

MINUTES OF MEETING Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Monday, 27th March, 2023, 1.30 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Lucia das Neves

ALSO ATTENDING: Gill Taylor (Assistant Director for Communities and Housing Support) and Felicity Foley (Committees Manager)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. VARIATION AND EXTENSION OF THE ENGAGE HARINGEY FLOATING SUPPORT CONTRACT WITH RIVERSIDE

The Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Well-being considered the report which sought approval to implement Contract Standing Order 10.02.1b, to extend and vary the current contract for the Provision of Housing Related Floating Support Services for two lots (floating support for families and floating support for couples and singles without children) delivered by The Riverside Group Limited. The estimated value of the service for the extension period was £3,995,000 and the total value of the whole lifecycle of the contract is £7,315,000.

The Cabinet Member noted that the provider had worked well with the Council for the past three years and had provided a range of services to families and single adults. All staff working for the provider were paid at the living wage. The team consisted of 16 Navigators, 2 Service Managers and a part-time Service Manager, and had the capacity to provide services to 480 households at any one time, and saw around 1000 people in a year. Quarterly contract meetings were held with the provider, and the Cabinet Member noted that it was important that different ways of measuring impact and prevention should be looked at as part of monitoring the contract.

Gill Taylor, Assistant Director for Communities and Housing Support, advised that the contract would be re-evaluate in two years time and a decision would be made as to whether re-tendering, extension or in-house routes would be taken.

It was noted that the cost of the contract had reduced by £150k, which had been made possible by the reduction of staffing numbers. It was important to note that this was not due to redundancy, but a vacant post which had not been filled for some time.

The Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Well-being RESOLVED to

1. Approve the extension of the existing contract for the Provision of Housing Related Floating Support Services for two lots (floating support for families and floating support for couples and singles without children) delivered by The Riverside Group Limited for a further period of 4 years from 1st April 2023, as allowed under the terms of the contract and in accordance with Contract Standing Orders (CSO) 10.02.01 (b) and CSO 16.02; and
2. Approve a variation of the contract price from £4,520,000 to £3,995,000 for the duration of the contract extension period from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2027.
3. Note that the reduction in contract price referred to in paragraph 3.1.2 above will trigger a reduction in service delivery as set out in Appendix 1 – Part B (exempt information) of this report.

Reasons for decision

In 2018 the Homelessness Reduction Act brought about a range of changes to the way that local authorities respond to households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. A key element of the legislation is an extended duty, for the Council and its partners, to prevent homelessness at the earliest possible stage. This focus on early prevention will be a key element of these floating support services and the services will therefore support the Council in meeting its statutory duty.

There continues to be a clearly identified need within Haringey for services to support residents with the wide-ranging factors that contribute to and cause homelessness. These floating support services will help to meet that need, providing a flexible and person-centred service which will support clients in a holistic way to maintain or establish sustainable housing and overcome problems that can contribute to homelessness.

The contract for the Provision of Housing Related Floating Support Services for two lots (floating support for families and floating support for couples and singles without children) was awarded for a period of three (3) years commencing from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023 with an option to extend for a further period/period of up to a total of four (4) years. The contract extension will enable the Council to ensure continuity of these services, which plays an integral role in the delivery of Haringey's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies by: helping to prevent and relieve homelessness and reducing the use of temporary accommodation.

Investment in prevention-focused services represents good value for money for the Council, as failure to prevent homelessness and ensure suitable, good-quality housing results in significant personal cost to residents and financial cost to the Council. The principal aim of this service is to enhance access to information, advice and guidance to those facing the most unequal risk of homelessness in the borough.

The contract performance has been evaluated as good throughout the contract period. Key Performance Indicators and methods of measurement are integrated within the service specification and are monitored through contract monitoring meetings and reports.

Given the above reasons, it is beneficial to extend the existing contract for an additional 4 years to give 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: the Council could elect not to extend these Floating Support services. However, this would leave Haringey without a service to support households to prevent and resolve housing and homelessness issues. This would be likely to cause an increase in cases of homelessness within the borough, which would have a significant detrimental impact on the residents affected as well as increasing demand for statutory services to respond to cases of homelessness which could have been avoided, had floating support been available. Therefore, the option of doing nothing was considered and rejected.

Deliver the services in house: the Council could elect to offer these Floating Support services in house. However, the investment required to create the capacity to develop such services, and to manage them on an ongoing basis, would be significantly greater than the cost of commissioning services from the current provider. This would also be a process that takes time; the extension period would allow sufficient time to carry out a full options appraisal to see if this would be viable in the future. The provider has expertise and a track record in delivering these services which will ensure the continuation of a high-quality service for residents and good value for the Council. In addition, some of the work undertaken by these services involves ensuring that decisions made by the Council and other public bodies are correct, and therefore it is appropriate that such services are delivered by an external provider.

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the press and public for the consideration of agenda item 5 as it contained exempt information as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1985); paras 3 and 5, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

5. EXEMPT - VARIATION AND EXTENSION OF THE ENGAGE HARINGEY FLOATING SUPPORT CONTRACT WITH RIVERSIDE

The exempt information was noted.

CHAIR: Councillor Lucia das Neves

Signed by Chair

Date

