

**Council**

28 March 2019

**Agenda Item 100**

Brighton &amp; Hove City Council

**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**

**Extract from the proceedings of the Housing & New Homes Committee, 13 March 2019**

**Date of Meeting:** **28 March 2019**

**Report of:** **Executive Director – Health & Adult Social Care**

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**Wards Affected:** All

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE*****Action Required of the Full Council:***

To receive the item referred from the Housing & New Homes Committee for information:

**Recommendation:** That the report be noted:

**Committee Resolution:**

- (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 Mungo’s 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) That the committee receives a report on the initial effectiveness of the safe space to stay service after 9 months of its operation and in the light of this report, considers options for continuation.

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**  
**HOUSING & NEW HOMES COMMITTEE**  
**4.00pm 13 MARCH 2019**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBER - HOVE TOWN HALL**  
**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Hill (Chair); Councillor Mears (Opposition Spokesperson), Gibson (Group Spokesperson), Atkinson, Barnett, Cattell, Meadows, Moonan, Page and Wealls

**PART ONE**

**73 CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE PROVISION OF A “SAFE SPACE TO STAY” SERVICE FUNDED FROM THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

- 73.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Health & Adult Social Care which sought authority to direct award of a contract to St Mungo’s for the provision of a “Safe Space to Stay” service which would provide accommodation and a rapid assessment service for homeless persons and those at risk of rough sleeping. The funding for the contract was 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. The report was presented by the Commissioning Manager, Health & Adult Social Care.
- 73.2 Councillor Gibson proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Page.

To amend the recommendations as shown in ***bold italics*** below:

***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. That the committee receives a report on the initial effectiveness of the safe space to stay service after 9 months of its operation and in the light of this report, considers options for continuation.***

- 73.3 Councillor Gibson explained that his main concern was that the proposed extension in recommendation 2.2 was for a further two years. This did not seem appropriate. He also wanted to remove the reference to delegated authority. The Government would be determining progress. It seemed appropriate to review the contract after 9 months.

- 73.4 Councillor Wealls asked what powers were possible in asking for future reports to committees following the local elections. The Senior Lawyer explained that future committees could not be bound but reports could be added to the committee timetable.
- 73.5 Councillor Mears stated that the Conservative Group would not be supporting the Green amendment. Not enough information was supplied. She could not agree the recommendations that asked to give delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care. Councillor Mears disagreed with Councillor Moonan's previous comments about a joined up council. To be fully informed committee members would also need to read the agendas from the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities and Equalities Committee. Councillor Mears did not believe that the council was joined up and considered it was dysfunctional. Timelines were a concern. Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 3.6 and stated that there had been no briefing for members or a brief update regarding successful bid. The graph was not clear. The report was last minute and Housing & New Homes Committee was being asked to implement the recommendations by the end of March.
- 73.6 Councillor Meadows was astounded that the report had been submitted to the Committee. No figure had been placed anywhere in the report, yet the Committee were being asked to delegate authority with a blank cheque. Councillor Meadows stated that the Green amendment was weak and that there should definitely be a report back to the Committee. There was no mention of monitoring the recommendations and no value for money for tenants. The financial implications did not say where the money was coming from. There was no EIA. Adult Care & Health were using a six month allocation policy, whereas the Housing & New Homes Committee had agreed a 5 year Allocations Policy. There were inequalities for people who lived in the city. She could not support a report that gave delegated powers to the Executive Director, Health and Adult Social Care for an unspecified amount of money.
- 73.7 Councillor Moonan thanked the Adult Social Care Commissioning Team for their hard work on commissioning services. Money was being spent in an accountable way. Funding was coming from the Government and not a penny would come from council tax payers in Brighton & Hove. There was an efficient team in Adult Social Care and the pilot service could be implemented quickly. The service had nothing to do with council tenants. People who used supported accommodation were very vulnerable people in the city. The way to support them was not to give them a council property. They were put through a carefully commissioned pathway. It was a different service for different people. It was stressed that there had been a councillor briefing session on this subject.
- 73.8 Councillor Meadows commented that if Housing Services were not paying for the service why was the Committee being asked to delegate authority to the Executive Director, Adult Social Care? She wanted to be reassured that there was nothing in the report that was housing funded.
- 73.9 The Executive Director, Finance & Resources confirmed that money for the service was not HRA money but was money that arrived in the General Fund as a grant from the Government.

- 73.10 In answer to a question from Councillor Mears the Assistant Director, Housing stressed that there was one housing allocation policy, however the service outlined in the paper was not operating through that policy.
- 73.11 Councillor Atkinson stated that the report should be celebrated as good news. These types of arrangements were commonplace and made perfect sense to him. He fully supported the recommendations.
- 73.12 Councillor Gibson welcomed the service and the report. He stressed that the proposals had nothing to do with value of money for tenants and nothing to do with the HRA. This was about funds that came into the housing general fund. The amendment had been submitted to achieve some monitoring. 9 months seemed to be the best time to review the service.
- 73.13 The Committee voted on the Green amendment as set out in paragraph 73.2. Members voted in favour of the amendment by 6 votes in favour and 4 against. The amendment was carried.
- 73.14 The Committee voted on the substantive recommendations as amended and these were agreed by 6 votes in favour and 4 against.

73.15 **RESOLVED:**

- (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 Mungo's 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) That the committee receives a report on the initial effectiveness of the safe space to stay service after 9 months of its operation and in the light of this report, considers options for continuation.