

MINUTES OF CABINET MEMBER SIGNING MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER, 2022, 10.00AM - 10.25AM.

PRESENT: Councillor Lucia das Neves, Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Wellbeing

In attendance: Zahra Maye, Commissioning Manager, Communities and Housing Support and Nazyer Choudhury, Principal Committee Co-Ordinator.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. VARIATION AND EXTENSION OF THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) STRATEGIC PARTNER CONTRACT

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

4. VARIATION AND EXTENSION OF HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT CONTRACT - DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE - FLOATING SUPPORT AND REFUGE PROVISION

The report sought Cabinet Member approval to implement Contract Standing Order 10.02.1b, to vary and extend the existing contracts under the original contract terms and conditions for the Domestic Abuse Refuge and Floating Support Services, provided on the Council's behalf by Solace Women's Aid.

The new safe accommodation in Burgoyne Road had been paused by the GLA and the original completion date was October 2024. This expected date would need to be extended to allow sufficient time to build a strong model and go through an adequate consultation process in addition to re-adapting from the coronavirus crisis.

The Council had worked with Solace for a number of years and they were good at addressing needs and any changes in response to new provisions. If a new model was decided upon, there were built-in clauses to existing contracts that could be exercised.

Solace had also met their key performance indicators, had been communicative and were generally good at addressing needs. Solace had also achieved many key outcomes.

The Cabinet Member emphasised the importance of pushing engagement with communities that spoke English as a second language or those who had had different cultural norms and expectations including by engaging residents in their first language.

The Cabinet Member RESOLVED

1. To approve the variation and extension of the current contracts for domestic abuse services to January 2025, held by Solace Women's Aid, as allowed under Contract Standing Order 10.02.1b as follows:
 - Floating Support - from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2025 at a cost of £302,765.
 - Refuge Provision - from 1 February 2024 to 31 January 2025 at cost of £97,728.
2. To note that the aggregated value of the full contract period is as follows:
 - Floating Support - from 1 August 2020 to 31 January 2025 will be £642,866
 - Refuge Provision – from 1 August 2020 to 31 January 2025 will be £398,775. 3.3.
3. To note that the funding for this extension will be from the Council's Housing Related Support general fund budget, in Adults and Health.

Reasons for decision

The current contract with Solace Women's Aid has 2 services:

- (a) A 60-unit floating support service which is ending on 31 January 2023.
- (b) A 15-unit refuge provision which ends on 31 March 2023.

It was in the Council's overall interest to continue to provide these much-needed domestic abuse services in Haringey. An estimated 3 in 10 women will experience domestic abuse at some time in their lives; in Haringey over 3,000 women were currently experiencing domestic violence and over 20,000 women are living with the legacy of past abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) placed new duties on local authorities to provide 'safe accommodation' and support to victims of domestic abuse. The Council was currently developing new 'safe accommodation' in the borough to fulfil these duties at Burgoyne Road (N4) an element of which will be Council run and is expected to be completed by October 2024. As such, an extension of the current contracts would allow the Council's Housing-Related Support Team adequate time to fulfil these duties and then to review and refresh all contracts and services needed to address domestic abuse going forward.

Further the requested contract variation and extension would provide sufficient time to explore sourcing models, service delivery pathways and then, if required, to carry out a tender process for new services.

Alternative options considered

Do nothing: This option was discounted as the Council had a statutory duty to provide safe accommodation and support to survivors of domestic abuse; refuge provision is one of the key services that fulfil this duty and floating support was a key preventative response.

In-house delivery of the provision was considered and was found not to be feasible at this time; there was not currently an established approach or delivery model for this type of specialist service within the Council. This would be explored again during the contract extension period, as part of refreshing the sourcing and delivery model for domestic abuse services.

Consideration was given to the completion of a procurement exercise via an open tender process. However, this option was discounted because the Council was currently developing

new services which will impact on strategy, commissioning, and delivery approaches from 2024. It is therefore not considered an effective use of available resources to procure a new service for such a short period of time.

CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Lucia das Neves

Signed by Cabinet Member

Date ...3 October 2022.....