

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 20th September 2018
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment
SUBJECT: Procurement of Floating Support Services
WARD(S) All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 In compliance with Procurement Standing Order 2.1, Executive Board approval is sought for the invitation of tenders to provide a floating support service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board:

- 1) Approves the commencement of a procurement exercise for floating support services**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 A procurement exercise was undertaken in 2014 for floating support services. Floating support services are short term, homeless prevention services, supporting people living in all types of tenure, including owner occupier, social and private rented properties, and across all client groups including people with mental health problems, offenders, substance misuse issues, anti-social behaviour.

3.1.1 People accessing floating support services will be supported by a key worker to meet identified needs and help promote independence, empower them to develop their capacity and skills, sustain their accommodation and prevent homelessness.

3.2 Two floating support services were procured, a generic housing support service and one working with people with mental health problems, providing support about housing issues and to access and engage with other mental health services.

3.3 The contract for both services was re-awarded to Plus Dane (working in partnership with SHAP). A three year contract was awarded from 1st April 2015 with the option to extend for a further year. The extension was awarded and the contract will expire on 31st March 2019.

3.3.1 The services are co-located within Plus Dane's Runcorn office, and

although support staff work on designated services they are both managed by one service manager

3.4 The services support about 190 people at any one time (150 to 160 on the generic service and 35 on the mental health service). During 2017/18 430 people were supported by Plus Dane SHAP and statistics evidence continuing demand for floating support services, with 11 people currently on the services' waiting lists.

3.4.1 The target duration of the service is 6 months, which may be extended and 12 requests were received during 2017/18 for additional support past 6 months.

3.5 In line with Procurement Standing Orders, approval is sought to undertake a tender exercise for floating support services. The contract will commence in April 2019 and it is proposed to offer a 3 year contract with the option to extend for a further two years on a year by year basis to stimulate market interest and encourage competitive submissions.

3.6 It is proposed go out to tender for an integrated floating support service. Although the Mental Health service has previously been commissioned as a separate service due to the specialist nature of the service, the Generic service works across all other client groups including people with multiple and complex needs and it is considered an integrated service would continue to meet the needs of all service users while providing an opportunity to realise efficiencies through realisation of services.

3.7 The tender will be evaluated on a Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) basis, with a proposed weighting of 70% quality and 30% price.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The service support Halton's Homelessness Strategy which is currently being reviewed.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The budget for the housing-related floating support services tender will be £340,000 which will realise efficiencies of approximately 10% against current budgets.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The services support people to maintain a settled home environment for children and young people, enabling them to continue to access and maintain existing schools, health services and support networks

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Services will empower people to access work, training and education opportunities.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The services will support people to access and engage with appropriate health services to improve their physical and mental health and well-being.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Floating support services provide support to minimise the risk of harm across all client groups, including offenders, people with substance misuse problems and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Financial risk is minimised as tenders will be invited within existing budgets.

7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken on the existing Generic and Mental Health services, but it is unlikely to highlight any risks from the change to service delivery as the new Generic service will be available to people from all client groups and will continue to accept referrals from existing referral agencies.

7.3 Plus Dane / SHAP have also been commissioned to provide Refugee support in Halton. Although this is provided through a separate contract, the Refugee service does benefit from skills, knowledge and capacity across the wider organisations.

7.3.1 There are 3 support staff working on the Refugee service, and staff from the Floating Support services provide additional intensive support for two weeks following refugee arrivals. There have been 7 arrivals over the last 16 months and there has been an increase in the pledges made across the Liverpool City Region but it is not known at this time how many more refugees will be accommodated in Halton.

7.3.2 In addition, SHAP have a bank of bilingual staff who support Refugee service but this resource would not be available should Plus Dane / SHAP be unsuccessful and the floating support service transfer to another provider.

7.3.3 The Refugee contract is due to end January 2019 with the option to

extend for a further year. The annual contract value is £215,017.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Support providers will be required to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act as part of the tender process.

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

None