



**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Tony Ellingham  
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Service)

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**Report of:** *John Macilwraith, Executive Director of People Services*

**Report to:** *Councillor George Lindars-Hammond Co-operative Executive Lead Member for Health and Social Care*

**Date of Decision:** 21.03.22

**Subject:** Approval to extend a current contract for up to 18 months to Salvation Army – Lincoln Court to continue to provide support to single women with multiple complex needs who are at risk of rough sleeping.

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:-	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	
- Affects 2 or more Wards	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Which Executive Member Portfolio does this relate to? <i>People Portfolio</i>		
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? Overview and Scrutiny Management		
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <b>1156</b>		
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-		
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>		

**Purpose of Report:**

To award a contract extension, by way of variation, to the existing contract to The Salvation Army to enable the continuation of provision of holistic support for vulnerable single women at risk of rough sleeping.

There are very few services that provide women only provision in the city and those that do have a particular focus on women fleeing domestic abuse and young women up to the age of 25. There are women in the city with a range of complex needs that put their health, wellbeing and accommodation at risk.

The extension by award of a new contract will ensure there is not a sudden loss of provision for this vulnerable group of women. A procurement process for a new contract has been completed, but there is a delay with implementation because it has not yet been possible to agree suitable new accommodation. This delay means the existing contract will come to an end before the newly procured contract begins.

**Recommendations:**

1. To award a contract extension, by way of variation of the current contract with the Salvation Army for 18 months to the end of September 2023

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

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: Gaynor Hobson
		Legal: Henry Watmough-Cownie
		Equalities: Ed Sexton
<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>		
2	<b>EMT member who approved submission:</b>	John McIlwraith
3	<b>Executive Member consulted:</b>	Councillor George Lindars-Hammond
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b>  Tony Ellingham	<b>Job Title:</b>  Commissioning Manager
	<b>Date:</b> 04.03.22	

## 1. PROPOSAL

1.1 The Council has a contract with The Salvation Army, to provide women only accommodation-based support. The service provides holistic support to women who face multiple disadvantages, such as poor health, being at risk of exploitation or abuse and not having stable accommodation. The support provided helps women address these challenges so they can enjoy improved wellbeing and live independently.

1.2 All the other women only provision in the city requires women to meet additional access criteria, such as age requirements or fleeing domestic abuse. The service provides accommodation and support to address any other needs. Typically people are supported to:

- Access GP services
- Engage with other services that address specific needs such as mental health needs, substance use, sexual abuse and other health needs.
- Consider longer term accommodation needs and where appropriate register and bid for social housing.

1.3 The service supports 11 people at a time. During the last year 19 of women have been supported. Most women have more than one presenting need and of those who have been supported:

- 42% have had a mental health need
- 21% have suffered sexual abuse
- 21% have been fleeing domestic abuse
- 32% have needed to address substance abuse

The level of needs that people typically present with and the importance of accommodation and support is demonstrated by the average age of death for female rough sleepers, which is 43 for women.

1.4 A majority of people supported between April 2020 and March 2021 have been between the age of 21 and 47 With an average age of 36.

The ethnicity of women supported by Lincoln Court is as follows:

- Asian 5%
- Mixed 5%
- Other 5%
- White British 85%

1.5 The service is consistently full and achieves good outcomes in terms of key indicators such as reducing loneliness and reducing loneliness. A high number of people have met their needs while in the service or made

progress.

- 1.6
- 85% have achieved economic wellbeing
  - 80% report improved health
  - 89% feel safer
  - 72% have achieved safe and secure accommodation

1.7 Procurement

A procurement has already been undertaken, but the contract cannot begin because accommodation has not been secured, there will not be a further procurement process when the contract ends. Although the service extension is up to 18 months there is an option to end the service earlier by giving 6 months notice. This will avoid any double running costs and means there will be a smooth transition from the current contract to the new complex needs women's service.

**2 HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

- 2.1 This proposal helps the council meet statutory duties and meet a range of strategic objectives.
- 2.2 The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 introduced new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness and the national Rough Sleeping Strategy sets an ambition to end rough sleeping by 2027. The council is monitored closely on achieving this target.
- 2.3 All Councils must have an up to date Homelessness Prevention Strategy and the local strategy in Sheffield sets out core strategic commitments that include tackling rough sleeping. The council is monitored closely on how successfully it reduces rough sleeper numbers, by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 2.4 The Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to arrange services that help to improve people's independence and wellbeing. This includes services that prevent people developing needs for care and support or delay people deteriorating such that they would need ongoing care and support.
- 2.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places new duties on the council to make arrangements for the provision of safe accommodation. This is a broad definition that includes women only provision such as Lincoln Court.
- 2.6 Our Sheffield – One Year Plan 2021-22 sets out a high-level framework for developing a more detailed 3-5 year Corporate Plan. It includes commitments to supporting people out of homelessness, ensuring young people in care achieve their full potential, reducing health inequalities and reducing anti-social behaviour.

### **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 Public consultation has taken part in relation to a wider of all housing related support using citizen space, focus groups and questionnaires.

Consultation has been undertaken with Commercial services, the Executive Lead Member for Health and Social Care and the Executive Director of the People Portfolio.

### **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

#### **4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications**

- 4.1.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and awarding an extension of up to two years would have a positive impact as it results allows for a smooth transition if any changes are required arising from the review.

#### **4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications**

- 4.2.1 The current cost of the service is £178,000 a year and the maximum cost of the extension is £267,000. Funding is available within the Housing Independence Budget.

#### **4.3 Legal Implications**

- 4.3. The original contracts were let in line with Council Standing Orders and the processes were supported by the Council's Commercial Services. A recommendation is sought to vary the existing agreement for up to one year.

### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 Recommissioning another service to full the gap in provision is not feasible. A new service has been commissioned, but technical problems have delayed the implementation of the contract.

Doing nothing and continuing to pay for the service would mean the contract was compliant with standing orders.

Exiting from the contract at the contract end date would leave a gap in

service provision for a vulnerable group of homeless women and make it more difficult to meet statutory requirements and meet key strategic objectives.

## **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The current contract ends on 31 March 2022. The service helps to meet statutory duties and contributes to meeting key national and local objectives to end rough sleeping. It also addresses a range of wider needs. Failure to extend the service by a new short-term contract award would make it harder to place vulnerable women in safe accommodation. This would put additional pressure on Social Care, domestic abuse services and Homeless services in the city.