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| Subject: | Contract award for the provision of a “Safe Space to Stay” service funded by grant by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government | | |
| Date of Meeting: | 13 March 2019 | | |
| Report of: | Executive Director for Health & Adult Social Care | | |
| Contact Officer: | Name: | Sue Forrest | Tel: 01273 292960 |
| | Email: | sue.forrest@brighton-hove.gov.uk | |
| Ward(s) affected: | (All Wards); | | |

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authority to direct award a contract to St Mungos for the provision of a Safe Space to Stay service which will provide accommodation and a rapid assessment service for homeless persons and those at risk of rough sleeping.
- 1.2 The funding for the contract is being made available to the Council by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (“MHCLG”) following a successful bid by the Council for funding to establish a Rapid Rehousing Pathway. Final confirmation of funding was received on 20 February 2019.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing & New Homes Committee: Grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health and Adult Social Care to enter into a contract with St Mungos for the provision of an accommodation and rapid assessment service for homeless people at risk of rough sleeping for a period of 13 months; and
- 2.2 Grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of HASC to approve an extension to the contract term for a further period or periods of up to two years in total subject to performance and subject to the availability of funding.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The majority of people who find themselves homeless are single people and if they don't manage to find accommodation, can end up rough sleeping.
- 3.2 The Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy (RSS) was published in August 2018, setting out their plans to meet the commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022, and end it entirely by 2027.
- 3.3 By 2027, the Government is expecting that the Council's response to rough sleeping will be based on a rapid rehousing approach. This means if a person is

at risk of rough sleeping they will have their needs assessed quickly in line with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, be offered appropriate support and then helped rapidly into a home, with appropriate support alongside.

The Government is clear that every area with one or more rough sleepers should have a clear local pathway into settled accommodation that includes:

- Rapid assessment of need and eligibility;
- Rapid rehousing into an appropriate settled home and referral into support services, where needed.

- 3.4 The council submitted a bid to the MHCLG on 31st October 2018 for funding to establish and support the provision of services to prevent, accommodate and support people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. This is a No First Night Out rough sleeping prevention accommodation service (NFNO) with 10 units of accommodation and 12 crash beds.
- 3.5 People who are identified as homeless by Housing Options with no accommodation options that night, so at imminent risk of rough sleeping will be referred to this service. The staff will engage with the person, assess their accommodation and support needs and plan their move into longer term accommodation. The target for moving people through the service is 72 hours. The service will be operational 24 hours a day. Most of the people referred to this service are not likely to be in 'priority need' under homeless legislation, so would not be accommodated in emergency accommodation.
- 3.6 A telephone interview took place on 14th November 2018, and on the 18th December 2018, the MHCLG notified the council that the bid for a Safe Space to Stay service was successful. . The award is conditional on arrangements for the delivery of the services to be in place and operational from March 2019.
- 3.7 The Council commenced discussions with possible providers of the services from the Christmas period in December 2018 as it was essential to ensure that the short mobilisation timeline could be met particularly as the Safe Space to Stay service required a provider to identify and secure suitable premises from which the Hub could operate. St Mungos were able to identify potentially suitable premises in early January 2019 for the NFNO service.
- 3.8 On the 14th January 2019, the MHCLG visited Brighton and inspected the property to ensure it met the MHCLG's grant criteria. Confirmation of the funding was formally received on 20th February 2019.
- 3.9 The costs of this service are higher than a standard support service as the service will be staffed at all times by skilled Assessment and Reconnection Workers and the short term nature of the service means Housing Benefit is not applicable or possible to claim in most cases increasing the costs of the service. The grant costs for the service for 2019/20 is £944,000 which covers staffing, client and building costs.

- 3.10 The Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding aims to focus resources on preventing single people from ending up rough sleeping if they find themselves homeless. This model requires joint working with the Housing Options team under the Homeless Reduction Act and with other partners, developing robust assessments at an early stage to identify clear accommodation pathways for individuals and making sure they are placed in accommodation which best meets their needs, and they have access to appropriate support and never end up sleeping rough.
- 3.11 The MHCLG and will be closely evaluating the effectiveness of the Safe Space to Stay model by comparing outcomes with areas without this model. The key indicator will be monitored on the number of people who have been through the service and found rough sleeping 6 months and 12 months later.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The short timescale on grant award and mobilisation timetable has meant that a full tender would not get the service up and running quickly in order to make an impact on preventing people rough sleeping in the city.
- 4.2 Any delay in setting up the services risks losing the grant funding. Awarding to another provider with a suitable empty building in the timescale required is unlikely to be possible.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Service providers, key partners and commissioners have been consulted on the models which will make the most positive impact.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There are limited options in ensuring contracts can be awarded and service providers delivering quickly in line with grant conditions.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The final award from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government following the service proposal, has been confirmed as £0.555m for 2018/19 and £1.368m 2019/20.
- 7.2 The services commissioned must be within the funds available.

Finance Officer Consulted: Sophie Warburton

Date: 25/02/19

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 Under the Public Contract Regulations 2005 Contracting Authorities such as the Council may award public contracts using a negotiated procedure without prior publication where for reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events

unforeseeable by that contracting authority, the authority is unable to conduct a standard procurement provided the extreme urgency has not been brought about by circumstances attributable to the contracting authority.

- 7.4 The scale of the funding and the timescale in which the services are required to be in situ are both out with the Council's control. The funding is significant and urgently required to make needed provision for those homeless within the City.
- 7.5 The adoption of the negotiated procedure without prior publication carries a small risk of challenge which has been mitigated by consultation with providers in the City. There may be additional risk if the contract were to be extended but that would need to be assessed at the time and in the context of any funding made available to support any such extension.

Lawyer Consulted:

Judith Fisher

Date: 28/02/19

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 7.6 This service model fits with the Council's Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Strategies to prevent people from ending up rough sleeping.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Rough Sleeping Strategy – Rapid Rehousing Pathway Prospectus – Expression of interest for Early Adopters

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. Brighton & Hove Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/housing/homelessness-and-rough-sleepers/rough-sleeping-strategy>

Background Documents

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rapid-rehousing-pathway-somewhere-safe-to-stay-early-adopters/rapid-rehousing-pathway-somewhere-safe-to-stay-early-adopters>