

Re-procurement of a service to replace the Accommodation Based Supported Living Service for people with moderate to severe mental health needs in Cambridgeshire

To: Adults and Health Committee

Meeting Date: 15 December 2022

From: Charlotte Black, Executive Director, People & Communities

Electoral division(s): Countywide

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2022/011

Outcome: Effective and efficient Accommodation Based Supported Living Service provision that supports people with moderate to severe mental health needs to access supported accommodation and learn skills to become more independent and manage their mental health.

Recommendation: The Adults and Health Committee is recommended to:

- a) approve the recommissioning of the Accommodation Based Supported Living Service for People with Moderate to Severe Mental Health Needs in Cambridgeshire on a 3-year basis from 1st July 2023 with an option for two 2 Year extension periods. This will cost £1,210,000 annually, a total of £8,470,000 over the total term of the contract and extension periods.
- b) delegate approval of award and extension periods to the Executive Director of People and Communities.

Officer contact:

Name: Guy Fairbairn

Post: Commissioning Manager – Mental Health

Email: guy.fairbairn@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Member contacts:

Names: Councillor Howitt

Post: Chair

Email: Richard.howitt@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01223 706398

1. Background

- 1.1 The current Accommodation Based Supported Living Service for People with Moderate to Severe Mental Health Needs in Cambridgeshire was commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) in 2017.
- 1.2 The service is provided by Sanctuary Supported Living (Sanctuary) and forms a key role in delivering our statutory duty under the Care Act 2014. The current contract was awarded in September 2017 for 3 years, with an option to extend for a further 12 months. A further exemption was approved until 31st March 2022 and a final exemption approved until 30th June 2023.

The service supports adults (18-65) to cope with their mental health challenges. It enables them to develop their daily living skills to live as independently as possible, ideally in their own home once they have left the service.

The service has capacity to support 117 individuals, across 8 different accommodation schemes located in Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdon. People who use the service hold a tenancy directly with the landlord, and receive support based upon their needs.

There is a range of property types in different locations, with either on-site support or visiting support. The properties include buildings where the individual will have their own room and share communal spaces as well as buildings designed for one person.

Sanctuary delivers support to individuals which fit into three main categories:

- **Intensive Support** - This is support for people with more complex needs. Staff are on site and available 24/7 and provide individualised support.
- **Medium Support** – This is support for individuals who are more independent. Staff available on site during the day to provide support with an on-call service for evenings and weekends. Some individuals will have moved from the Intensive Support service into this category as part of their journey.
- **Visiting Support** – This is where support is available to individuals who require some support but are preparing to be living independently. It may be that an individual has already received both Intensive and Medium support before moving to Visiting Support.

The provider works closely with mental health Social Work teams, clinical mental health services, and other local voluntary sector services. Work in this collaborative way ensures individuals receive the support they need and move through the service and into independent accommodation. A case study is shown in Appendix A to give an example of how the service can support people to achieve their outcomes.

The service aims to improve the ability of individuals to engage and connect with their communities. In doing so it's improving not only their personal health, relationships, and well-being, but potentially reducing behaviours that may affect the local area that they live in. An improvement may mean greater independence and an ability to engage in activities (e.g., volunteering) or even make a return to paid employment, therefore reducing reliance on benefits and formal involvement of services in their lives.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The main issues with the current service were reported to the Adult & Health Committee in December 2021. The next part of this report presents an analysis of these issues with mitigations which can be incorporated in the new service.
- 2.2 The service provided has a planned maximum stay of two years. However, individuals often stay for much longer due to several factors. The principal factor is the difficulty in finding appropriate 'move-on' housing which is primarily via the housing pathway with the District Councils. There are also challenges and delays where individuals have complex needs or fluctuating health conditions when trying to achieve their outcomes. For a smaller cohort of individuals, this has meant they have remained within the service for many years (e.g., 15+ years).
- 2.3 Since March 2020, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly when new tenancies could start, have caused delays in individuals transitioning into and out of the service. In addition, reduced amounts of face-to-face contact from support teams prolonged the length of support. It also reduced access to treatment and medical appointments. This had a negative effect on the number of individuals who moved into the service. Its only now services are beginning to see pre-Covid 19 level of utilisation.
- 2.4 Following an incident in the service in 2019 and a subsequent serious case review, the lessons learned from this have been reviewed and will be incorporated into the replacement service.
- 2.5 Commissioners previously identified three key areas for further analysis and pilot projects which will help inform future approaches, improve individual outcomes and service effectiveness, as well as value for money. The three projects scoped are outlined below:
 1. **'Co-occurring Conditions'** – People who have substance misuse issues as well as mental health needs are diagnosed as having co-occurring conditions, or dual diagnosis. The pilot has linked the public health commissioned substance misuse services and the service provider together to better support individuals who have this diagnosis. Typically, 30% of individuals in the service are in this category. During 2022 additional training for the provider has been implemented to support service outcomes.
 2. **'Void Management'** – A full review of all empty (void) properties has been carried out to understand why there is a high level of voids. During 2022, monthly void management meetings and regular engagement with all the housing providers in the service developed. As part of the existing arrangements with most landlords, there is an agreement in place where the rent for a property is paid by the Council if it is empty. The purpose of this is to ensure that there is adequate supply of properties for individuals, to protect the landlord against a loss of income which may be outside of their control and increase value for money to the LA. Commissioners continue to review all options to reduce the level of voids. This includes reducing the number of available units in particular tiers where there is over capacity, and removing unsuitable properties, and reducing contract value if there is a decrease in the number of available units. Void costs are tracking to be circa 30% lower in 2022/23.

3. **‘Referral Process’** – The referral process for access the scheme has been reviewed to ensure that individuals are being identified appropriately that the referral and assessment process is not delayed and that the potential referral of new individuals into the service is tracked and monitored. This project has been achieved by working collaboratively with teams within the Council to review the process, raise awareness and implement change. In addition, the service delivery teams, and social work teams engage with individuals from the beginning about their needs and aspirations, including potential routes into independence. Early registration on District Housing pathways is made, and an early understanding of the areas and communities where the individual would like to live made so that individuals can be supported to look at options for independent living beyond their stay within the service.

All pilot projects have been completed and the lessons learnt incorporated into the design of a new service. The new service is designed on the greater understanding there is now of how the service works, where there are pressures, and what outcomes need to be achieved in a flexible way. It has considered co-production work with service users and other stakeholder carried out in 2021 and expanded upon in 2022 with review and feedback from across multiple areas (service users, operations, contracts, brokerage, finance, and procurement).

Proposal for the new replacement service – ‘Mental Health Supported Accommodation Service’

- 2.6 The details for the recommissioned service are set out below and in the specification which will be approved at Joint Commissioning Board.

- **Adjustments to current service levels:**
 - **Intensive Level Service** - continue in its current form as there is no evidence that it requires change and/or improvement
 - **Medium Level Service** – this has additional hours added with Accessibility increased from 5 days a week to 7 days a week. The service will include evening support to improve support, outcomes, and mitigate risk.
 - **Low Level Service** - this will be re-focused to deliver based upon individual needs, with one location having additional hours dedicated to it. This is in response to the needs and risks of the service at this location.
- **Move-on** – The principles of move-on will remain but will be based upon an individual's assessment rather than having a fixed 2-year period. It is accepted that for some people, move-on is not an option. For these people, the service offer will be centred on sustaining them and meeting their ongoing statutory needs.
- **New Locations** – A priority will be to source new accommodation in East Cambridgeshire and in Fenland. This will complement the services in Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdonshire. This will initially be on a small-scale (e.g., 3-4 units in each) and can be expanded if required. This will fit into the Low-Level Service and will remain under review. There is an identified risk relating to the need to

recruit new staff to cover these areas due to the wider recruitment challenges in the care market at present.

- **Service Levels and Accommodation** – An existing Medium Level Service will become an Intensive Level Service (based on the site, cohort of people and risk assessment). This will allow an Intensive Level Service to be closed within the first 24 months of the new contract – this is primarily due to the building having some significant access challenges and limited bathroom facilities. People will be moved in a planned way either as part of their natural pathway or relocated within the service linked to a robust consultation process. This will reduce capacity by 10 spaces, but will allow for replacement capacity within the service based on need (e.g., extra capacity in new locations)
- **Overall Capacity** – The overall capacity of the service will be reduced to 105 spaces as this enables the Council to address the current 20% void rate but still allows for anticipated growth in line with the projections for population growth. This will reduce void costs and liability. It is also felt that if there is a pressure on capacity, there will be a more pro-active approach to support move-on where appropriate. In addition, there will be a pilot for the first 12 months of the contract to allocate a 'space' in an Intensive Level Service for a Respite space, allowing the need for this to be assessed and evidenced.

Finance, Procurement, and contracts

2.9 The Council have considered insourcing all or part of this service but discounted it on the grounds below:

- The council do not currently have the qualified staff, necessary resources, or the capacity to maintain an effective care service at this time without increasing risks. As such, a third party is necessary to provide the standard of care expected.
- This can be reviewed during the first 3 years of the contract, with the option to insource at this point.

2.10 The procurement of the Mental Health Supported Accommodation Service will be completed via a full open and transparent tender.

2.11 The successful provider will be required to demonstrate how they intend to meet the service requirements and will be judged on their ability to provide outcome-based and person-centred care for the cohort supported. The provider will be required to pay staff at the Real Living Wage rate as a minimum.

2.7 The overall budget for this service in 2022/23 is circa £1,210,000. This is made up of:

- £828,491 for a block contract with the provider.
- Circa £364,000 in 2022/23 for individual support hours (currently variable)
- £25,587 health contribution from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS)

The recommendation is to keep within the current overall financial envelope for the service – this will be achieved by reducing capacity and realigning support in a more flexible way to achieve efficiencies and using a Block Contract model to deliver best value for money. The closure of an Intensive Level Service site will deliver a saving in Year 2 and beyond.

An inflationary uplift will be applied to this figure (£1,210,000) in-line with the agreed Council uplift strategy for 2023/24, and this will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with strategy for the duration of the contract.

2.7 The contract form

- **Block Contract** – It is proposed that the Council buys this service on a ‘block’ basis. This gives the Council guaranteed capacity and a proactive approach adjusting around individual support needs (e.g., due to a mental health crisis). The downside of purchasing via a block is that the Council must pay for the hours, whether they are used to deliver care or not. The Block Contract model will deliver best value for money and budget management.
- **Term** – It is proposed to offer a 3 years + 2 Years + 2 Years extension contract. This follows the soft market testing feedback, but balances this with the option of continued review for service development, changing needs and possible in-sourcing after year 3 following further assessment or continuity of the service if all extensions are exercised.
- **Outcomes & Contracts** – A greater emphasis within the contract will be on outcomes and monitoring of defined key performance indicators. This will allow for better evidencing, more effective contract management and continuous improvement.

2.13 The table below outlines the proposed timeline for recommissioning the contract:

Procurement Timetable	
Event	Date
Issue ITT	16/12/2022
Deadline for clarification questions from suppliers	23/01/2023
Deadline for tender returns	30/01/2023
Tender evaluation	w/c 20/02/2023
Moderation meeting	w/c 27/02/2023
Approval of award	16/03/2023 Accommodation Board 29/03/2023 Joint Commissioning Board
Notification of award	31/03/2023
Standstill period (if applicable)	11/04/2023
Contract award	12/04/2023
Contract start date	01/07/2023

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Environment and Sustainability

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.2 Health and Care

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Improve outcomes and combat health inequalities based on population health management across the county including leading the 'health in all policies' approach across the authority

3.3 Places and Communities

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.4 Children and Young People

There are no significant implications for this priority

3.5 Transport

There are no significant implications for this priority

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

. There are no significant implications for this priority

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal?

Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Linda Walker

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User?

Yes

Name of Officer: Charlotte Knight

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes

Name of Officer: Matthew Hall

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Will Patten

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Smith

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents guidance

5.1 None