

# Committee Report

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**PURPOSE:** Information Report

**COMMITTEE:** Public Health and Communities Committee

**DATE:** 14 March 2025

**TITLE:** New Integrated Sexual Health Services for Bristol, North Somerset and South

**Gloucestershire**

**Officer presenting the report:** Dr Joanna Copping      **Job title:** Consultant in Public Health Medicine

**Committee Chair:** Councillor Stephen Williams

**Executive Director lead:** Hugh Evans: Executive Director for Adult and Communities

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## **Purpose of Report:**

This report is for information only to inform the Committee of the outcome of recent procurement exercises to identify providers of a new Integrated Sexual Health Service (ISHS) for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG). This report is a requirement of the delegated authority granted in May 2022 under the previous Cabinet system.

## **Evidence Base / Context**

1. The commissioning of comprehensive, open access ISHS are mandated under the jurisdiction of the Director of Public Health.
2. Contracts with the three new providers were completed on:
  - a. Health promotion services: 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025
  - b. Digital sexual health services: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025
  - c. Clinical sexual and reproductive health services: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025
3. These integrated services include sexual health promotion, contraception, sexually transmitted

infection (STI) testing, STI treatment and partner notification, chlamydia screening, HIV prevention, training provision and research participation.

4. The new service model was developed in response to a comprehensive sexual health needs assessment (SHNA) and is composed of three distinct service elements: the digital sexual health service, which will act as the front door for most people, the clinical sexual health service, and the health promotion, outreach and community engagement service (see appendix A for a service model diagram). The new services will go live on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.
5. The ISHS is commissioned jointly across BNSSG to improve efficiency, reduce variation and improve integration of services and pathways. Bristol City Council is the lead commissioner for this contract as we are responsible for the largest population and budget in relation to sexual health within the area and have the greatest needs and inequalities.

**Officer Recommendations:**

That the Committee for Public Health and Communities notes the outcomes of the sexual health reprocurement processes to identify appropriate providers of ISHS. These new services are expected to launch on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. The providers of each of the three services are:

- Digital sexual health service: SH:24 (a community interest company)
- Clinical sexual health service: University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust, with North Bristol NHS Trust and Brook Young People (a charity) as partners/sub-contractors
- Health promotion, prevention and community engagement service: Brook Young People, with Brigstowe as a sub-contractor (both are charities)

**Corporate Strategy alignment:**

Theme 4 (Health, Care and Wellbeing) of the Corporate Strategy describes how we need to embed health in all our policies to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities and the demand for acute services. It recognises that public health is a statutory requirement of local authorities and that

we need to commission public health services to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. The continued commissioning of ISHS will help to achieve these aims.

### **City Benefits:**

While there is a requirement to provide open access sexual health services to all residents, sexual health problems are not equally distributed within the population. Strong links exist between deprivation and STIs, teenage conceptions and abortions, with the highest burden borne by women, men who have sex with men (MSM), teenagers, young adults and black and minoritised ethnic groups. Similarly HIV infection in the UK disproportionately affects MSM and Black Africans. Some groups at higher risk of sexual health problems face stigma and discrimination, which can influence their ability to access services. The recommissioning of an ISHS will enable Bristol to bring key partners together to deliver a collaborative approach to tackling these health inequalities and improve health outcomes.

### **Consultation Details:**

A public consultation on the draft commissioning intentions was conducted for 8 weeks from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024. There were 551 responses to the consultation with the vast majority agreeing or strongly agreeing to the proposals. The full consultation report and 'you said, we did' summary are both available here: [Sexual and Reproductive Health Commissioning Intentions Consultation | Ask Bristol Consultation and Engagement Hub](#).

### **Background Documents:**

A comprehensive sexual health needs assessment was completed in 2022 and updated in 2023 for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Both versions are available here: [Health Needs Assessments](#).

## APPENDICES

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Environmental Impact Assessment</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix D – Decision Risk Assessment</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix E – Exempt Information</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix F – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix G – Options appraisal matrix</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Business case / financial analysis</b>	<b>NO</b>