



Operational Officer Decision Record

Where the decision has a financial value of between £100k - £350k and does not have a **significant** impact on two or more wards

1. Subject and details of the matter (to include reasons for the decision and detail of any previous cabinet decision)

The decision record confirms the extension of the current Housing Related Support contract from 01/07/2021 – 31/03/2022 at a contract value of £118,755 and:

Grants an additional £69,030 from the 2021/22 Safer Accommodation Duty funding budget to secure the continuation of the refuge and floating support services for the Borough.

Background:

Domestic abuse is currently high on the Government's national agenda with them committing to support all victims of domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse Bill was passed on 29th April 2021. The Act introduces a Statutory Duty for the Authority to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within refuges and other safe accommodation across the Borough.

North East Lincolnshire Council were allocated £373,916 and were asked to begin work to meet the requirements of the new duty from 1st April 2021.

Whilst considering the impact of the new Duty, North East Lincolnshire Council were also re-commissioning their housing related support services with effect from 01/07/2021. With the introduction of the new Duty, and because housing related support was intertwined with domestic abuse support, it was determined that

specialist Domestic Abuse support would sit outside of the re-commissioning of HRS and although be paid by HRS funding, would be considered as part of the new DA Duty.

An exception report was submitted and approved on 28/07/2021 to extend the current contract value of HRS with Women's Aid NEL for 01/07/2021 – 31/03/2022.

Discussion was held in July 2021 between Officers and NEL Women's Aid, the current Refuge provider, to determine their total funding requirements for 2021/22. It is proposed that an additional £69,030 be awarded to secure floating support and refuge services from 01/07/2021 to 31/03/2021 whilst carrying out a needs analysis of support and accommodation services for those experiencing domestic abuse in the borough.

The needs analysis results will ensure the accommodation and support needs of those experiencing domestic abuse in the Borough are taken fully in to account and longer-term commissioning and procurement decisions are taken to secure appropriate services.

2. Decision being taken

That the Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism extend the Housing Related Support contract with NEL Women's Aid for the period 01/07/2021 – 31/03/2021 and award NEL Women's Aid an additional £69,030 grant from the Safer Accommodation Duty funding to enable service continuation with full support and refuge utilisation.

3. Anticipated outcome(s)/benefits

The funding will secure the full 15 rooms and retain staff to continue with floating support at current levels and enable This will provide continuity whilst the needs analysis is undertaken, and the Local partnership Board determine the services to commission to fulfil the statutory duty from 01/04/2022.

4. Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision

Not to award the HRS funding and additional safer accommodation funding would have potentially caused reputational damage to North East Lincolnshire Council, should NEL Women's Aid have to reduce services and staffing resource as they had indicated during discussions.

Keep Domestic Abuse support in the remit of housing related support and on the framework of providers. Rejected as the housing support needs of the client group are too closely linked and interdependent on the domestic abuse advice and support provided, so sits more favourably with the purpose of the safer accommodation duty.

5. Background documents considered (web link to be included or copies of documents for publishing)

[Local authority support for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

6. Does the taking of the decision include consideration of Exempt information? If yes, specify the relevant paragraph of Schedule 12A and the reasons

No

7. Details of any conflict of interest declared by any Cabinet Member who was consulted by the officer which relates to the decision (in respect of any declared conflict of interest, please provide a note of dispensation granted by the Council's Chief Executive)

None

8. Monitoring Officer Comments (Monitoring Officer or nominee)

The above proposal is consistent with the aims of the Safer Accommodation Duty funding and is supported by the stated strategic aims of the Council.

9. Section 151 Officer Comments (Deputy S151 Officer or nominee)

The additional cost is to be met from within existing service budgets, specifically from within a £373k allocation of Safer Accommodation funding.

10. Human Resource Comments (Head of People and Culture or nominee)

There are no direct HR implications

11. Risk Assessment (in accordance with the Report Writing Guide)

The contract is extended on the understanding that the review commences to allow sufficient time to procurement a new service before the extension expires.

A Local Partnership Board has been set up to agree the service required and to monitor their effectiveness.

Outcome and contract monitoring will be built into the new commissioning arrangements and a specialist data analyst will be in place to co-ordinate the need analysis and data received from monitoring, and this will be used to drive improvements and changes in delivery going forward.

12. If the decision links to a previous one taken by Cabinet, has the Cabinet Tracker been updated?

N/A

13. Decision Maker(s):

Name: Sharon Wroot

Title: Executive Director for Place, Environment, Economy, and Resources

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 1st April 2022

14. Consultation carried out with Portfolio Holder(s):

Name: Councillor Callum Procter

Title: Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 1st April 2022