

Accommodation Based Supported Living Service for People With Moderate to Severe Mental Health Needs in Cambridgeshire – Exemption Request

To: Adults and Health Committee

Meeting Date: 9 December 2021

From: Executive Director, People & Communities

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2021/053

Outcome: People will be able to access supported accommodation, learning skills to become more independent and manage their mental health, whilst the service is reviewed and retendered.

Recommendation: Adults and Health Committee are asked to:

- a) recommend that the 'Accommodation Based Supported Living Service for People with Moderate to Severe Mental Health Needs in Cambridgeshire' is exempted for a period 15 months from 1/4/2022 to 30/6/2023 for a total value of £1,005,449.65.

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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. The service is provided by Sanctuary Supported Living and delivers support to Adults (18-65) who have moderate to severe mental health needs.

Within this service, the individual is supported to cope with their mental health challenges, develop their independence and daily living skills in order to live as independently as possible, ideally in their own home once they have left the service.

The service provides support for up to 119 individuals, across 8 different accommodation schemes which are located in Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon. Everyone will hold a form of tenancy directly with the landlord, and receive support based upon their needs. There is a range of support for people and a range of property types in different locations, with either on-site support or visiting support. The properties include shared buildings where the individual will have their own room and share communal spaces as well as individual self-contained properties.

The current provider delivers support to individuals which fit into three main categories:

- Intensive Support - This is support for those with more complex needs. Staff are on site and available 24/7 and provide individualised support. (27 units of accommodation)
- 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. (38 units of accommodation)
- 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. (54 units of accommodation)

The provider works closely with mental health Social Work teams, clinical mental health services and other local voluntary sector services as needed to ensure individuals receive the support they need, 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 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 in an individual's personal health and well-being 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.

- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 The annual value of the contract for 2021/22 is £804,359.72

- 1.4 In addition to the contract value of £804,359.72, additional individual support hours are assessed by Mental Health Social Workers as part of the individual's Care and Support Plan. Mental Health social work is delegated to Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT) and the team's work as part of a multi-disciplinary team that meets the social care and health needs of the individual

The total spend for these additional hours in 2019/20 was £337,167 and £327,217 in 2020/21. This element of funding is covered under the Cost of Care budget and therefore fall outside of this request. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG make a small contribution to the contract value as well as jointly funding additional hours where there is also a health responsibility.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The service provided has a planned maximum stay of two years. Individuals often stay beyond this timescale due to several factors. The principle issue is the difficulty in finding appropriate 'move-on' housing which is primarily via the housing pathway with the District Council. There are also challenges and delays where individuals have complex needs and often require support for longer than 2 years to achieve their outcomes. The Social Work and Provider teams work with District Council partners to improve opportunities for independent housing, a good example being Cambridge City Council who help and support individuals who are located at the Ditchburn Place scheme by automatically giving them higher priority for housing.
- 2.2 Since March 2020, the effects of the pandemic have also adversely affected individuals causing delays into and out of the service, particularly with the Government guidance around delays in tenancies starting (where landlords were not allowing new tenancies to start) and under the The Coronavirus Act 2020 where extra protection for tenants was provided by delaying when landlords can evict tenants (between 26 March 2020 and 30 September 2021) both of which which affected move-in and move-on/out from the service. In addition, reduced face to face contact from support teams prolonged the length of support and reduced access to and longer waiting lists for treatment and medical appointments. This has had a negative effect on the number of individuals who moved into the service, which has increased the number of empty properties within the service during the pandemic.
- 2.3 Commissioners have also 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 pilots being 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 will link the public health commissioned substance misuse services and the service provider together to better support individuals who have this diagnosis. There are approximately 30 individuals in this category currently within the service and it

is expected that improved training and expert input will reduce the need for higher needs accommodation and improve individual outcomes. Mental Health services are facing increased demand and complexity of presentations so ensuring the service is able to deal effectively with individuals with complex and multiple needs is vital.

2. 'Void Management' – A full review of all empty (void) properties is currently being carried out, as part of an overall review of the scheme's 119 units, to understand why there is a high level of voids. Void rates were at 19% at the beginning of November with 23 properties empty out of a total capacity of 119. It is critical that the three Tiers of property type outlined in paragraph 1.1 have the right tenancy arrangement, are appropriate for the service that is being delivered in them and that their usage is maximised. As part of the existing arrangements with the majority of 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 and to protect the landlord against a loss of income which may be outside of their control. The cost of these void properties to the Council in the service needs to be reduced to ensure value for money is achieved and engagement with all the landlords has started regarding this. Commissioners are reviewing all options to reduce the level of voids including reducing the number of available units in particular tiers where it is felt there is over capacity or removing unsuitable properties from the pathway and commissioners will seek a reduction in contract value if there is a decrease in the number of available units.
3. 'Referral Process' – The referral process used to access the scheme is being 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 piece of work will be achieved by working collaboratively with the appropriate teams within the Council to review the process, raise awareness and implement change. In addition, the service delivery teams, and social work teams will engage with individuals from the beginning about their needs and aspirations, including potential routes into independence. Early registration with on District Housing pathways will be made in all cases, and an early understanding of the areas and communities where the individual would like to live will be made so that individuals can be supported to look at options for independent living beyond their stay within the service.

All pilots will be fully monitored during the period and will be delivered within the current financial envelope of the contract.

- 2.4 In order to fully develop the pilot projects to inform the commissioning intentions it is requested that the current contract is extended using an exemption waiver for a further period of 15 months. The cost of the block contract for the proposed 15-month extension period is £1,005,449.65. This will ensure that there is appropriate time to re-evaluate the current amount of accommodation, noting the increased pressure in mental health referrals post pandemic, the individual's pathway and flow as well as improving outcomes for the increasing number of complex individuals who require mental health supported accommodation.
- 2.5 By extending the current service commissioners will be able to undertake a critical review of the service, the associated accommodation and the ability of the service to achieve positive

outcomes. This will allow for a full options appraisal to include the potential of in-house delivery and allow time for a robust process to be carried out with the market to ensure that there are clearly developed commissioning intentions and opportunities to make appropriate changes to the pathway are taken.

It should be noted that this extension is outside of the Contract Procedure rules and could be subject to challenge but the risk of this is low due to the rationale and reasons for the extension as set out in this paper.

2.6 Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Not meeting revised timeline of June 2023	The requested 15-month extension has factored in the activity already completed and under way, the planned activity including implementation and analysis time, and the future procurement process. This project is a priority for the mental health commissioning team.
Relationship with current provider is affected detrimentally in light of the planned work and activity	The provider has already been engaged with regarding the outline plans and are supportive of these. Regular review and update meetings will be scheduled going forwards.
Inflationary increase for 2022/23 (noting National Insurance increase in 2022)	Financial planning for this is under way and will be incorporated into budget planning.
Increase in Mental Health challenges across the Health & Social Care system (i.e. more complex needs, higher demand etc)	Greater partnership working with Health & Public Health. Integrated Care System roll-out from April '22.
Workforce capacity in health & social care services	Regular contact and tracking of staff vacancies with provider.
Risk of challenge to contract exemption	Extending the contract is not a compliant process within the contract procedure rules however the risk of challenge is believed to be low with a compliant process being undertaken in the timelines described in this report

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment
There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us
There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications
There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications
This exemption is being requested for the service to continue outside of the contracted term and is not compliant with the Contract Procedure rules however the risk of challenge is believed to be low with a compliant process being undertaken in the timelines described in this report

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications
The service forms part of the statutory responsibilities of the Local Authority under the Care Act 2014 to provide care and support in respect of accommodation needs.

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 (See further guidance in Appendix 2):
There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral
Explanation:

- 4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral
Explanation:
- 4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: N/A
Explanation:
- 4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral
Explanation:
- 4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral
Explanation:
- 4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.
Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral
Explanation:
- 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
Explanation:

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes
Name of Financial Officer: Justine Hartley

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement? Yes
Name of Officer: Henry Swann

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer? Yes or No (sent on 17 Nov with 3 chasers – No response)
Name of Legal Officer: Fiona Macmillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?
Yes
Name of Officer: Will Patten

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?
Yes or No
Name of Officer:

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: Kate Parker

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