Town Clerk, Wells City Council offered details to CHARIS, who acted as the contract deliver for the Somerset area, to support the tendering of a new solution for the next two years (01.07.2025-01.07.2027). During this tendering exercise it became clear that CHARIS would now only support the Bridgwater and Taunton Hubs, and all other hubs within Somerset would now fall within the Somerset Council offering of Community Council for Somerset (CCS). The tender exercise assumed the continuation of provisions within Wells at the same volume at present. Equally, there were a number of operational assumptions made.

For Wells City Council, the delivery of displaced services is offered from the Portway Annexe, and is supported by Wells Community Network (WCN). There are two employed members of staff, both employed by Wells City Council, and a significant number of volunteers, delivered through WCN, and some wider support for certain classes such as ESOL.

Whilst the volumes of use have remained relatively static since the commencement of the service, the profile of need is changing, with the emphasis moving from solely Ukrainian refugees, to a wide number of nationalities being supported.

All costs associated with the provision, up to 30th June 2025, were recharged on a quarterly basis retrospectively.

Over the initial contract period, there was little in the way of engagement and support offered to the two employed staff as they were seen to be delivering a role outside of the Councils direct responsibility, and in

many instances WCN delivered the service alongside them, as a management partner. In essence, the Council's role was considered to be one of financial management for invoicing opposed to operational responsibility.

The new contract, which can be seen by members in the confidential appendices (B), details the requirements of the Council, in brief, Wells City Council will be responsible for the delivery of the Hub and for financial and operational management of the service, including staffing. CCS will take responsibility for following usage information, mapping wider trends, marketing.

There is a sub contract of work in Schedule 2 of the main contract body, which details WCC's responsibilities, some of which also sit within the Service Level Agreement (Appendix A) with WCN, who will act as our delivery partner.

Future Actions

Council has been aware for some time, that the income generated from this service is slight and represents room rental for the space occupied by the service. Within that in mind, it would be prudent, assuming Council agrees to signing the contract, to consider the next two year period as an opportunity to market the services and facilities of the Portway Annexe to ensure that in 2027 when this contractual arrangement may come to an end or reduce, that the building income isn't adversely affected.

Recommendations

Council is asked to:

1. Agree to enter into contract with Community Council for Somerset (CCS) for the two year term commencing retrospectively from 1st July 2025 to 1st July 2027.
2. Agree to enter into Service Level arrangements with Wells Community Network (WCN) for the provision of support services.
3. Delegate responsibility to the Town Clerk to sign the contract on behalf of Council.
4. Delegate responsibility to the Town Clerk to form the Service Level Agreement with WCN.

Appendices:

- Appendix A: Service Level Agreement for Volunteer Support (WCN) (**Confidential**)
- Appendix B: CCS Contract (**Commercially Sensitive**)