



REPORT TITLE: Mental Health Accommodation Based Support

Cabinet Date	24 th March 2021
Cabinet Member	Councillor Carole Allaway-Martin (Adult Social Care Commissioning)
Key Decision	Yes
Purpose of Report	<p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval for an extension of the arrangements and deadlines set out in the commissioning strategy project for individuals requiring mental health supported accommodation services that were originally approved by the Cabinet in July 2020. This is due to the operational difficulties caused by Covid-19. Such services are currently provided by Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust] (“GHCNHSFT”) under subcontracts with 13 placement providers on NHS National Standard Sub-Contract terms. The Council’s contract with GHCNHSFT for such services will expire on 31st March 2021.</p>
Recommendations	<p>To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health to direct award to the incumbent supplier (namely GHCNHSFT) a 12 month contract commencing 1st April 2021 for the supply of mental health supported accommodation services on grounds that the contract award is strictly necessary for the purpose of ensuring the health and welfare of service users on the basis described in paragraphs 6 and 7 below and for reasons of extreme urgency given that the recommissioning timeline for such services has been substantially impacted by Covid-19, with service providers and Individuals who receive this service unable to fully respond to any consultation and engagement on the subject of appointing replacement providers. The proposed short-term contract award will provide the council with an opportunity to consult/engage as described in paragraphs 33 to 36</p>

<p>Reasons for recommendations</p>	<p>GHCNHSFT currently provides Mental Health Supported Accommodation services by way of sub-contracts with third party suppliers. The Council's contract with GHCNHSFT and GHCNHSFT's contracts with providers are due to expire at the end of March 2021.</p> <p>In October 2019, an independent review made recommendations to both GCC and GCCG regarding the future commissioning of this service.</p> <p>A decision by the Lead Cabinet Member for Social Care Commissioning in April 2020 confirmed the current arrangements until September 2020, with Cabinet agreeing in July 2020 to extend this until the end of March 2021. However, the recommissioning timeline has been substantially impacted by Covid-19, with providers and individuals unable to fully respond to any consultation and engagement.</p> <p>The above recommendations will allow the much-needed recommissioning of this service to be undertaken in a timely and safe way. The recommendations will also allow time for each person currently placed within the service to take an active part in the processes of sourcing land, design, obtaining planning permission, the physical build and commission of their new placement; with the ultimate aim of this work being to improve the quality of the lives of the people that currently receive this service.</p>
<p>Resource Implications</p>	<p>The budget for the proposed 12 month contract award is £1,243,663.00. This is split into £895,667.57 accommodation costs and £347,995.43 staffing costs.</p> <p>No Council staff are currently employed in this area.</p> <p>The savings target for 2020/21 of £435k will need to be carried forward into 2021/22.. It is proposed to achieve this by utilising Local Government Covid Emergency funding for Q1 as well as other funding streams that have previously supported this activity.</p>

Background Documents	<p>Settled, Secure and Safe Lives in Gloucestershire Policy Cabinet Report 20th April 2016</p> <p>Investing in Support for Homeless Vulnerable People - Interim Arrangements Cabinet Report 1st February 2017</p> <p>Investing in Support for People in Vulnerable Circumstances – Interim Arrangements Cabinet Report 27th September 2017</p> <p>Funding Supported Housing: Policy Statement and Consultation. October 2017 DCLG and DWP</p> <p>Individual Cabinet Member Decision Report March 2020</p> <p>Cabinet Report and DRS July 2020: Mental Health Accommodation Based Support</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>
Statutory Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 117 of the Mental Act 1983 • Care Act 2014
Divisional Councillor(s)	All
Officer	Karl Gluck: Lead Commissioner, Mental Health, Advocacy & Autism Tel: 0300 4211550 Email: kgluck@nhs.net
Timeline	Engagement planned between April to June 2021 for the service providers and July 2021 for residents receiving the service.

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for an extension of the deadlines within the commissioning strategy project for individuals requiring mental health supported accommodation, originally approved by the Cabinet in July 2020. This is due to the operational difficulties caused by Covid-19. The provision of such services is subcontracted at present via Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust (GHCNHSFT) on NHS National Standard Sub-Contracts. The council's contract with GHCNHSFT expires on 31st March 2021.

Progress since Cabinet Approval in July 2020

2. Since Cabinet approval in July 2020, the Project Board has been meeting monthly to undertake a risk assessment to ascertain whether, due to the pressures of managing the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been operationally safe to start the processes of consultation described in this paper, to allow the transfer of the provider contract from GHCNHSFT back to GCC.
3. At every meeting between August 2020 and January 2021, the Project Board has jointly made the decision that the operational pressures on both GHCNHSFT and the 13 individual providers was too great to start this consultation process.
4. One of the key issues has been that GHCNHSFT HR has advised of the need to run the following simultaneously:
 - a. GHCNHSFT staff consultation regarding the proposed changes to their staffing team (as outlined within the July 2020) and the
 - b. Consultation process with the current 13 providers to migrate the existing 13 placement providers' contracts back from being subcontracted under GHCNHSFT to GCC
5. At the January 2021 Project Board meeting the Board undertook an options appraisal process to ascertain whether it was possible to separate the staff and provider consultation processes, so that the 13 provider sub-contracts would be novated to the council by March 2021, but leave the staff consultation until after April 2021.
6. However, this process further exposed operational pressures of managing both the increasing demands of the second wave of Covid-19 and the demands of rolling out the national vaccination programme within GHCNHSFT. GHCNHSFT made the formal request to the Project Board that the project be stood down until April 2021. GHCNHSFT as part of its covid response has prioritised a range of services including supported accommodation.

7. The operational team that are impacted by this review and the providers working with individuals' main priorities are keeping people safe and from preventing an outbreak of covid. As stated due to the unforeseen rise in covid cases in the winter and the subsequent pressures on services it was agreed that the recommissioning project would be placed on hold. To do otherwise would risk de-stabilisation of current providers, existing placements and detract from minimising the impact of covid. It should be noted that the cohort of patients within these units are high risk in terms of impact of covid (e.g. Serious Mental Illness/co-morbid physical health conditions).
8. In making this decision the Project Board understood that the project would not be able to meet the deadlines set out in the Cabinet paper of July 2020, missing the key deadline of novating the 13 provider sub-contracts to GCC by the end of March 2021. Therefore, it was noted that it would be necessary to go back to Cabinet to formally ask for these deadlines to be extended.
9. Another key deadline that the project will now miss is the current 3 year period of the project running from July 2020.
10. As described within the July 2020 Cabinet Paper, currently there is very little accommodation within the market place that meets the minimum standard for these services. This was previously described as each person will at least have access to their own personal bathroom, if not their own front door. The review also recognised that due to the large numbers of placements that need to be recommissioned to meet this quality standard, a large amount of "new build" accommodation is going to have to be commissioned.
11. As it takes between 24 to 30 months to source land, design, obtain planning permission, physically build and commission each new build accommodation scheme, it was proposed in the July 2020 Cabinet Paper that the recommissioning project will have to run for approximately 3 years.
12. Due to the issues as described above, we have been unable to start the formal market engagement required for new build accommodation. Therefore, this has delayed the proposed 3 year timeline of the project, with the new proposed project timeline starting April 2021 and ending March 2024. As described within the July 2020 Cabinet Report, this is the estimated timescale, and every effort will be made to reduce it if possible.
13. In preparation for the transfer of the 13 provider sub-contracts described above, the Mental Health Commissioning Team (MHCT) have been undertaking the following pieces of work outside the Project Board meetings:
 - The MHCT have been working with the Council's Legal Team and have developed a hybrid version of the Council's current standard contract that will meet the unique needs of the current service, whilst also meeting the governance standards of the Council.

- The MHCT have been working with the Council's Older People's Commissioning Team to ensure that the needs of the recommissioning of the Supported Accommodation Service are included within all of the current planning that is being undertaken to implement the Council's new Housing with Care strategy.

As part of this work, the aim is to ensure that the market engagement that is currently being planned around the Housing with Care strategy also includes the new build accommodation that is so key to this project. The proposed delay to the start date of the project of April 2021 currently will not affect this aspiration.

- Since March 2020, the MHCT have been working with two speculative developer led housing schemes. These schemes each consist of 20 units of accommodation (40 in total), in good locations, providing residents with their own front door, as well as staff-controlled access and regress. The aim is that these developments will meet the needs of the people in the current Supported Accommodation Service.

Both of these schemes should receive approval of their planning applications within the next two months, with the hope that building can start in the summer of 2021.

14. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the need for recommissioning these services further, as currently only 5% of these placements have an en-suite or personal bathroom. Going forward the minimum standard for these services will be that each person will at least have access to their own personal bathroom, if not their own front door.

15. Internal/external reviews of the Supported Accommodation Service have identified the level of complexity/risk within this portfolio. The risk of Serious Incident (death/serious injury) and admission to psychiatric inpatient unit is deemed to be highly probable.

- a. Significant proportion of people have long term mental illness any change in their accommodation, even for the better, would lead to a deterioration in their mental state.
- b. In addition, some of these people have lived together for such a long time, that any change in their accommodation, even for the better, might have an adverse effect on their mental health and lead to hospital admission.

Option(s)

16. Due to the issue of urgency we need are recommending the following:

Option 1: Direct award to GHC NSHFT to maintain the existing contractual arrangements for the Supported Accommodation Team.

- This provides stability for the existing service provision and will enable commissioners to develop further options on the future commissioning arrangements with GHC NHSFT and sub-contracted providers.

Risks

17. Risk of destabilisation individuals with Serious Mental Illness:

- Preventing individuals currently living in the community from destabilising and becoming unwell is one of the key priorities of this project.
- Given the length of time that some individuals have been living in their current accommodation and supported by the existing providers this is highly likely unless handled sensitively.
- In addition to the impact on the individuals, there is a high likelihood that this could incur further costs, as individuals may need enhanced care packages or could require admission to an acute psychiatric inpatient unit.
- The above risks are currently being managed/mitigated through the Project Board for this work and the recommendations below.

Risk of Challenge from GHCNHSFT

18. As described above, directors and managers from GHCNHSFT have been involved in the development of the proposals within this paper.

Risk of challenge from competitors

19. There is a risk of challenge from competitors of the 13 incumbent placement providers. However, this is judged to be low due to the short-term nature of the proposed arrangement, and given that the proposed award is justified in view of the fact that it is strictly necessary for the purpose of ensuring the health and welfare of service users, and for reasons of extreme urgency given that the recommissioning timeline for the required services has been substantially impacted by Covid-19, with service providers and individuals unable to fully respond to any consultation and engagement in the process of appointing replacement providers. All recommissioned placements will be offered to the open market in due course

Risk of further disruption to timelines of this work due to the challenge of Covid-19

20. As we are currently in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, the timelines for this project are very difficult to predict.

Financial implications

21. The current annual budget for the Supported Accommodation Service is £1,243,663.00. This is split into £895,667.57 accommodation costs and £347,995.43 staffing costs.
22. The savings target for 2020/21 of £435k will need to be carried forward into 2021/22. It is proposed to achieve this by utilising Local Government Covid Emergency funding for Q1 as well as other funding streams that have previously supported this activity.
23. No Council staff are currently employed in this area.

Climate change implications

24. Most of the current placements within this service are provided within converted Victorian properties, which on the whole have poor insulation and fossil fuel type heating systems.
25. One of the key aims of this project is to move as many of these placements as appropriate to purpose built new build buildings, with all the advantages of modern insulation and heating standards in line with the Council's climate change strategy.

Equality implications

26. Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed? Yes
27. Cabinet Members should read and consider the Equalities Impact Assessment in order to satisfy themselves as decision makers that due regard has been given.

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications

28. A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The outcome showed a medium risk, meaning that when migration of these contracts reverts back to GCC the minimum security accreditation of "Cyber Essentials Plus" will be required, as personal data will be processed.

Social value implications

29. This an existing service embedded with local communities across Gloucestershire supporting people with Serious Mental Illness remain embedded within the community.

Consultation feedback

30. Throughout the process of the review of the Supported Accommodation Service, lead directors from GHCNHSFT, as well as the manager of Supported Accommodation Service were included and were actively involved in developing the recommendations of the review as reported within this paper.
31. Since the review, through the Project Board, service lead directors from GHCNHSFT and the manager of the Supported Accommodation Service have been part of the decision-making process that has led to the recommendations within this paper.
32. In developing the recommendations within this paper, work has been undertaken with the Associate Director of Contracts and Planning from GHCNHSFT, who has confirmed that GHCNHSFT has moved all the contract notice periods for the providers of this service to 1 month.
33. Due to the need to have a formal process to move these contracts from GHCNHSFT to GCC, no formal consultation with the current providers has been possible. However, the manager of the Supported Accommodation Service has long-standing relationships with all of the providers and has been informally keeping them informed as the review, and then the work to develop this paper, has progressed.
34. If the recommendations within this paper are approved, a process of formal engagement with the 13 subcontracted placement providers will start in late April 2021.
35. As the first stage in this process is only contractual and has no impact on the services being currently delivered, no formal consultation will be undertaken with the people that currently receive the service.
36. However, once the recommissioning part of the project starts in April 2021 the proposed Service Recommissioning Team will work with each individual within the service to design a new placement to meet their needs. This process will include the individual being part of the processes to source land, design, obtain planning permission, physically build their accommodation as well as design and commission their future care package.

Officer recommendations

37. Officer advice is that the Cabinet approves the option 1 above.

38. At a future date we will bring to Cabinet further options on the future commissioning of the service provided by GHCNHSFT and associated sub-contracts.

Performance Management/Follow-up

39. The Supported Accommodation Service Project Board will manage all of the above actions and recommendations.