

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND LEISURE COMMITTEE		
DATE:	26 NOVEMBER 2013	AGENDA ITEM:	10
TITLE:	CONTRACT EXTENSIONS FOR HOMELESS SERVICES 2014-15		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR RICHARD DAVIES	PORTFOLIO:	HOUSING
SERVICE:	COMMISSIONING	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	BRIGID DAY	TEL:	0118 937 3207
JOB TITLE:	HEAD OF SERVICE, COMMISSIONING AND IMPROVEMENT	E-MAIL:	BRIGID.DAY@READING.GOV.UK

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council commissions a range of services to meet the varying support and care needs of vulnerable residents in Reading. The Council seeks to meet these needs by contracting with high quality providers to deliver value for money services. This report sets out for committee approval a number of contracts to be extended for Housing Services in 2014/15 and beyond.
- 1.2 The contracts listed are all for Homeless Accommodation Services. Further details of each contract are set out in **Appendix 1 - Contract Extensions April 2014**.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal Services, be authorised to extend contracts with providers as set out in Appendix 1, and as described in Paragraph 4 of this report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 In November 2011 Cabinet approved a three-stage 'Homelessness Pathway' approach to supporting homeless people through supported accommodation and into independent living. This reconfiguration of existing provision provided a more structured approach to delivering services - a clear pathway with different levels of support that enable homeless people to rebuild their lives and move on into independent living as soon as they are ready. With 'Access' and 'Move-on' panels coordinating placements into, through and out of provision, the Pathway consists of three main stages:

- 'Stage One' intensive support delivered in a hostel staffed 24 hours.
- 'Stage Two' life skills support, usually in a smaller hostel or shared house.
- 'Stage Three' independent living with support in shared houses, bedsits and flats.

- 3.2 The service redesign increased the level of provision in the Pathway whilst delivering a more effective way of working and better targeted resource delivering circa £215,000 savings per annum.
- 3.3 The Pathway continues to work well, providing increased oversight and coordination. This has enabled the local authority to work more closely with providers to drive up quality of services and to monitor effectiveness.
- 3.4 The programme aligns with the Council's vision for Reading to be "A highly regarded, leading Council; ambitious and focused on what matters most to our communities, delivering value for money and quality". To achieve this, the Council has identified three priorities, one of which is "Value for Money: being efficient, spending carefully and valuing every pound spent on quality services".
- 3.5 The contracts for the services set out in this report and Appendix 1 will enable the Council to continue to deliver good quality, cost effective services during 2014/15.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 **Homeless Accommodation Services - Annual Contracts Value = £1,051,865.91**
Following a review, the services listed in appendix 1 remain essential to maintain our homeless service capacity. It is proposed that following negotiation on price and quality, these contracts are extended for a further three years.
- 4.2 Appendix 1 sets out the details of each contract that Committee is being asked to approve.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 This exercise will contribute to the strategic aim "*To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all*" by ensuring the services we provide to vulnerable residents in Reading meet our quality standards, are monitored carefully, and are positively developed to meet the needs of our clients.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 In addition to the service user forums run by the Council, where overarching service performance and reviews are discussed and fed back to commissioners, many individual service reviews and monitoring, including home care, sheltered housing and supported housing services, have involved their clients. Clients also contribute to the development of the specification for any new service. Officers have started to develop ideas for consultation and implementation during 2013/14 to further involve service users in proactive service monitoring arrangements.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant to this decision. The recommendations in this report relate in the main to the extension or continuation of current services. Where changes to services are to take place these will, or will have been the subject of stakeholder consultation.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Contracts for Homelessness Accommodation Services were entered into by the Council with the providers listed at Appendix A for the period ending the 31st March 2013 and the contracts contain an option clause to extend for a further aggregate of three years, which complies with Contract Procedure Rules 5(1)(k).

8.2 It will be necessary for the Council to enter into Supplemental Agreement with each of the providers listed at Appendix A to record the option to extend.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The financial implications arising from the proposals set out in this report are set out below:-

9.2 Revenue Implications

The report identifies a programme of spend of £1,051,865.91. This is currently funded through the approved Adult Social Care budgets.

9.3 Capital

There are no capital implications arising from these proposals.

9.4 Value for Money (VFM)

Officers seek to ensure value for money through the commissioning process including reviews of services, negotiations with providers, competitive tendering and quality and performance monitoring. It is in this way that many services this year and in the coming year will continue to be maintained, and even improved, but for less money.

9.5 Financial Risks

Providers face challenging economic circumstances and it is important that the Council seeks to work with providers in a way that allows pressures, and opportunities, to be jointly identified and managed. Officers seek to maintain both an overview of the provider market for each service area while also keeping an open door to individual providers to help them sustain and ensure the viability and safety of their services.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Appendix 1 - Contracts extension list

Homeless Accommodation
Services

	Annual value	Description	Base
Ability Housing Association (Shepton House & 72 Southampton Street)	75,238.98		Reading
Bournemouth Churches Housing Association Ltd (Waylen Street)	69,999.99	Waylen Street provides 9 beds to homeless adults with support needs. Waylen Street is in the second stage of the Reading 'Homelessness Pathway' and provides an accommodation based support service to homeless people delivering 'life skills' support. 100% of referrals are from the weekly Access Panel, of which Waylen Street is a member. The service is delivered with a flexible daytime-only staff rota.	Reading
Home Group Ltd (Stonham) (Garner House)	39,599.98	Supported self catering accommodation for single men aged between 18 and 65 years of age, who are ex-offenders or people at risk and who wish to live independently in the community and within the law. The kitchen/diner, bathroom and toilets together with the garden surrounds are all shared communal areas. Staff are available during office hours only and linkwork is carried out on a regular basis with a view to meeting the objectives of both the service and the service user, as agreed on their care and support plan. Garner House provides 7 beds to homeless adults with support needs. Garner House is in the second stage of the Reading 'Homelessness Pathway' and provides an accommodation based support service to homeless people delivering 'life skills' support. 100% of referrals are from the weekly Access Panel of which Garner House is a member. The service is delivered with a daytime only staff rota.	Reading
Launchpad Reading (Supported Housing)	233,675.99	Provide supported housing to single people who have a history of homelessness. Launchpad Reading (formerly Reading Single Homeless Project) is a registered charity that helps some of Reading's most vulnerable and disadvantaged people to turn around their lives and fulfil their potential. Support workers can help with: Tenancy sustainment, finding accommodation, benefits & budgeting, mental health issues, employment, education & training, developing independent living skills, gaining access to other services, developing social skills, social groups & activities.	Reading
The Riverside Group Limited (Hamble Court)	308,604.98	Registered provider of social housing in the UK, providing support and affordable housing to people of all ages and circumstances throughout England.	Reading
The Salvation Army (Willow House)	324,745.98	Willow House is a Salvation Army Housing Association centre managed by The Salvation Army + Social Services. It provides 35 male and 3 female places to people who find themselves without their own accommodation. Of these, 32 places offer half-board accommodation and 6 places are self catering. The maximum permitted duration of stay as set by Supporting People, is for 2 years. The centre is the only 24/7 direct access supported accommodation in Reading that provides meals on a half board basis.	Reading

Total spend	1,051,865.91
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