

REPORT TO: Executive Board
DATE: 16 October 2014
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
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 floating housing support services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board

- 1) Approves the commencement of a procurement exercise for floating housing support services; and**
- 2) Receives a further report on the outcomes of the tenders.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 A procurement exercise was undertaken in 2011 for floating support services to deliver housing related support to people in their own homes across all tenure to maintain their accommodation, promote independence and empower people to develop their capacity and skills.

3.2 There are currently four floating support services, providing housing support to people from the BME community, people with mental health problems, people at risk of homelessness from anti-social behaviour (ASB) and a generic service to provide support to all other client groups.

BME Floating Support Service

This service works with people from all BME communities, delivering support with tenancy and housing issues, providing a translation service and engaging with service users through other BME groups, including the Polish group and through drop in sessions on Halton's gypsy/traveller sites.

Mental Health Floating Support Service

This service works with people with mental health problems to meet their housing support needs and providing support to access and engage with other mental health services.

Risk of Homelessness due to Anti-Social Behaviour Service

This service works closely with the Community Safety team, accepting referrals from the Multi-Agency Meeting to prevent homelessness and working with perpetrators to understand the impact of their behaviours on their tenancy and the surrounding community and work in partnership to affect positive changes

Generic Floating Support Service

This service works cross tenure supporting all client groups to address any support needs which may affect their housing. For example providing support to sustain accommodation and prevent homelessness, manage finances and access appropriate health and support services.

- 3.3 A one year contract was awarded to Plus Dane for all four services from 1st April 2012, with the option to extend for a further two years. The final extension has been awarded and the contract will expire on 31st March 2015.
- 3.4 The services have supported 409 people in 2013/14, and 91 people in the first quarter of 2014/15. Statistics evidence continuing demand for floating support services and positive outcomes are being achieved including the prevention of homelessness for vulnerable people in Halton.
- 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 2015 and it is proposed to offer a 3 year contract with the option to extend for a further year to stimulate market interest and encourage competitive submissions.
- 3.6 It is proposed to go to tender for 2 lots, with the BME, generic and the risk of homelessness services due to ASB being rationalised into one service. There are a number of reasons for the rationalisation of services, including feedback received during monitoring visits about the complexity of ASB cases, potential duplication of services for BME clients and the potential for efficiencies by streamlining service provision.
- 3.7 The Mental Health service will go as a separate lot due to the specialist nature of that service.
- 3.8 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 will support and contribute to Halton's Homelessness Strategy 2013-18.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The budget for the housing-related floating support services tender will be £400,000 which will realise approximately £40,000 efficiencies against current budget provision.

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 BME, Generic and Risk of Homelessness due to ASB 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.

In addition, there is another BME service currently operating in Halton and existing Plus Dane BME clients will be signposted to this service where ongoing BME specific support is required.

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 under the meaning of the Act.