

Report No.
CS14118

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **Executive**

Date: **Pre Decision Scrutiny by Care Services PDS Committee on:**
21st January 2015

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **GATEWAY REPORT ON TENANCY SUSTAINMENT SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

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Ward: Boroughwide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report reviews the provision of tenancy sustainment services to young people and makes recommendations for commissioning when the current contracts finish on 30th August 2015.
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2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to agree:

- 2.1 **that officers undertake a tendering exercise to procure a tenancy sustainment service for young people including those young people with higher support needs. The tender will require the provider to make arrangements for the provision of accommodation appropriate for the contract.**
- 2.2 **the contract period will be for 3 years from 31st August 2015 with the option to extend for a further 2 periods of 1 year each.**
- 2.3 **To delegate authority to the Chief Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to award a short extension to the existing contract for up to 6 months if necessary.**
- 2.4 **to authorise Officers to use a negotiated procedure if procurement option (e) is preferred.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Supporting Independence.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost Current cost £438,870 per annum for One Support contract plus £1,307,000 (estimated) for semi independent placements
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring cost. £438,870 +£1,307,000
 3. Budget head/performance centre: : 749000 -Supporting People Services ; 807110 - Leaving Care Team; 826900 - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
 4. Total current budget for this head: £1,751,340 Supporting People; £690,980 Leaving Care Team; £320,730.00 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Support Grant
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): LBB staff are engaged in contract monitoring and quality assurance of these services.
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: .25FTE
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 92 young people at any one time.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Tenancy support services are delivered by one Support to care leavers and to homeless young people aged 16 plus. The service is either delivered as part of the tenancy agreement for young people living in supported accommodation, or to young people placed in private accommodation or social housing. The young people accessing this service are not able to access the support service run by South London YMCA in Charles Darwin and Lewis King House as there is a lower age limit of 20 imposed for the YMCA services.
- 3.2 The support service provides support hours delivered as 1;1 or in groups during which staff assist young people to develop the life skills essential for sustaining a tenancy. This includes practical support with budgeting, paying for rent and bills, claiming benefits as well as support into education and training. The support service also provides overall management of the schemes and liaises with local agencies and police in order that the schemes maintain a reasonable profile in the neighbourhood.
- 3.3 There is not a statutory requirement to fund this service, however by providing the service the Council is able to meet its responsibilities to young people who are covered by the Southwark Judgement. This is a House of Lords ruling that every 16-17 year old presenting themselves as homeless to their local authority must have their needs assessed by their local children's services. If they are deemed to be a Child in Need they must be accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act. For the Council this means that a 16 or 17 year old applying as homeless to their housing authority may fall under the Child in Need category and would be able to access a range of support owed to certain children 'looked after' by a local authority. The council funds a Senior Practitioner Social Worker post based in the Housing Support and Resettlement Team to undertake the assessment of 16 and 17 year olds and determine which services would best meet their needs. The tenancy support service provides an appropriate service for a significant proportion of those young people assessed and diverts many young people from becoming Looked After Children.

3.4 The annual value of the contracts is:

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|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Supported Accommodation | £343,616 per annum |
| Floating Support | £ 95,255 per annum |
| Total | £ 438,871 per annum |

These contract prices have been frozen since 2011.

3.5 The table below gives basic information about each supported accommodation scheme. The support levels H, M, L, (high, medium or low) refer to the average number of individual support hours provided in the schemes to each the young person each week.

| Support provided by One Support | Number of units available | Support Level | Landlord |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 1-3 Anerley Station Road | 8 | H | Look Ahead |
| 34 Thicket Road | 7 | M | Look Ahead |
| The Hub | 6 | L | Look Ahead |
| 98 Wiverton Road | 4 | L | London & Quadrant |
| 43 Stembridge Road | 4 | L | Casa Support (Amicus Horizon) |

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|-----------------------------------|-----------|---|-------------------------------|
| 142 Croydon Road | 5 | M | Casa Support (Amicus Horizon) |
| 4 Hawes Road (Teenage Parents) | 6 | M | Casa Support (Amicus Horizon) |
| 11 Highland Road | 5 | M | A2 Dominion |
| Drake Court | 14 | M | A2 Dominion |
| TOTAL UNITS | 59 | | |

- 3.6 The Floating Support Service delivers 112 hours per week to young people living in independent tenancies in private or social housing. This service also supports teenage parents. One Support use their staff group flexibly across both services in order to achieve the best matches of staff and users. The outcomes achieved by young people leaving the floating support services are positive and are set out against the different targets in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 In addition to the contracts with One Support the Council funds spot placements in accommodation with more intensive support for young people whose needs cannot be met in the One Support schemes. There are no block contracts for these schemes. Unaccompanied minors directed to Bromley by the Home Office are also included in this group.
- 3.8 Expenditure for 53 young people placed in semi-independent accommodation in 14/15 is forecast to outturn at £1,307,000.

History of Contracts

- 3.9 Tenancy support schemes for young people were developed during the late 90s by a range of different support providers and housing associations. Officers amalgamated and re-tendered these contracts in 2011 in order to reduce duplicated costs across several providers and to increase efficiency in the service. This amalgamation resulted in annual savings in the contract value of £245k.
- 3.10 One Support won a two year contract for tenancy support to young people in 2011 which had an option to extend for 2 periods of 1 year each. Both extensions have been taken up after consideration of a gateway report by the Executive.
- 3.11 The current contract with One Support expires on 30th August 2015 and there are no further extensions available.
- 3.12 The implementation of the current contract was complex as the new provider had to enter into 4 agreements with 4 different landlords, all of whom run slightly different arrangements. If the service is retendered and another provider is successful this exercise will have to be repeated. We would estimate that the implementation of the new contract could take 9 months to a year.

Contractor's Performance

- 3.13 Officers meet with One Support regularly in order to ensure that the service is utilised efficiently and that key performance indicators are being met.
- 3.14 Overall the Contractor's performance is satisfactory. Appendix 1 details performance since the beginning of the contract against KPIs and the outcomes that young people identify through their support sessions.
- 3.15 One Support are working pro-actively with their staff to ensure that the service is led by the motivated staff who can respond to the fluctuating needs of the users. They are also stressing the importance of the organisation providing diversionary community activities to support young people living away from their families.

Profile of the Service in the Community

- 3.16 Supported accommodation schemes can be unpopular with neighbours and from time to time issues arise due to antisocial behaviour, noise, parties. These issues tend to occur during evenings and weekends. The current contract only covers the cost of 24 hour support in one of the schemes. However CCTV cameras have been installed in most of the schemes which enable staff to monitor activity and identify which tenants have been involved in problems. Community police are regularly called to the schemes.
- 3.17 The tenants are inclined to get involved in drug taking, petty theft, gangs, threatening behaviour and violence. Young women are prone to involvement in abusive relationships. The provider has reported 41 incidents during the last year. The majority of these take place during the evening or at weekend.

Demand for the Service

- 3.19 Demand for the service remains high. The service has not met utilisation targets over the last year because Landlords have failed to carry out maintenance at the schemes in a timely manner. There have also been times when the support needs profile of the young people referred has been higher than the provider or the Landlord could accept into schemes where the support provided is at a lower level. In this instance young people may be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation with floating support.

Suitability of Accommodation and Maintenance

- 3.21 Ownership of the accommodation is set out in Table 1. The landlords Look Ahead and A2 Dominion were support providers under the previous contract. When the support contract was awarded to One Support these organisations contracted One Support to take responsibility for day to day housing management and took a less active interest in the properties.
- 3.22 Over the period of the contract there has been a noticeable decline in the standard of maintenance of the accommodation. As part of the support service One Support assists young people to liaise with their landlord regarding repairs and other emergencies as required. However, responses are very slow, or inadequate. Council officers and One Housing Group Officers have spent significant amounts of time chasing landlords to make repairs and maintain the properties. Most issues are only resolved after a number of months. The reluctance of the landlords to complete maintenance and repair work to the schemes is becoming a major concern.
- 3.23 During the contract One Support have demonstrated commitment by spending £46k of their own funds on renovating and securing the Hub which included installation of a new CCTV system. They have also indicated their willingness to jointly invest with the landlord in CCTV for Stembridge and Croydon Road schemes where recent incidents have highlighted the need for CCTV to be installed in all the schemes to facilitate better management of incidents.
- 3.24 Officers have considered the suitability of the current accommodation as part of this review. The conclusions are set out below:

| Name of Scheme | Units | Support Level | Notes |
|----------------|-------|---------------|-------|
|----------------|-------|---------------|-------|

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| 1-3 Anerley Station Road Look Ahead | 8 | H | This property is a pub which was converted into supported accommodation around 2000. The building is listed. The layout of the building makes the scheme difficult to manage as staff cannot observe or control the entrance. There is only one tiny communal room which accommodates 2 people at a time. The individual accommodation is in poor repair and bathrooms are shared. This is not ideal for a high support scheme. |
| 34 Thicket Road, Anerley Look Ahead | 7 | M | This property was converted in 2005 and was specifically designed for this purpose. It has a staff office at the front of the building, a communal area and an informal training kitchen. All the units have self-contained facilities |
| The Hub St Mary Cray Look Ahead | 6 | L | Converted from a pub in 2004. These units are above a youth centre. There are no offices or communal facilities within the scheme. |
| 98 Wiverton Road Sydenham L&Q | 4 | L | Converted from a house before 2000. There are no communal facilities or offices. |
| 43 Stembridge Road Casa Support | 4 | L | Converted from a house prior to 2000. No office or communal facilities. These units are self-contained and are used as move on from schemes where there is more support. |
| 142 Croydon Road Anerley Casa Support | 5 | M | Converted from a house prior to 2000. There is a small office on site. These units are self-contained and are used as move on from schemes where there is more support. |
| 4 Hawes Road (Teenage Parents) Bromley Casa Support | 6 | M | Converted from a house in 2005. This was purposely designed to accommodate mothers and babies. It has both office and communal accommodation which is well used. |
| 11 Highland Road Bromley A2 Dominion | 5 | M | Converted from a house in the 1990s this scheme has no office or communal facilities. It has self-contained accommodation for an appropriate adult who provides some very limited support to tenants of the scheme. |
| Drake Court Orpington A2 Dominion | 14 | M | Purpose built scheme in 1980s. Units are not self-contained but there is a self-contained flat which can be used for an appropriate adult. |
| TOTAL UNITS | 59 | | |

3.25 Officers recognised that the accommodation being used was not suitable in that it made schemes management difficult. In the purpose built schemes it is easier for the staff to control access by non-residents or to record it on CCTV.

3.26 One Support have indicated that they would be prepared to make longer term investments in accommodation in Bromley, either by purchasing and refurbishing some of the existing

schemes, or by building a bespoke scheme which has been designed specifically to deliver supported housing. In order to pursue one or both of these options One Support would require a longer term contract with the Council.

- 3.27 The property landlords are unwilling to share longer term plans for the properties prior to being informed of the Council's commissioning intentions for the support service.

Market Situation

- 3.28 The market for supported housing has changed during the last few years. All local authorities have undertaken procurement exercises and have radically reduced the service costs. Whereas ten years ago the providers ranged from small local voluntary sector organisations to national charities the profile has changed so that most contracts are now won by a handful of large independent sector organisations. These organisations may still be registered social landlords, but many have closed down their support functions.
- 3.29 The Council made good use of the Southwark and Lewisham Supporting People Framework in order to minimise procurement work and achieve competitive contract prices. This framework expired on 31.3.14, but a new framework is currently being procured with Bromley as a named partner. The new framework should be available for use from April 2015.
- 3.30 The hourly support rate has dropped from £25 per hour to £15 per hour. The Council achieved significant savings through re-tendering in 2011 and would not achieve a similar reduction unless the service specification was seriously reduced.

Options

- 3.31 There are a range of inter-dependencies that have been considered whilst determining the future options for this service, all in the context of an uncertainty about future available budget. The options considered are listed below:

Service Options

- a) To cease funding both services entirely. This would have a negative impact on the housing department and Children's Social Care budgets as the Council would still have statutory duties under housing and care legislation. The estimated cost of providing an alternative service would be £1.5m per annum.
- b) To continue to support the accommodation based units but to cease funding the floating support service entirely. This would impact on young people's ability to adjust to independent living and sustain tenancies. The estimated cost to the Council would be £125k assuming that 10% of recipients would lose their tenancies.
- c) To continue with floating support, but to cease funding the support service into accommodation based services. The impact of this would fall on the housing department as the landlords of the accommodation would be unlikely to continue to allow the properties to be used by young people with no element of support or supervision. The estimated costs of alternative arrangements would be £1.3m per year.
- d) To reduce the current service specification and the number of supported accommodation schemes in order to concentrate funding on those where accommodation is more fit for purpose and easier to manage. Reducing the number of units would still impact on other departments as above.

- e) To retain the floating support service (43 units) and accommodation based tenancy sustainment service (59 units) and to add the provision of spot placements for young people who have higher needs to the requirement. Officers will be seeking efficiencies within the service.

Procurement Options

- a) to undertake a procurement exercise using the current service profiles to test the market to see if further savings are achievable. It would be cost effective to use the Supporting People framework when available, although this may require a short extension to the existing contract.
- b) to undertake a procurement exercise using the current service specification, but requiring the provider to bring their own or develop new build accommodation appropriate for the contract. This option would require a short extension to the existing contract.
- c) as above, but expand to undertake a more complex procurement exercise which expands the current specification to include the provision of semi-independent accommodation and support as required. This may deliver some savings for Children's Services.
- d) to build on relationship with existing provider and negotiate a new 3 year contract with One Support within existing resources using existing accommodation and assuming that landlords will continue to make the properties available.
- e) to build on existing provider relationship and negotiate a new contract for a longer period with One Support on the basis that they will purchase and remodel some existing schemes and / or develop a purpose built facility to replace current stock. If this option is pursued Officers would be using a "negotiated" procedure.

Conclusions

3.32 Officers recommend

- that the Council retain the floating support service (43 units) and accommodation based tenancy sustainment service (59 units) and to add the provision of spot placements for young people who have higher needs to the requirement. Officers will be seeking efficiencies within the service, (service option e)
- that Officers undertake a procurement exercise which to include the provision of semi-independent accommodation and support as required. This may deliver some savings for Children's services (procurement option c)

These options will provide the best solution for the Council, as this will allow the market to be tested for all 3 services. The solution will also formally transfer the entire responsibility for the provision of accommodation to the provider(s).

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 National and local policies expect that appropriate accommodation and support is provided for homeless young people and care leavers. These services are key to fulfilling the statutory duties of Care Services towards young homeless people as well as Children's Service responsibilities for under 18 care leavers and younger teenage parents.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The 2014/15 budget for contracted Supporting People services is £1,751,340. Within the budget the allocation for these young people's contracts is £438,870. The budgets for Placements of Care Leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are £690,890 and £320,730, totalling £1,011,620. The estimated total expenditure for 2014/15 is £1,307,000.
- 5.2 This report recommends that a procurement exercise is undertaken to let a new contract for these services. The report acknowledges that the current contract price benchmarks favourably against comparable services and that it is most unlikely that further significant savings will be achieved via market testing. It is possible that some savings in the price of semi-independent places may be achieved through a tender process.
- 5.3 The new contract will include the flexibility to enable the Council to request further efficiencies/savings or to terminate should the need arise during the extension period.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Contract Procedure rules require officers to undertake a tendering exercise in order to establish best value for money when awarding this contract.
- 6.2 The properties at which the services and accommodation are provided are not owned by the Council. The new contract will require providers to identify and make arrangements for making accommodation units available.
- 6.3 Officers obtained authority to enter into the new framework agreement being set up by Southwark and Lewisham Councils in 2012.
- 6.4 Changes to UK procurement regulations will be announced during 2015 in response to the changes to EU Regulations. The procurement process may be affected by these changes, depending on the time scale for the implementation of the new regulations and timing on the issues of EU Notices (if required).

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| Non-Applicable Sections: | Personnel implications |
| Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer) | ACS 10043 Commissioning Arrangements for Supporting People Services for Young People. ACS 10059 Commissioning Arrangements for Supporting People Services for Young People. ACS 11023 Award of contract for Supporting People |

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| | <p>Services</p> <p>ACS12031 Supporting People Services Joint Framework Agreement</p> <p>Gateway review of One Support Services – January 2014</p> <p>CS14042 Contract Award Tenancy Support Services for Young People – June 2014</p> |
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