

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

27 FEBRUARY 2018

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

COMMISSIONING AND AWARD OF CONTRACTS IN RESPECT OF THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME

1. Purpose of Report.

The purpose of the report is to: –

- Seek approval to continue service delivery of 3 contracts funded under the Welsh Government Supporting People Programme;
- Suspend the relevant parts of the Council's CPRs in respect of the requirement to re-tender the proposed contracts listed in Appendix 1 of this report and;
- Authorise the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services to enter into the contracts with the providers listed in Appendix 1.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The short term contracts in Appendix 1 supports the delivery of Corporate Priorities of –

- Supporting a successful economy
- Smarter use of Resources
- Helping people to be more self-reliant

3. Background.

3.1 **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme** - The UK Government has committed to resettling 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020, fleeing Syria as a result of the civil war. On 5th July 2016 a report was submitted and endorsed by Cabinet to participate in the resettlement programme to accept 6 families over a 24 month period. Guidance from Welsh Government outlined a set of support requirements to oversee the resettlement programme and support needs of Syrian refugees. A procurement exercise was carried out and the contract was awarded to The Welsh Refugee Council. The contract length is up to 24 months, which is due to expire in October 2018. It supports a maximum of 6 families at any one time. Each family receives up to 12 months support to ensure that families are provided with suitable accommodation and the needs of these vulnerable individuals are met. The majority of the programme is funded by the Home Office (via the flexible Overseas Development Aid budget) however the support element is funded via the Supporting People grant

3.2 **Prisoner Release Empowerment Project** - The Big Lottery funded a Prisoner Release Empowerment Project which provides support to homeless people involved in the Criminal Justice System. The project works with people to find and maintain housing, and supports people to ensure a successful and positive resettlement from prison. A cabinet report was submitted and endorsed to enter

into a pilot contract for 12 months. A review was carried out which highlighted the success of the service and it was evident that the service prevented homelessness.

3.3 Supported Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Persons - The homeless hostel for families and young people at Brynmenyn provides 16 units of accommodation with 24 hour on-site support staff. The service is funded through the Supporting People Programme Grant, to help prevent and relieve homelessness. Concerns have been raised over the accommodation standards - the size of the bedrooms accommodate 3-4 persons each (either three single beds or twin single beds and 'bunk beds') together with minimal furniture such as bedside units, drawers and wardrobe. There are no individual toilet and washing facilities as these are shared – one male and one female bath/shower rooms and there are also shared kitchen facilities.

3.4 The hostel is situated within two converted buildings, a former 'Council office' and an adjacent terraced property, both of which were constructed in the early part of the 20th Century and require substantial expenditure to be brought up to modern standards expected of hostel accommodation and most importantly to meet the basic needs of the client group such as families and young people placed in this service. In addition the buildings do not meet the requirements for buildings used by the public under the Equality Act 2010.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme Refugees - It is evident that 12 months of support is not sufficient to enable Syrian families to successfully integrate into their communities and become independent. A more appropriate length of support of up to 24 months is required. In addition to this there have been family break ups resulting in family members requiring additional accommodation and resettlement support. The Home Office has confirmed that all family members must continue to be supported under the Programme and this has resulted in the Welsh Refugee Council having to increase the level of units of support. Not providing the support would have been a breach of the funding conditions of the Home Office.

4.2 In light of the unforeseen circumstances in regards to the increased length of support required and the changes to family makeup that have and may continue to occur, it is proposed that Cabinet suspend the relevant parts of the contract procedure rules and enter into a further 12 month contract with the support provider to 31st October 2019 to ensure all families currently resettled are provided with a maximum of 24 months support. The number of units is increased to 12 to allow for support to be provided flexibly in the event of any further family breakdown or unforeseen circumstances.

4.3 Prisoner Release Empowerment Programme - The Prisoner Release Empowerment Programme contract is due to come to an end on 31st March 2018 with no option to extend. Given the complexities and sensitivities of prisoner release cases, the pilot period has not been long enough to determine the exact requirements of a holistic service going forward therefore the Council need to ensure that there is a continuity of service to avoid/reduce disruptions that could arise from the ending of the contract. In order to avoid such a disruption and to build on the expertise already established by this project, it is proposed that Cabinet suspends the relevant parts of the Council's CPRs in respect of re-tendering and

agrees to the awarding of this contract based on current Contract arrangements until 31st December 2018. A tender process will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's CPR rules for the issuing of new tenders and the provision of the services in order for a new contract to be in place for 1st January 2019. Appendix 1 of the report provides information on the service type, the contracted provider and the short term value of the Contract. It is also intended that this forms part of a larger contract in the future, however until these arrangements can be put in place a 9 month extension is required to ensure service continuity. The pilot showed that the service would be better placed as part of our larger generic floating support contract. By realigning the two contracts and commissioning as one this will support the corporate priority of "making smarter use of resources", reduce costs and provides for a single point of access to service delivery.

- 4.4 **Supported Temporary Accommodation for Homelessness Persons** - Given the condition of Brynmenyn hostel (highlighted in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 above), i.e. that it does not meet the standards that the Authority would seek to provide to homeless persons in the County Borough, an appraisal is currently being undertaken to look at potential options going forward for the property. These options range from full scale refurbishment, to finding alternative provision, to demolishing and re-providing a purpose built hostel on the existing site. This option appraisal will be undertaken in two phases, the initial will be a long list of options, from which a shortlist of about three options will subsequently be explored in more detail. It is proposed that the initial stage of the option appraisal will be completed by March 2018 and reported to CMB. Following this, it is envisaged that the more detailed report on the refined shortlist of options to determine the proposed course of action will be reported to CMB and Cabinet by July 2018. The potential course of action is envisaged to take approximately 20 months from option decision to completion and it is proposed that the accommodation and support services contract start at the same time.
- 4.5 Supporting People commissioned a 4 year contract which is due to come to an end on the 30th April 2018, with no option to extend further. As detailed above the letting of a contract at this stage prior to this options appraisal could have a constraint on the type of service we would seek to provide in the future. Given the condition of the property, a temporary decant of service and uncertainty in future provision going forward it is difficult to undertake a recommissioning exercise. Therefore, it is proposed that Cabinet suspends the relevant parts of the Council's CPRs in respect of re-tendering the Supported Accommodation for Homeless Persons service and agrees to the awarding of this contract based on current contract arrangements until 30th April 2020, with an option to extend for a further 6 months. This will ensure that option appraisal has been submitted and agreed and there is adequate time to start a commissioning exercise.
- 4.6 Cabinet needs to be aware that by entering into these short-term contracts with the current providers listed in the Appendix 1, the Council is exposed to the risk of potential challenge from other providers of such services. The contract extension required for the Supported Temporary Accommodation for Homelessness Persons contract is 2 years. As in all previous years the funding from Welsh Government is allocated on an annual basis, however to mitigate the risk to the Local Authority a section is included within the General Terms and Conditions of the contract which stipulates that any reductions in grant from Welsh Government can be applied locally.

4.7 There are difficulties in the commissioning of these services due to the unknown future funding of such Contracts under Welsh Government funding Programmes. The proposed length of the Supported Temporary Accommodation for Homelessness Persons contract is relatively short term and has a low value. The risk set out in paragraph 4.6 needs to be weighed against the need to provide a preventative service to prevent homelessness from occurring.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

5.1 This report is requesting a suspension of the Council's CPRs, but no amendment to the CPRs is being sought.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 All services funded via these contract arrangements are funded by Welsh Government Grant. As mentioned earlier, Welsh Government has confirmed funding levels in respect of 2018-2019.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet: –

- Suspend the relevant parts of the Council's CPRs in respect of the requirement to re-tender the contracts listed in Appendix 1 of this report;
- Approves the continuation of service delivery of 3 contracts funded under the Welsh Government Supporting People Programme;
- Authorise the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services to enter into the contracts with the providers listed in Appendix 1 of this report.

Andrew Jolley

Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services

Contact Officer: Jade Wing, Supporting People Strategic and Commissioning Manager

Telephone: (01656) 642486

E-mail: Jade.Wing@Bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Ravens Court

Background documents – None

Appendix 1 Contract details

Supporting People

Service Type	Contracted Provider	Total Contract Value	Contract Length
Prisoner Release Empowerment Programme (9 month)	Wallich	£22,365.36	9 months
Syrian Refugee	The Welsh Refugee Council	£125,480	12 months (the current contract has 8 months left to run)
Brynmenyn	Wallich	£359,984	24 months