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## **Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee**

**27 November 2019**

### **Housing Related Support**

#### **Report by Executive Director Adults and Health**

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### **Summary**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 the Health and Adults Social Care Select Committee (HASC) received a report in relation to the future of housing related support contracts. This followed a reduction in funding as part of the County Council budget setting for the 2019/20 financial year. The Committee asked that a further report be considered by the HASC at its November meeting in relation to the contracts which had been removed (the 'red' contracts) and those being recommissioned jointly with the district and boroughs (the 'amber' contracts).

### **Focus for scrutiny**

The Committee is asked to consider how risks and potential consequences of the changes have been managed and whether the mitigating actions are sufficient.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

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### **Proposal**

#### **1. Background and Context**

- 1.1 The budget for housing related support for 2020/2021 has been reduced to £2.3 million from the previous level of £6.3 million following a cabinet member decision in December 2018.
- 1.2 In consultation with the district and borough councils the contracts funded by this budget were rated red, amber and green broadly in line with the statutory responsibilities of West Sussex County Council. Extensive consultation was carried out with providers and service users about the value of the services delivered through the housing related support budget.
- 1.3 Since April 2019 the red rated contracts have been gradually decommissioned, and the green rated contracts recommissioned. The remaining three amber rated contracts, which predominantly deliver housing and resettlement for vulnerable households, have been the subject of considerable work with the district and borough councils to consider how to retain these services within a reduced financial envelope.

## **2. Proposal – mitigation and risk management action**

- 2.1 The amber contracts were extended until 31 March 2020 with the current providers to enable the recommissioning work to be carried out.
- 2.2 The district and borough councils have agreed to jointly fund services for housing and resettlement services with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 for the life of the contracts. Each district and borough council has committed £25k funding for the financial year 2020/21 and £50k per year thereafter.
- 2.3 The existing contracts for housing and resettlement services will be extended until 30 September 2020 to allow time for the procurement exercise to take place. In 2020/21 this will require West Sussex County Council to fund an interim shortfall of £175k, in addition to the £350k that it has committed on an on-going basis to support the amber contracts. From 2021/22 onwards the combined partner contributions will create a financial envelope of £700k, which is expected to be sufficient to cover costs in full.
- 2.4 The new contract specifications will be agreed with district and borough councils in December 2019. In January 2020 the procurement of the new contracts will commence, with contract awards and due diligence to be completed by June 2020. The new contracts will commence from 1 October 2020.
- 2.5 There is still one amber service for which on-going funding has not yet been agreed. This service supports people with mental health needs on discharge from hospital. Negotiations are ongoing with Sussex Partnership Trust (SPT) to agree a funding envelope for these services, however if this is unsuccessful the service will cease on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The impact on users will be mitigated through close partnership working with the existing providers to maximise the existing housing resettlement contracts.

## **3. Resources**

- 3.1 As detailed above.

## **Factors taken into account**

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 The proposal has been subject to extensive consultation with district and borough councils and partner organisations.

### **5. Risk Management Implications for decommissioned services**

- 5.1 Members requested the opportunity to scrutinise the impact of decommissioning the red contracts. These contracts were low level, short term floating support services for older people. Decommissioning of these services took place in a gradual and planned manner meaning that existing customers were able to access the full benefit of the short-term service and seek other sources of support if required.

- 5.2 The primary referral source to these providers were the registered housing providers and it is reported that they have increased capacity within their own organisations to support tenants directly.
- 5.3 Additionally, a multi-agency sub group of the strategic housing task and finish group was established to monitor the impact of the loss of these services. To date there is no evidence that this has increased pressure and demand in other areas or impacted on homelessness. This group will continue to meet every six months to monitor this position.

### **Amber Contracts**

- 5.4 The amber services will be extended to enable a joint recommissioning process to take place. The overall financial envelope is reduced however market testing has indicated that the identified budget of £700k is sufficient to deliver these services and attract providers to tender for their provision.

### **Probation Contract**

- 5.5 The probation contract has been considered separately to the other commissioning arrangements. This has been extended until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. From April 2020 this service will be jointly funded by the national probation service, police and crime commissioner, district and borough councils and the county council. This will enable the probation service time to consider ongoing provision for this cohort of individuals and provides a more cohesive and collaborative approach to issues of shared responsibility.

### **Kim Curry**

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### **Background papers**

Previous Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee agendas/reports:

12 June 2019

12 December 2018

27 September 2018