

	Decision of Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters' Security
	Report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services
Authority to invite tenders for the Single Homeless Prevention Service in accordance with Paragraph 13 of Part 3 of the Constitution	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Name: Laurence Coaker Job Title: Head of Housing Needs Service Email: Laurence.Coaker@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report concerns authority to tender for the Single Homeless Prevention Service to relieve and prevent homelessness for single people and couples without children, with low to medium support needs who do not meet the Priority Need threshold.. This report requests approval to invite tenders in respect of procurement of the Single Homeless Prevention Service as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters' Security, having consulted with the Leader and in accordance with paragraph 13 of Part 3 of the Constitution:

2.1 Approves inviting tenders for the provision of a Single Homeless Prevention Service for a period of 4 years from 1 November 2023 to 31 Oct 2027 on the basis of the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.18 of the report.

2.2 Approves Officers evaluating the tenders referred to in 2.1 above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.18 (vi) of the report.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Council currently has an outcome based contract with Pan London SHPS to deliver the Single Homeless Prevention Service (SHPS). Although the contract term is 4 years (from 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2024), the Council can no longer refer clients from 1 November 2023. This is to allow Pan London SHPS to fulfil the final outcome around tenancy sustainment for clients that have previously been referred. The proposed contract start date is therefore 1st November 2023 to ensure a continuity in service provision as well as ensuring the Council's ability to refer clients to the service.
- 3.2 Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Council has a statutory duty to take "reasonable steps" to prevent or relieve homelessness for anyone at risk of homelessness within 56 days, regardless of their support needs. This includes single people and couples without children.
- 3.3 The Council completed an Outcome Based Review (OBR) on single Homelessness in 2017, which identified a gap in provision for single people who do not meet the Priority Need (vulnerability) threshold in homelessness legislation, (the Housing Act 1996, Part 7). Although the majority of these single people were homeless or threatened with homelessness, they did not qualify for significant help to meet their housing needs, beyond very general advice and assistance. This often meant that the individuals were not able to resolve their housing needs and any underlying vulnerabilities they suffered from would deteriorate.
- 3.4 This cohort tend to have a range of low to medium vulnerabilities, ranging from issues with mental health, drug and alcohol abuse or being exoffenders. Dealing with single homeless households therefore requires a different, more tailored response than homeless families, the majority of whom have no vulnerabilities beyond the fact that are in housing need.
- 3.5 It was therefore agreed that the Council should engage more with the voluntary sector, who do have the experience and expertise in dealing with single homeless people, to assist the Council to meet the new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and also to meet the gap in services identified by the OBR, to provide more significant support to single homeless people, who do not meet the vulnerability threshold under homelessness legislation.
- 3.6 In 2018, the Housing Needs Service created a dedicated team, the Single Homeless Team, to specifically deal with applications received from single people and couples without children.

3.7 The Single Homeless Prevention Service (SHPS) is an outcomes based, payments by results service to relieve and prevent homelessness for single people and couples without children, with low to medium support needs as well as working in the longer term to sustain them in accommodation. To maximize long term housing sustainment, the service improves clients' wider personal circumstances, ranging from mental health, employment, family relationships and access to support services, including alcohol or substance abuse.

Trailblazers Fund and Life Chances Fund

3.8 The Council successfully secured £900K from the Government's Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers fund, which the Cabinet agreed to match fund in January 2017. The Trailblazer funding was awarded to the Council to commission local voluntary sector agencies to work in partnership with the Council to prevent and relieve homelessness for single homeless people, and couples without children. The bid was for an outcomes based, payments by results service. This approach was taken to allow the voluntary sector organisations to build their capacity to deliver the service and ensure value for money for the Council by only paying for successful outcomes. The outcomes are detailed below (Table 1):

Table 1: SHPS outcomes

Completion of Personal Housing Plan (PHP)
*Prevention of Homlessness
*Relief of Homlessness
8 month sustainment

*either prevention or relief outcome is made, not both

3.9 However, this payment for outcomes approach presents a financial risk to voluntary sector organisations, as if they do not achieve enough successful outcomes, they may not receive sufficient payments to cover their service delivery costs. The Trailblazer bid therefore included provision for the voluntary sector to work with a social investor, to transfer the financial risk.

3.10 In 2017, following a competitive tender process, a contract to deliver the SHPS service was awarded to a consortium of Crisis and Thames Reach, two highly experienced voluntary sector organisations with a strong track record in working on single homelessness. The consortium was financially backed by Bridges Fund Management ("Bridges").

3.11 In anticipation of the Trailblazer Grant funding coming to an end in September 2020, Bridges successfully bid for the Life Chances Fund (LCF) with a view to delivering SHPS model across London. The application was supported by 13 local authorities (including Brent) and was successful in securing 35% funding

for the service, which meant that 35% of all outcome costs were paid by the LCF and the remaining 65% paid by the Council. Islington Council led in terms of the procurement and contracting processes for the Single Homeless Prevention Service which enabled the Council to continue the SHPS model in Brent by entering into contract with Bridges and Crisis to deliver a part-funded Single Homeless Prevention Service from 2020 to 2024. Although the current contract is due to end in Oct 2024, to allow SHPS to fulfil the final 8 month tenancy sustainment outcome, they will no longer accept any new referrals from November 2023. This procurement will therefore ensure there is a continuity of SHPS provision.

Benefits of the Service

- 3.12 Since the implementation of The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (the 2017 Act), in April 2018, there has been an increase in demand from single homeless people. The demand has risen significantly since April 2022, with an average of 119 applications per week, which has risen to an average of 141 applications per week, over January to March 2023. The service allows the Council to fulfil its statutory duties for a key group of single people who have significant support needs, but a level of vulnerability insufficient to be placed into emergency temporary accommodation.
- 3.13 A payment for outcomes approach ensures value for money for the Council by only paying for successful outcomes. It also ensures that the SHPS Team actively seek referrals to achieve more outcomes.
- 3.14 This contract will enhance the support and assistance available to singles and couples without children and will deliver an overall cost saving when compared to the resources required to deliver the service in-house.
- 3.15 The Housing Needs Service has also proposed amendments to dealing with applications from singles and couples without children. The current online appointment system cannot deal with the current volume of demand as there aren't sufficient appointment slots for clients to be seen at the Civic Centre and delays have potentially led to preventing homelessness for some clients.
- 3.16 The new model focuses on a face to face drop-in service which will be delivered from a Council owned building in Harlesden; partner agencies will add significant value through colocation in the building and will allow for a more efficient and holistic approach to addressing a person's housing needs by access to employment and skills support, financial inclusion services, and services around mental health and substance addiction.
- 3.17 The Single Homeless Prevention Service will be an integral part of this service delivery and Officers anticipate the new model will serve to transform and strengthen the Council's approach to single homeless people in the borough

Contract Value

3.18 The contract will be capped at £2.1M across 3 years of referrals. This is a demand led service. 756 referrals are anticipated per year based on current demand.

3.19 In accordance with Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89, pre-tender considerations for the procurement of the contract for the provision of a Single Homeless Prevention Service (the “Contract”) have been set out below for the approval of the Cabinet Member.

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
(i)	The nature of the services / supplies / works.	Single Homeless Prevention Service to relieve and prevent homelessness for single people and couples without children, with low to medium support needs who do not meet the Priority Need threshold.	
(ii)	The estimated value.	£2.1M	
(iii)	The contract term.	4 years	
(iv)	The tender procedure to be adopted.	Open procedure	
v)	The procurement timetable.	Indicative dates are:	
		Tender publish	13 June 2023
		Deadline for tender submissions	14 July 2023
		Panel evaluation	9 August 2023
		Report recommending Contract award circulated internally for comment	17 August 2023
		Authority to award approval	1 September 2023
		Call-in period of 5 days and minimum 10 calendar day standstill period – notification issued to all	11 September 2023

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
		tenderers and additional debriefing of unsuccessful tenderers	
		Contract Mobilisation	12 September 2023
		Contract start date	01 November 2023
		<p>1. At selection stage shortlists are to be drawn up in accordance with the Council's Contract Procurement and Management Guidelines by the use of a selection questionnaire to identify organisations meeting the Council's financial standing requirements, technical capacity and technical expertise.</p> <p>2. At tender evaluation stage, the panel will evaluate the tenders against the following criteria:</p> <p>At tender evaluation stage a panel of evaluators, will score the tenders to identify the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) based on 50% of points being awarded for Quality, 40% of points being awarded for Price and 10% of points being awarded for Social Value.</p> <p>The highest ranked</p>	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
		tenderer will be recommended for the forward of contract.
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	This is an outcome based contract based on delivery and the council will only be paying the provider once the provider can demonstrate that they have met their KPI. Therefore there are no risks of non-performance.
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	The council will be awarding the contract to the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT)
(viii)	The Council's Best Value duties.	10% of the weighting will be for Social value
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	There will be TUPE implications for a new provider. There will be no TUPE implications for the council.
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	See sections [6] and [7] below.
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	This has been assessed in line with the Procurement Sustainability Policy and determined that a quality measure for sustainability is not required and can be captured as part of the Social Value criteria
(xii)	Sustainability	Appropriate Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes will be included in the contract.
(xiii)	Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes	The Contract will require the payment of the London Living Wage.
(xiv)	London Living Wage	A contract manager will be appointed and appropriate contract management provisions will be included in the contract.
(xv)	Contract Management	

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The estimated contract value from 1 November 2023 to 31 Oct 2027 is £2.1M. This is a £500K increase to the cost to the council, in comparison to the previous contract. This will be funded from the Housing Needs General Fund budget. There will be no grant subsidy, as seen in previous years, and the additional cost will be absorbed in the budget. This has also been noted as a risk in the Medium Term Financial strategy. The estimated value of this Contract is £ 2.1M

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The estimated value of the proposed Contract is above the threshold for Services under the Public Procurement Regulations 2015 (the “PCR 2015”) and the procurement is therefore governed by the PCR 2015.
- 5.2 The procurement is subject to the Council’s own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in respect of High Value Contracts given the procurement is valued at £2.1M. In accordance with paragraph 13 of Part 3 of the Council’s Constitution, the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters’ Security having consulted with the Leader, has delegated power to approve the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.18 above (Standing Order 89) and the inviting of tenders (Standing Order 88) for High Value Contracts.
- 5.3 Once the tendering process is undertaken, Officers will report back to the Cabinet Member in accordance with Contract Standing Orders, explaining the process undertaken in tendering the contracts and recommending award.
- 5.4 As this procurement is subject to the full application of the PCR 2015, the Council must observe the requirements of the mandatory minimum 10 calendar standstill period imposed by the PCR 2015 before the contract can be awarded. The requirements include notifying all tenderers in writing of the Council’s decision to award and providing additional debrief information to unsuccessful tenderers on receipt of a written request. The standstill period provides unsuccessful tenderers with an opportunity to challenge the Council’s award decision if such challenge is justifiable. However if no challenge or successful challenge is brought during the period, at the end of the standstill period the Council can issue a letter of acceptance to the successful tenderer and the contract may commence.
- 5.5 Immediately following the Cabinet Member making the decision to tender the contract, Officers will need to complete an Individual Member Decision Form and submit it to Executive and Member Services.
- 5.6 Any other legal implications relevant to the contract to include TUPE and human rights matters - Officers have advised that there are no TUPE and human rights implications for the Council in entering into the contract.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the “Public Sector Equality Duty”), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act

- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

6.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

6.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

6.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.

6.5 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and Officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 The individual Cabinet member has consulted the Leader in respect of this contract.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 There are no direct staffing implications for the Council arising from the tender process. The services are currently provided by an external provider. As part of the procurement process, employee liability information will be sought from current contractor and provided to the tenderers. The TUPE process and any issues that may arise from it will be managed during the mobilisation phase, which will be at least two months between contract award and commencement.

9.0 Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

9.1 The Council is under a duty pursuant to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (“the Social Value Act”) to consider how services being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area; how, in conducting the procurement process, the Council might act with a view to securing that improvement; and whether the Council should undertake

consultation. Officers have had regard to considerations contained in the Social Value Act in relation to the procurement.

- 9.2 The services under the proposed contract have as their primary aim the improvement of the social wellbeing of vulnerable groups in Brent. In procuring the services and in accordance with the council's Social Value Policy, 10% of the total evaluation criteria will be reserved for social value considerations.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Corporate Director of Resident Services