

Report of Strategy and Commissioning

Report to Director of Environment and Housing

Date: 25th September 2014

Subject: Extension of contract for the Supply and Management of Furnished Temporary Accommodation Service with RD Willis Properties.

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of Main Issues

1. Leeds City Council has a framework contract for the Supply and Management of Furnished Temporary Accommodation service with RD Willis Properties. It is part of the programme of Housing Related Support commissioned and managed by Strategy and Commissioning, Public Health on behalf of Environment and Housing, Children's Services and Adults Social Care.
2. RD Willis Properties provides a minimum of 21 units of accommodation to ensure the council is able to provide interim accommodation to homeless households seeking assistance under homeless legislation. Accommodation is provided in self-contained dispersed community based properties.
3. The current contract extension for this service is due to expire on the 30th September with the option of a further 6 month extension. The service has been in place since 9th January 2012. Approval is sought to extend the RD Willis Properties contract using the 6 month extension available to continue providing Temporary Accommodation to those seeking assistance from the Local Authority under the Homelessness Legislation. The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the 2002 Homelessness Act) requires all councils to ensure that interim accommodation is available to homeless households seeking assistance under this legislation. Therefore provision of temporary accommodation must continue to ensure that the council fulfils its legal obligation.

Recommendations

The Director of Environment and Housing is recommended to approve the request for a 6 month contract extension to the existing contract with RD Willis Properties for the Supply and Management of Furnished Temporary Accommodation Service from the 1st October 2014.

4. Purpose of this Report

Purpose of this report is to request that the Supply and Management of Furnished Temporary Accommodation Service is continued through a 6 month extension to the existing contract.

2. Background Information

- 2.1** A contract has been in place with RD Willis Properties for the Supply and Management of Furnished Temporary Accommodation since the 9th January 2012 and the current extension is expiring on the 30th September 2014. The Service provides a minimum guarantee of 21 units of accommodation used cross directorate by Environment and Housing, Adult Social Care and Children's Service.
- 2.2** The terms of the Framework contract extension were varied from 2 x 12 months to 4 x 6 months in October 2013. This was to allow the Temporary Accommodation (TA) Board to respond in a timely manner to any changes in future demand and to ensure value for money should the demand decrease. The decision was approved by the Director of Environment and Housing in September 2013. There are still uncertainties which remain regarding the impact upon the demand for temporary accommodation due to welfare reform.
- 2.3** The TA Board provides the strategic and operational steer for the recommendations contained within this report. The board is chaired by the Chief Officer Statutory Housing, and includes representatives from Leeds Housing Options, Adult Social Care, Children Services, Strategy and Commissioning, Public Health and Procurement.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Approval of extension for this contract will ensure continuity of service to those people requiring access to emergency accommodation with support to find longer term housing solutions.
- 3.2** Whilst the number of placements made into temporary accommodation is reducing the utilisation and demand for this contract has remained consistent over the last 12 months. There is an ongoing need for this provision for vulnerable homeless adults and families. The service is both strategically and operationally relevant. It has been agreed across all 3 directorates that the minimum guarantee of 21 units should remain the same for this extension period.
- 3.3** Feedback from the services utilising this contract regarding the performance of the contract has been positive. The provider has shown flexibility in providing accommodation in times of increased demand.

- 3.4** At present the Council still requires access to Temporary Accommodation. Whilst services do not anticipate increases in the number requiring temporary accommodation, there are a number of uncertainties relating to the impact of welfare change and the economic situation which make it difficult to assess the possible impact on homelessness and demand. The Temporary Accommodation Board proposes to undertake a continuous review of the situation.
- 3.5** Following consultation with the services utilising this contract, this report seeks to maintain the contractual minimum guarantee number of units at 21. The units supplied will include self-contained properties and rooms in a shared house. The minimum guarantee relates to the number of units the provider will guarantee available to the council for which they will get a guaranteed income. This is not a maximum number and the provider is expected to supply properties above this level should demand rise and should properties be available.
- 3.6** Supply and demand will be managed through regular communication and operational meetings between the Council and RD Willis Properties.
- 3.7** A further review will be undertaken prior to the expiry of this extension which will be 31st March 2015. A final six month extension period will be available at this time. A continuous review of this contract will be undertaken over the next 12 months and prior to the next extension.
- 3.8** Performance has been monitored and managed by the Contracts and Commissioning Officers within the Strategy and Commissioning team. Feedback received has been positive with all key directorates pleased with the performance and flexibility of the provider.
- 3.9** There are no issues of contract compliance or complaints about the service.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.4 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.4.1** Consultation has been undertaken with all services utilising and involved in the delivery of the contract including the Procurement Team, Legal Services and the Provider. This has been overseen by the Temporary Accommodation Board.
- 4.4.2** Numbers placed in Temporary Accommodation have fallen over the last year; consultation has taken place with all directorates using this contract about this issue. All key stakeholders agree to keep the minimum guarantee at 21 units which they feel is the best way forward.

4.5 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.5.1** An Equality Impact Assessment screening tool has been undertaken in relation to this recommendation. The screening tool indicates that a full EIA does not need to be undertaken as extending the contract will not involve any changes which would impact negatively on service users, staff or stakeholders. The screening tool is attached as a background document for information.

4.6 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.6.1** The RD Willis Properties service is strategically relevant and contributes to the Best Council Plan 2011-2030 for Leeds to be the 'Best City' by delivery of the priorities set out in the 'City Priority Plan' 2011 to 2015. The service will especially contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Leeds City Priority Plan 2011 to 2015 to ensure that people are '*supported to live safely in their own homes*'.
- 4.6.2** The service also contributes directly to the priorities set out in the Homelessness Strategy 2012-2015 in particular to deliver a modern programme of temporary accommodation through the provision of self-contained and dispersed accommodation.
- 4.6.3** The RD Willis Properties service also contributes to the Children and Young People City Priority Plan 2011 to 2015 by supporting homeless families with dependent children.

4.7 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.7.1** This contract specifies a minimum guarantee of 21 units for which the provider will receive income from the council. Underutilisation of this contract is covered by the 3 Directorates using this contract to ensure that the provider receives payment for 21 units. The split for this between the 3 Directorates is 45% Environments and Housing, 45% Children Services and 10% Adult Social Care.
- 4.7.2** This contract specifies a minimum guarantee of 21 units for which the provider will receive income from the council. Beyond this guarantee the provision of additional units will be based upon demand. The provision of a 6 month extension and the option to extend for further 6 month period allows the Temporary Accommodation Board to respond in a timely manner to changes in demand and ensure value for money should the demand decrease.

4.8 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.8.1** The recommendation within this report is in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 21.1 and there is provision remaining for one further 6 month extension within the original contract.
- 4.8.2** This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information
- 4.8.3** This is a significant operational decision and is not subject to call in.

4.9 Risk Management

- 4.9.1** The 6 month extension period is required to enable continuation of the services provided by RD Willis Properties. It provides a key part of the Housing Related Support Service for Homelessness adults and families. Based on the current demand and utilisation of this contract decommissioning the service would leave vulnerable homeless people without the support and accommodation required to help achieve independent living.

- 4.9.2** The Council will continue to work in partnership with the provider in order to ensure that the placements are maximised and trends information is shared. TA Board are fully aware of the situation and will be undertaking a continuous review of supply and demand. A risk log has been developed by the Board to mitigate risks and ensure proactive actions are in place to develop alternative options.
- 4.9.3** There are a number of uncertainties relating to the impact of welfare change and the economic situation which makes it difficult to assess the possible impact on homelessness and demand for TA. An increased focus within commissioned services and Housing Options on prevention work, early intervention and alternative longer term solutions is reducing the need to access temporary accommodation.
- 4.9.4** The contract will continue to be performance managed by officers in strategy and commissioning and discussed at the TA Board meetings.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1** Whilst the number of placements made into temporary accommodation have remained consistent over the last 12 months there is still on-going need for the provision of this service. At present there are a number of uncertainties which could impact upon the demand for temporary accommodation which makes it difficult to plan for the longer term.
- 5.2** In order to allow flexibility it is recommended that this short term extension is put in place with RD Willis Properties to ensure continuity of services and allow for continuous review.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1** The Director of Environment and Housing is recommended to approve the 6 month contract extension to the existing contract with RD Willis Properties for the Supply and Management of Furnished Temporary Accommodation Services with effect from the 1st October 2014.

7. Background Documents¹

- 7.1** Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration screening document

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.