



21st August 2018

Our ref: FH/JT

John Taylor
Director
Health Watch
Worcestershire

Dear John

Re: Cardon Banfield Deceased – Safeguarding & ‘Outreach’ services for the Homeless enquiry from the Board

I am writing in response to the concerns raised in your recent letter requesting assurance following the recent Board meeting and receipt of the Independent Report published by Worcester City Council. We can provide assurance for the following points:

1. The Cabinet decision, which included the grant award to the District Councils in Worcestershire, was published in November 2015. This was taken following stakeholder consultations to inform risk management in addition to an equalities impact assessment on 5 contracts relating to homeless services provided in Worcestershire.
2. We received assurance from Worcester City Council that they had carried out a stakeholder engagement prior to advertising the tender for the new service which would have provided further information about any potential risks.
3. The decision following the commissioning process for the new service for homeless people was detailed in the Cabinet Paper from Worcester City published on 09.02.2016. This was to a standard that satisfied the requirements of the County Council as is compliant with national OJEU guidance.
4. Worcester City Council managed the tender process, service specification and monitoring requirements which included responsibility for supporting mobilisation and effective transition to a new service model, supported by the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership.
5. We were informed that the contract was in place, active from April 1st 2016 and awarded to County Communities Partnership for the HoPES (Homeless Prevention and Engagement Service). We have seen evidence in our monitoring of data that supports the provision of service being active from April 1st 2016 including numbers of referrals, and outcomes from this activity.

6. We were not aware of any challenges to this decision by any other parties made during or immediately after the contract award within procurement regulations.
7. The County Council grant conditions include an annual review by the County Council with the District Council Commissioners and service manager.
8. Accountability for monitoring service performance and Value For Money on behalf of the District Councils rests with Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership who receive regular reports from the HoPES service.
9. Worcestershire County Council also carries out 6 monthly grant monitoring meetings with District Council commissioners and HoPES service manager. Assurance is received to include budget allocation, adherence to quality indicators and performance against KPI targets achieved by the Provider. This includes information from service users themselves to inform future service developments.
10. Grant monitoring meetings have taken place on 22.03.2017, 19.10.2017, 12.03.2018. In addition there have been timely reports by the District Council, when required, to Adult Safeguarding Board and FOI responses. This information has been reviewed by County Council Commissioners in addition to the Independent Review commissioned by Worcester City Council published in February 2018.
11. We have received assurance at all the above meetings of the satisfactory performance of the HoPES service and the administration of the grant funding to meet the needs of homeless people living in Worcestershire.

I hope this addresses the concerns set out in your letter. Please let us know if you require further information.

Yours sincerely



Dr Frances Howie
Director of Public Health