

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Thursday, 19 August 2021

Decision No: (CAB 21/22 32193)

DECISION-MAKER:	THE LEADER FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE JOINT COMMISSIONING BOARD
PORTFOLIO AREA:	COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND HERITAGE
SUBJECT:	Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Service Recommissioning
AUTHOR:	Lee Tillyer

THE DECISION

- (i) To support the recommendation to carry out a procurement of Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse services for period of 7 years (5+2) for a total value of up to £3,430,000 (£490,000, p/a) using existing and available budgets of which £344,000 is SCC and CCG funding and £146,000 Office of Police and Crime Commissioner funding.
- (ii) To note, in addition to the £490,000, the contract would include the potential to vary the current annual value by up to 45% of SCC contributions (£154,800 per annum) to respond to new services required as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act, subject to further approvals.
- (iii) To support the recommendation to proceed to Full Council for final decision.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The current Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse contracts come to an end in March 2022. Approval is required through Council to carry out a procurement for new services.

These services enable Southampton City Council to meet statutory obligations under the Domestic Abuse Act to have support in place for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

Services to support victims of domestic abuse are crucial to the safety and wellbeing of many of our residents. Domestic abuse is seen in all sections of society, regardless of age, faith, education, employment, children, income, complex needs and any other attribute. Southampton is committed to

providing support to victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse (DVSA) offering support in a time of crisis, keeping them safe from further harm, enabling victims to make supported and informed decisions such as whether to leave an abusive partner, if that is their wish, and gaining practical and/or emotional support to help them rebuild their lives.

This work also supports a number of key strategies such as the Safe City Partnership strategy and the Health and Care 5 year strategy in their aims to safeguard victims and improve their wellbeing while avoiding greater pressures on other services across the system including mental health and substance misuse.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

An extension to existing arrangements has been considered but is not viable. All contract extensions have now been used. A final option to direct award to the incumbent providers for a single year was used for the current financial year. This arrangement, implemented under a VEAT (Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency) Notice specified to the market that the arrangement would be Page 7 for no more than one year. Going back on this assertion leaves us open to legal challenge and reputational damage.

Do nothing has been considered and rejected as it would result in no services being in place when the current contracts come to an end. Services are required to meet legal duties under the Domestic Abuse Act.

The option for SCC to provide these services in house has been considered. This has been rejected because Southampton and neighbouring areas benefit from a good range of existing providers offering high quality and well respected services. To pursue an SCC led service could mean that we lose the expertise and variety of provision and strong networks that exist amongst the external providers. The Southampton First policy has made this approach a strong consideration but the evidence from our own experience and neighbouring authorities indicates a strong market geared up to competitively tender for this contract and deliver quality, specialism and cost effectiveness.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 19th August 2021

Decision Maker: The Leader

Proper Officer:
Claire Heather

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*