

Report

Cabinet Member for Social Services

Part 1

Date: 29 October 2021

Subject **Housing Support Grant Programme**

Purpose To seek the Cabinet Member's approval to waive Contract Standing Orders to extend seven Housing Support Grant funded contracts for up to a maximum period of two years for current (floating support) contracts that are due to expire on 31 March 2022).

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Ward All

Summary This report proposes that the contracts named below are extended for up to a maximum period of two years ie four contracts for one year until 31 March 2023 and three contracts for two years until 31 March 2024. This extension is outside of the contract terms and is not in compliance with Contract Standing Orders but will allow the Council adequate time to implement a remodel and recommissioning of floating support services funded by the Housing Support Programme in Newport by 1 April 2024.

Proposal **To approve the waiving of Contract Standing Orders to extend seven Housing Support Grant Programme funded contracts (as detailed below) for up to a maximum of two years to allow for the review and recommissioning processes of Housing Support Grant floating support services; this will consolidate some services reducing the total number of contracts thereby improving capacity, effectiveness, resilience and efficiency**

Action by Head of Adult and Community Services

Timetable To be in place by 1 April 2022

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Strategic Director - People
- Head of Law and Regulation – Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance – Chief Finance Officer
- Head of Adult and Community Services
- Housing Support Grant Planning Group
- Category Manager – Finance
- Cabinet Member – Social Services

Signed

Background

There are seven fixed term contracts, funded via the Welsh Government's Housing Support Grant (HSG) Programme, due to end on 31 March 2022 (all of these are for floating housing support services and are listed in Table 1, below). By extending these contracts by the period listed in the table, it would allow the Supporting People Team (SPT) time to review, remodel and recommission all HSG floating support services, of which there are 21 in total (listed in Table 2a, below) plus 8 pilots schemes developed using the additional £2.05 million HSG funding received from WG this year (listed in Table 2b, below). The outcome of this process will achieve:

- A streamlined set of support services grouped to recognise service and service user type delivered by support providers with relevant knowledge and experience.
- A smaller number of contracts where contract value and contract duration will encourage on going investment (including in staff) from the support provider.
- Fewer but focused contracts to ensure additional resilience and build capacity within the SPT to manage the contract and partnership arrangements effectively to ensure services comply with contractual and operational requirements.

A realistic and detailed project work plan will be produced to deliver the review, remodel and recommissioning project which will take account of capacity, risk, operational and implementation factors. The outline detail for the floating support services and time frame is shown in Table 3, below.

Table 1 – proposed HSG contracts to be extended

Service	Activity	Support Provider	Contract Start Date	Contract Value (annual)	Proposed Contract End Date
Renoir ASC	Housing support for people with developmental conditions	Pobl Group	16 Sept 2015	£235k	31 Mar 2023 <i>ie 1 year extension</i>
Memory Loss	Housing support for people with memory loss and dementia	Pobl Group	12 Oct 2015	£73.9k	31 Mar 2023 <i>ie 1 year extension</i>
Rough Sleeper service	Rough Sleeper & Outreach support	Eden Gate	1 Apr 2018	£80.4k	31 Mar 2023 <i>ie 1 year extension</i>
European Economic Area	Housing support for people from European Economic Area	Newport Mind	9 Jan 2019	£86k	31 Mar 2023 <i>ie 1 year extension</i>
VALUE OF CONTRACTS TO BE EXTENDED BY 1 YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2023 (annual)				£0.47m	
Family Intervention and Prevention	Housing support for families with children / families with complex needs	Pobl Group	1 Apr 2018	£81.1k	31 Mar 2024 <i>ie 2 year extension</i>
Lighthouse Project	Generic housing support; this contract also includes support for people with physical disabilities/impairments and resettlement support for people moving out of HSG funded hostel provision	Pobl Group	1 Apr 2015	£491.9	31 Mar 2024 <i>ie 2 year extension</i>
Lighthouse Project	Generic housing support; this contract also includes support for refugees, hospital in-patients and for people with sensory impairment	Taff Housing	1 Apr 2015	£550.9	31 Mar 2024 <i>ie 2 year extension</i>
VALUE OF CONTRACTS TO BE EXTENDED BY 2 YEARS TO 31 MARCH 2024 (annual)				£1.12m	
TOTAL VALUE OF EXTENDED CONTRACTS (annual)				£1.59m	

A draft service delivery model design for floating support was developed with a view to presenting a completed proposal at a future meeting of the Housing Support Grant Planning Group / Adult Board. The general direction of the service delivery model design was to recommission all floating support services reducing the number of separate services from 21 to 10, with services grouped more effectively to reflect support type and user needs, and with new contract service specifications within each contract to reflect this.

The SPT's development of a work programme to review, remodel and recommission the HSG funded floating support services and subsequent presentation of this proposal has been delayed for two main reasons:

- Additional work and temporary change of SPT focus as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic; and
- Planning, developing and implementation of new / remodelled services to allocate the additional £2.05m in HSG awarded to Newport as of 1 April 2021.

Extending the contracts (as detailed in Table 1) to tie in with the phased remodelling plan will allow the SPT to fully develop a work plan to implement the remodel of floating support services.

The tables below (Table 2a & Table 2b below) show all current floating support services funded by HSG as at August 2021.

- The total contract value (including 2021/2022 pilots) is £4.49m.
- **The contract value of those that are due to expire (Table 2a - blue cells) on 31 March 2022 is £1.59m.**
- The pilot schemes that were developed using the additional HSG awarded to Newport are shown in Table 2b – pink cells. Recommendations on whether these should continue once the initial pilot period has ended will be made, based on performance, need and availability of on-going HSG funding.

These HSG funded services support service users with a wide range of needs in addition to housing-related support. The proposed remodel (detailed in Table 3 below) will group these services into a maximum of 10 contracts, with each group reflecting support type and user needs more effectively. The timeframe specified in Table 3 has also considered current contract type/duration, risks and realistic implementation for the SPT.

Table 2a –current floating support services (2021/2022)

Service	Support Provider	Contract Value (annual)	Contract End Date
Verified Rough Sleeper	The Wallich	£328.6k	31.03.23
Street Homeless Outreach	The Wallich	£76.8k	31.03.23
Street Homeless Drop-in / Outreach	Eden Gate	£80.4k	31.03.22
Renoir (developmental disorders)	Pobl	£235k	31.03.22
Memory Loss	Pobl	£73.9k	31.03.22
Older Persons	Pobl Care & Repair	£68.8k	n/a
Lighthouse 55+	Age Cymru Gwent	£249.8k	31.03.24
European Migrants	Newport Mind	£86k	31.03.22
Lighthouse Main	Pobl	£491.9k	31.03.22
Lighthouse Main (inc sensory) (inc hospital & refugee services)	Taff	£550.9	31.03.22
Ffynnon (substance/offenders)	Pobl	£398.7k	n/a
PREP (prison leavers)	The Wallich	£72.9k	n/a
Hospital to Home (mental health)	Platform	£41.6k	n/a
LIFT (young homeless)	Llamau	£326k	n/a
Mental health floating support	Newport Mind	£316.6k	n/a
Mediation (young homeless)	Llamau	£74k	n/a
FIPP (families)	Pobl	£81.1k	31.03.22
Domestic Abuse	Llamau	£238.6k	31.03.24
Newid (low level generic)	Pobl	£471k	n/a

Table 2b - Pilot Schemes (2021/2022)

Service	Support Provider	Contract Value (annual)	Contract End Date
Refugee Support	The Gap	£17.6k	31.03.22
Male to Male Support Dads Can	Mon Housing	£25.5k	31.03.22
Assessment & Support NCC Preventions	Newport Mind	£32.8k	31.03.22
Assessment & Support CMHT	Platform	£41.6k	22.08.22
Assessment & Support NCC Early Years m	Llamau	£30.4k	31.03.22
Vulnerable Women Maindee Parade	Cyfannol	£30.7k	31.03.22
Assessment & Support ED The Grange	Newport Mind	£31.2k	31.03.22
Assessment & Support GSSMS	Pobl	£24.9k	31.03.22

Table 3 - Proposed floating support remodel (inc timeframe):

<p>Year 1 / 1</p> <p>Rough Sleeper/homeless/street-based lifestyle</p> <p>VRS (2023) Outreach (2023) Eden Gate (2022)</p> <p>Project start - Jan 2022 Contract start April 2023</p> <p>£485k</p>	<p>Year 1 / 2</p> <p>Generic (incl physical /sensory/hospital)</p> <p>Renoir (2022) Lighthouse Hospital (2022) Memory loss (2022) Care and repair (on-going)</p> <p>Project start - April 2022 Contract start April 2023</p> <p>£415k</p>	<p>Year 1 / 3</p> <p>Migrants & Refugees</p> <p>GAP Refuge (2022) Lighthouse Refugee (2022) EEA (2022)</p> <p>Project start – June 2022 Contract start April 2023</p> <p>£254k</p>	
<p>Year 2 / 4</p> <p>Generic</p> <p>Pobl Lighthouse (2022)</p> <p>Project start - Jan 2023 Contract start April 2024</p> <p>£491k</p>	<p>Year 2 / 5</p> <p>Generic</p> <p>Taff Lighthouse Gen (2022) ACG 55+ (2024)</p> <p>Project start - Jan 2023 Contract start April 2024</p> <p>£612k</p>	<p>Year 2 / 6</p> <p>Young people & families</p> <p>Dads Can (2022) Preventions (2022) LIFT ongoing Early years (2022) Mediation (on-going) FIPP (2022)</p> <p>Project start – April 2023 Contract start April 2024</p> <p>£570k</p>	
<p>Year 3 / 7</p> <p>DA / VAWDA SV</p> <p>DAFS (2024+3) Maindee Parade (2022)</p> <p>Project start – tbc Contract start +April 2024</p> <p>£269k</p>	<p>Year 3 / 8</p> <p>Generic (low level inc learning diff)</p> <p>Newid (on-going)</p> <p>Project start – tbc Contract start +April 2024</p> <p>£471k</p>	<p>Year 3 / 9</p> <p>Offending / Substance Misuse</p> <p>GSSMS Pilot (2022) ED Pilot (2022) Ffynnon (on-going) PREP (on-going)</p> <p>Project start – tbc Contract start +April 2024</p> <p>£527k</p>	<p>Year 3 / 10</p> <p>Mental Health</p> <p>H2H (on-going) Mind t/s (on-going) CMHT Pilot (2022)</p> <p>Project start – tbc Contract start +April 2024</p> <p>£399k</p>

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

The HSG funding relevant to this proposal is are detailed in Table 1. In summary:

- The total contract values of contracts requiring a one-year extension is £0.47 million.
- The total contract values of contracts requiring a two-year extension is £1.12 million.
- The total value of all contract requiring an extension is £1.59 million.

All costs above will be met through the Housing Support Grant Programme; this funding is on-going grant via the Welsh Government. There is no cost to the Council's core budget.

Risks of not extending the HSG contracts (as detailed in Table 1)

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	Risk Mitigation Action(s)	Risk Owner
Inability of SPT to recommission all services within the timeframe –	High – The Authority would then need to complete evaluation followed by a full tender process for all 7 services.	Medium/Low The support providers have indicated they wish to continue with the contracts for up to a period of a further two years.	Maintain an active dialogue with support providers and commence negotiations regarding services as soon as possible. Re-model of floating support services to be planned and implemented on a phased basis to mitigate risk and allow SPT to develop a workplan	NCC SPT
Services ending without adequate or alternative provision in place	High – Access to support could be reduced to vulnerable people	Medium/Low	Maintain an active dialogue with support providers and commence negotiations regarding services as soon as possible.	NCC SPT
Services operating outside of an agreement	High -	Medium/Low	Issue short-term agreements to ensure specification/financial etc measures are in place	NCC SPT
Missed opportunity to streamline/consolidate all existing contracts	Medium -	Medium/Low	To undertake as proposed within this document.	NCC SPT
Lack of direction for the recommissioning and procurement processes leading to new / effective service delivery model not being achieved	High	High	Close working continues with support providers concerned and Procurement Team and relevant support provided where necessary.	NCC SPT
Non-compliance with the performance requirements of WG, resulting in funding being cut	High	High	Work with support providers to ensure delivery is agreed and starts from 1 April 2024.	NCC SPT
Reduction in HSG budgets now and in the future, resulting in reduced services available to people at risk of homelessness within in the city	High	Medium	Liaison with other stakeholders (within and outside of the Council) to ensure capacity of SPT is focussed on new developments to address risk.	NCC SPT

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

The Housing Support Grant Programme budget for Newport totals £8.5m received as a grant directly from Welsh Government. The HSG programme supports a number of the Council's policies and priorities including:

- Homelessness Strategy and Delivery Plan – prevention of homelessness through commissioned housing support services;
- Rough Sleepers Strategy – support services for rough sleepers and Rough Sleepers Co-ordinator;
- NCC Corporate Plan 2017-2022 - contributes, with partners, to two of Newport City Council's four Well-being Objectives/Goals, namely Objective 3 'To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient' and Objective 4 'To build cohesive and sustainable communities';
- NCC Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledge – provision of safe and secure accommodation and support for care leavers;
- Newport Well-Being Plan 2018-2023. The floating support services support two of the four wellbeing objectives of the plan, namely "We want people and communities that are friendly, confident and able to improve their wellbeing" and "We want Newport to have healthy, safe environments for people to enjoy";
- Strategic Equalities Delivery Plan – commissioned services for hard to reach, marginalised groups and domestic abuse provision.

Options Available and considered

Option 1 - The Cabinet Member decision not to waive Contract Standing Orders for the above contracts which would mean that these services would end placing unmanageable demand on remaining services and other stakeholder / statutory services. As the current contracts for Housing Support Grant are due to expire on 31 March 2022, the SPT does not have the capacity or the relevant information to recommission all seven services for 1 April 2022. This would also damage plans for the remodel of all floating support service provision in Newport.

Option 2 – Cabinet Member decision to waive Contract Standing Orders to extend the relevant contracts as follows:

- Extension for a period of 1 year, until 31 March 2023 – Renoir ASC, Memory Loss, Rough Sleeper service, European Economic Area.
- Extension for a period of 2 year, until 31 March 2024 – Family Intervention and Prevention, Lighthouse Project (Pobl) and Lighthouse(Project (Taff)).

During this extended period a full recommissioning and procurement process will be undertaken so that new projects will be in place from as detailed on the table above (Proposed Floating Support Remodel).

Preferred Option and Why

The **preferred option** is for Option 2 ie for the Local Authority to seek a Cabinet Member decision to waive Contract Standing Orders to extend the relevant contracts for a period of one year until 31 March 2023 (for Renoir ASC, Memory Loss, Rough Sleeper service, European Economic Area) and for a period of two years until 31 March 2024 (for Family Intervention and Prevention, Lighthouse Project (Pobl) and Lighthouse(Project (Taff)).

During this extended period the SPT will develop a realistic team work plan (based on the information contained in the table above – Proposed Floating Support Remodel).

Note – in its latest HSG guidance (updated March 2021) the Welsh Government encourages a person-centred and outcome approach to commissioning and contracting with longer term contract periods with a varied approach to contract drafting to support co-production and delivery of services. The guidance also suggests that "careful consideration should also be given to the contract length when procuring services, recognising the need for flexibility in contract lengths to deliver sustainable services whilst balancing value for money. Consideration should also be given to the importance of contract lengths

creating a stable environment to recruit and retain staff and to give certainty and consistency to people who use services.”

Comments from Procurement Category Manager:

The contracts for Renoir ASC, Memory Loss and the Lighthouse Project were all procurements awarded using the Public Procurement Regulations 2006 as Part B Services where no contract value was given and therefore a further extension of these contracts outside of the initial contract period would not contravene the regulations by not inviting competitive tenders.

The contracts for the Family Intervention and Prevention, Rough Sleeper Service and European Economic Area were all direct awards to local organisations who are experts in delivering these services as excepted contracts in accordance with CSOs. The value of these services for the initial contract period and for the requested extension are below the OJEU ‘Light Touch Regime for Social and other specific services (Regulation 74) threshold of £663K respectively and again there is no legal requirement to invite competitive tenders.

As current contracts for these Housing Support Grant services are due to expire on 31 March 2022, the Local Authority has to seek a Cabinet Member decision to waive Contract Standing Orders to extend.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There is no direct financial implication to core budgets as the contracts detailed within this report are grant funded. Any reductions in grant allocations would result in reductions to the providers. This of course would result in an operational risk and could indirectly cause cost increases in other areas of the council i.e. homelessness.

Waiver of CSO’s to extend contracts is allowed under section 25 and the values shown are under the threshold which would otherwise not allow this to happen. Therefore, procurement rules, both Council and UK are satisfied.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. The Cabinet Member is able to authorise the waiving of Contract Standing Orders, provided that this does not contravene any statutory requirements in relation to the tendering of public contracts, and he is satisfied that the proposed award of these contracts represents value for money. The Public Contracts Regulations 2005 were amended in 2015, to remove the previous distinction between Part A and Part B services. These types of services that are funded through Housing Support Grant would now be covered by the “light touch” tendering regime, but only where they exceed the relevant financial threshold of £663k. In these cases, the individual contracts are below this procurement threshold and, therefore, there is no statutory requirement for them to be re-tendered. Therefore, it is open to the Cabinet Member to agree to waive the requirement in CSO’s to re-tender these contracts and agree to them being extended for a further 1 or 2 years, as appropriate. The reasons for waiving this requirement are set out in the report and the extension of the current contract arrangements will facilitate a comprehensive review of the way in which these services are procured and delivered in future, to deliver improved services and a more efficient use of the grant funding. The effect of this waiver is to allow a direct award of the existing contracts on the current terms for a further agreed period, as there is no provision within the existing contracts to allow for a further extension of time.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The report seeks approval to waive contract standing orders for the Housing Support Grant Programme, pending a full review following an increase in funding and changes to guidance. This will maintain stability during this challenging time and also allow for capacity to be developed in order to deliver a more fit for purpose provision in the future. There are no HR implications in extending the current contracts.

Scrutiny Committees

Not applicable.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

• Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

- Long term: The extension of these contracts will support many vulnerable citizens to avoid becoming engaged with statutory services thus preventing long term needs escalating.
- Prevention: The Housing Support Grant Programme is a prevention and early intervention programme, especially in the prevention of homelessness and preventing the move to more expensive, less independent, statutory provision
- Integration: all of the services are commissioned and provided by the Housing Support Grant Programme are following an assessment of individual need delivered in partnership with APB, ABUHB, Public Health Board, Adult and Community Services, Children and Family Services, Housing, OPCC and voluntary sector etc.
- Collaboration: Housing Support Grant Programme, the NCC team and commissioned services work collaboratively to ensure services are available, delivered and flexible to meet the needs of Newport citizens. The Programme works collaboratively across a number of service areas and teams within the Council and with external partners and stakeholders. Collaboration extends into the evaluation, reconfiguration and recommissioning of services as required. Since the start of the Programme in 2003 the SPTs in Gwent have worked collaboratively on a range of initiatives.
- Involvement: Housing Support Grant Programme holds regular engagement / consultations events with stakeholders, partners and service users in order to influence and inform the strategic planning of new services and the evaluation of specific services. Service users are invited to participate in their support service (what support is needed and how it is delivered) through the Outcomes Framework of which are recorded bi-annually. In addition a regional service user website has been developed to provide direct information and support for people in receipt of services; this is also a forum for service users to share their feedback / comments and participate in interactive events eg surveys etc.

• Equality Act 2010

The Housing Support Grant Programme is mindful of the protective characteristics included within the Equality Act 2010 and reports to the Welsh Government to ensure representation and equitable distribution of available resources amongst eligible vulnerable groups / citizens.

• Socio-economic Duty

The objectives of the Housing Support Grant Programme focus on delivering services which support those people who are the most socially-economically disadvantaged in order that they may improve their lives / circumstances. As such services commissioned under the Housing Support Grant Programme support the Council's Socio-economic duty. The specific arrangements for Newport are detailed within the Local Commissioning Plans and the upcoming Housing Support Grant Strategy.

• Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

There is no Welsh language impact to this proposal.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

This Measure placed a duty on Welsh Ministers, local authorities and other public bodies to set specific objectives for tackling child poverty and to publish child poverty strategies. The Housing Support

Programme is one of the Welsh Government's anti-poverty programmes and commissions a number of financial inclusion services that assist in addressing child poverty.

A specific Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed to accompany this proposal. The proposal does not seek to change any current arrangements but seeks to extend existing services/contracts for a period of one or two years in preparation of a full remodel of Housing Support Grant funded floating support services at which point a full Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

Housing Support Grant Programme has commissioned and currently funds a number of projects to support ex-offenders and prison leavers.

Consultation

This report was submitted to the Cabinet Member for Social Services who approved the proposal.

Background Papers

Not applicable.

Dated 29 October 2021