

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
REGENERATION & GROWTH DEPARTMENT
HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT
HOUSING NEEDS SERVICE**

**ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICE, ROUGH SLEEPERS
HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE
CONTRACT**

**DOCUMENT (b): SPECIFICATION FOR THE
PROVISION OF A ROUGH SLEEPERS' HOUSING
ADVICE & RESETTLEMENT SERVICE**

Date: 28/11/2014

SPECIFICATION

This specification is for the Advice and Resettlement component of Brent's wider Rough Sleepers' Support Service for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough in the borough.

The Rough Sleepers' Support Service is being commissioned as two distinct but inter-dependent service elements, this, a Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Support and the other, a Rough Sleepers' Street Outreach Service. While the two elements are individually specified and are being put out to tender separately, it is the council's intention that they should be delivered with sufficient integration that service users accessing them experience them as a cohesive service offer.

The two service elements may be commissioned either from a single or different provider, should the two services be delivered by different providers, one of the council's central expectations of both providers would be that they establish a sufficiently close working partnership to ensure service users experience the desired integrated service offer.

Both services are being tendered for a period of three years with an option to extend for up to another two years.

1.1 The two service elements to be commissioned are:

A Street Outreach Service, to identify and engage with people sleeping rough in Brent and in need or want of assistance with getting into accommodation and off the streets. This service will not target the relatively newly observed phenomenon of migratory economic migrants without support needs who choose to sleep rough to save money in order to maximise the income they can remit home.

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A Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service to primarily assist rough sleepers referred to them by the Street Outreach Service, but on occasion also people referred to them by a designated referrer as being at risk of sleeping rough, to secure and maintain appropriate and stable accommodation. (Designated referrers will be as determined by the council) The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement service will also gate keep Brent's Rough Sleepers' Pathway accommodation.

1.2 It is envisaged that both service elements will work with a range of service users, some of whom may present with considerable needs but have limited or no engagement with other support services, so presenting potential risks to themselves and/or others. Both service elements will support clients with chaotic lifestyles, including those who may have had or still have ongoing drug and alcohol issues and/or mental health issues and may present with significant vulnerability as a consequence of these needs.

1.3 The provider/s of both service elements will be expected to work with other local support services and partners including but not restricted to: Brent Council's Housing Options and START Plus

teams, care managers, social workers, community psychiatric and substance misuse services, Ashford Place, Lift, the boroughs supported housing and floating support providers, the London Street Rescue and No Second Night Out services, probation services, registered social landlords (RSLs), and private landlords.

1.4 The provider/s of both services shall participate in monthly targeting and tasking meetings chaired by Brent's Street Population Coordinator to plan and review actions for individual rough sleepers and/or emerging rough sleeping issues in the borough.

2. UNDERLYING SERVICE VALUES

2.1 This is an outcomes-focused specification and as such leaves scope for providers to organise service delivery in a range of ways to achieve the required outcomes. However, Brent Council has defined a set of underlying values that organisations including the provider of the services and service under this contract will be expected to adhere to in delivering such services.

2.2 The values guiding this service will be:

- to treat individuals with dignity and respect;
- to promote maximum independence; not doing things for people but helping people to do things for themselves to prevent dependency;
- to focus on a person-centred and individualised approach to address the specific and changing needs of individuals;
- to support and promote individual choice and control to assist service users to realise their aspirations and full potential;
- to be preventative and proactive; responding to emerging problems and preventing them from escalating;
- to involve people who use the service in shaping it and to seek their views and act upon their feedback;
- to achieve a balanced approach to risk which gives individuals control and the support if they make mistakes without serious implications for their security and safety.

3. BRENT ROUGH SLEEPERS' HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

3.1 This service is being commissioned as a housing advice and resettlement service to work with the rough sleepers referred to them by the Street Outreach Service and people referred to them by designated referrers as at risk of sleeping rough and requiring a service to prevent this. The service provider shall as part of the provision of its services and the service required of it:

1. complete a timely and comprehensive assessment of all service users referred to it;
2. identify realistic, appropriate and sustainable housing options for service users and any barriers to their accessing or sustaining this;

3. for all service users formulate in a timely manner and execute a support plan that addresses their housing and other related needs and any identified barriers to their accessing or sustaining accommodation;
4. where appropriate refer service users on to supported accommodation and support them while they wait to access this accommodation;
5. where appropriate support service users in accessing private rented sector accommodation and provide them with the necessary pre-tenancy support to ensure they are able to remain in this accommodation;
6. act as the gatekeeper for Brent's Rough Sleeping Pathway accommodation;
7. support previous rough sleepers who, having previously been assisted into accommodation so that they can re-approach the service seeking assistance if they are experiencing difficulties in maintaining their tenancies or remaining in the allocated accommodation; and
8. support previous rough sleepers in accessing appropriate education, training or employment, increasing their financial independence and stability, so better securing their continuation of their tenancy or accommodation arrangements.

3.2 The provider shall also attend and participate in relevant meetings and forums to promote close working relationships and joint work with the key partnership agencies.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE

4.1 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will provide rough sleepers, referred into the service by the Street Outreach Service, with high quality, advice and structured support with the objective of assisting them to make the transition from a chaotic street lifestyle to sustaining appropriate stable accommodation. The service will, where appropriate, reconnect individuals from outside the borough to their home area.

4.2 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will for each rough sleeper it works with, establish an individual resettlement plan which addresses both their needs and future aspirations and ensures they establish and can sustain stable accommodation arrangements that serve as a firm foundation for the realisation of their aspirations.

4.3 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will, working with partners, coordinate action around each rough sleeper to execute their individual resettlement plan, reviewing and if necessary revising resettlement plans as required, in line with each rough sleepers changing needs.

5. SERVICE USER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND SERVICE ACCESS

5.1 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service is being commissioned to provide support services to people who are sleeping rough in Brent and in need of housing related support.

5.2 Potential service users' eligibility for the service will be based on the verification of their rough sleeping by the rough sleeping outreach service or through referral to the service by a designated referrer who has assessed them as being at risk of sleeping rough and in need of the service to prevent this.

5.3 The service will be accessible to rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds, though their further onward referral options, beyond reconnection, may be severely limited.

5.4 Service users previously known to the Rough Sleeper's Housing Advice and Resettlement Service shall be able to re-approach the service for further support, should this be required to sustain their tenancy.

6. HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will deliver:

- a high quality, cost effective support service with appropriately trained staff, with skills including the abilities to develop relationships with rough sleepers and partner agencies, to motivate vulnerable people, assess their needs, keep accurate records and deal with issues associated with rough sleeping, mental illness and substance abuse.
- a service that is flexible and responsive to the service users' needs, ensuring continuity of appropriate support from the street to the sustainment of stable accommodation.
- a service that works proactively with service users to identify and resolve issues.
- a service which links with agencies in a way that promotes partnership working.

6.2 The service will have in place robust needs and risk assessment processes, proactively mitigating risk and will use SMART support planning processes to best support its service users in meeting their short and long term goals and realising their aspirations.

6.3 The service will provide a support service tailored to the individual user as appropriate allocating service users a named key worker who will engage and support the service user placing them at the centre of their individual support plan.

6.4 The service will work creatively to enable service users to engage with other services and will build relationships with partner agencies to ensure effective referrals and joint work to ensure health, rehabilitation and development needs are met.

6.5 The service will through effective record keeping facilitate support, manage case work, support joint working and produce data to inform policy.

6.6 The service will ensure it is responsive to the needs of BME groups and in accordance with the council's equal opportunities policy.

6.7 The service will for those people who do not have English as a first language, or are unable to communicate using English ensure access to appropriate translation services and promote access to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses.

6.8 The service will provide up to date monitoring information to CHAIN, Homeless Link and Brent Council and other organisations as appropriate and assist in using this information to develop services that help clients towards becoming independent self sufficient members of society.

6.9 The service will ensure any data which is supplied to third parties is in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Examples of organisations including but not being limited to:

- Other Advice Agencies
- Contact details of local GP's, Health Centre etc.
- Support services
- Training providers and other classes
- Employment agencies
- Income support and or benefits

6.10 The service will ensure that the services are carried out in compliance with legislation, to include revision of/or relevant additional legislation.

6.11 The service will establish and maintain good working relationships with the Private Rental Sector (PRS) organisations, accommodation providers and current knowledge of the PRS market such that it is able to procure PRS tenancies for those rough sleepers for who PRS accommodation is the most appropriate housing option, providing the necessary pre-tenancy support to ensure rough sleepers sustain this accommodation.

6.12 The service will establish a close working partnership with Brent Council's START Plus Team and the boroughs hostels and supported housing providers such that it is able to refer into supported housing those rough sleepers for who this is the most appropriate housing option.

6.13 The service will act as the gatekeeper for Brent's Rough Sleeping Pathway accommodation and support the rough sleepers accommodated in this temporary accommodation until they are resettled to more permanent accommodation.

6.14 The service will establish and maintain good working knowledge of the education, training or employment opportunities available to previous rough sleepers, so it can best support them in accessing these, to increase their financial independence and stability, so better securing the continuation of tenancies and accommodation arrangements of service users.

6.15 The service will provide a pre and post tenancy support service to rough sleepers to best promote their living independently in the community and tenancy sustainment, ensuring then take responsibility for their health needs, are aware of and access relevant and appropriate specialist services and are engaged in meaningful day time activities.

6.16 The service will to prevent individuals from returning to rough sleeping through appropriate sign posting to specialist medical, support, detoxification and housing services.

6.17 The service will support previous rough sleepers who, having previously been assisted into accommodation, who may re-approach the service seeking assistance, for example if they are experiencing difficulty with maintaining their tenancies.

7. SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK

7.1 So that service users are supported to engage in making their own choices, including being fully involved in the running of the service and achieving as great a level of independence as possible, the service provider will have in place policies and working practices such as a customer care/service user's charter and a service user involvement strategy that demonstrably promote service user involvement and feedback.

8. STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT

8.1 The service provider is required to employ sufficient, competent, suitably qualified, CRB checked and trained staff to provide the service commissioned.

8.2 The service hours required per week will be seventy five hours and provided that the service is resourced and staff perform as required under the specification and the contract, paid staffing levels for the service will be 75 hours per week.

8.3 For this contract, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") is expected to apply. Information in relation to this is as detailed in the council's invitation to tender for the contract. The provider has been referred to this in the council's ITT
The provider acknowledges and agrees that London Borough of Brent does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of any TUPE or employment related information.

9. LOCATION OF SERVICES BASE and OPENING HOURS

9.1 It is an essential requirement that the Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement support provider have and maintain an appropriate office base in the London Borough of Brent for its staff to operate out of which is accessible to service users. Minimum requirements during which this office should be open and accessible to service users and referrals from the Outreach service provider, are Monday to Friday 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

10. OUTCOMES

10.1 This service specification is outcome-focused and does not tightly prescribe how and what a provider should do to achieve the specified outcomes. Outcome-focused services aim to achieve the goals, aspirations and priorities of the individuals they serve. The service should be delivered in a way that is right for the individual and designed to achieve what the person desires. Outcome-focused services are fundamentally person-centred and individualised in their approach, recognising that each individual is unique so has different requirements.

10.2 Brent Council wants to be able to assess how a service is assisting individuals to achieve their goals and positive outcomes, and evidence how, (whilst they are receiving the service), they progress relative to their position on first accessing the service. The council requires the service provider to provide outcome data to evidence such progress as part of the provider's contract obligations.

11. TARGETS

11.1 The service provider will be required to submit accurate performance data both monthly and quarterly. This frequency may be reviewed with the agreement of both the provider and the Council.

11.2 General targets for the service are detailed below, specific targets for the service will be agreed with the provider by the Council within 8 weeks of contract start date or in the absence of agreement will be determined by the council via its representative, the Street Population Co-ordinator (or to the council nominated representative), and will be subject to annual review through which they may be amended by agreement or through decision by the Council.

Outcome	Target
New clients with resettlement / action plans	100%
Existing clients with resettlement / action plan to be kept open until successfully transferred to other services i.e. to a hostel provider, private rented accommodation or statutory providers but to be reviewed as and when appropriate.	100%
Clients' support needs assessed and referred to hostel accommodation through START + referral or referral to another borough	30%
Clients' support needs assessed and referred for privately rented accommodation through referral to the, Single Housing Advice Service	55%

or by providing advice about renting privately	
Clients assisted through the provision of advice, information and referral to other agencies to return/reconnect to originating borough or country they originated from	15%
Clients assisted to claim benefit if not already claimed	100%
Clients assisted to seek training and employment within 6 months of commencing resettlement through referral to BACES or CHC's own capacity building programme.	65%
Clients assisted to access mental health or drug and alcohol services as well as medical assistance if needed through referral to CRI or other CCG services	100%

11.3 In order to assess operational efficiency of service performance the provider will be expected to submit reports on the following information:

Information	Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of serious incidents 	Within 12 hours of incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of safeguarding alerts 	Within 24 hours of incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pi Returns 	Monthly/Quarterly

12. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

12.1 The Council will utilise a risk-based approach to monitoring this service. The focus will be to assess the achievement of outcomes and performance to targets. This will be achieved through a range of methods including submission of quantitative and qualitative outcome data.

12.2 It is expected that the service provider will maintain high levels of performance through their own internal quality assurance processes.

12.3 With the use of a risk based monitoring approach a provider who is performing well will likely need less monitoring than one whose performance is deemed poor.

12.4 A Service Performance Assessment will be completed for the service, at least annually by the council's Street Population Coordinator. Following this, a service monitoring plan will be devised by them and agreed with the provider.

12.5 However, independent of the service performance assessment the performance areas outlined in this specification and in Appendix 1 attached must be complied with by the provider. The performance requirements are intended to achieve positive outcomes for service users and provide information and data to evidence this to the Council.

12.6 The Council will monitor and review the effectiveness of these services and service user views will be an integral part of this review process.

13. PERFORMANCE MONITORING RETURNS

13.1 The service provider shall complete and submit electronically a Performance Indicator Workbook, the format of which will be provided by the council, at the end of each quarter (June, September, December and March) within 15 working days of the end of each quarter.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

14.1 The provider will ensure the provision of the service, which includes the provision of staff resources, premises and facilities and all agents comply with all relevant Health and Safety requirements. The provider must submit all Health and Safety information and data, which is required by the Council in order to ensure the safety of service users and staff and agents of the provider.

15. INCIDENTS

15.1 Serious and untoward incidents must be reported to the council within 12 hours of them occurring. The report and information provided must comply with local procedure and requirements for reporting of serious incidents.

16. SAFEGUARDING

16.1 The provider must report safeguarding incidents or allegations to the Council within 24 hours and must liaise with appropriate agencies including social work teams, police, probation and health professionals in line with local procedure, and at all times take necessary action to protect individuals (vulnerable adults and children at risk) from immediate and future harm.

17. CONCLUSION

17.1 The aim of this service specification is to set out a clear and measurable benchmark of the quality of Rough Sleeping Housing Advice and Resettlement Service.

17.2 Any changes to the service provision arrangements (as specified in this specification) must be agreed with the London Borough of Brent's Street Population Coordinator before they are made and all changes should be agreed in writing.