

THURSDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING**PRACTICAL SUPPORT SERVICE****EXEMPT INFORMATION****PURPOSE**

To seek approval from Cabinet to undertake a Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) commissioning exercise to provide a Practical Support Service to Tamworth residents and to award the contract following the tendering process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. authorises officers to procure a Practical Support Service and delegates authority to the Director of Communities, Partnerships and Housing to agree the tender specification and to award the contract to the successful bidder,
2. delegates authority to the Director of Communities, Partnerships and Housing to manage the Practical Support Service contract including any variations during the term of the contract.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is proposed that the new Practical Support Service will have two elements. A Tenancy Start Up service that will focus on those individuals and families who are taking up their first tenancy and may have had no experience of managing a household or understanding of the commitments necessary to stay in the tenancy. The client group is likely to be young single people, care leavers and those who have left mental health accommodation or prison with many lacking the necessary life skills. The Extra Support at Home Service is for individuals or families where a change of circumstance i.e. unemployment, hospital, new child, or bereavement might put at risk the continued security of their home. In both services the level of support is expected to be light touch, with referral to other available services if appropriate, to support the individual or family to reduce the risk of being without a home and to return to independent living. A high-level specification for the Practical Support Service is attached as appendix 1.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

It would have been possible to re-commission the current Practical Family Support service which focusses only on families. However this would not have addressed some of the most vulnerable households in Tamworth who are threatened with homelessness and who are

often single people. TBC has also faced challenges in monitoring this contract as referrals have been via Families First and there has been a lack of evidence that this contract sufficiently addresses TBCs demand issues. In addition Staffordshire County Council has recently commissioned a Tamworth Schools and Family Partnership Service providing additional family support services based from the Secondary School Multi Agency Centres.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

£25,280 per annum is earmarked from the Voluntary Sector Budget GS1002 from April 2017 until March 2020 as identified in the MTFs, to fund this service.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

The procurement of the service will be overseen by the Council's procurement team to ensure the process is compliant with legislation and the Council's finance regulations. The new contract will be managed through quarterly performance reports to the Council to ensure that the services provided are delivering the requirement impact. The contract will include a risk assessment completed by the successful bidder.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

TBC will continue to support key services which can be delivered by voluntary and community sector organisations. Funding is available to support this commissioning exercise and the contract will be let on a one plus one plus one basis to allow the Council flexibility should the availability of funding increase or decrease over the next 3 years or the provision of these services need to be redesigned to better meet the Council's priorities and demand management requirements.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

TBC has commissioned a range of services under the Public Sector Commissioning Framework to the value of £131,000 per annum and these three year contracts will automatically cease on 31st March 2017. A review of the current commissioned services has taken place within the context of the Council's priorities and consultation with the portfolio holder and commissioners from partner organisations. The review was set within the framework of the Council's demand management operating model. An outcome from this review has been the decision to transform the current Practical Family Support service into one that will address the needs of single people, couples without children and particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of homelessness. Welfare reform, limited availability of affordable housing and the cuts to the Supporting People funding has resulted in TBC responding to an increase in the number of residents who have multiple needs and in vulnerable housing situations.

REPORT AUTHOR

Karen Adderley
Head of Partnerships and Commissioning
Ext 569

karen-adderley@tamworth.gov.uk

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Practical Support Service high level specification

This page is intentionally left blank