

Subject: Procurement of an Assessment Service for Rough Sleepers & Homeless Adults
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: That the Housing and New Homes Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) to take all necessary steps to:

- (i) procure and award a contract for Five (5) years for the provision of an Assessment Service for homeless adults with a local connection requiring supported accommodation to the value of £360,000 per annum,
- (ii) to approve an extension to the contract referred to in 2.1(i) for a period or periods of up to two years in total if it is deemed appropriate and subject to available budget.

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

72 PROCUREMENT OF AN ASSESSMENT SERVICE FOR ROUGH SLEEPERS & HOMELESS ADULTS

- 72.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Health & Adult Social Care which sought approval for a competitive procurement by tender for an assessment support service for rough sleepers and homeless adults. The report was presented by the Commissioning & Performance Manager, Rough Sleeping & Homeless Support Services.
- 72.2 Councillor Mears stated that the Conservative Group could not support the recommendations to grant delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care. Once again, the committee was seeing the impact of not having an Adult Social Care Committee and the need for a committee decision. Housing & New Homes Committee had no control over that directorate. She asked who would be using the 10% of allocation under the control of Adult Social Care. The Housing Allocation Policy was very clear on local connections which did not apply to Adult Social Care.
- 72.3 Councillor Mears referred to paragraph 10.2 – Legal Implications. This stated that Housing & New Homes Committee was the appropriate decision making body. Councillor Mears stated that she had never before been asked to give delegated powers to another Executive Director that did not have a committee. Paragraph 10.3 spoke about the estimated total cost of the contract. Councillor Mears was very interested to know what “light touch” meant (paragraph 10.3). Meanwhile, no EIA was attached to the report (paragraph 10.8). Councillor Mears asked when it would be available.
- 72.4 The Commissioning & Performance Manager explained that the EIA for the new service was ongoing and could be completed quickly. It would be circulated to members. She would be happy to bring back any outcomes to Housing & New Homes Committee.

- 72.5 The Senior Lawyer referred to paragraph 10.3. She stated that where there was a local government function it was subject to a lesser procurement advertisement regime. Publishing a notice was all that was necessary to engage the regulations. The Senior Lawyer stressed that the Committee did have control over the activities of the Executive Director. The Committee had delegated powers in relation to housing and homelessness. The Committee could delegate its powers to an officer including the Executive Director of Health and Adult Social Care. It did not have to be only to the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing.
- 72.6 Councillor Moonan stated that it would be helpful to explain how an assessment centre was different to a hub. Equinox had been mentioned in a previous item. This assessment centre would help. It would lead to more efficiency with regard to who was going where. She stressed that the Housing and New Homes Committee was one of a number of Committees and was part of one council. As long as there was scrutiny it did not matter where items were considered.
- 72.7 A Chart showing Rough Sleeping Prevention and Intervention Services from March 2019 (Rapid Rehousing Pathway) was circulated to Members. Members were informed that due to the additional funding that had been secured from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government there were a number of new services which had opened and were separate to the assessment centre, which were detailed on the chart. The chart showed the hub services. Hub Services were for individuals who were rough sleeping and were new to the streets. The outreach team would find them on the streets and take them to the hub where an assessment would take place. The people may or may not have a local connection to Brighton & Hove. The role of the no second night hub was to take people from the street and either put them towards supported accommodation, private rented accommodation or help to relocate them outside the city if another council had a duty to them.
- 72.8 The assessment service was different and was for those people who have been identified and assessed as having a local connection. The assessment service was the route into supported accommodation for adults. This could be low, medium or high support accommodation. There would be a six week thorough assessment to determine the best route for an individual.
- 72.9 In answer to a question by Councillor Cattell it was confirmed that a building had not yet been procured. Officers had identified a building that they were interested in procuring, and they had been in touch with the councillors in that ward to let them know. A lease had not yet been signed on a property.
- 72.10 Councillor Page stated that he understood that the Health & Wellbeing Board was the committee for Adult Social Care, in joint working with health. Reference was made to paragraph 4.4 "the role of the Assessment Service will be to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the individual..." This sounded like a social care assessment for which the council retains responsibility in law. Reference was made to paragraph 3.4 regarding local connection. The criteria stated that a person must have lived in the city for at least 6 out of the last 12 months and sleeping rough would not count. If people were sleeping rough for six months their health would be at great risk. To exclude them in this way appeared inhumane. To meet the criteria for local connection the homeless person had to have an actual relationship with their close family. Councillor Page argued

that many people with complex needs feel the city is their only home because their family are here but family relationships had broken down.

- 72.11 The Commissioning & Performance Manager remarked that the support provider would deal with certain elements of the assessment. This would be about what their housing needs were, what their strengths and aspirations for the future. They would also identify what external assessments needed to be made. That might be a social care assessment, a health assessment, a mental health assessment, or using the substance misuse service. When the person moved on to the next service there would be a comprehensive understanding of what their needs were and what sort of accommodation would be suitable for them. The definition of local connection for rough sleepers in the city had been used for a number of years.
- 72.12 Councillor Gibson welcomed the offer to report back on this issue. He hoped that there would be a progress report. He referred to national guidelines regarding local connection and asked for an estimate of how many people did not have a local connection. The Commissioning & Performance Manager explained that 50% of rough sleepers did not have a local connection. If a person did not have a connection anywhere they could access services.
- 72.13 Councillor Wealls mentioned that some of the terminology in the report was hard to follow. There needed to be a clear and sensible pathway. Meanwhile the fragmentation of these services across three committees was a problem.
- 72.14 Councillor Meadows noted that the report was by the Executive Director for Health and Adult Social Care who was not in attendance. It was not a housing services report. The recommendations would be taking money from the HRA and caused much concern. Paragraph 3.7 referred to New Steine Mews which was owned by Adult Social Care and was their responsibility. This was another report asking for more money from tenants. She considered that the report was full of contradictions and asked if it was only the HRA that would be funding the Assessment Service. The financial implications in paragraph 10.1 showed that it was clearly not a housing related project. Councillor Meadows asked why housing services was picking up the bill and stated that the report was talking about people who were coming into the city and who had been here a short while, who could override people who had been on the housing waiting list for years. The Housing & New Homes Committee had agreed a period of five years or over for people on the housing register. The report demonstrated no accountability and no monitoring.
- 72.15 The Executive Director, Finance & Resources confirmed that the £5.4m quoted in the report was in the general fund. He would provide more specific information to members on how that money was split.
- 72.16 The Commissioning & Performance Manager referred to a question about "Safe Place to Stay". "No First Night Out" and "No Second Night Out" were national terms. "No First Night Out" meant preventing people spending their first night out. The local term was "Safe Place to Stay". The "No Second Night Out" hub meant people not spending a second night out. In terms of the discussion about the allocations policy, the assessment service was about allocation to supported accommodation. It was not part of the allocation to general needs. It was about people with support needs in the city. Every

contract that was let was thoroughly monitored and officers could provide data around how many people come into services and what their outcomes are and where they go to. The Chair stated that some of that information might be of interest.

72.17 Members voted on the recommendations which were approved by 6 votes to 4.

72.18 **RESOLVED:** That the Housing and New Homes Committee grants delegated authority to the Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care (HASC) to take all necessary steps to

- (i) procure and award a contract for Five (5) years for the provision of an Assessment Service for homeless adults with a local connection requiring supported accommodation to the value of £360,000 per annum,
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