

	<p style="text-align: center;">ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS BY OFFICER 22nd December 2016</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Title</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Authorisation for single source tender to block book semi-independent accommodation for young people in Barnet</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Report of</p>	<p>Commissioning Director, Children and Young People</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Enclosures</p>	<p>None</p>
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<h2>Summary</h2>
<p>This report seeks authorisation for a single source tender with Elliot Leigh to block book local accommodation for Children and young people through.</p>
<p>The West London Alliance framework and in house provision is unable to meet current demand and requirements. Barnet has identified current placement vacancies with a new local provider and has negotiated a competitive price.</p>
<p>The maximum value would be £325,000 for a 12 month contract. This includes block booking of up to 8 units of provision that includes staff presence on site 24 hours a day and additional key worker support for up to 5 hours per week for those in the placement. Block booking is required to secure sufficient units of new supported accommodation within the Borough of Barnet and to meet the needs of local children and young people.</p>
<p>This accommodation would enable local placements for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and also enable other young people currently in residential provision to move into the new local semi-independent provision, freeing up residential placements for the most vulnerable children and young people.</p>

Decisions

1. Authority for a single source tender to block book accommodation with 24 hour on site support and to commission additional key worker support up to a maximum value of £325,000 for a 12 month contract

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 As a result of the recent need to place USAC from closed camps in Calais, there has been a sharp increase in the number of placements required at short notice. Local authorities are being asked to confirm vacancies on a weekly basis and have been required to find placements for young people the same day or next day. Numbers of placements required are not yet known but are likely to increase over the next 6 months. The type of accommodation must meet specific requirements, including being based within the borough and having 24 hours support. Young people aged 16 and over need to be placed in semi-independent accommodation, with key worker support available. The accommodation must include 24 hour security. Children younger than 16 need to be placed with foster carers or in residential provision.
- 1.2 There are no current vacancies in Barnet available through existing contracts that meet the requirements outlined above.
- 1.3 Barnet has identified current placement vacancies with one local provider (up to 8 rooms across two adjoining properties) and negotiated a very reasonable price per unit, with support costs in line with the market rate. A local provider is preferable so as to enable young people to access local education, employment and training opportunities as well as maintaining local support networks and accessing a range of Barnet's support services. A local site also offers the advantage of facilitating age and other assessments within required timescales and delivering support locally.

2. REASONS FOR DECISIONS

- 2.1 The provider has the volume of vacancies and can meet the requirements to have 24 hour security (staff on site 24 hours a day).
- 2.2 Barnet needs to act quickly to secure these current existing vacancies at this negotiated rate.
- 2.3 The West London Alliance framework and in house provision is unable to meet these requirements / current demand.
- 2.4 This accommodation would create local placements for older UASC and also enable other young people currently in residential provision to move into the new local semi-independent provision, freeing up residential placements for younger and more vulnerable children and young people.

- 2.5 There is a spend to save incentive for sourcing local provision. Moving young people on from local residential provision to local semi-independent provision provides a cost effective placement for this cohort. Costs for placing children and young people with external providers are much higher.
- 2.6 A local provider is preferable so that age appropriate assessments and support can be delivered within required timescales. It is also more cost effective to deliver support to children and young people within the borough.
- 2.7 A block booking is also preferable to enable tailored support (including assessments and translators) in a co-ordinated and timely way.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3.1 An alternative option is the 'do nothing' option, which is not desirable as providing accommodation and support for children and young people in care, including USAC is a statutory duty.
- 3.2 An alternative tender could be initiated but this would take a significant amount of time and the demand is immediate. An alternative procurement approach risks the loss of the current existing vacancies within Borough and not having accommodation when asked to find placements for children and young people at short notice.
- 3.3 Out of borough provision is more expensive for the local authority and other services and may lead to poorer outcomes due to the ability to place within proximity to local services and support networks.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Quality assurance checks will be carried out with the provider and if successful contract mobilisation will take place immediately to secure the existing placements at the negotiated rate.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 **Safeguarding** - Outcome 1 of the Children and Young People's Plan 2016-2020 is that Families and children are kept safe. This service includes 24 hour security, along with the ability to respond in person to emergencies on a 24 hour basis. which is essential to safeguard young people.
- 5.1.2 **Resilience** - Outcome 2 of the Children and Young people's Plan is to ensure that Families and children achieve their best. High quality placements for all children and young people in care, including UASC are fundamental to achieving the Family Friendly Barnet vision of Resilient Families: Resilient Children, and to delivering against the Family Service Practice Improvement Plan, which aims to improve outcomes for children.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 The costs of the identified current placement vacancies have been negotiated.

5.2.2 A total of 8 units are available to block purchase. The units will be block booked at a value of £850 per week per unit inclusive of key worker support for up to 5 hours per week for those in the placement. This cost is reduced to £650 per week for placements that are for UASC (inclusive of 5 hours support per week). The contract will be for 12 months.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 The Council's contract procedural rules ('CPR') apply where the value of social and health care contracts are below £589,148, however the Treaty principles of equal treatment and transparency are still applicable, when making the award.

5.3.2 Section 12.2 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules states that acceptance of contracts with independent providers of individual placements for children or adults will in the first instance be achieved through approved frameworks or approved lists of providers. Where requirements cannot be met through approved frameworks or approved lists, authority is delegated to the relevant director of a service area as per the scheme of delegation to enter into contract with a new independent provider. Such contracts are non-procurements and are therefore not subject to procurement rules or the contract procedure rules as outlined in Appendix A of the CPR.

5.3.3 The council's Contract Procedure Rules details the circumstances under which a single tender action can be taken. In line with the Contract Procedure Rules, this single tender action has been approved by the Commercial and Customer Services Director.

5.3.4 The Council has a statutory duty to provide appropriate and safe placements for children in care and UASC.

5.3.5 The Council has received a letter from the Home Office asking local authorities to be prepared to make arrangements for accommodation and support for UASC and young people as the need arises. This includes a requirement for authorities to confirm any places they have so as to facilitate a timely placement for children into long term care arrangements.

5.3.6 There is a risk that the direct award may be seen as contrary to the Treaty principles of equal treatment and transparency, however such a challenge is very low risk. The contract is for 12 months therefore any extension for a further full period of 12 months may take the value of the contract over the £589,148 value where a full procurement regime under the Public Contract Regulations will have to be undertaken; therefore the scope for extension of the arrangement is restricted.

5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 Local placements for children in care are fundamental to achieving the Family Friendly Barnet vision of Resilient Families: Resilient Children which aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. The risks of not implementing this recommendation would include:

- Risk of not meeting the Council's statutory duty.
- Risk of not meeting the needs of high risk children and young people
- Risk of a service that does not meet required standards and timeframes
- Reputational risk of a poor Ofsted report

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

5.5.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

5.5.2 Securing local placements for vulnerable children and young people, including UASC promotes positive inclusion of these groups.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

5.6.1 This booking has been approved at Director Level.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Letter to Local Council Leaders from the Home Secretary 10.14.16 regarding the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

7. DECISION TAKER'S STATEMENT

7.1 *I have the required powers to make the decision documented in this report. I am responsible for the report's content and am satisfied that all relevant advice has been sought in the preparation of this report and that it is compliant with the decision making framework of the organisation which includes Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Budget and Policy Framework and Legal issues including Equalities obligations.*

8. OFFICER'S DECISION

I authorise the following action

8.1

Signed

Date
