

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 28th March 2013
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
PORTFOLIO: Health and Adults
SUBJECT: Extension of Supporting People Contracts
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update Executive Board on Supporting People contracts and seek approval to extend service provision for a further 12 months from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014, which requires a waiver to Procurement Standing Orders.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board:

- 1) **Supports an extension of existing Supporting People contracts for a period of up to 1 year from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014.**
- 2) **Agree to using Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.3 (d) and (e) to waive Part 2 of Procurement Standing Orders which refer to contracts exceeding £1,000,000 in value, whilst a strategic review of the Sheltered Schemes and Domestic Abuse services contracts service is undertaken. Following the review a decision will be taken in respect of conducting a full tender process in compliance with EU Public Procurement legislation 2006, Part 6.**
- 3) **Agree to using Procurement Standing Orders 1.8.3 (d) and (e) to waive Part 3 of Procurement Standing Orders which refers to contracts whose value is in excess of £173,934 but not exceeding £1,000,000 for the delivery of the Service User Involvement contract.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Domestic Abuse Services

The Council currently has two contracts with Halton & District Women's Aid for the refuge accommodation and the domestic abuse service which includes the IDVA, floating support service and sanctuary scheme.

Domestic Abuse services were included in the scrutiny review of homelessness services and reports have been taken to Executive Board and Health Policy and Performance Board and issues were raised about the condition of the property.

At the meeting on 29th November 2012, Executive Board agreed the focus should be on improving the accommodation. Meetings have since been held with the landlord of the property, Riverside/English Churches Housing Group (ECHG) who has commissioned an architect to draw up draft plans. A further meeting has been arranged for 22nd March 2013 to discuss the amended plans. Riverside/ECHG is still to cost the improvements and confirm if they have funding available to remodel the refuge. Since then a number of issues have been raised regarding the completion of reports to agencies and budget monitoring. Women's Aid have agreed to comply with these matters and a further extension is sought to ensure continuity of service provision and a variation to the contract is proposed to ensure compliance with the completion of records.

3.2 **Sheltered accommodation services**

Halton has 17 sheltered housing schemes providing 560 units of accommodation by 11 provider organisations.

A strategic review of sheltered housing has been undertaken and recommendations will include changes to service delivery model and reductions in contract value.

The implementation of any changes may be a lengthy process due to a number of factors including:

- Consultation with service users about proposed changes to service delivery
- Contract negotiations to agree reductions in contract value
- Providers must give notice of any changes in unit cost

Halton also a community alarm service to 91 older people. These services, which are currently provided by 4 support providers, are due to be reviewed in 2013/13.

Initial savings of £7,300 have been achieved and the extension is sought to allow time to fully implement proposed changes to fully implement efficiency proposals and improvements to service delivery.

3.3 **Service User Involvement**

The Service User Involvement project works with service users and support providers to provide opportunities for service users to develop their skills and confidence; encourages and empowers people to become involved within their services and communities; and to access training and work opportunities.

This service has provided support to service users during the

reconfiguration of homeless services in 2012, and will be a valuable resource to inform and support people affected by the Welfare Reform changes in 2013.

This service is to be included in a planned review of all advocacy services within the borough which is due to take place in 2013/14. An extension is sought to allow the outcome of the advocacy review to inform future service delivery prior to the commencement of a procurement process.

Substantial savings were achieved on the against the overhead costs for this service as Management costs are shared across this service and the larger contract for the provision of Floating Support. However, further discussions are to be held with the support provider to identify where efficiencies may be achieved. It is anticipated a 5% reduction in contract value may be realised

4.0 Business case Supporting the Proposal to Waive

4.1 Value for Money & Competition

Efficiencies were achieved from the domestic abuse services in 2012/13 and an extension of the existing contract will enable consideration to be given to proposals for remodelling the existing refuge.

The strategic review of sheltered schemes has identified the majority are delivering value for money services. It would be financially advantageous to achieve any efficiency through discussion with individual support providers.

4.2 Transparency

In order to ensure transparency, the services will continue to be closely monitored by Halton Borough Council against set standards within the existing contract specifications.

4.3 Propriety & Security

The contracts comply with Halton Borough Council's Standing Orders in relation to procurement. The contracts are liable to termination if any instances of corruption by this organisation or its staff members occur, ensuring compliance with anti-corruption practices.

Additionally if the services fail to meet the performance standards and targets set to the satisfaction of the Council, then the Council will have the option to terminate the contracts, giving 3 months' notice.

4.4 Accountability

The Operational Director for Commissioning & Complex Care has responsibility for all contracts.

In addition, Domestic Abuse services in Halton are currently subject to scrutiny by the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

In common with other contracts this process will be open to both internal and external audit.

4.5 Position of the contract under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006

Under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 Health and Social Services are part-exempt services. It is in any event subject to fundamental transparency and non-distortion of competition requirements and the award of any contract must be advertised in the Official Journal within 42 days of the award of the contract.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Domestic Abuse services support Halton's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2011-14.

5.2 The Older People's Commissioning Strategy and the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy identify the need to support Older People to maintain their independence and a high quality of life.

6.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The following table gives details of the financial implications of continuing to deliver the services to 31st March 2014:

Services	Contract Value 2013/14
Domestic Abuse	£231,542
Older people's services: Sheltered schemes	£350,600
Community alarm	£17,700
Service User Involvement	£51,000

6.2 Contract values are within existing current budget allocations.

Efficiencies of £7,300 have been agreed from sheltered schemes with effect from April 2013 with further efficiencies anticipated in 2013/14 following discussions with providers.

An additional 5% (£2,500) reduction is anticipated to be achieved from the service user involvement contract value.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The Domestic Abuse services provide a safe environment for children and young people where they are supported and protected from abuse and neglect. The Domestic Abuse Support service also enables children and young people to remain in their home and continue to access and maintain existing schools, health services and support networks.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Service User Involvement facilitates service user forums and training which encourages and empowers people to access services, develop their skills and knowledge and secure training and employment opportunities.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

All services support people to minimise reduce the risks of harm, and access relevant services to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

7.4 A Safer Halton

The Domestic Abuse services support victims to minimise the risk of harm from perpetrators. To enable people to be safe within their own homes, the Sanctuary element of the Domestic Abuse Support service provides target hardening of properties and sheltered schemes provide safe, secure accommodation for older people.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The current Supporting People Contracts expire on 31st March 2013 and this waiver will approve the issue of new contracts for a twelve month period. This course of action is low risk in terms of procurement challenge as we can demonstrate that we will undertake a full tender process following the strategic review.

8.2 Financial risk is minimised as services will be delivered within existing budgets. All services are monitored by the Quality Assurance Team to ensure the provision of good quality, value for money services.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 9.1 All support providers are required to demonstrate that they embrace and comply with the Equality Act, and services are monitored to ensure this is the case.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed as part of the strategic review of sheltered schemes.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.