



Executive Director/Director Non-Key Executive Decision Report

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Report to: Dawn Walton - Director of Commissioning, Inclusion and Learning

Date of Decision:

Subject: Procurement of supported accommodation for adults at risk of offending.

Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? **People**
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? **Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 291

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

Purpose of Report:

This report seeks permission to tender a support service for people who have an offending history and risky behaviours.

The service will provide around 110 units of supported accommodation with a short period of move on support into independent tenancies. Support would be provided for individual service users for 6 to 12 months, depending on need. During this time they will be provided with a holistic support package to support their recovery and develop the skills and resilience to move on to a sustainable lifestyle in permanent accommodation.

The service will ensure that the needs of women are catered for, and couples where one or both members meet its eligibility criteria.

The annual expenditure on this contract will be up to £445,000 per year initially, This anticipates a reduction of around £35,000 from the current contract price.

In addition, there will be a 1% annual reduction built into the contract from May 2020. This service will be commissioned as detailed in this report and in line with the delegations agreed by Cabinet in the Delegated Decisions for Housing Related Support Commissioning Strategy and Budget Plan 2016 - 2020

Recommendations:

As delegated through the 17th February 2016 Cabinet decision '*Delegated Decisions for Housing Related Support Commissioning strategy and Budget Plan 2016 to 2020*', the Director of Commissioning, Inclusion and Learning is recommended to:

1. Approve a re-procurement process to re-commission a supported accommodation service for people with a history of offending, in line with the detail set out in this report
2. Award, following a procurement process, a contract to the bidder offering the best value response, for a contract period of 5 years with break clauses for flexibility.

Background Papers:

Delegated Decisions for Housing Related Support Commissioning Strategy and Budget Plan 2016 - 2020

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Paul Jeffries
		Legal: Henry Watmough-Cownie
		Equalities: Ed Sexton
		Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Service: Janet Sharpe
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
<i>The Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods is consulted in relation to the use of Council Housing.</i>		
2	Lead Officer Name: Ann Ellis	Job Title: Strategic Commissioning Manager, People - Commissioning
	Date:	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Purpose of Report:

The proposed service will provide support for people who have a history of offending behaviour who are also in need of short-term supported accommodation for their period of support. Service users will often have a history of risky behaviours and/or anti-social behaviour. Some will be directly released from prison without accommodation or recently released and inadequately housed. This places them at risk of rough sleeping and potential further offending. In recent years there has been an increase in the prevalence of people with multiple needs and risky behaviours whose needs are difficult to meet. This makes it difficult to place people needing support in the right type of accommodation. This is particularly the case for the relatively small number of women who need this type of service. The proposed new service will address this need by building on the current model of provision to reduce the risk of homelessness and rough sleeping, and improve access for women.

1.2 This service will offer a dispersed housing service as an alternative to hostels or scheme based services which are not considered the most appropriate accommodation option for this client group.

There is an existing service in place which is contracted until 2 November 2018 and is primarily aimed at single people who have a history of offending. It is a service which is highly valued both by clients and stakeholders, reducing homelessness for offenders and supporting people into resettlement in the community, enabling them to sustain their tenancies and preventing them re-offending. Additional benefits are avoiding the unnecessary use of emergency and crisis services, including care and health services.

The proposed service will focus on those offenders with multiple needs and those most at risk, particularly women.

1.3 The main components of the new service will be to provide:

- a minimum of 110 units of support
- planned support sessions tailored to individual needs and with regular reviews of support, needs and risks. The frequency of support will be determined by individual need
- support and encouragement to engage in meaningful activities and where appropriate, gain qualifications with a view to gaining voluntary or paid employment.
- an accredited tenancy ready course

1.4 Additionally:

- The Provider will have a clear and thorough understanding of the pathways into mental health, substance misuse and the criminal justice system and work in partnership with all agencies to ensure that individuals maximise their potential to develop independent living skills and ability to sustain a tenancy
- The service will work within a psychologically informed way, understanding trauma and the impacts of trauma on people's lives and behaviours to minimise evictions and maximising positive move-on to other accommodation.
- Where possible the Provider will support offenders, who are sentenced to a short prison term, or who are re-called to prison for a short period, to retain their accommodation to prevent any repeat homelessness.

- A short period of support will be provided for service users when they move to their new accommodation and provide a 'warm handover' from the service provider to the new landlord to help them settle in and increase the likelihood of a sustainable tenancy and prevention of further periods of homelessness
- The service to individual service users will be provided for between 6-12 months in total; someone needing longer than this would be by exception only.

1.5 Accommodation :

- to provide a minimum of 110 units of accommodation in a mix of self-contained one bed properties and shared two bed properties.
- to ensure sufficient appropriate accommodation for people with high needs or presenting with high risks
- to ensure a sufficient number of accommodation units specifically for women

1.6 We have already identified 24 properties with 33 bed spaces and the provider will be expected to provide support in these properties. In addition the successful provider will be required to be responsible for sourcing and bringing 77 units for the contract consisting of 110 units of accommodation in a mix of self-contained one bed properties and in suitable, shared small properties.

1.7 The Service Provider will enter into Managing Agent Agreements with the Registered Providers of social housing and any private landlords.

1.8 General information on the properties available for this contract will be included in the Invitation to Tender material, to be published on YORtender.

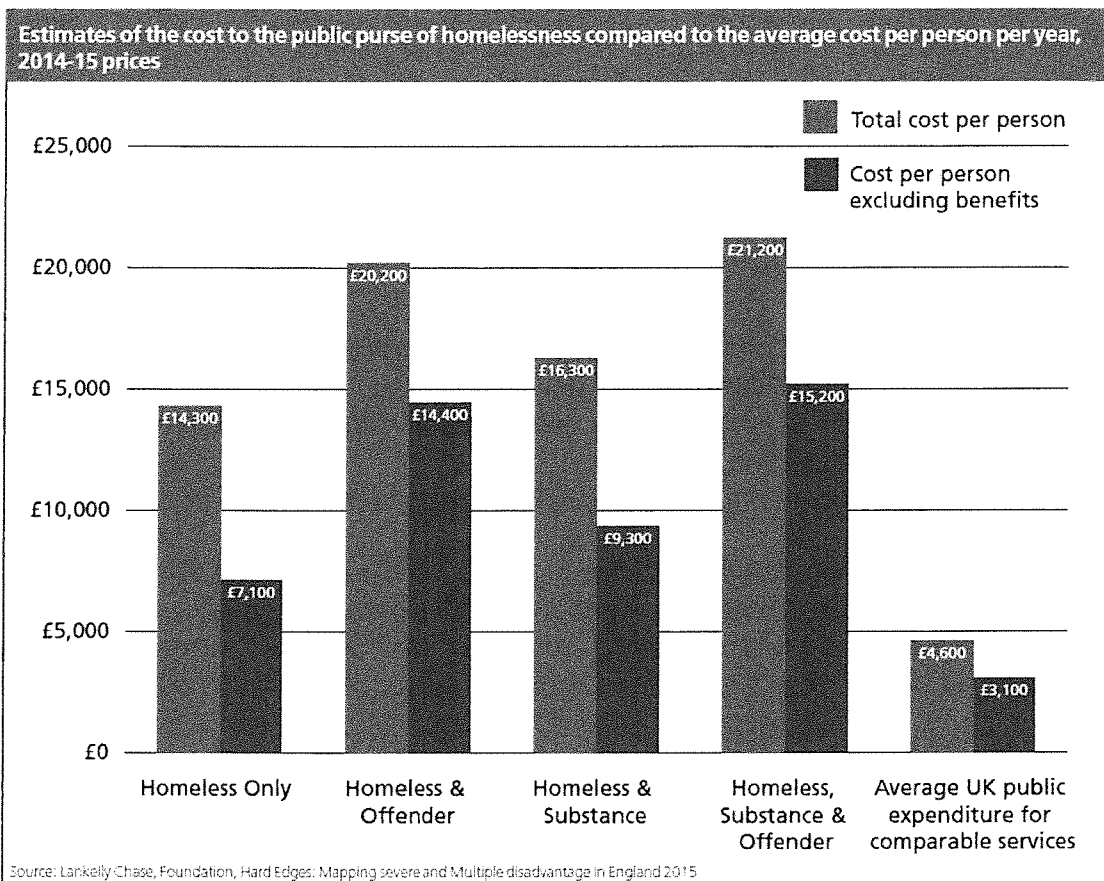
2. Why the service is required:

2.1 This service will meet a number of the Council's strategic goals. In addition, the need to prevent rough sleeping by successfully supporting people leaving prison into accommodation is identified as a priority in the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy (August 2018), which says '*If we are to end rough sleeping we need to change the way people leaving prison are supported into accommodation. This means planning early for their release, working in partnership with the relevant housing authority and providing support to access benefits or maintain previous tenancies*'.

The Government will place more onus on prisons and the Community Rehabilitation Companies to support people into suitable accommodation. As currently, it is anticipated that local authorities will have the main responsibility for housing.

The strategy sets out a number of priorities for criminal justice services, local authorities and the NHS to address the need to prevent and respond to offender homelessness and poor health and well-being. For the local authority the strategy places responsibility both with Housing and with Health and Well-being services. It refers to research carried out by Lankelly Chase a few years ago which revealed the costs of homelessness to the public purse, which the new strategy and obligations aim to avoid.

See diagram below:



2.2 The new service will contribute to this strategy by protecting homeless offenders from the risk of street homelessness. In terms of the Council's Care Act duties, the service is focused mainly on **secondary prevention** (where **primary prevention** is preventing the occurrence of problems, secondary is preventing problem escalation, and **tertiary prevention** is reducing the severity of problems). For some of the service users, those with more complex needs, the focus will be on tertiary prevention.

The service is one of a range of accommodation services provided by the Council for homeless single adults. In addition to this service, there are four accommodation based services providing support for single people in hostels and flats. The services are in high demand by the Housing Service in order to prevent homelessness and to discharge its homelessness duties. The utilisation level for all single homeless and offender services is over 95%.

2.3 Of the 208 new starters to the Council's single homelessness services in the first half of 2018, 71 were identified specifically as having their main support needs around offending. The main needs of other service users on entry were mental health and substance misuse. Analysis of individuals who weren't primarily identified as offenders revealed that a high number of these have also recently been in prison. This is likely to reflect the large number of rough sleepers and the vulnerably housed in the homeless population, who are involved in petty theft, drink or drug related offences and anti-social behaviour on the street.

2.4 In the same period (Jan – Jun 2018) the 65 new starters to the current dispersed

accommodation service for offenders were identified primarily as offenders, with support needs around mental health and substance misuse.

2.5 The number of people coming straight from prison or with a recent offending history accessing all homelessness services and the offenders' service is therefore currently about 270 per year. Since many are not identified in client record data as coming from prison this might well be underestimated. Given their size and expertise it would be reasonable to assume that high support and hostel services (which, as grouped accommodation, are not considered particularly suitable for this client group) could support a proportion of the offenders, approximately 75 offenders over the year, and a further 10, (an estimate based on current TA figures) may be placed in temporary accommodation.

This would indicate a need for 185 placements per year in this service. If it is anticipated that the length of support is between 6-12 months on average, then the number of units of service required to accommodate these placements is approximately 130.

2.6 The service has been reduced substantially in recent years as a result of budget constraints. It has to be commissioned within available resources. On the positive side, the Rough Sleeper Initiative and the development of a service for those people in the city with multiple and complex needs, 100 of whom are identified as offenders or having some history of offending, should ease the pressure on this service in the next few years. During this time the impact of the new strategy on the performance of support for prison leavers, and the needs and demands for this service will be monitored and if necessary, reviewed.

2.7 **Women:**

There is an increasing percentage of single women who have multiple needs and risks in supported housing services. There has been a 33% increase in women with multiple needs in supported accommodation from 2016/17.

2.8 In 2017, in response to this increase, the Council commissioned a supported accommodation service for women, however, this is small and in high demand. The Council finds it difficult to find suitable placements in supported housing for women, who tend to have riskier behaviours and are more at risk from harm than men.

2.9 The current service is in very high demand and operates a waiting list. Because they are far fewer in number and there is less suitable accommodation available, women spend a longer time on the waiting list as need is outstripping supply.

2.10 For these reasons proposals are included for the new dispersed 'offender' service to be widened to include more places for women.

2.11 **Couples:**

The new service will also accommodate couples, where one, or both members meet its eligibility criteria.

3. **HOW DOES THIS CONTRIBUTE?**

3.1 This decision contributes to the Council's *Corporate Plan 2015-18*, specifically:

- Better Health and Wellbeing
the service will support service users to improve their health and wellbeing and access primary and non-emergency health services where required.
- Tackling Inequalities

the service will support service users to access help to manage their money (financial inclusion), to become settled in and contribute to their local community and to access education, employment and training opportunities as identified in their individual support plan.

- Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities

the service will support service users to integrate back into communities after periods of homelessness or periods in custodial care and will work to ensure that service users act as responsible members of the community, reducing anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance.

3.2 The Homeless Reduction Act:

The service will support the Council's extended duties within the Homeless Reduction Act to prevent homelessness by being linked into newly developing South Yorkshire pathways from prison (being developed through the sub-regional Rough Sleeping Initiative) and by providing support to prevent repeat cycles of homelessness.

3.3 This recommission contributes to a range of local strategies:

- Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018
- Housing Independence Commissioning Plan 2016-2020
- Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2022

3.4 To meet strategic priorities the service will:

- Develop and implement person-centred approaches to support and recovery, that enable the delivery of cost effective and efficient support
- integrate into a range of pathways, including the criminal justice and substance misuse pathways and complement agendas of partners
- help more people live independently, safely and well in their own homes
- help people identify their health conditions and needs and encourage them to access services that assist recovery
- recognise and address social determinants of need and promote wellbeing
- reduce unplanned and regular use of emergency and crisis services such as A&E and the Police Reduce demands on public services more widely (e.g. Social Care, Courts, Prisons, Council Housing Solutions)
- Support more socially excluded people to access education, training and employment

4. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

4.1 Consultation has been undertaken with Housing Solutions, other stakeholders (such as Fitzwilliam centre, Probation, Community Rehabilitation Company, Police), referring agencies (such as the Rough Sleepers outreach team and day centres working with homeless people) and service users.

4.2 All stakeholders provided very positive feedback on the existing service, reporting a high demand and very good outcomes. It was felt that the attitude, skills and ability of the staff who are flexible and prepared to take risks with challenging clients was a contributing factor to the success.

4.3 Service users were very complimentary about the current service. A variety of comments can be summarised as follows:

- Not giving up on people and persistent assertive approach to push engagement was acknowledged and appreciated as without this people would have continued to not engage
- Speed from assessment to service delivery was seen as positive and assisted in keeping people off the streets and emergency food provision when benefits were delayed or stopped was acknowledged as improving people's health and wellbeing
- Support to engage with a large range of activities and course which suit people's interests was valued and seen as improving people's confidence
- Support to access move on accommodation and support with resettlement was appreciated seen as very positive and needed
- Provision for women was acknowledged as a needed service due to the gaps in other service provision for women
- It is clear from many of the comments that the Service is and needs to be well engaged with other voluntary sector provision in the city which adds to the wholeness of the approach for this client group
- Some concern was expressed about not allowing pets.

4.4 Service users have helped to shape the specification for the proposed service. Flexibility around domestic pets is part of the new specification, though this has to be managed within the restrictions placed on the service by the landlord and as part of a health and safety risk assessment.

5. **IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

5.1

Equality of Opportunity Implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and there are no negative impacts if the services are recommissioned in line with the recommendations in this report. Overall the impact of the recommendations are positive.

5.2

Financial and Commercial Implications:

The maximum resource available for the recommissioned service is £435,000 a year. However we expect the market to bring reductions and added value through the tender process.

There will be a 1% annual reduction built into the contract from 1 May 2020. Additionally, the market will be tested to see if it can bring in any charitable contribution towards the service provision, either to reduce costs to the Council or to enhance service delivery by increasing the service units to help meet the high demand for the service.

Providers will also get additional income from rents and service charges. Regulations around Housing Benefits and related subsidy loss are complex and can pose a risk to Council finances. Therefore, prospective providers bidding for this contract will be informed by the Invitation to Tender documentation that the landlord of the properties will have to be a Registered Provider and not create a situation where the Council loses subsidy on the Housing Benefit it pays out as a result of the landlord criteria. The tender will be open to charitable and other service providers but they must be able to prove a relationship with a Registered Housing provider as the landlord of the properties.

Legal Implications:

5.3 On 17th February 2016 Cabinet approved a report '*Delegated Decisions for Housing Related Support Commissioning strategy and Budget Plan 2016 to 2020*', which delegated decision making for the commissioning of Supported Housing to the Director of Commissioning. It was resolved that:

(c) in accordance with the high level commissioning strategy and this report, authority be delegated to the Director of Commissioning to:

(i) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living and the Director of Commercial Services, approve the procurement strategy for any service delivery during the period of the strategy;

(d) authority be delegated to the Director of Commissioning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living, the Director of Legal and Governance and the Director of Commercial Services, to take such other steps as he deems appropriate to achieve the outcomes in this report;

In addition, the record of executive functions stated that:

5.3.1

(e) the Director of Commissioning shall only procure and award contracts for the provision of supported accommodation where the use of Council Housing accommodation is integral to the support, in consultation with the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods and where the appropriate approval for that use of the accommodation is in place; and The Director of Housing has been consulted and has advised that Housing Services will no longer be able to support using SCC properties for this type of scheme due to demand for the shrinking stock they have and changes to how they support tenants.

(f) the Director of Commissioning shall only procure and award contracts for the provision of supported accommodation, where there will be implications for housing benefit subsidy loss, in consultation with the Director of Finance Service.

5.4 The contract will be let in line with Council Standing Orders and the process is supported by the Council's Commercial Services. The terms and conditions of the contract were drafted by the Council's Legal Services and allow for the contract to end before the maximum duration of five years if the Council's strategic or resource situation changes. This will be made clear to potential bidders in the tender documentation.

5.5 The local authority is under a duty to prevent needs for care and support following implementation of the Care Act 2014. Under sections 2(1)(a) and (b) of the Act the authority must provide or arrange for the provision of services, facilities or resources, or take other steps which it considers will contribute towards preventing or delaying the development by adults in its area of needs for care and support; and to reduce the needs for care and support of adults in its area. Under sections 2(2)(a) and (b) a local authority in performing that duty must have regard to the importance of identifying services, facilities and resources already available in the authority's area and the extent to which the authority could involve or make use of them in performing that duty; and the importance of identifying adults in the authority's

area with needs for care and support which are not being met (by the authority or otherwise).

- 5.6 Under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 the local authority is also under a duty to provide advice and assistance to persons in its area who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Three alternative options have been considered alongside the recommended option to recommission the services. These are set out below.

Option 1: Do not continue to commission this Service

- 6.1 There is a need for this service. The service is an important component of the Council's commissioned supported accommodation service. It is a dispersed service which is a much needed alternative to large hostel accommodation which is not suitable for all service users. It provides a different 'offer' to service users and has positive outcomes, particularly for people with multiple needs. Demand outstrips supply for the service.
- When funding was aggregated to create the Supporting People Programme a large amount of funding from Probation Hostel Grant was included to ensure that people leaving prison with housing support needs are not homeless and at risk of reoffending. All stakeholders interviewed in April 2018 attested to the value of this service.
- Without the service we would see an increase in rough sleeping and more pressure on Housing Solutions, on the criminal justice system and on related services.

Option 2: Commission less.

- 6.2 The dispersed accommodation service has a high utilisation rate. Demand outstrips supply and reducing the service would have an adverse impact on homelessness and recovery. Service Users benefit from stable accommodation to aid their transition to independent living and learning how to sustain a tenancy, while being supported them to reduce the risks that they pose to themselves and others. Ideally the service needs to be increased rather than decreased.

Option 3: Run the service in house

- 6.3 The offender service providers have a long history of working with probation and a range of landlords to provide support for offenders many with complex needs. There is a healthy voluntary sector market with expertise and a good track record of providing positive outcomes in supported housing. The voluntary sector is able to bring in additional charitable funding to support the client group. There is no obvious home or expertise for this bespoke service in-house and if we delay the progress of the tender the contract will run out.
- The accommodation used for this service is scattered throughout the city and belongs to a variety of landlords, including the Council. During the consultation period, Council Housing Services have said that due to demand for council housing for general needs they are not able to continue to provide any council properties for the use of this type of service.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a continued need for supported accommodation in the city to meet strategic and legal responsibilities for the client group described. Demand for the service outstrips supply.

The current contract ends in November 2018 and therefore a decision is required to enable the service to be recommissioned. A gap in service would have a detrimental impact on homelessness amongst offenders and adults with multiple needs.

The supported accommodation service will provide people with support needs stable accommodation while they develop the skills to live independently and move on to their own tenancy. The support will address underlying issues and reduce homelessness, including rough sleeping.

The existing service is a tried and tested model of provision that is valued in the City by all stakeholders and is well established within a number of pathways. The new service has been enhanced to include more needed provision for women and for people with multiple needs.

Signed:


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Director of Commissioning, Inclusion and Learning

Date: 20/12/18