

## Corporate Parenting Board - 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Commissioning of External Semi-Independent Living Services 2018		
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Blackman, Director of Children's Integrated Services Katy Ball, Director of Procurement and Children's Commissioning	<b>Wards affected:</b> all	
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Michael Rowley Michael.rowley@nottinghamcity.gov.uk		
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>			
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2017		
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>			
Strategic Regeneration and Development			<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools			<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing			<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services			<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer			<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport			<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector			<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture			<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration			<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>			
<p>Nottingham City Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient accommodation for its Looked After Children. For those young people aged 16 years above (who have left school), it is often appropriate to provide this accommodation in a semi-independent setting, in order to successfully prepare young people for independent living.</p> <p>NCC has an internal semi-independent estate which provides consistent, quality accommodation and support. In addition to this NCC's Children's Placement Service commissions external providers locally, and further afield when appropriate, to provide accommodation and support for children in care aged 16-18.</p> <p>A procurement process has been undertaken to establish a set of accredited providers locally and across the country. Those providers who have been successful in their application have been informed and contracts are now being drawn up. There were approximately 30 providers (nationally) that have been successful.</p> <p>Procuring SIL services via an open accreditation process offers an opportunity to improve outcomes, improve local sufficiency and consistency of quality and to provide greater value for money. The number of young people in external semi-independent placements has risen over the last year and this accreditation process will allow us to drive quality and value for money in those placements whilst having the flexibility to explore the most appropriate and cost-effective options available in the best interests of meeting the individual needs of each young person.</p>			
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>			

<b>1</b>	To note the progress made in improving the quality and choice of provision of semi-independent living services for 16-18 year old young people in care
<b>2</b>	To note the more robust contractual arrangements being put in place in respect of this provision.

## **1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 Since the expiry of the framework contract established in 2011 Semi-Independent Living (SIL) services have been commissioned on a spot purchase basis. A more robust commissioning and contracting approach is required that still provides NCC with the flexibility to source the best type of accommodation and support package for this cohort of young people
- 1.2 We require high quality, value for money, effective SIL placements for our young people that help to prepare them effectively for independent life post-18. The service specification that forms the basis of the contract sets out clear standards for accommodation and support and stipulates quality monitoring and contract management requirements.
- 1.3 We require those services to be able to provide support in a flexible way that meets the diverse needs of our 16-18 cohort. We also need those providers to do so without long term financial commitment from NCC for a set level of business or income because the number of young people needing SIL placements, and the duration of those placements, is constantly changing.
- 1.4 Under this model accommodation and support will be priced separately with a fixed hourly rate for support. This allows Social Care Teams to stipulate the required number of hours of direct support work to be undertaken with each individual young person, and for that number of hours to be adjusted during the SIL placement in accordance with the young person's needs at any time. Whilst the intention is always that the amount of direct support provided to a young person is on a gradually reducing trajectory, there may be times that an increase in support is needed and this approach allows for this flexibility to ensure individual support needs are met.
- 1.5 We require a system that facilitates effective contract management and quality control, with the ability to impose sanctions on those providers who do not meet with our expectations. Through the accreditation process failure to meet the criteria set out in the procurement process means failure to gain accreditation and NCC will not commission providers that are not accredited. However providers can re-apply if they remedy the reason for failure, therefore promoting a culture of constant improvement of services linked to opportunities for the development of the external market.
- 1.6 Under the accreditation approach to the procurement of these services, NCC is able to review quality of delivery and suspend a provider's contract at any time should they not meet the required standards. NCC also retains the flexibility to issue an action plan in such circumstances giving the provider the opportunity to undertake remedial work to meet the required standards before repeating the accreditation process to have their contract reinstated.
- 1.7 We require a system that allows us to flex who we contract with in the wider market for these services according to volume of demand and complexity of needs

presenting at any time. The accreditation process remains open so any new provider can be directed to apply for accreditation at any time. This is important if for example a SIL placement is specifically required a considerable distance from Nottingham in the best interests of the young person.

## **2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

2.1 Over the last year the number of young people placed in SIL settings has increased, partly due to an increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children aged 16+. Work has also been undertaken to improve the quality of provision and to implement a clear set of Quality Standards with SIL providers who currently have NCC young people in placement.

2.1.1 Procuring SIL services via an open accreditation process offers an opportunity to improve outcomes, improve local sufficiency and consistency of quality and to provide greater value for money. This approach may provide opportunities to make savings though no specific savings target has been allocated.

2.1.2 Taking a longer term view, the improvement of quality and consistency of accommodation and support provided to 16-18 year old children in care may have a positive impact on their representation in homelessness, unemployment (& NEET), the criminal justice system, substance misuse.

## **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 N/A

## **4 FINANCE COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

4.1 N/A

## **5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 N/A

## **6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)**

6.1 N/A

## **7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required because:

The proposal is not for a new service that supports or disadvantages any individuals representing any of the protected groups.

Yes



**8    LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR  
THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

8.1   None

**9    PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

9.1   None