

To: Executive
15 March 2022

BFC Approval of the Strategic Procurement Plan for Domestic Abuse Refuge & Outreach Services

Director of People Services

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Executive approval of the attached Strategic Procurement Plan (SPP) for procurement of Domestic Abuse Refuge and Outreach Services. The new contract will begin on the 1st of September 2022 with a proposed total contractual term of up to 7 years, starting with an initial period of three years and four further years of optional extension equating to 3 + 2 + 2 years. The SPP will be presented to Executive on the 15th of March 2022 in line with the EWP.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Executive approve the Council's plan for procuring Domestic Abuse Refuge and Outreach Services under the "Social and other Specific Provisions" of the Public Contracts Regulations (also known as the "Light Touch Regime") as detailed in the Strategic Procurement Plan.

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The procurement of the Domestic Abuse Refuge and Outreach Service Contract supports the delivery of our Statutory Duties: Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Children's Act 2004, Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 3.2 The proposed procurement of this service through a single stage tender will help maximise tender opportunities that will generate value for money and high-quality Domestic Abuse Refuge and Outreach provision. Tendering for a single provider / lead provider which will further enable consistent and efficient contract management arrangements.
- 3.3 The COVID-19 pandemic has put additional demand on domestic abuse service providers both nationally and locally. During 2020/2021, there was an increase in Domestic Abuse incidents reported to police in Bracknell Forest. The re-tendering of this contract enables domestic abuse victims and their children to continue to access refuge and outreach services.
- 3.4 To be compliant with Public Contract Regulations 2015 and BFC's Contract Standing Orders, and for timely completion of the tender, award, and mobilisation phases in time for the contract to commence in September 2022.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 **Do nothing:** current contractual obligation will lapse, there would be no adequate provision to meet our statutory duties and domestic abuse victims and their children's access to refuge and outreach services would be reduced.

- 4.2 **Extending:** Continually extending the current contractual arrangement will need to be permitted through waivers. The current contract for this service has already been extended twice by waiver. Use of further waivers is not advisable as it does not provide stability for BFC or the provider.
- 4.3 **Spot purchasing without a contractual arrangement:** Best value for money is unlikely to be achieved. Spot purchasing would not attract the same speed of response to referrals made under contract.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 Key findings of the analysis of usage of existing provision are detailed in the Strategic Procurement plan

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

6.1 Legal Advice

Legal comments are as set out in the Strategic Procurement Plan.

6.2 Financial Advice

Finance has been consulted and reviewed and are in agreement with assumption made in document.

6.3 Other Consultation Responses

Procurement

Procurement considerations contained within the Strategic Procurement Plan.

6.4 Equalities Impact Assessment

An initial impact assessment screening has been completed. This identified that a Full Equality Impact assessment was not required.

6.5 Health and Wellbeing Impact

Domestic Abuse is a key determinant of public health and a priority for the Local Authority to ensure that victims are appropriately supported. Refuge provision helps victims of domestic abuse to break the cycle by finding safe accommodation.

6.5 Strategic Risk Management Issues

None identified

Background Papers

Strategic Procurement Plan – Domestic Abuse Refuge & Outreach Services 2022

Contact for further information

Amy Jones, Head of Strategic Commissioning - 01344 351684

Amy.Jones@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Thom Wilson, Assistant Director Commissioning – 01344 354142

Thom.Wilson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Sarah Gee, Assistant Director Early Help & Communities – 01344 351447

Sarah.Gee@bracknell-forest.gov.uk