

OFFICER DELEGATED DECISION REPORT 10 JUNE 2022

Report title: Housing-related support service for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people

Ward: All

Portfolio: Cllr Ben Kind, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Report Authorised by: Fiona Connolly, Strategic Director of Children's Services

Contact for enquiries: Rachel Parry, Commissioning Officer, Supported Housing Commissioning Team, rparry@lambeth.gov.uk, 020 7926 5783

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks permission to waive Contract Standing Order 8.2 to award a contract to Single Homeless Project to provide a housing-related support service for seven unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people (UASYP) with low-level support needs. The service will be provided in a building on Moyers Road, in Leytonstone. A direct award to Single Homeless Project is required to mobilise the service quickly, to urgently meet the needs of the young people, to significantly reduce costs to Children's Social Care, and to ensure Lambeth retains access to the available property, whilst putting the long-term contract out to tender.

FINANCE SUMMARY

This will be a revenue only contract, paid for by the Children's Social Care 18+ Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children budget. The total cost would be £129,322.35, which includes both the support costs and rent charges for Moyers Road, where these young people have no recourse to public funds. The service is anticipated to save Children's Social Care a minimum of £109,216.48 per annum, based on the average costs of accommodating seven unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people in semi-independent living services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To waive clause 8.2 of the Council's Contract Standing Orders to award a contract to Single Homeless Project, for the provision of a housing-related support service for seven unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people in the Moyers Road building, for twelve months with proposed dates from 27 June 2022 to 27 June 2023 at a cost of £129,322.35.

REASONS FOR EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE

The accompanying part II report is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following Paragraphs of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

1. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).

1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Council currently commissions a framework of semi-independent living providers. This accommodation is offered to children looked after and care leavers (including unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people) who are assessed as being entitled to accommodation under Section 20 of The Children Act 1989. Referrals and placements are made by Children's Social Care. This accommodation is spot-purchased as required from a framework of 'preferred providers', though a proportion of placements are made with other providers that are not part of this arrangement. There are usually around 150 young people living in this type of accommodation each night, at a cost of approximately £7,000,000 per year.
- 1.2 In October 2020, a needs assessment for young people requiring housing-related support was successfully completed. This work focussed on four key areas:
 1. Prevention of homelessness/ increased use of foster care and staying put arrangements.
 2. Assessment of needs.
 3. High quality, specialised housing-related support provision.
 4. Successful moves into independent accommodation with appropriate transitional support.
- 1.3 Although the focus of the needs assessment was on all young people requiring housing-related support, specific attention was given to the following sub-groups: Looked After Children, care leavers, children in need, homeless young people, unaccompanied asylum seeking children, young parents, victims of contextual harm (sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour), young people involved in gangs and serious youth violence, young people with mental ill health and those identifying as LGBTQ.
- 1.4 The needs assessment was developed through three main sources: data, consultations, and review of best practice from elsewhere. Data was collated and analysed from databases including Northgate and Hope (Lambeth Council Housing), Mosaic (Lambeth Council Children's and Adult's Social Care), Police, MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference for victims of domestic abuse) and provider's local databases. Consultations were conducted with all relevant stakeholders including young people, providers, Children's Social Care, Housing, Public Health, and the Youth Offending Service. Best practice was reviewed from services and Local Authorities across the United Kingdom.
- 1.5 The needs assessment highlighted significant problems with our current processes and services, to a greater degree than was anticipated. Significantly, within the needs analysis of those unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, it was identified that current provision was not meeting their needs, with specific concerns around the following:
 - Language: many UASYPs are unable to speak English. Current services do not ordinarily employ support workers who speak the same languages as UASYPs, making it difficult for them to communicate.

- Social needs: placing UASYPs who can't speak English with support workers and other young people who can't speak their native language, and who have had very different life experiences to them, can lead to loneliness and isolation.
- Mental health: UASYPs have suffered a large amount of trauma and require specific trauma-informed support to overcome their PTSD. This sort of specialist help is not routinely available in current provision.
- Physical health: some UASYPs have physical health complications as a result of assault, or exposure to disease and infestation on their journey to the UK. Our current provision does not provide the type of specialist physical health support that this client group requires, nor do they have links to specialist services.
- Immigration: UASYPs require support to navigate the complex British immigration system. Current provision does not employ immigration workers and thus are unable to meet this need, whereas specialist organisations either employ immigration specialists directly, or have close connections to organisations that support immigration claims.

1.6 Following the completion of the needs assessment, an options appraisal was presented to the Children's Services Management Team and Resident Services Management Team in December 2020. A direction of travel was approved to embark on a large-scale transformation programme, which will include commissioning specialist housing-related support services for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. The programme commenced in January 2021, with a target date of completion of Spring 2023. Not only will this innovative and trailblazing programme drastically improve outcomes for young people, but it is projected to make significant cost savings.

1.7 The long-term specialist housing-related support services for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people are currently being competitively tendered, with the target date for contract awards being autumn 2022. This short-term twelve-month contract will allow us to mobilise this much needed service quickly, meaning we can meet the urgent need of our unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, as well as mobilising a building that has been secured by Lambeth Council from a registered provider, for the purpose of this contract. This will also give sufficient time for the current tender process to be completed, and for the long-term contract to be awarded and mobilised.

1.8 This new service is in line with the Lambeth Together Programme, Lambeth Made Safer Strategy, Serious Youth Violence Strategy, Children's Social Care's Sufficiency Strategy and Corporate Parenting Board objectives.

2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

2.1. For Lambeth to directly award a twelve-month contract to Single Homeless Project to deliver this much needed housing-related support service for seven unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, alongside considerable savings to the Council (details can be found in section 3, Finance).

2.2. Children's Social Care currently have high numbers unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people accommodated in high-cost semi-independent living placements. We are seeking this one-year direct award contract to enable us to mobilise the building swiftly and to move seven unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people out of their spot purchased high-cost semi-independent living placements into the Moyers Road service, meaning immediate savings to Children's Social Care.

- 2.3. We must furthermore ensure that the Moyers Road building is mobilised quickly to ensure that the landlord and registered provider, London and Quadrant, do not give the building to another organisation.
- 2.4. Our new pathway (detailed in section 1, Context) will seek to reduce Children's Social Care spend and improve outcomes for all young people by providing lower-cost, specialist supported housing placements. As part of this pathway, we are in the final stages of a large-scale competitive tender to place successful bidders onto an approved provider list to deliver housing-related support services for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. Once that is in place we will run a call-off for this building and award a contract of 5 years
- 2.5. We will award the longer-term contract through call off to a provider on our Approved Provider List. However, the Approved Provider List will not be ready for use until Autumn. Therefore, to retain this building and make imminent savings, we propose a direct award.
- 2.6. Single Homeless Project (SHP) have extensive experience in delivering accommodation-based, advice, and floating, support services to young people, care leavers, and refugees across London. They provide Lambeth's refugee resettlement scheme and Lambeth's high-level floating support programme for care leavers, meaning relationships are already established with the Children's Social Care teams are experts at working with complex young people and refugees and will be able to provide a specialist service tailored to the needs of UASYPs and deliver the desired outcomes. SHP work within psychologically informed and trauma-informed principles. Staff use this expertise to understand how young people's past experiences influence their engagement and development of social relationships, and to promote change, recovery and increase resilience.
- 2.7. Other options considered for service provision were:
- Not providing the service at all – This option is not possible, as there is an immediate and urgent need for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people to be placed into lower support, specialist housing-related support provision.
 - Providing the provision in-house – This was considered however was not recommended. The council does not have the infrastructure in place to deliver a housing-related support service notably around staff absences and out of hours cover. Furthermore, this route would be considerably more expensive.
 - Tendering – The current competitive tender is underway for award of this contract for a period of 5 years, with an option to extend for a further 2 years. This twelve-month contract will allow time for that tender process to be completed, and for the new service to be in place, meaning continuity of service.
- 2.8. The building in Moyers Road, Leytonstone has been selected because of the size of the building, and its location in a residential area. Initially, building sourcing was focused on Lambeth specifically. However, because of difficulty sourcing an adequate number of buildings of the appropriate size and residential location, we have expanded our search. In addition, some of our service users are not safe in Lambeth. Therefore, having supported housing outside of Lambeth in addition to within Lambeth enables us to better meet the needs of this client group.
- 2.9. The service is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

- Increased engagement: 1. Within the local community, 2. With positive social networks 3. In accessing education and structured vocational activities 4. With mental health and physical health support.
- Increase in the number of UASYPs who can speak English to a good standard.
- Increase in the number of UASYPs with independent living skills, who can move into independent living swiftly, once their immigration claim is accepted.
- Increase in the number of UASYPs who are supported to secure the right to remain in the UK.
- Increase in the number of UASYPs who integrate into their community.
- Increase in the number of UASYPs supported to access specialist support with their physical health.
- Decrease in the number of UASYPs struggling with their mental health and requiring statutory mental health services.

3. FINANCE

3.1. SHP will provide this service at the cost of £129,322.35 per annum as below.

	Per young person p/w (£)	Per young person p/a (£)	For the 7 units p/a (£)
Total cost	354.33	18,474.62	129,322.35

3.2. Taking the average costs for semi-independent living placements for 7 young people aged over 18, we can estimate that the potential cost reduction would be in the region of £109,216.48 per annum.

	Proposed costings for SHP, Moyers Road (£)	Average cost of 7 UASCs 18+ across Framework and Non-Framework SILs (£)	Estimated saving based on averages (£)
Total for 7 YP p/a (£)	129,322.35	238,538.83	109,216.48
Average for each YP p/a (£)	18,474.62	34,076.98	15,602.36
Total for 7 YP p/w (£)	2480.31	4,574.97	2,094.66
Average for each YP p/w (£)	354.33	653.57	299.24

4. Legal and Democracy

- 4.1 The delegated authority to deal with the matters set out in this report is vested in the Strategic Director for Children's Social Care. Before exercising that authority, this paper should be reviewed by a category board.
- 4.2 The Council's Contract Standing Orders require that procurements with a value in excess of £100,000 should be formally tendered. Where it is proposed to offer a direct award without

formal tender it should be treated as a waiver of the Contract Standing Orders, and this may be authorised by the Director, upon the recommendation of the Procurement Board.

- 4.3 Waivers to the Council’s Contract Standing Orders’ purchasing rules are permitted in certain circumstances, such as where it is demonstrably in the Council’s interests.
- 4.4 Under the Public Contract Regulations 2015, education, training, social, and related services are categorised under Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations and as such are subject to the ‘light touch’ procurement regime. For such contracts, the threshold above which the full application of the regulations apply is £663,540 including VAT. For below threshold contracts, the Council’s duty is to act reasonably and proportionately when evaluating the efficacy of awarding a contract to a particular provider.
- 4.5 The Council’s Constitution requires that all key decisions, decisions which involve resources between the sums of £100,000 and £500,000, and important or sensitive issues, must be published on the Council’s website for five clear days before the decision is approved by the Cabinet Member or Director concerned (Constitution, Part 2, Chapter F). Any representations received during this period must be considered by the decision-maker before the decision is taken.

5. CONSULTATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

- 5.1. This service has been designed as a result of recommendations made in the Needs Assessment: *Young people who require housing-related support*. To inform the Needs Assessment, young people were consulted, including UASCs, in addition to professionals working with this client group such as service providers and the Children’s Social Care practitioners. The Needs Assessment also consulted professionals working in other areas about best practice.
- 5.2. The service specification for the new UASC housing-related support services was informed by consultation with young commissioners with lived experience as UASCs, and professionals working with this client group in Lambeth and other boroughs.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The main risks that impede on the successful delivery of this scheme are outlined below:

Table 2 – Risk Register

Item	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Score	Control Measures
1	Delay to mobilisation	3	4	12	1. Producing mobilisation plan with SHP and L&Q, with buffer periods built in 2. Regular mobilisation meetings with all parties
2	Young people in low-cost placements being referred, meaning anticipated savings are not made	2	4	8	Collaborate with Children’s Social Care to plan who will be moved into the service, to ensure that savings will be made

3	Serious disaster affecting the running of the services e.g. terrorist attack, fire, pandemic	4	8	32	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contractual requirement for provider to have a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in place that is aligned with Lambeth's BCP 2. BCP reviewed by commissioners through the audit process 3. Handling of pandemic section of BCP and individual risk management plans reviewed regularly by commissioners
4	Impact of Brexit on supply chain leading to delays with renovations, property preparation and/or recruitment	3	2	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commissioners continuously review changes brought by Brexit 2. Emergency meetings arranged with relevant statutory bodies and providers where needed 3. Action plans agreed by relevant agencies
5	Provider under-performs and therefore does not deliver the anticipated outcomes	2	2	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarterly contract monitoring meetings held with commissioner 2. Audit of service 3. Improvement plans set and followed up on 4. Three-month notice period enables us to end the contract early if needed
6	Procurement challenge	2	2	4	Explain that to secure the building, we need to mobilise it as quickly as possible through a one-year direct award, and that the longer-term contract will go out to competitive tender after one year

Key

Likelihood	Very Likely = 4	Likely = 3	Unlikely = 2	Very Unlikely = 1
Impact	Major = 8	Serious = 4	Significant = 2	Minor = 1

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) covering the entire transformation programme including this service, was completed in January 2021, and is available as Appendix A. The EIA scored low with regards to negative impacts, and it was anticipated that there would be an overall positive impact for the users of the services.
- 7.2 In our current services there are high numbers of UASCs who speak very little or no English. After English, the most common languages spoken within this group are those native to Eritrea, Albania, and Sudan. This service will have be more culturally appropriate through employing staff who can speak the same languages as UASCs, and who have knowledge about their cultural background, with an emphasis on celebrating cultural holidays.
- 7.3 Additionally, the service will have an emphasis on providing asylum and immigration advice. Therefore, it is anticipated to increase the numbers of UASCs who are granted leave to remain.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 8.1 The service provider will work closely with the Police and Community Safety in both Lambeth and Waltham Forest, and the Lambeth Youth Offending Service, particularly around issues of gangs and threats to residents. As a provider of floating support and other services throughout

London, the provider has built up strong relationships with a range of organisations across different boroughs which aim to keep young people, and the wider community, safe. The provider is also contractually obliged to carry out locality checks to ensure any impact on the local community is quickly identified and appropriately responded to. Any complaints regarding negative impact on local communities are escalated via the contract monitoring officers and commissioners, who work in partnership with appropriate agencies and Waltham Forest.

- 8.2 The provider will work with Lambeth and Waltham Forest to produce a locality management protocol detailing how they will monitor and deal with anti-social behaviour or street activity caused by young people residing in the service and ensuring that they facilitate good neighbourhood relations and deal with neighbourhood complaints.
- 8.3 Following a series of incidents of serious youth violence across the borough and in the supported housing services, work has been underway to ensure multi-agency protocols are in place to minimise and manage risk. We hold two meetings to agree and oversee this work:
- Monthly operational meetings between commissioning and service managers of the supported housing services; and,
 - Bi-monthly strategic meetings with senior managers from commissioning, gangs leads within the Metropolitan Police and the Council's Community Safety, Housing, Children's Social Care, and the supported housing providers.
- 8.3. It is a contractual requirement that the provider's staff must possess an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance and that all staff receive training on the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.

9. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental

- 9.1 The contract includes a section on sustainability, outlining that the provider should:
- Encourage staff and young people to travel using green transport methods.
 - Encourage young people to have sustainable eating habits.
 - Encourage young people to get involved with community growing schemes.
 - Use green energy; ensure the building is a minimum of EPCD; commit to phasing out gas boilers; and commit to retrofit.
 - Provide recycling and food compost facilities.
 - Use second-hand furniture and recycle white goods.
 - Use water butts to capture rainwater.
 - Commit to being net zero by 2030.
 - Commit to reducing single use plastics across all services and offices.
 - Connect young people to green skills and apprenticeships, and green volunteering opportunities.
 - Ensure young people have adequate access to green space and encourage young people to get involved with preserving biodiversity.

Health

- 9.2 The service provider will work with UASYPs to improve their health outcomes, in line with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Key Performance

Indicators (KPIs) will be set to ensure every UASYP is registered with the GP and attending regular dentist check-ups. They will also be monitored to ensure every UASYP engaging in specialist support with mental health, substance misuse and sexual health, where they have identified needs in these areas.

Corporate Parenting

- 9.3 This service is in line with the council's corporate parenting duties and responsibilities to care leavers including UASYP up to the age of 25; where the service will provide housing-related support to UASYP.
- 9.4 This service will enable Lambeth to be a better corporate parent by improving the support that is offered to UASYP, who are classified as care leavers. Through tailoring support to the needs of UASYP, we anticipate improved outcomes, including increased engagement with mental and physical health support; improvement in ability to speak English; increase in independent living skills; and an increase in number of young people securing right to remain in the UK.

Staffing and accommodation

- 9.5 None

Responsible Procurement

Good Quality Jobs with Fair Pay and Decent Working Conditions

- 9.6 The contract specifies for the provider to pay the London Living Wage (LLW) to all staff employed via these contracts.

Quality Apprenticeships, targeted Employment for Lambeth residents and Lambeth Priority Group

- 9.7 The contract specifies for the provider to offer entry-level positions across their organisations.

Reduce Emissions: Lambeth Council has a commitment to being Zero Carbon by 2030

- 9.8 The service specification includes a section on sustainability as outlined above (point 9.1). This includes a requirement for providers to commit to being net zero by 2030, in addition to committing to other emission reduction activity such as reducing single use plastics, using green energy, and phasing out gas boilers.
- 9.9 The service will also encourage young people to adopt sustainable lifestyles, such as eating sustainable foods, accessing green skills opportunities, and getting involved with community growing schemes.

Single Use Plastics

- 9.10 The contract specifies that the provider must commit to reducing single use plastics across all services and offices and must provide recycling and food compost facilities in this service.

Positive Health and Wellbeing

- 9.11 The contract specifies for the provider to sign the London Mayor's Healthy Workplace Charter.

Other Offers (Innovation)

9.12 The provider uses volunteers across their organisations.

10. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Item description	Date
1	Obtain sign-off from key officers	13.05.22
2	Obtain sign-off from Delegated Director	17.05.22
3	Obtain Category Board clearance from Delegated Director	30.05.22
4	Report published online	TBC
5	Decision date	TBC
6	Contract start date	TBC

Audit Trail				
Name and Position/Title	Lambeth Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in paragraph:
Sophie Konradsen, Acting Lead Commissioner: Young People's Supported Housing	Resident Services	26.04.22	06.05.22	7 and 8
Cllr Ben Kind	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	25.05.22	26.05.22	
Fiona Connolly, Strategic Director of Children's Social Care	Children's Services	12.05.22	17.05.22	
Jane Carroll, Director of Children's Social Care	Children's Services	06.05.22	11.05.22	
Mark Sage, Group Manager	Finance and Property	06.05.22	10.05.22	3
David Thomas, Contracts Lawyer	Legal and Governance	06.05.22	09.05.22	4
Marianna Ritchie, Democratic Services	Legal and Governance	06.05.22	12.05.22	
Sasa Glisic, Senior Category Manager: Procurement	Finance and Property	06.05.22	19.05.22	
Kim Kirton, Equalities and Communications	Strategy and Communications	06.05.22	13.05.22	

Report History	
Original discussion with Cabinet Member	25.05.22
Report deadline	26.05.22
Date final report sent	25.05.22
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	No
Date first appeared on forward plan	N/A
Key decision reasons	N/A
Background information	The Children Act 1989
Appendices	Appendix A – Needs assessment Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

APPROVAL BY CABINET MEMBER OR OFFICER IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHEME OF DELEGATION

I confirm I have consulted Finance, Legal, Democratic Services and the Procurement Board, and taken account of their advice and comments in completing the report for approval:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Post: Rachel Parry, Commissioning Officer

I approve the above recommendations:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Post: Fiona Connolly, Strategic Director, Children's Social Care

Any declarations of interest (or exemptions granted): none

Any conflicts of interest: none

Any dispensations: none