

Report seeking authority to procure a new Street Outreach Service for people who are rough sleeping

Date: 28th September 2021

Report of: Head of Commissioning (Housing and Public Health)

Report to: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- Leeds City Council commissions a range of housing related support services for vulnerable people in Leeds. The primary aim of these services is to support people to achieve and maintain independent living. These contracts are managed by the commissioning team in Adults and Health on behalf of the Communities, Housing and Environment Directorate, and include a street outreach service that engages with people who are rough sleeping. The current contract expires on 31st March 2022.
- Approval is therefore being sought to procure a new service.
- This will support the housing priority of *Minimising homelessness through a greater focus on prevention*.

Recommendations

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment is recommended to:

- a) Approve authority to proceed with a competitive procurement process, as outlined in this report and in line with Contract Procedure Rules (CPRs) 3.1.7, to procure a suitable provider/consortium to deliver a new street outreach service.
- b) Approve a contract period of 5 years commencing 1st April 2022 (with an option to extend for a period of up to 36 months in any combination), with a maximum budget of £215,000 per annum (£1,720,000 for the overall contract period should the full extension period be taken up).
- c) It should be noted that a report will be submitted for approval at the end of the procurement process to approve the contract award, which will be a direct consequence of this key decision and will therefore be a significant operational decision and not be subject to call in.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Leeds City Council has commissioned a Street Outreach Service (SOS) for a number of years, with the current contract being in place since 2019. It is a city-wide assertive outreach and support service for people who are rough sleeping and / or begging, to help them move away from the streets and access a range of support agencies including housing and health services. The contract expires on 31st March 2022.
- 2 The Government has set ambitious targets to end rough sleeping by the end of this parliament. This service supports the work in Leeds to reduce the number of people rough sleeping.
- 3 A multi-agency Street Support Team (led by Safer Leeds and including staff from the council, health, and housing services) was established in September 2018 and is the cornerstone of the Leeds approach to tackling and reducing rough sleeping and begging. The SOS is a key part of this partnership, participating in the daily co-ordination meetings, bi-weekly emergency accommodation meetings and street support governance meetings.
- 4 A review of the current provision has been undertaken, including data analysis, consultation with current service users, staff and stakeholders, and a reflection on best practice in other cities across England. This has determined that there remains a need for this provision and that it is a successful approach to addressing rough sleeping. Feedback from the consultation will be taken into account when writing the specification for the new contract.
- 5 The review also considered the city's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and what was learnt about the needs of this client group. The SOS played a critical role in working with the wider street support partnership, including ensuring that everyone who was street-based was aware of the "Everyone In" offer and continuing to support those on the streets, ensuring vital health support was provided to those that needed it. They provided a key link between those placed in emergency accommodation from the street and other support services to assist people to move on and to help those who have remained street based to access the services they need.
- 6 An options appraisal was carried out using the findings, to consider procurement options, contract length and service model. The proposals are as follows.
- 7 The contract will be subjected to competitive tender, as a result of the findings from the options appraisal, which determined that a new contract must be procured in order to meet the ongoing objectives.
- 8 Approval is being sought to procure a contract for a period of 5 years plus an extension of up to 36 months (to be taken in any combination). This is because:
 - it would demonstrate commitment to council and national government priorities around rough sleeping
 - this provision can take time to see outcomes achieved, so a longer contract provides stability to the provider and clients, reducing disruption to service delivery and access, to enable this to happen
 - continuity of partnership working arrangements can be maintained
 - staff recruitment and retention will be easier as a result of longer terms of employment, greater job security and opportunities for development.
- 9 The service availability and scope will stay largely unchanged, since the review found no significant case for alteration. This means that the service will be operational from Monday to Friday, although there will be a requirement for flexibility to manage different patterns of working to meet ad hoc requirements. The service will continue to work with people who are rough sleeping and / or begging. However, the emphasis on begging will be reduced, so that

instead, engagement should encompass all of the needs of those living a street-based lifestyle, which may include begging. Intelligence around begging should be fed into Street Support tasking meetings, at which the most appropriate lead agency will be determined.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 10 The impact on rough sleeping in the city will be measured through:
 - The number of people supported
 - The number supported into secure accommodation
- 11 The Social Value Toolkit will be embedded within the procurement and contract management processes in order to identify and measure the additional outcomes being delivered.
- 12 An Equality Diversity Cohesion Integration screening has been completed and is attached. There are no issues to be addressed.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 13 As is best practice, service users and staff from the current services, as well as stakeholders, have been consulted as part of the review.
- 14 The Executive Member for Environment and Housing was consulted on the proposals on 27th September 2021 and is supportive of the approach.
- 15 The Project Board for the review has discussed the findings of the consultation and endorsed the recommendations of the options appraisal referred to in paragraphs 7 to 9.
- 16 The Project Team includes a representative from Homeless Link, the national membership charity for organisations working directly with people who become homeless in England. This ensures that the project benefits from knowledge and experience of good practice from around the country.

What are the resource implications?

- 17 It is requested that the maximum budget be set at £215,000 per annum, which is the current contract value, with the potential for achieving some savings through the use of the price / quality separated approach of evaluation.
- 18 There is provision within the Communities, Housing and Environment revenue budget to fund this service over the lifetime of the contract.
- 19 Should there become a requirement to achieve financial efficiencies during the lifetime of the contract, these would be the subject of a contract variation. Any change to the budget will in turn impact the service specification and any amendments be discussed with the provider.
- 20 The new service will be subject to robust contract management to ensure that the contract outcomes and value for money are achieved.

What are the legal implications?

- 21 This is a Key Decision since the total value of the contract (including potential extensions) is £1,720,000 and is therefore subject to Call In. It was published on the List of Forthcoming Key Decisions 14th July 2021. Should the option to take up the extension period be required then that will be subject to a separate decision at the appropriate time.
- 22 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.
- 23 The total contract value over the eight year period, including the possible extensions, will exceed the procurement threshold for Health and Social Care, which is £663,540. Whilst the service is not subject to the “full” regulations but to the “Light-Touch Rules Regime” under the regulations, there is still a requirement to advertise this opportunity via the council’s YORtender portal, Contracts Finder and the Find a Tender Service to ensure an open competitive tendering exercise.
- 24 There is no risk of challenge, since the proposed approach is to award this contract through an open and competitive procurement process.
- 25 Subsequent decisions arising from this report, for example the decision to award the contract, will be treated as a consequence of this Key decision and will therefore be treated as a significant operational decision at most, which will not be subject to call in.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 26 A project team comprising of Adults & Health Integrated Commissioning, Safer Leeds, Leeds Housing Options, Homeless Link and Procurement & Commercial Services has been set up to manage the re-commissioning process and ensure that the process adheres to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, as well as the council's Contract Procedure Rules. The project team reports to a Project Board, which contains senior officers from the same council services and a representative of the Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure linkage to the health inclusion agenda.
- 27 A risk register has been established as part of the re-procurement process and this will continue to be managed and updated. Significant risks will be reported to the Project Board.
- 28 A mobilisation period has been built into the procurement timetable to ensure that the service can be fully mobilised before the contract start date
- 29 This procurement will enable a continuity of provision that addresses a key priority for the city. The risks are the same as with any procurement, such as TUPE, the potential loss of existing experienced, skilled and trusted staff members and a transition period in which the service has to build trust, confidence and reputation amongst in-scope populations. This will be managed through the Project Team throughout the procurement and mobilisation process, and then through a robust contract management process.
- 30 If this decision is not approved, the current service will fall out of contract on 31st March 2022 causing significant risk to the Council and its providers. There is an evidenced need for this service, and should it not continue to be delivered beyond the expiry of the current contract, this would significantly affect the Council’s aim of ending rough sleeping in the city.
- 31 Requirements relating to information governance and the processing of personal data will be included in the specification and monitored through contract management processes including a Quality Management Framework.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

- 32 The service specification will require that the service undertakes to meet all legislation, guidance and good industry practice in environmental management and the objectives of the Council's sustainability policies. Officers from Adults and Health work with the provider through the established contract management process to ensure the service is proactively seeking to minimise its carbon footprint and thereby support the Council in achieving its ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. Much of the work is carried out by staff on foot, resulting in low levels of traffic emissions.
- 33 The contract will also make a contribution to the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-2021) in terms of helping to ensure that *'people will live in healthy, safe and sustainable communities'*.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

- 34 There is the option of ending the provision once the current contract expires. However, this would significantly affect the Council's aim of ending rough sleeping in the city.
- 35 Paragraphs 7 to 9 outline the options considered around the service model.

b) How will success be measured?

- 36 The contract will include a Performance Framework for the purpose of monitoring service delivery and outcomes. This will reflect the aims listed in paragraph 10.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 37 If approval is given, the intention is to go out to tender in October 2021. Approval to award the contract will be sought in December 2021, which will allow for a mobilisation period before the new contract starts in April 2022.

Appendices

- 38 Equality Diversity Cohesion Integration Impact Screening

Background papers

- 39 None