

Report of Head of Commissioning, Adults and Health

Report to Director of Resources and Housing

Date: 7th August 2019

Subject: Request for approval to vary Engage Leeds Visiting Housing Related Support contract awarded to GIPSIL Limited to include MHCLG and HRA funding

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, 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. An opportunity has arisen to fund some additional targeted work as a result of a bid for funding the city has made to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding and through Housing Revenue Account.
2. The funding will be used to fund Navigator posts that support people who need additional help to settle into accommodation, recover and engage with activities and services in their local communities.

Recommendations

The Director of Resources and Housing is recommended to approve, in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rules 21.7, a variation to the Engage Leeds Visiting Housing Related Support contract awarded to GIPSIL Limited to include:-

- Funding from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of £105,000 to fund two Navigator posts and a trainee Navigator post (up to July 2020).
- Approve the allocation of up to £80,000 for one year from Housing Revenue Account to fund two Navigator posts under Engage Leeds contract.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Supporting people who are rough sleeping and begging is a priority for the Council. There are a number of housing related support services in place in the City Centre that provide accommodation and support in the City, such as St George's Crypt Overnight service, St Anne's Resource Centre and Street Outreach Service. In addition there are City wide services to support and prevent homelessness, these are Beacon accommodation service and Engage Leeds visiting housing related support service which have both been operational for two years.
- 1.2 There is an opportunity to fund additional targeted activity following receipt of funding from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 1.3 Additional funding is also requested from Housing Revenue Account to employ Navigator posts to work with people who are rehoused in LCC properties.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to set out proposals for how some of this resource could be utilised and to seek authority from the Director of Resources and Housing to vary the Engage Leeds contract to carry out this work.

2. Background information

- 2.1 A report to Cabinet and CLT in March 2017 provided an overview of the incidence of rough sleeping and begging in the city and the challenges associated with tackling this issue and encouraging the take up of support. Numbers of people rough sleeping has increased substantially nationally and although numbers in Leeds are lower than comparable cities, they have risen.
- 2.2 Safer Leeds has established the Leeds Street Support Team to focus efforts on tackling the issue and funds have been awarded by MHCLG to reduce rough sleeping. The team offer more targeted outreach work, coordinate case conferencing arrangements and facilitate fast access to key support services.
- 2.3 Like many other cities, Leeds has seen an increase in the numbers of people begging. Many people who beg are vulnerable individuals, affected by their life experiences and/ or circumstances. The reasons why they beg are often very complex, and can be compounded by a range of mental and physical ill health issues and challenging behaviours, all of which can be real barriers to engaging with services.
- 2.4 Leeds has a number of commissioned services that are specifically targeted towards supporting people who are vulnerable and have complex needs. These include Forward Leeds, Street Outreach, Engage and Beacon. There is close partnership working with statutory agencies and with other services such as WYFi.
- 2.5 There is a need to provide additional support once people are rehoused to help them sustain their accommodation and integrate within the community.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The proposed Navigator posts will support service users who have been rough sleeping and/ or begging and have been identified through the housing pathway, the Street Outreach Team and the Street Support Team as needing intensive support to maintain accommodation, reduce and prevent a return to street based life and to enable integration into the community. This will involve intensive work on small caseloads that will look to ensure the individual is supported in their recovery to find employment, undertake training, develop budgeting skills, cultivate positive social

circles and be better equipped to maintain their accommodation and independence and avoid returning to the street. Once an individual has been identified as suitable for navigation support the navigator will give continued support and be a single point of contact until the individual is settled and able to maintain their accommodation and independence

- 3.2 Engage Leeds is already delivering directly related services and have the necessary infrastructure, they are considered uniquely placed and suitably experienced to do this work. Placing workers with Engage Leeds will mean that there is more capacity in the service to provide intensive support for people with the most chaotic lifestyles.
- 3.3 The posts will work closely with the Police, Leeds Housing Options, Leeds Street Team, Forward Leeds, WYFi and other relevant services.
- 3.4 The Navigator posts will add value to and work within pathways to current services and develop a more coordinated approach for the individual supporting them as required.
- 3.5 Outcomes anticipated from this additional work will include individuals moving into supported or more permanent accommodation; engagement with drug and alcohol and health services, improved health and wellbeing and reduction in failed tenancies.
- 3.6 The additional £185,000 will increase the annual value of the contract by 4.98% from £3,711,750 to £3,896,750.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Discussion has taken place with a range of stakeholders about the bid to MHCLG and the allocation of funds received. This has included a discussion about how best to invest the funds.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Discussion has taken place with Housing Management about the need for additional capacity to support people who have previously been rough sleeping or begging and the need to help settle and sustain tenancies. Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration.
- 4.2.2 Additional workers to support this vulnerable client group will mean that extra help is provided to engage with services to sustain tenancies.
- 4.2.3 People who are rough sleeping and begging may be vulnerable and at risk of abuse or presenting a safeguarding risks to others in the city. Additional support will reduce risk to all concerned.
- 4.2.4 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration screening tool has been completed and is attached as Appendix1.

5. Council policies and best council plan

- 5.1 The navigator posts will contribute to the work of the Leeds Street Support Team established by Safer Leeds. The work also contributes to the Housing Strategy particularly the outcomes related to reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 5.2 The work proposed supports the Council's ambition for Leeds to be a compassionate and caring city by helping to reduce rough sleeping and begging and the negative

impacts of this across the City. It also supports the 'Vision for Leeds 2011-2030' and the delivery of wider outcomes relating to community safety, health and well-being, social inclusion and employment and training.

- 5.3 The extra support provided is in line with the Best Council plan 'tackling poverty and reducing inequalities'.
- 5.4 The services will also make a contribution to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-2021) in terms of helping to ensure that 'people will live in healthy, safe and sustainable communities'.
- 5.5 These services also contribute to priorities within the forthcoming Leeds Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2019- 2024 by delivering health promotion and helping to increase the number of successful completions from drug and alcohol treatment programmes to support recovery.

6. Resources and value for money

- 6.1 The HRA funding of £80,000 is for two posts including management costs and on costs. A further three posts will be funded by grant from the MHCLG Rapid Rehousing Pathway. This grant of £105,000 has been injected into the Resources and Housing revenue budget and must be spent by July 2020.
- 6.2 The Salaries for posts funded are in line with other similar posts. Payment will be based on actual costs based on submission of financial returns and will not exceed the amount approved in this report.
- 6.3 Performance monitoring processes will be put in place by the Adults and Health Commissioning Team to ensure value for money and quality of delivery for the duration of the post.

7. Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 7.1 There is no overriding legal obstacle preventing the variation of this contract under CPRs 21.7 and the contents of this report should be noted. The percentage value uplift of 4.98% is within the value permitted by regulation 72 (5) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. In making the final decision, the Director of Resources and Housing should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for money.
- 7.1 As the overall value of this decision does not exceed £500,000 this is a Significant Operational Decision and is not subject to call in. There are no grounds for keeping the contents of this report confidential under the Access to Information Rules.

8. Risk management

- 8.1 Risk management is built into the work of Engage Leeds who have the experience and skills to manage risks of working with this vulnerable client group including managing lone working and aggressive and volatile behaviour.

9. Conclusions

There is an increasing number of people rough sleeping and begging nationally and in Leeds. It has become clear that although intensive work is taking place to rehouse

people from the street, additional specialist support is required to help people maintain tenancies, gain independence and move away from a street based life. Additional resource to fund specialist navigators will help to address this problem and will be an important addition to the housing and support pathway.

Funding is available for one year for these posts but may be extended subject to approval of funds from the MHCLG and via the HRA. If this is the case a further report will be submitted.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 The Director of Resources and Housing is recommended to approve in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rules 21.7 a variation to the Engage Leeds Visiting Housing Related Support contract awarded to GIPSIL Limited to include:-
- Funding from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of £105,000 to fund two Navigator posts and a trainee Navigator post (up to July 2020).
 - Approve the allocation of up to £80,000 for one year from Housing Revenue Account to fund two Navigator posts under Engage Leeds contract.

1. Background documents¹

None.

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.