



## Mayor and Cabinet

### Permission to Procure NHS Health Checks Programme

**Date:** 21 September 2022

**Key decision:** Yes.

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Prevention, Inclusion & Public Health Commissioning Team, Director of Public Health

### Timeline and Engagement

NHS Health Checks Contract Extension – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021

COVID-19 Related Extensions by Directorate Report - 2nd March 2021

Mayor & Cabinet Award of contract for NHS Health Checks – 5th June 2019

### Outline and recommendations

The NHS Health Checks programme aims to prevent cardiovascular morbidity and mortality through the early assessment, awareness and management of individual physiological and behavioural risk factors.

The Mayor and Cabinet are recommended to agree to officers undertaking an open tender exercise to procure the following service:

NHS Health Checks programme for a period of three years from April 2023 with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

The Contract Value is £325,000 per annum, and total contract value of £1,625,000 over 5 years.

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 From September 2019, delivery of the statutory NHS Health Checks programme in Lewisham has been overseen by One Health Lewisham, a GP federation of 35 General Practices in Lewisham which cares for more than 300,000 people. Prior to this NHS Health Checks in Lewisham were delivered by GPs and pharmacies through separate contractual arrangements. The current contract has been extended as far as possible and is due to expire on 31 March 2023.
- 1.2 This report recommends that the Mayor and Cabinet agree to officers undertaking an open tender exercise for the procurement of this service.
- 1.3 The provider will then work with Commissioners and Lewisham's Public Health team to continue returning to face to face and invitation based delivery following the Covid-19 pandemic, and to realise the intended improvements in reach, equity of coverage, and targeting of those most at risk. The new contract will be flexible to enable working alongside other health innovations such as digital health checks and to provide closer work with the Health Inequality Community Champions.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Mayor and Cabinet agree to officers undertaking an open tender exercise to procure the following service:
  - NHS Health Checks for a period of three years from April 2023 with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The Contract Value is £325,000 per annum, and total contract value of £1,625,000 over 5 years.

## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The proposed procurement of this contract meets the corporate strategy 2018-22 as follows:
  - Priority 5, Delivering and defending: health care and support; the services within the contract will provide physical and mental health assessments on all service users and where appropriate refer to primary and secondary NHS and community services to improve outcomes and reduce the impact of cardiovascular disease, strokes and dementia among residents.
- 3.2 The national NHS Health Check programme was launched in England in 2009 to provide vascular risk assessment checks for those in the 40 -74 year age group, to be implemented appropriately according to the needs of the local population. Details of the current national NHS Check programme are available at <http://www.healthcheck.nhs.uk>
- 3.3 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, responsibility for commissioning and monitoring the programme passed to local authorities. Statutory regulations require that local authorities offer the risk assessment element of the NHS Health Check to their entire eligible population every five years, i.e. 20% of the eligible population annually. They are also required to improve the percentage of people taking up the offer, working towards an aspiration of 75% of those offered a Health Check (or 15% each year of those eligible). The mandated function requires local authorities to provide a number of functions:
  - For each eligible individual aged 40-74 to be offered an NHS Health Check once in every 5 years and for each individual to be recalled every 5 years if they remain eligible

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- For the risk assessment to include specific tests and measurements
  - To ensure the individual having their NHS Health Check is told their cardiovascular risk score, and other results are communicated to them
  - For specific information and data to be recorded and, where the risk assessment is conducted outside the individual's GP practice, for that information to be forwarded to the individual's GP
  - LAs are also required to continuously improve the percentage of eligible people having an NHS Health Check
  - NHS England has recently stated that practices may wish to consider suspending health checks for over 75s if necessary to free up capacity for Covid-19 response. However, these are funded through the GP Contract with NHS England, and NHS Health Checks for 40-74 year olds should continue.
- 3.4 The NHS Health Check programme supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Strategy 2018-2022 through 'Delivering and defending: health, social care and support', particularly the focus on ensuring that 'Healthy lifestyles are increasingly a way of life across all of our communities'.
- 3.5 The NHS Health Check programme contributes to the delivery of key priorities of Lewisham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These include the overarching indicator of Under 75 mortality rate which aims to continue the decrease in the rate of under 75 CVD mortality as well as the Priority Indicators 'Achieving a healthy weight', 'Reducing alcohol harm' and 'Reducing the number of people smoking'

## 4. Background

- 4.1 The Prevention, Inclusion & Public Health Commissioning Team commissions a range of services to improve and maintain the health of our residents.
- 4.2 Cardiovascular diseases are amongst the preventable forms of non-communicable diseases, of which England faces an epidemic that includes:
- heart disease
  - cancer
  - diabetes
  - dementia
- 4.4 Non-communicable disease and disability has the greatest impact on the most deprived communities, the NHS Health Check therefore provides an opportunity to address entrenched health inequalities. While cancer prevention is not an aim of the programme, many of the risk factors are the same.
- 4.5 The NHS Health Check programme aims to prevent cardiovascular disease, and associated conditions, through the early assessment, awareness and management of individual behavioural and physiological risk factors. In doing so it promotes the early identification of cardiovascular disease and the other associated conditions. It also supports individuals to manage and reduce behavioural risks and associated conditions through information and evidence-based risk reduction interventions.
- 4.6 A total of 15 million people are eligible for free NHS Health Checks in England. The programme has the potential to:
- prevent 1,600 heart attacks and strokes
  - prevent 4,000 people a year from developing diabetes

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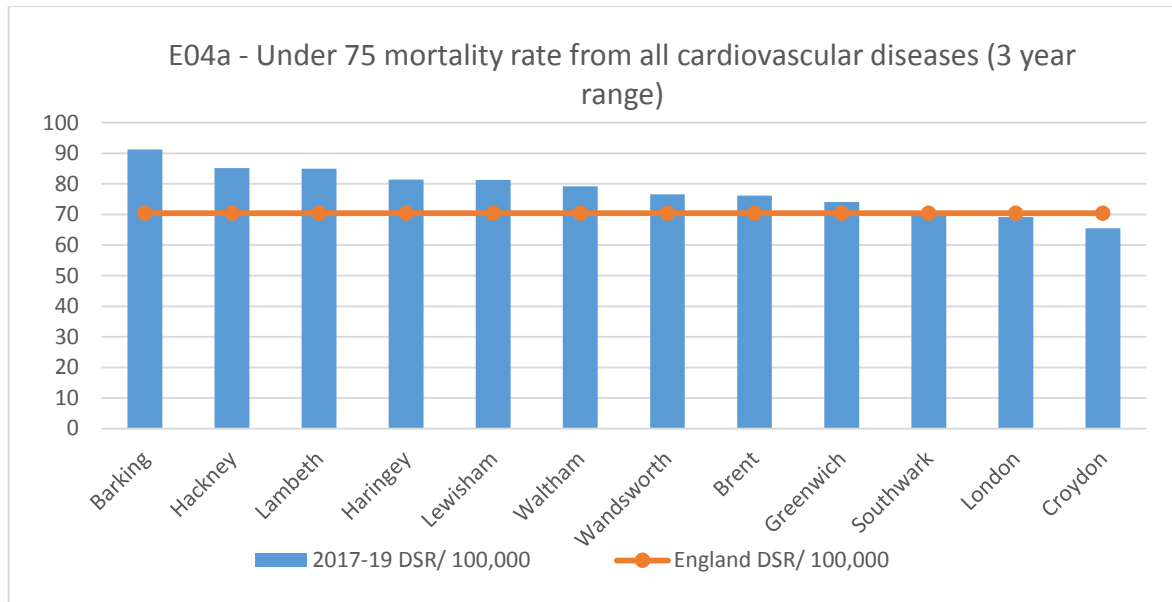
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- detect 20,000 cases of diabetes or kidney disease each year
- avoid at least 650 premature deaths a year

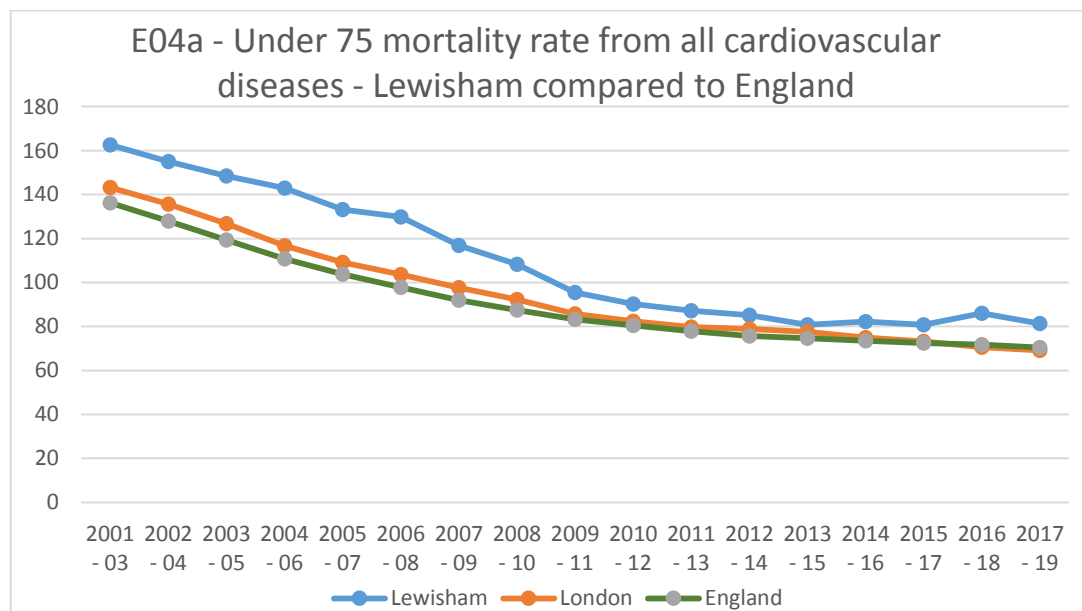
4.7 Lewisham has high premature mortality rates from circulatory diseases compared with London and England and cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a major contributor to the life expectancy gap between Lewisham and England. However, Lewisham has low levels of detected disease as evidenced in figures 1 and 2 below:

**Figure 1: CVD mortality compared to statistical neighbours**



Source: PHE Fingertips (<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/>)

**Figure 2: CVD mortality compared to London and England**



Source: PHE Fingertips (<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/>)

## 5. Current Service Provision

5.1 Since September 2019, delivery of NHS Health checks has been overseen by One Health Lewisham, a GP federation of 35 General Practices in Lewisham which care for

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more than 300,000 people. Prior to this NHS Health Checks in Lewisham were delivered by GPs and pharmacies through separate contractual arrangements.

- 5.2 Officers sought permission to extend the NHS Health Check Programme in December 2021 from the Executive Director of Community Services who agreed the recommendation to extend the Council's contract with One Health Lewisham (OHL) for delivery of the NHS Health Checks programme for twelve months (1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023).

### **Current NHS Health Check Delivery – One Health Lewisham**

- 5.3 In September 2019, One Health Lewisham was commissioned to deliver the entire Lewisham NHS Health Check programme in a “Prime Provider” role on a 2 year contract with an option for an extension for a further 2 years. Anticipated benefits of One Health Lewisham's delivery included:
- Visibility of all GP sites, providing the opportunity for consistent delivery and improved equity
  - Ability to target those most at risk of CVD, based on visibility of practice data and identification of known risk factors – male sex, BAME ethnicity, smoking status, familial history
  - Centralised reporting potential
  - Improved weekend and evening appointment provision, and access to those not registered with a GP, e.g. refugees or people experiencing homelessness
  - Visibility and opportunities to streamline care pathways, i.e. referrals.
- 5.4 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the NHS Health Check programme was suspended in Lewisham from March 2020. In July 2020, Public Health England (PHE) published a Health Check restart preparation document (PHE NHS Health Check Restart July 2020) which stated that local plans should be in place to restart the programme from 1st August 2020.
- 5.5 Different models of delivery were encouraged as long as they continued to comply with the regulatory requirements and programme standards. An agreement was made that Phase 1 of the programme will be delivered by telephone in line with new National Guidance.
- 5.6 The programme re-launched on 1st October 2020 through a remote delivery model. Monthly delivery targets were agreed and contingency arrangements designed to accommodate service disruption due to heightened Covid-19 restrictions.
- 5.7 Whilst this switch to remote delivery has enabled Health Checks to be delivered in the context of COVID-19 restrictions, it presented challenges and risks to programme quality, including:
- Reducing cohort of patients with observations on file
  - Risk of failure to prioritise delivery to patients with observations on record means the service risks failing to engage patients with lower GP attendance.
  - OHL advised they experienced higher rates of “Did Not Attend” (DNA) for telephone Health Check appointments than observed for in-person Health Check appointments.
  - Any difference in outcome(s) of Health Checks delivered remotely vs. in-person is unknown, e.g. engagement with lifestyle advice or recommended clinical intervention.
- 5.8 Returning to pre-Covid 19 delivery reinstated the formal invitation process of face to face assessment with Point of Care Testing (PoCT), targeting those at highest risk of

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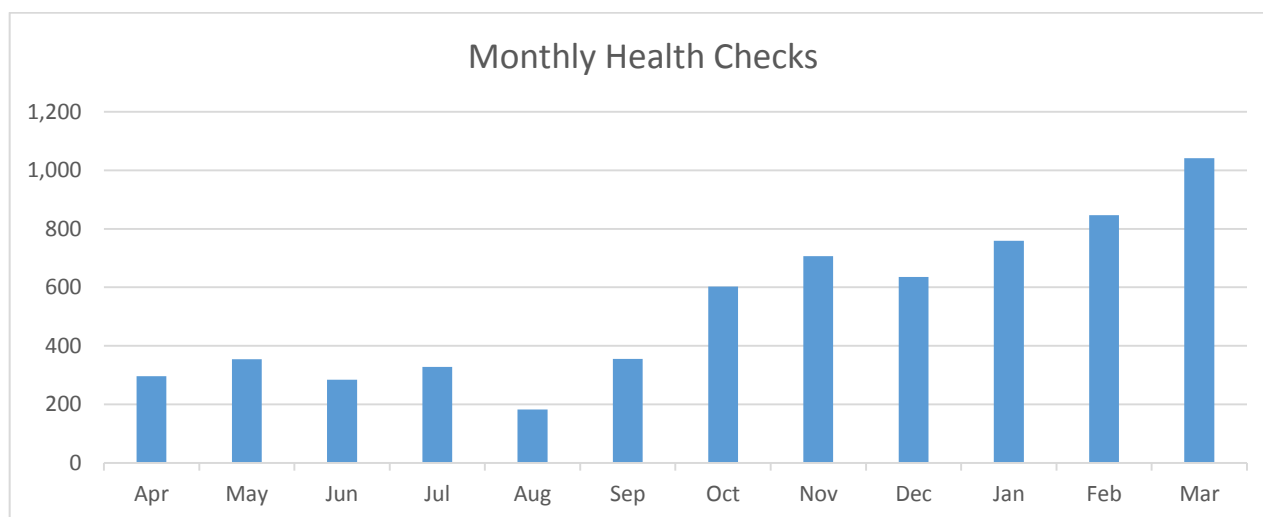
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health inequalities. Attendance to gather data, test and discuss risk is the gold standard.

- 5.9 Historic issues with performance and quality assurance of NHS Health Checks have been largely related to the pandemic. However, as of Q4 2021-22, performance and reporting has improved, with increasing numbers of completed health checks (see Figure 4 below). There is room for further improvement around meeting needs of more vulnerable residents. Further work will be required going forward to link in to the planned digital NHS Health Checks pilot and outreach leading into the Health Inequalities Community Champions Programme.

**Figure 3: Numbers of completed NHS Health Checks Financial Year 2021-22**



## 6. Commissioning Approach

- 6.1 Due to the value of the contract consideration has been given to bringing the contract in-house to Lewisham. However the clinical nature of the service requires a clinical oversight that the local authority cannot directly provide.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the NHS Health Checks Contract will be subject to a competitive tender with the new contract to be in place from 1 April 2022. This will be undertaken as a one stage procurement process based on the indicative timetable outlined in the table below.

NHS Health Checks Procurement Timeline	
Activity	Date
Market warming	14/07/2022
Approval at Mayor & Cabinet	14/09/2022
Issue tender documentation	16/09/2022
Award Mayor & Cabinet	07/12/2022
Potential Overview and Scrutiny	December 2022
TUPE and mobilisation	Jan-Mar 2023 for 01/04/2023 start

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## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 This report seeks approval to run a competitive tender exercise of the NHS Health Checks programme for 3 years (April 2023 to March 2026) with the option to extend for a further 2 years. The Contract Value is £325,000 per annum, and £1,625,000 over 5 years, which is within current public health budgets.
- 7.2 Expenditure will be funded from the Public Health Grant, which is currently ring-fenced.

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 The report seeks approval of the future delivery of the NHS Health Checks programme by an external provider. Given the potential spend on this contract (at a length of 3 + 2 years) this contract would be categorised by Contract Procedure Rules as a Category A contract. The report sets out the other options considered and explains why this is the recommended option.
- 8.2 Assuming that Mayor and Cabinet accepts the recommendation for future delivery by an external provider, Contract Procedure Rules place requirements on how that should happen. The Rules require that when letting contracts steps must be taken to secure value for money through a combination of cost, quality and competition, and that competitive tenders or quotations must be sought depending on the size and nature of the contract (Rule 5). Given the potential spend on this contract the procurement regulations (Public Contracts Regulations 2015) will also apply. The requirements of both Contract Procedure Rules and the procurement regulations would be satisfied by use of an open tender procedure. The process for procurement and the award of the contract would have to be in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules. As a Category A contract, it would be for Mayor and Cabinet to take a decision on the award of any contract.

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 The NHS Health Checks programme is designed to detect risk factors for heart disease before symptoms develop. This can help with early detection, prevention and improve outcomes particularly for those at highest risk of heart disease, which includes those from lower socio-economic groups and some Black and Minority Ethnic communities. The programme seeks to reduce the risk of heart disease stroke, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia in these groups.
- 9.2 The proposals within this report specifically aim to address and improve equity of access across the borough, and improve the reach of the programme.

## **10. Climate change and environmental implications**

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications.

## **11. Crime and disorder implications**

- 11.1 There are no Crime and disorder implications.

## **12. Health and wellbeing implications**

- 12.1 Lewisham has high premature mortality rates from circulatory diseases compared with London and England and cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a major contributor to the life expectancy gap between Lewisham and England. However Lewisham has low levels of detected disease.

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- 12.2 The NHS Health Check programme systematically targets the top seven causes of preventable mortality: high blood pressure, smoking, cholesterol, obesity, poor diet, physical inactivity and alcohol consumption. The Council has a statutory responsibility to deliver that service, and it is a key part of our local approach to addressing health inequalities.
- 12.3 In line with local need the programme aims to prevent heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and kidney disease, and raise awareness of dementia across the population with a particular focus on high risk and vulnerable groups.
- 12.4 The outcome of the programme is used to raise awareness of cardiovascular and other risk factors, as well as engaging residents to address and reflect on their health needs, their lifestyle and medical approaches/interventions best suited to managing the individual's health risk.

## 13. Social Value

- 13.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires that when the Council is procuring services above the EU threshold it must consider, before commencing a procurement process, how the procurement might improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area. It must also consider how the procurement might be conducted so as to secure that improvement. The matters to be considered must only be those relevant to the services to be procured; and it must be proportionate in all the circumstances to take those matters into account. These requirements are part of the Council's Constitution (Part IV.I Contract Procedure Rules).
- 13.2 The Council's Sustainable Procurement Code of Practice will be applied to this contract. This sets out various social, environmental and economic considerations to be applied. The purpose is to ensure that products and services are sourced and produced responsibly; to maximise resource and energy efficiency in the manufacturing and supply of goods and services in order to minimise environmental impacts; and to deliver outstanding value for money over the entire lifetime of the contract.
- 13.3 In addition, the service will ensure minimum pay rates in line with prevailing London Living Wage (LLW) or above where applicable.
- 13.4 Bidders will be asked to submit a method statement that has a weighted score of 10%. Bidders will be asked to demonstrate how the service will contribute to the key social value outcomes, including how the organisation works with local employers and training organisations to remove stigma and barriers to support individuals in returning to employment, training and/or education
- 13.5 Once contracts have been awarded the Social value delivery and monitoring be formally reported on the KPI Performance report.

## 18. Background papers

Mayor & Cabinet Award of contract for NHS Health Checks – 5th June 2019



NHS Healthchecks  
OHL- M and C repo

COVID-19 Related Extensions by Directorate Report - 2nd March 2021

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COVID-19  
Extensions - Commu

Award of contract for NHS Health checks programme to One Health Lewisham Ltd



Award of contract  
for NHS Health chec

NHS Health Check ED Extension Report



NHS Health Checks  
Extension ED Report

## 19. Glossary



glossary  
standard.pdf

## 20. Report author and contact

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