

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 08 February 2023

Subject of Report: Commissioning Plan for North Somerset Pathways to Adulthood Service

Town or Parish: All

Members Presenting: Councillor Mike Bell (Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing) and Councillor Catherine Gibbons (Executive Member for Children, Young People, Lifelong Learning and Skills)

Key Decision: Yes

Reason: Above £500,000

Recommendations

To approve this Commissioning Plan to proceed to tender for the Pathways to Adulthood Service.

1. Summary of Report

The service delivered at Pizey Avenue provides a Pathways to Adulthood Service and overnight respite to young adults aged 14-25 years with complex needs, which is a much-needed resource utilised by both Adults and Children's Directorate. The current service is delivered by provider Brandon Trust which will end on the 31 March 2024.

2. Policy

The commissioning of the Pathways to Adulthood service will support the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-24 in its ambitions to:

- A commitment to protect the most vulnerable in our communities.
- An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives.
- A collaborative way of working with partners and families to support children achieve their full potential

The commissioning of the Pathways to Adulthood service will support Children's Services Annual Directorate Statement 2022-23 in its ambition to:

- Seek regular feedback from children and families and use this to inform practice improvements.

- Commission a variety of placements to meet the needs of children and young people.
- Ensure all children and young people have meaningful transitions to post-16.

The commissioning of the Pathways to Adulthood service will support the Adults Services Annual Directorate Statement 2022/23 in its ambitions to:

- Ensures we are a Council that empowers and cares about people.
- To ensure we are an open and enabling organisation
- Creating opportunities for people to have fulfilling activities during the day that meets their care needs and improves their wellbeing.

3. Details

Introduction

The current Pathway to Adulthood Service contract is held by Brandon Trust Ltd. The current contract term is due to end on 31 March 2024.

The service meets the needs of young people between the ages of 14 and 25 with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) to access short breaks and reach their optimum independence. The service focuses the provider on delivering outcomes which support individuals towards their independence and improve the readiness for transition into the most appropriate and cost-effective forms of support as adults. It reduces the reliance on long term residential care or similar placements and allows individuals to remain with families for longer.

This is the only service that provides dedicated respite and pathways to independence in the North Somerset area. It is of critical importance to the young people who attend and their families, and the delivery of statutory functions to young people and their families.

If the tender process results in a change of provider there will potentially be TUPE transfers from the current provider.

Contract Structure

- The estimated contract value for the life of the contract is £3.5m. The term of the proposed contract is 4 years with an option to extend for a further 3 years in any year increment as determined appropriate.
- The initial term of the contract will be for 48 months.
- There will be an extension period of up to a further 36 months.
- There is a 6-month termination period without cause in the contract.
- The new contract will need to include a mechanism for an uplift in line with other Council contracts.
- The estimated contract value per year is £500k

Outline timeline

- A detailed Procurement Plan will be produced for sign off by the Executive Members by 30th April 2023

- The preparation of the specification and ITT documents will be completed by the end of May 2023
- The opportunity will be advertised on the council's e-Tendering Portal during June 2023
- The successful supplier will be notified in October 2023.
- The new service will start on the 01 April 2024

4. Consultation

Current users of the Pathways to Adulthood Service and other stakeholders, both internal and external, have expressed their views on the service and that they wish for it to continue in the future. All interested parties will be consulted prior to any tender process in order to ensure their views help to inform the Procurement Plan, tender documents and subsequent new service.

ASH Panel and CYPS have been consulted.

5. Financial Implications

Costs

The current costs of the block funding arrangement are currently £498,606 which includes an element of enabling hours per annum. We would expect the re-commission to be within the same amount.

Funding

This £498,606 cost can be fully met from existing Children's and Adults' revenue budgets.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

Section 5 of the Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to help shape the market for services within their area, what this means is that local authorities must ensure steps are taken so that there is a sufficient supply of short breaks to meet local need as disabled young people transition to adulthood.

The provision of suitable respite care services remains a statutory requirement under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, although the type of support is not specified. The Children and Families Act 2014 and Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to ensure access to more personalised care services.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

A thorough Climate Emergency Risk Register will be completed by the Procurement Team, the results of which will be detailed in the Procurement Plan and built into the tender process to ensure that any implications are monitored and mitigated throughout the procurement process and subsequent contract management.

8. Risk Management

A thorough general risk assessment (including commercial, market and internal risks) will be completed by the Procurement Team, the results of which will be detailed in the

Procurement Plan and will be monitored and mitigated throughout the procurement process and subsequent contract management.

A comprehensive contract management plan will be put in place following contract award.

9. Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment? Yes

10. Corporate Implications

None identified

11. Options Considered

Do not provide a Pathway to Adulthood Service

The provision of respite care is a statutory responsibility and therefore the service needs to be commissioned in some form or other. This service is used to support children and young people with the most complex needs, for whom family life can be extremely fragile. A failure to provide adequate respite care could result in family break down, with the Council being required to bring the child into care of the Local Authority.

The Procurement Plan will detail how the newly commissioned service will look following consultation and agreement with stakeholders.

Extend the current contract

The current contract extension comes to an end on 31st March 2024 and, in line with Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and Contract Standing Orders, cannot be extended any further.

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Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

The current contract and specification are available on request.