

Decision Pathway



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 05 November 2019

TITLE	Extension of Rough Sleeper Service Contract including the Rapid Rehousing Pathway		
Ward(s)	City-wide		
Author: Hywel Caddy	Job title: Commissioning Manager (Homelessness)		
Cabinet lead: Councillor Paul Smith	Executive Director lead: Colin Molton		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report: To seek approval to extend rough sleeping service contract and Rapid Rehousing Pathway for a period of 6 months to 30 th September 2020 at a cost of £789,500.			
Evidence Base: Background The Rough Sleeper Service (RSS) is commissioned to reduce rough sleeping in the city. Originally the service was based at the Compass Centre (with tenancy agreement from Riverside HA), alongside the Homeless Health Service. The service also ran Employment, Training and Education services from 1 New St in St Judes (with a lease from BCC). The current RSS started on October 1st 2014 for three years with a subsequent two year extension to September 2019 (within the original tender) and a subsequent extension to 31st March 2020 (agreed by Cabinet in order to coincide with MHCLG funding end dates). Bristol is in a similar position to other local authorities, following years of cuts to central government funding and inadequate resources to deal with the current levels of rough sleeping as highlighted in a recent Homeless Link Blog. Reducing Rough Sleeping is a priority to BCC (Corporate Plan), the city (through the One City Plan) and the Government - MHCLG & Cabinet Office – through their Rough Sleeping Strategy with a commitment to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. Alongside the Rough Sleeping Strategy, and as an integral part of the action plan, MHCLG have made available various fund streams towards these objectives that Bristol has successfully bid for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1.1 million Rough Sleeper Initiative funding for 2018-20 • £1,063,017 to create a Rapid Rehousing Pathway in 2018-19 Whilst this funding is welcomed by BCC, it does put the council in a difficult position in regard to strategically commissioning services to reduce rough sleeping. The MHCLG funding streams and bidding opportunities have short run in periods and are for short time periods - currently ending in March 2020. Essentially, BCC needs to commence the RSS recommissioning process now but only has the financial resources of our existing budget (£521k plus an additional £38k = £559k) and we are unable to commission a wider preventative approach as future government funding linked to the Rough Sleeping Strategy will not now be known until the govt. spending review formal announcement (September/October 2019). Indications from the MHCLG advisors is that there is likely to be further funding linked to the Strategy themes so the intention is to extend the RSS service (and successful MHCLG funded initiatives) by a further six months – to September 2020. This will allow for a six – nine month period from the announcement of funding levels, to finalise commissioning plans, consult on these, tender for the service/s and implementation period.			

This would enable a full service to be operational by October 2020. Bristol is not unique in adopting this approach - Oxford City Council have also decided to adopt this approach of extending their Rough Sleeper Service by six months to allow suitable time to commission a whole system service for rough sleeping assimilating in MHCLG funding (they too are reliant on significant funding from the MHCLG). Forward planning in this way will allow us to commission services that link to the Homelessness Strategy Action plan and put in place a framework of providers to respond to a rapidly changing environment.

There is a risk that MHCLG are unable to make a future funding commitment to rough sleeping work. This is a low risk as all indications from the MHCLG suggest an ongoing commitment to funding to reduce rough sleeping. In the unlikely event that there is no MHCLG funding for next year (or significantly reduced funds), this would result in a general fund spending pressure that would need to be mitigated from other funding streams.

Total funding for the six month extension will be:

RSS service - £279,500

RRP service - £510,000

Total - £789,500

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet: - Approve authority for the Executive Director Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Housing to extend the Rough Sleeper Service contract and the Rapid Rehousing Pathway contract for a period of six months until 30th September 2020 at a cost of £789,500.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

Key commitment to reduce the overall level of homelessness and rough sleeping, with no-one needing to spend a 'second night out'.

City Benefits:

The EQIA for the Preventing Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy provides a useful overview. In brief the proposal will assist many rough sleepers to access accommodation and support improving their health and reducing the physical and mental health impact of living on the streets.

Consultation Details:

Provider consultation, member consultation, and consultation with the Rough Sleeping Partnership.

Background Documents:

Rough Sleeping Strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rough-sleeping-strategy>

Delivery Plan: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-strategy-delivery-plan>

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24 (Cabinet 3rd Sept 2019):

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=3687&Ver=4>

Revenue Cost	£789,500	Source of Revenue Funding	MHCLG funding / general fund
Capital Cost	£0	Source of Capital Funding	n.a.
One off cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice: The extension of the existing contract for a further six months will enable preparation for a new contract once the available resources for 2020/21 are confirmed. This will enable service continuity and prevent disruption to the progress made on reducing rough sleeping in the city. The 2019 Government Spending Round announcement, on 4th September, has confirmed the Government's intention to continue funding Homelessness services for 2020/21, with an additional 13% funding increase nationally. The methodology for the local allocation of this funding will follow in the Autumn statement.

Finance Business Partner: Wendy Welsh, Finance Manager 5/9/19

2. Legal Advice: It is recognised that the extension of the current contract places the Council in a situation where it

may breach the procurement regulations. The difficulties faced by the service due to the short time periods of the current funding available are set out in the report. The relatively short extension of 6 months to allow time for the Council to run a fully compliant tendering process following confirmation of funding, and have in place a full service from October 2020, will help mitigate the risk of a challenge. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the proposed procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Leader/Solicitor, 24th October 2019

3. Implications on IT: No anticipated impact to IT Services.

IT Team Leader: Simon Oliver 14-08-19

4. HR Advice: There are no HR implications evident as services will be externally commissioned.

HR Partner: Celia Williams, 22-08-19

EDM Sign-off	Nuala Gallagher	11-09-19
Cabinet Member sign-off	Councillor Paul Smith	12-09-19
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	03-10-19

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	NO
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal The EQIA for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24 provides a useful overview.	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal Since this proposal is to extend the length of an existing contract with no further changes, no new environmental impacts will arise as a result. There is therefore no need to carry out a new Eco-Impact Assessment for this key decision. Giles Liddell 06/09/19	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO