Agenda Item No: 16

Meeting of:	**Cabinet**
Date of Meeting:	**Thursday, 19 November 2026**
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Live Well Scrutiny Committee
Item which the Chair has decided is urgent (Part I) **(If yes, why)**	Not applicable
Urgent Decision Procedure Used **(If yes, why)**	Not applicable
Item Type	Part I
Report Title:	Providing a Support Service for Sight and/or Hearing-Impaired Adults in the Vale of Glamorgan
Portfolio Holder:	Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health
Strategic Leadership Team:	Director of Social Services
Lead Officer:	Head of Resource Management and Safeguarding

1.0 What is this report about?

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to enter into a Direct Award contract for the continued delivery of a Support Service for Sight and/or Hearing-Impaired adults in the Vale of Glamorgan.

1.2 The current contract provides specialist support, information, advice and guidance to adults who are blind, partially sighted, severely sight impaired and/or experiencing hearing loss, promoting independence, wellbeing and social inclusion.

1.3 It is proposed that the new contract is direct awarded for an initial period of 3 (three) years, with the option to extend for a further 3 (three) years.

2.0 What is the Recommendation?

	Recommendation – What and How?	Reason for Recommendation – Why?
2.1	That Cabinet notes the contents of the report, with a view to considering the details as set out in the associated Part II Report later on this agenda.	To advise of the current position with this specialist service.

3.0 What is the background to this report?

3.1 The Council currently commissions a Support Service for Sight and/or Hearing Impaired Adults which provides practical, emotional and social support to adults living within the Vale of Glamorgan who are experiencing sight loss and/or hearing impairment. The service supports people to achieve their personal outcomes, maintain independence and remain connected with their communities.

3.2 The current contract was originally awarded to Sight Cymru in April 2019 for an initial five-year period. The contract was subsequently extended and was due to expire in March 2026. In March 2026, Cabinet approval was granted to directly award a one-year contract to Sight Cymru until March 2027. This arrangement was implemented to ensure continuity of the service provision whilst longer-term commissioning and procurement options were considered.

4.0 What issues are there to be considered?

4.1 Options available for securing the future provision of the service have been considered, including undertaking a competitive procurement exercise and awarding the contract through a direct award process. Full details are provided in the Part II report attached to this agenda.

5.0 How has evidence been used to inform the report, including the views of others?

5.1 This report and the recommendations under Part II have been informed by contract performance information, service monitoring data and discussions with operational staff within adult services.

5.2 Consideration has been given to market intelligence gathered across the region via Ardal Procurement, including procurement activity undertaken by Monmouthshire County Council and Cardiff Council during 2026.

5.3 The current service specification has been reviewed to ensure the proposed contract continues to align with identified needs and supports the wellbeing outcomes of adults with sight and/or hearing impairments.

6.0 What are the next steps if the recommendation is approved?

6.1 Full details are as set out within the report under Part II.

6.2 There will be a need to ensure appropriate safeguards around quality of care, cost control, data protection and exit provisions.

6.3 There will also be a requirement to continue contract management arrangements through quarterly monitoring and performance reporting to ensure the required service standards and outcomes continue to be achieved.

7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?

7.1 This report supports the objectives of Vale 2030 by contributing to its core working objectives.

WO1: Creating great places to live, work and visit

- The sight and hearing-impairment support service enables people to remain active independent and connected within their local communities, helping them to access services, facilities and opportunities through the Vale of Glamorgan.

- It also enables employment and volunteering opportunities for local partners.

WO2: Respecting and celebrating the environment

- The service promotes local, community-based support that enables people to access activities and services closer to home, reducing the need for travel and associated carbon emissions.

- Using community venues and partnership working contributes to sustainable practices and local engagement.

WO3: Giving everyone a good start in life

- The service provides people with access to information, advice, digital inclusion support and assistive technology that promotes confidence, independence and lifelong learning.

- The service also supports families and carers by providing advice, reassurance and practical support that enables individuals with sensory impairments to live independently and achieve their personal outcomes.

WO4: Supporting and protecting those who need us

- This is the most directly aligned objective. The service empowers and supports adults who are blind, partially sighted, severely sight impaired and/or experiencing hearing loss to maintain their independence, wellbeing and safety.

- Through rehabilitation support, information and advice, social inclusion activities and specialist sensory support, the service helps people achieve positive outcomes, remain connected to their communities and reduce loneliness and isolation.

- The service also contributes to early intervention and prevention by providing timely support that can reduce demand for other services and help people to maintain their independence for longer.

WO5: Being the best Council we can be

- Commissioning the sight and hearing loss support service through a direct award process ensures continuity of a well-established and specialist service that delivers positive outcomes for residents with sensory impairments.

- Investing in high-quality, outcome-focused support promotes effective use of resources and ensures the long-term sustainability of personalised care approaches.

8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?

8.1 **Long Term** – the proposed direct award supports the long-term wellbeing of adults with sight and/or hearing impairments by ensuring the continuation of a specialist service that promotes independence, wellbeing and community participation via ongoing support, reducing the risk of needs escalating over time.

8.2 **Collaboration** – The service is delivered through partnership working with the Council, local health board, community and third sector organisations. Effective collaboration ensures citizens using the service receive appropriate support that meets their needs and personal goals.

8.3 **Prevention** – The service adopts a preventative approach by providing early intervention, advice and support which help reduce isolation and loss of independence whilst supporting people to remain living safely and confidently within their own homes and communities for longer.

8.4 **Involving people** – People using the service are actively involved in identifying what matters most to them, shaping their support arrangements and providing valuable feedback on service delivery. The service promotes choice, independence and person-centred support, ensuring people remain at the heart of any decision-making.

8.5 **Integration** – the provider is expected to work closely with other professionals and agencies to maximise positive outcomes.

Resources

9.0 Finance

9.1 It is the intention of the Vale of Glamorgan Council to Direct Award the contract to Sight Cymru, and the service will continue to be funded from existing Social Services budgets.

10.0 Workforce

10.1 The process of monitoring the service will be undertaken by staff within the Social Services directorate, making appropriate use of corporate expertise and processes in areas such as procurement, finance and HR where required.

11.0 Legal and Equalities

11.1 **Does an Equalities Impact Assessment need to be completed? If not, why?** An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed as the proposal relates to the award of a contract in relation to an existing service and does not involve a change to the nature or the service, eligibility criteria or a reduction in service provision.

11.2 The proposed award has been considered in accordance with the provisions of the Procurement Act 2023. The Vale of Glamorgan Council is relying upon the provisions contained within Section 43 of the Act on the basis that competition is absent within the market for delivery of these specialist sensory impairment services. This position is supported by regional market intelligence and evidence obtained through procurement activity undertaken by partner Authorities via Ardal Procurement.

11.3 The service will be delivered through a robust contractual arrangement that clearly sets out the responsibilities of both the Council and the Provider together with the performance, safeguarding, monitoring and reporting requirements expected throughout the life of the contract.

11.4 The Provider will be required to comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, including safeguarding legislation, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, equity legislation, data protection requirements and Welsh Language standards where applicable.

12.0 Key Contacts

12.1 **Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?**

Lead Officer: Iain McMillan Head of Resource Management and Safeguarding IMcMillan@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk	Democratic Services Officer: Matt Swindell Cabinet and Committee Services Officer. mlswindell@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Appendix

None.

Background Documents

Sight Support Service Specification 2026.