

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2020/2021 REPORT NO.

London Borough of Enfield

Operational Decision

Operational Decision by:

Bindi Nagra
**Director of Health and Adult Social
Care**

Report of: **Doug Wilson**
Head of Strategy, Service Development & Resources

Subject: Young Persons supported accommodation
pathway contract extension
Cabinet Member: Councillor Cazimoglu & Councillor Jewell
Executive Director: Tony Theodoulou

Key Decision: 5258

Purpose of Report

2. To request an extension of the current Young Persons Supported Accommodation pathway contract for a further two years.

Proposal(s)

3. That the current contract is extended for a further two years from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2023, in line with the legal provisions within the current contract; subject to small variations in service delivery.

Reason for Proposal(s)

4. On the 1st April 2021 the current contract will reach the end of the first three year period and subject to review of performance the current contract with Christian Action Housing has the option to extend for two periods of a further two years.

Relevance to the Council Plan

5. Under Priority 1 – Good homes in well-connected neighbourhood, the Council Plan states, 'We want to create a place where anyone born in the borough has a home to grow up in'. These supported accommodation

schemes provide that opportunity for our young people, who for whatever reason can no longer remain with their families

Background

6. Currently the Young Persons supported accommodation pathway is funded through the Housing Related Support budget.
7. The current contract was awarded after an open tender. The contract was broken into lots but after a competitive process Lot 1 - 'provision of support and accommodation' was won by Christian Action Housing with a combined quality (60%) and price (40%) score of 98.2%. The contract is for 103 units of accommodation at a cost per annum of £ 647,000.
- 8 This pathway includes:
 - a 16-17 year old service with crash pad to allow for the FAST Team intervention services to operate.
 - a higher support unit 18-24
 - A foyer service 18-24
 - Step-down dispersed housing 18-24
- 9 Contract award was agreed by Executive Director of People Services and the contract commenced 2nd April 2018. The contract was awarded for an initial period of three years with an option to extend for two periods of a further two years each.
- 10 In the three years that the contract has been running Christian Action has:
 - achieved Foyer Federation Accreditation - a nationally recognised scheme for providers of Young People services <https://www.foyer.net/>
 - successfully moved 61 young people into independent living and
 - currently successfully support 84% of their cohort into Employment, Education or Training.
- 11 The contract was varied in 2019 to include the Young Person's Mental Health Support Scheme when St Mungo's withdrew from that contract (Lot 2) and from all services throughout the borough. The cost of the Young Persons Mental Health scheme is £129,617 per annum. The contract variation was written to align with the ending and extension options of the existing Christian Action contract. Referral into the scheme is via the FAST or CAMHS service.
- 12 The only positive concern with the current contract is the success of the FAST team in delivering interventions for 16-17year-olds at Teresa House. This resulted in a void situation arising, therefore, under-utilisation of the block contract. Temporary arrangements have been tried e.g. placing unaccompanied asylum- seeking children (UASC) into the service. However, longer term this is not sustainable as UASC do not seem to require the hours and high levels of support delivered at this unit.

- 13 Going forward the proposal is to extend all current contract arrangements and, having reviewed use of Teresa House, to amend its tenancy criteria to maximise service delivery at this location:
- 14 These amendments include:
- Extend the upper age at Teresa House from 18th Birthday to 19th Birthday.
 - Provide a first steps option for 16-17 years old Looked After Children currently with foster parents but seeking to live independently.
 - To meet the increased demand for a Looked After Children, young mothers to be and baby-mother support scheme.

Main Considerations for the Council

- 15 It provides over 108 units of accommodation for vulnerable young people providing them with support and life skills so that they can make a safe transition into adulthood.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

- 16 The changes proposed to this contract positively impact upon a protected category of pregnant women; by providing some units of accommodation for young mothers or mothers to be who have also been looked after children.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

- 17 That there will be a gap in service to vulnerable young people and an increase in homelessness.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

- 18 None identified

Financial Implications

- 19 The cost extension of the current Young Persons Supported Accommodation pathway contract for a further two years is £776,617 per annum (provision of support and accommodation by Christian Action Housing £647,000 and the Young Person's Mental Health Support Scheme £129,617). This is the same as now and therefore no change in the spend and budget for Housing Related Support.

Legal Implications

- 20 Section 10 of the Children's Act 2004 requires local authorities to promote co-operation and make arrangements with third parties to improve the

safeguarding and well-being of children in that authority's area relating to, amongst other things, their physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

Section 17(1) of the Children Act 1989 places a general duty on local authorities (a) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and (b) so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.

Additionally, section 20(3) of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on local authorities to provide accommodation for children in need aged 16 or over whose welfare is likely to be seriously prejudiced if the local authority does not provide such accommodation. A local authority has a general duty to take steps to secure accommodation in its area as far as reasonably practicable for looked after children including certain duties for children who have left the care of a local authority.

The Housing Act 1996, Part 7 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) places a responsibility on local authorities to assist those who are within the priority category of need which includes 16-17 year olds, care leavers aged 18, 19 and 20, and those who are categorised as vulnerable because they have fled their home due to violence.

- 20.1 As flagged elsewhere in this Report, the contract terms permit extension of two further periods of two years each beyond April 2021. The relevant provisions of the contract do go on to say that any such extension must be subject to a Service Review and the Council's assessment of the provider's performance in ongoing delivery of the Services as being satisfactory (which from the detail of this Report appears to be the case).
- 20.2. Officers must be comfortable that the 'small variations' being proposed are lawful modifications under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and are not material changes which would otherwise open the Council to procurement risk.
- 20.3. The documentation evidencing the extension and any accompanying variations must be in a form approved by Legal Services on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance.

Other Implications – None

Options Considered

- 21 Retendering the service was considered, however based on the quality and extent of responses received three years ago in the initial tender

and the fact the housing market remains under pressure it was felt that tendering at this time would not yield additional benefits for the Council.

Conclusions

22 That approval is given to extend, subject to the variations listed above, the current contract with Christian Action Housing for a further two years.

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Date of report

Appendices – None

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:
None