



**CABINET – 27<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

**DIRECT AWARD FOR THE PROVISION OF HOSTEL-BASED SERVICES AND OUTREACH HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**PART A**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to make a direct award of a contract to two existing providers of hostel-based and outreach-based support services for adults at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. This is on the basis that the current lead provider has decided not to extend its existing contract and to enable continued focus on reviewing the provision before recommissioning the service.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the direct award of hostel-based and outreach-based support services to Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA) and Falcon Support Services for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 March 2024.

**Reasons for Recommendation**

3. The direct award will enable continuity of service provision using existing service providers whilst allowing time to review the provision as part of service recommissioning.
4. The NCHA and Falcon Support Services have been delivering elements of the existing provision via subcontract arrangements with the lead provider (who does not wish to extend their contract) and this will give continuity of provision.

**Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)**

5. The initial term of the existing contract for hostel based and outreach-based support ends on 30 June 2022; therefore any new contracts need to be in place for 1 July 2022.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

6. The provision of support services for individuals who are homeless aligns with the 'Safe and Well' strategic outcome of the County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26. This outcome aims to ensure that people are safe and protected from harm, live in a healthy environment and have the opportunities and support they need to live active, independent and fulfilling lives.
7. This service also aligns with the 'Staying Healthy, Safe and Well' strategic priority of the Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032.
8. The Cabinet in October 2019 received a report on a proposed new model for homelessness prevention and housing-related support to be put in place from April 2020. It agreed that an external provider be commissioned to deliver a combination of both hostel-based accommodation and outreach housing-related support and the Director of Public Health was authorised to agree the detailed specification and procure the services.

### **Resource Implications**

9. The Public Health annual funding envelope for this service is £300,000. This has previously been awarded to the main provider and distributed by them to the other providers. The intention going forward is for each of the two providers to have a separate contract.
10. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on this report.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

11. None.

### **Officers to Contact**

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## **PART B**

### **Background**

12. The Public Health Department commissions a hostel-based and outreach-based support service for adults at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. There are two main components of the service:
  - a. An in-reach support service into the Falcon Centre Homeless Hostel in Loughborough.
  - b. An outreach floating support service which includes telephone support, group work, benefits advice surgeries, signposting and one-to-one support.
13. The current contract was awarded to The Bridge and commenced on 1 July 2020 with the initial term of the contract ending on 30 June 2022 but with an option to extend for a further 24 months. The Bridge currently sub-contracts elements of the provision to Falcon Support Services and Nottingham Community Housing Association. The contract value is £300,000 per annum.
14. The maximum extension period available for this contract is 24 months (from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024). To align the future contract with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) requirements, the Department intends to carry out a full redesign of the homelessness prevention and housing-related support services provided by the Council with a view to the new service commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.
15. The Bridge indicated it did not wish to extend its contract, but Falcon Support Services and Nottingham Community Housing Association indicated their willingness to continue to provide services until 31 March 2024. As neither are currently lead providers the current extension would not apply to them, and a direct award is needed to enable the provision to continue beyond 1 July 2022.
16. The direct award will maximise continuity for current service users as the majority of the service will remain unchanged and existing providers will be able to address the elements of the contract that The Bridge was previously responsible for. The intention is for each provider to have a separate contract: Falcon Support Services for £210,000 per annum and Nottingham Community Housing Association for £90,000 per annum. Falcon Support Services will be responsible for providing a referral hub, hostel based support, follow-up support for those leaving the hostel, and a drop-in service. Falcon Support Services will also lead on contract and performance management. Nottingham Community Housing Association will be responsible for outreach support and drop-in services.
17. These services fall under the Light Touch Regime of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the total value of this proposed direct award is below the relevant threshold, which means that the Public Contract Regulations 2015 are not applicable to this contract award.

**Equality and Human Rights Implications**

18. There will be no additional equality or human rights implications from the direct award as the service offer will remain unchanged.

**Partnership Working and Associated Issues**

19. Preventing homelessness and supporting those at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness requires close working relationships particularly with the district councils. Offering a direct award to Falcon Support Services and Nottingham Community Housing Association will provide time to conduct a system-wide review of service provision.

**Background Papers**

Report to the Cabinet on 22 October 2019 “Development of a New Model for Homelessness Prevention and Housing-Related Support” and minutes of that meeting

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=5606#AI61001>