

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Metro Mayor and Members of the Combined Authority

Meeting: 26th July 2019

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

Key Decision

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING AND THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER: HOUSING AND SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

APPROVAL OF THE ASSERTIVE OUTREACH PROCUREMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to seek approval for awarding of the Assertive Outreach contract prior to the named provider being identified following the procurement process to enable delivery to begin as soon as possible once the procurement exercise is completed.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority:
- (a) Note the progress made to date in the development of the Trailblazers programme and development of the LCR Assertive Outreach specification that has been developed with all 6 LA's.
 - (b) Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Policy and Strategic Commissioning, Monitoring Officer and Treasurer to approve the awarding of the Assertive Outreach contract following the conclusion of the procurement process.

3. BACKGROUND

In March 2018 Central Government announced that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) would join the Trailblazer programme. Trailblazer is a central programme to support the prevention and reduction of homelessness in England. This funding is additional to that provided to Local Authorities to meet their statutory duties in relation to homelessness. Prevention is the key driver of Trailblazer's funding. The funding for the programme will be managed by the Homelessness Strategy Team within the LCRCA. The LCRCA will ensure co-ordination across the 6 local authorities, the sharing of best practice and

consistency of approaches to prevention. Additionally, the Trailblazers funding will maximise co-ordination with the development and delivery of Housing First.

- 3.2 The Housing First Feasibility study, funded by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government highlights the need for 'wider system change' including 'significant investment in prevention services' and 'the development of clear pathways between the Criminal Justice system, mental health service provision and the system for preventing and responding to homelessness. Delivery of the Trailblazer programme will be crucial in supporting this wider system change whilst adopting the principles of the Homeless Reduction Act:
- Improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness
 - Extension of the period 'threatened with homelessness'
 - Introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and intentionality
 - Introducing assessments and personalised housing plans, setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation
 - Deliberately and unreasonably refusing to cooperate
- 3.3 Part of the trailblazers funding has funded an uplift in early identification of those getting into housing difficulties and provided support for those who are presenting as homeless. It has supported the 6 constituent Local Authorities to ensure that they are able to meet and exceed the duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in preventing homelessness.
- 3.4 At the time of the original submission, it was planned that the Trailblazer funding would support the development of rough sleeper 'hubs' from which assertive outreach services would operate across the Liverpool City Region. A number of developments, some ongoing, relating to rough sleeper services since that date have led to the need to update original plans. These include:
- Allocation of Housing First Pilot funding to Liverpool City Region
 - Allocation of Rough Sleep Initiative funding to Liverpool City Council
 - Opening of permanent night shelter for rough sleepers in Liverpool City
 - Allocation of Rapid Re-Housing Funding to Liverpool City Council
 - Announcement of additional Rough Sleeper funding and allocations of such to Halton, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral
- 3.5 Over the last 6 months, work has been ongoing with the six constituent Local Authorities and Public Health to develop a partnership approach to the City Region assertive outreach service. This has enabled all organisations to develop and review the specification and requirements of the service, ensuring that the implications of the changes above are fully assessed. The aim is to ensure maximum efficiency of services and avoid the possibility of any duplication that may otherwise occur. All 6 Local Authorities have worked collaboratively to develop the specification for this service.
- 3.6 Ministry of Housing Communities and local Government are keen to see delivery of the service by the end of September 2019. We are currently undergoing an Open OJEU procurement process, following public contract regulations. We have advertised this opportunity both locally and nationally via The Chest to ensure

means of competition. The procurement is due to close 22/07/2019 with the view that all tenders will be evaluated by 05/08/2019. We are under significant pressure to ensure the commencement of contract is in place by 01/10/2019 therefore we are seeking budget approval to ensure that delivery of the contract can commence by the 01/10/19.

4. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

- 4.1 The Memorandum of Understanding (the “Agreement”) is made between the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government; “MHCLG”
- 4.2 Due to the number of developments and funding announcements, some ongoing, relating to rough sleeper services since the announcement of the funding the original concept of the service has had to be reconfigured. Also it was necessary to ensure that the specification and requirements of the service identified the implications of the changes are fully understood the operational impact. The aim is to ensure maximum efficiency of services and avoid the possibility of any duplication that may otherwise occur. Hence there has been a delay to the delivery of the service, MHCLG are keen to avoid duplication and understand the reworking of the specification was required but want to see delivery at the earliest opportunity

5. Financial

The implications of not delivering the service at the earliest opportunity are about reputational risk and will impact on the effective delivery of Housing First. The Assertive Outreach service will develop pathways into Housing First. The strategic commissioning intentions are to reduce rough sleeping and to improve choice and control for individuals. The service will be required to support a reduction in health inequalities by improving access to health care and promoting the social inclusion of homeless populations.

The service will achieve the following:

- Reduction in rough sleeping
- Development of local referral routes into Housing First
- Improved access to current commissioned services for those who may choose not to access Housing First or other services
- Improved physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Increase in homelessness prevention
- Improving pathways between partners such as the Criminal Justice system, mental health service provision and the system for preventing and responding to homelessness

5.2 Human Resources

The service will be commissioned and the contract will be 2 years with an option to extend by 2 years.

5.3 Physical Assets

There are no implications.

5.4 Information Technology

There are no implications

6. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 6.1 The risk of gaining approval to procure the contract prior to awarding contract will be mitigated by the procurement process. We are currently undergoing an Open OJEU procurement process, following public contract regulations. We have advertised this opportunity both locally and nationally via The Chest to ensure means of competition. The procurement is due to close 22/07/2019 with the view that all tenders will be evaluated by 05/08/2019. We are under significant pressure to ensure the commencement of contract is in place by 01/10/2019 therefore we are seeking budget approval to ensure that delivery of the contract can commence by the 01/10/19.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No direct implications as a result of the delivery of this service but equality and diversity implications will be identified, monitored and reviewed as part of the contract monitoring process.

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- 8.1 The LCRCA will directly employ a contracts and reviewing officer who will work closely with the service and support development. This Officer will also ensure the coordination and communication within each Local Authority area. Monthly meetings will take place between the service, Local Authority representatives and the LCRCA to ensure the service is responsive to local needs. The successful provider will need to make available to the LCRCA Combined Authority evidence of the progress of service users against the agreed measures/indicators of the service

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This report updates the LCRCA on the need to approve the procuring of the Assertive Outreach service prior to awarding the contract to ensure delivery is not delayed and the LCRCA can commission the service.

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Director of Policy and Strategic Commissioning

COUNCILLOR G MORGAN

Portfolio Holder: Housing and Spatial Framework

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Appendices:

Appendix One -

Background Documents: