



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY CABINET BOARD

27 June 2022

Report of the Head of Adult Services – A. Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected

The Scheme will be located in Sandfields East, but people eligible for the service will be referred from across all ward areas and the ongoing floating support will be delivered across all ward areas.

COMMISSIONING OF CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES IN A 'STEP UP TO STEP DOWN' SCHEME.

Purpose of the Report

To obtain Member approval to undertake a procurement exercise for the provision of care and support within a 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme and for the Head of Adult Services to receive delegated authority to enter into a contract with the winning bidder.

Executive Summary

This report sets out a proposal to undertake a procurement exercise in order to appoint an experienced provider to deliver a 'Step Up to Step Down' care and support service to a number of people with mental health and/or learning disability needs.

Background

For a number of years a Supported Living Scheme has been delivered from a property located in the Sandfields East ward area.

Supported Living is a Scheme in which a small number people (normally 2-4) with care and support needs live together, with 24 hour specialist care and support provided to them within the accommodation. Each person residing in the Scheme have their own tenancy agreement, they have their own bedroom and will share facilities such as a kitchen and living room.

The property in Sandfields East was specially developed by First Choice Housing Association to meet the accommodation needs of people with a learning disability that have care and support requirements. It provided a home for up to four people, who required 24 hours support to remain independent and safe.

Within the next few months this property will become vacant as the tenants are planning to move into a different property. Due to the upcoming vacancies, a review was undertaken to identify the best use for this property.

The review identified that there was no longer a need for this property to be utilised as a Supported Living Scheme for people with a learning disability. The reason for this is that there is a sufficient number of vacancies within other Supported Living Schemes to meet projected demand.

Over the last four years, Neath Port Talbot Council (the Council) have been utilising opportunities to access capital funding provided by Welsh Governments Integrated Care Fund and Social Housing Grant, to develop a range of new accommodation and support models that offer more independence to people with social care needs. This includes the development of Extracare, where people have their own flats within a building that has communal areas and 24 hour support. Independent Living Flats have also been developed, where people

have their own specially adapted flat with targeted floating support delivered to them.

After reviewing the support and accommodation needs of people that will require a social care intervention over the next few years and matching this to what supported accommodation services are available now, as well as what we plan to develop over the next five years, it was identified that Neath Port Talbot would benefit from a 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme.

'Step Up to Step Down' is where specialist support is provided to people with a learning disability and/or mental ill health that have reablement potential and would like support in order to live more independently. It is called 'Step Up to Step Down' as a person will receive specialist intensive support for a period of 18-24 months, in order to develop their daily living skills and maximise achievement of their independence outcomes (i.e. stepping up the level of support provided). Once their independent living skills have been developed, the person can then move into their own home without the need for ongoing 24 hour support (i.e. stepping down the level of support provided).

People that are assessed as being eligible for the 'Step Up to Step Down' would move into the Scheme for a period of 18-24 months and receive specialist support so that they can develop the skills to live more independently. Once a person has maximised their independent living potential, they will be supported to move into their own home. Some people will need ongoing targeted floating support and the provider of the 'Step Up to Step Down' will continue to deliver this in the person's new home, so that the person receives continuity of care.

In accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR), Officers are required to undertake a competitive procurement exercise for the delivery of a 'Step Up to Step Down' service within the identified accommodation.

Providers wishing to be considered for this opportunity will be evaluated based on their quality and cost, in order to identify which bidder will offer the most economically advantageous tender. The bidder offering the most economical advantageous tender will be awarded the contract to deliver the 'Step Up to Step Down' service for a period of four years, with an option to extend the contract for an additional period of up to four years, subject to a 90 day no-fault termination clause.

Financial Impacts

The net budget for Mental Health and Learning Disability placements (after client contribution and budgeted Health Board contributions) in the 2022-2023 financial year is:

Learning Disability Placements	-	£16,560,400
Mental Health Placements	-	£3,060,680

The above figures are for all placements, including direct payments, care homes and supported living. The average cost of a supported living placement is £1,583.38 per person per week (including Housing Support Grant funding), which is the closest model to project the cost the proposed 'Step Up to Step Down' scheme.

It is not possible to indicate the total financial impact of this proposal until the services have been tendered and the Council has evaluated the bids as the providers will be required to submit costings. The procurement process will ensure that the Council contracts with a provider that is able to offer best value for money, taking into account both the quality and cost of the bidder's submissions.

The costs of a person's ongoing care and support package once they have moved on from the 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme will be less than the cost of their care package prior to entering the Scheme. This is because the person will require significantly less ongoing care and support to remain safe and independent.

Integrated Impact Assessment

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the

Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.

An overview of the Integrated Impact Assessment has been included below in summary form only and it is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment, which is attached to the report at Appendix 1, for the purposes of the meeting.

Equalities: Overall there will be more positive than negative impacts. Any potential negative impacts can be mitigated and the positive impacts outweigh the potential negative impacts.

Systems will be in place that will allow officers to check that the proposal is having its intended outcomes and not resulting in any unintended negative consequences for people with a protected characteristic.

Socio Economic Disadvantage: The indication is that the proposal will have a positive impact; however, systems will be in place that will allow officers to check that the proposal is having its intended outcomes and not resulting in any unintended negative consequences for people in regards to social economic disadvantages.

Community Cohesion/ Social Exclusion/Poverty: The indication is that the proposal will have a positive impact; however, systems will be in place that will allow officers to check that the proposal is having its intended outcomes and not resulting in any unintended negative consequences for people in regards to community cohesion, social exclusion and/or poverty.

Welsh Language: The indication is that the proposal will have a positive impact; however, systems will be in place that will allow officers to

check that the proposal is having its intended outcomes and not resulting in any unintended negative consequences for people wishing to use the Welsh Language.

Biodiversity: Not applicable for the proposal to commission a care and support service.

Well-being of Future Generations: The indication is that the proposal will have a positive impact; however, systems will be in place that will allow officers to check that the proposal is having its intended outcomes and not resulting in any unintended negative consequences against the aims of the well-being of future generations.

Valleys Communities Impacts

The Scheme will be located in an identified property within Sandfields East. However, people eligible for the service from across Neath Port Talbot, including the valleys, will be referred to the service.

This Scheme should have a positive impact for valley communities, as the service intends to develop people's independence and daily living skills so that they do not need to live in 24 hour support models. This means that when a person with care needs due to their learning disability and/or mental ill health has received this service and is ready to move into their own accommodation, they can choose to live in their valley community with floating support. Without this service, the person may have needed to permanently move away from their local valley community in order to reside in a 24 hour support model, such as a specialist care home.

Workforce Impacts

No implications.

Legal Impacts

It is anticipated that the contract value will exceed the threshold of £663,540 (inclusive of VAT) for the Light Touch Regime set out in the

Public Contract Regulations 2015. In addition the Council must comply with its own Contract Procedure Rules which apply to the letting of contracts.

Under the Public Contract Regulations 2015, the Council is obliged to act in an open fair and transparent manner, ensuring that contract opportunities for such social care services are advertised to reach a wide market in order to encourage competition and to ensure equal treatment of all bidders.

As such, the Council is required to undertake a competitive procurement exercise for the service in accordance with the Light Touch Regime under Public Contract Regulations 2015 and its Contract Procedure Rules. The tender process to be undertaken will comply with relevant legislative and procedural requirements. Contract terms will be drafted to govern the relationship between the Council and appointed provider in relation to the provision of the service.

Risk Management Impacts

Risks associated with not implementing the proposal:

The Council is responsible for paying First Choice Housing Association's rental voids, since there is no longer a demand for this property to be used as a Supported Living Scheme, there is a high risk of voids. The void payment cost is £201.26 per bedroom, per week. The intention to repurpose the property into a 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme intends to mitigate this risk.

This development will play a key role in enabling people to live more independent and fulfilled lives. If this Scheme was not taken forward it would present a risk to people's independence and quality of life outcomes, as they would need to remain living in more institutionalised support models and would be unable to safely live independently without high levels of care.

Risks associated with implementing the proposal:

There is a theoretical risk that there may be no ongoing demand for a

'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme and that this would have a negative financial impact on the Council. Officers have mapped the needs of people already known to social services and are confident that there is enough ongoing demand for this type of service, as such the risk of paying long term rent voids is low. Furthermore the contract for the delivery of care services will be for an initial period of four years, which equates to delivering a Service to around 8-10 people, if after four years there is no ongoing demand, the Council can choose not to extend the contract for a further period. In addition, the Council will be able to issue a 90 day no fault notice on the care service contract if significant long term voids occur. The Council will only pay the care provider for the hours that are delivered to people living in the Scheme, this means that the Council would not pay for care and support if there were no people requiring a service.

If there is no suitable accommodation for a person to move into once they have achieved maximisation of their independent living skills in the 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme, there is a risk that the person cannot move out of the Scheme. This would cause a delay in moving new eligible people into the Scheme, as well as causing a delay in enabling the person to move into their own home. Officers intend to work closely with Registered Social Landlords to identify suitable accommodation and to apply for the available Welsh Government capital funding (e.g. the new Housing with Care Fund) for the development of new accommodation.

There can be risks associated with establishing a new service. The winning bidder will be required to submit a contract mobilisation plan to ensure a smooth establishment of the service. The implementation of this mobilisation plan will be monitored by Officers within the Common Commissioning Unit. This will mitigate any risks associated with setting up a new service.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

The proposal for this Scheme has arisen in response to feedback from people receiving services, who have indicated that they would like to move into more independent living arrangements.

Recommendations

Having had due regard to the integrated impact assessment it is recommended that agreement is given for:

- a. The undertaking of a procurement exercise to commission care and support services for a 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme,
- b. Following the procurement process, for the Head Adult Services to be granted delegated authority to enter into a contract with the bidder evaluated as offering the most economically advantageous tender (taking into account the quality and cost of the bids), for the provision of care and support for a 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

Undertaking a procurement exercise for the delivery of care and support services within the 'Step Up to Step Down' Scheme will ensure that the Council is legally compliant when purchasing these services. In addition, the establishment of this Scheme will ensure that the Council is best placed to continue meeting the needs and demands of those that require support to develop their independent living skills, so that they are able move into less institutionalised accommodation.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for immediate implementation, with the agreement of the Scrutiny Chair.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Integrated Impact Assessment

List of Background Papers

None.

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