

Third Sector Activity – Contracts over £50k

Background

Third Sector activity is governed by the Third Sector Project Board. For current (2021-2022) commissioning activity, a report was presented to the Highland Health and Social Care Committee on 7 October 2020 for information and endorsement of a decision that was made by the Third Sector Project Board on 10 September 2020, regarding contracts over £50k currently purchased from the Third Sector. At the meeting on 7 October 2020, the Highland Health and Social Care Committee endorsed the decision of the Third Sector Project Board to extend these Adult Social Care contracts currently purchased from the Third Sector for one year i.e. 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, at current funding levels and subject to sustained activity levels.

Following this approval / endorsement, the Health Board recommenced its procurement plans, which had previously been deferred in line with COSLA / Scottish Government guidance.

Whilst the intention was to conclude procurement activity by 31 March 2022, progress was significantly slowed / delayed due to COVID pressures; and during late 2021 the Health Board's Chief Officer and Director of Adult Social Care agreed that the work / processes relating to the Third Sector activity be placed on hold meantime, to allow resources to be diverted to COVID operational priorities.

The Health Board's Designated Managers with responsibility for the current contractual arrangements are currently reviewing their plans in regards to resuming the agreed procurement activity beyond March 2022, which includes finalising realistic timescales and contractual extensions required for the work to be undertaken. It is intended that these plans / recommendations once finalised will be presented to the Third Sector Project Board for approval, anticipated to be during March 2022.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- a) **note** the hold placed on third sector activity, agreed by the Health Board's Chief Officer and Adult Director of Social Care; and
- b) **note** the activity currently being undertaken to resume the procurement activity beyond March 2022.