

**Councillor Beverley Momenabadi, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People**

**Delegated Authority to Award a Contract - West Midlands Regional Supported Accommodation Flexible Framework Agreement 2021 (16 to 21 year olds)**

Ref no:	CWC21006
Council Plan aim	Children and young people get the best possible start in life Well skilled people working in an inclusive economy More good jobs and investment in our city Better homes for all Strong, resilient, and healthy communities A vibrant, green city we can all be proud of
Originating service	Children and Young People in Care
Accountable officer	Veronica Grantham, Commissioning Officer (01902) 555494
Leadership Team approval	15 July 2021
Accountable Lead Cabinet Member	Cllr Beverly Momenabadi 07973 665182
Date Lead Cabinet Member briefed	3 August 2021
Procurement advisor	Ellen Wilkinson, Procurement Business Partner (Social Care) (01902) 554950

**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Council currently purchases services from the West Midlands Regional Supported Accommodation Flexible Framework. This framework was commissioned by Staffordshire County Council on behalf of 14 local authorities and trusts in the West Midlands Region, and it is due to expire on 30 November 2021. Staffordshire County Council is in the process of retendering the framework at the time of writing.
- 1.2 The framework will be utilised by the following Local Authorities: Staffordshire County Council, Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company, Coventry City Council, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, The County of Herefordshire District Council, Sandwell Children's Trust, Shropshire Council,

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, The Council of the City of Stoke-on-Trent, Borough of Telford & Wrekin, Walsall Council, Warwickshire County Council, City of Wolverhampton Council and Worcestershire County Council.

- 1.3 Participating authorities have a statutory duty to work with housing providers to ensure that care leavers are provided with suitable accommodation when they leave the care system. This framework agreement is designed to support this requirement. It will also support authorities' legal obligation to help prevent homelessness. The framework will provide services primarily for young people aged 16 to 17 years, but it can cater for those up to the age of 21 years. There is no obligation on the participating authorities to purchase services through this framework.
- 1.4 The West Midlands Strategic Commissioning Network assigned a regional task and finish group to oversee the process and support Staffordshire County Council with the commissioning and procurement of this new framework.

The aims of this regional partnership approach are to:

- Improve outcomes for young people in care aged 16 to 17, care leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).
- The framework will cater predominately for young people in care aged 16 to 17. In addition, to prevent homelessness, it will cater for care leavers aged up to 21.
- Encourage market expansion to meet the participating local authorities' and trusts' sufficiency agenda.
- Provide a greater diversity of service provision.
- Improve quality of service delivery
- Secure best value

## **2.0 Local Context**

- 2.1 Whenever possible, young people in care aged 16 to 17 years and care leavers are supported either by the Council's in-house housing support service or the contracted supported accommodation service for young people provided by Accord Housing Association. For a small number of care leavers, these support services are not appropriate due to a requirement for them to live out of city. The most common reasons for this are risk of exploitation and their time in care being spent out of city, and therefore all their links including to education and training being out of city. The West Midlands Flexible Framework Agreement is used in such situations, and a strategic review of supported accommodation services has evidenced that although local usage is low, the framework is an important part of a comprehensive supported accommodation offer for care leavers in the Council.
- 2.2 During financial year 2020/21, 11 young people were supported by framework service providers. As on 5 April 2021, 3 young people were being supported by framework service providers; the average number is five at any one time. Actions are being taken to reduce the level of usage.

<b>Proposed Contract Award</b>	
Contract duration	4 Years
Contract Commencement date	1 December 2021
Annual value	£347,000 (estimated spend by the Council)
Total value	£1,388,000 estimated spend by the Council over 4 years. Estimated total spend on the framework across all participating authorities is £175,000,000 for the same period.

### **3.0 Procurement Process**

- 3.1 The total estimated value of the framework agreement over the 4 year period is £175,000,000. Staffordshire County Council has adopted an Open (above threshold) procedure, which is in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Any amendments to the procurement procedure will be reported in an Individual Executive Decision Notice (IEDN) to the relevant Cabinet Member in consultation with the relevant Director in accordance with the delegation within this report.
- 3.2 Staffordshire County Council published the Contract Notice on 25 March 2021. The existing framework was due to end 11 July 2021. However, due to the high level of interest in the tender, it has been necessary to extend the duration of the framework until 30 November 2021, to allow sufficient time for the evaluation of bids. The new framework will commence on 1 December 2021 in order that there will be no disruption to service delivery. Furthermore, the framework will be reopened to new entrants on 1 June 2023 and 1 June 2025, to allow the framework to be refreshed.
- 3.3 Where the Council wishes to place a young person with a framework provider, in the first instance it will enter into an Access Agreement with Staffordshire County Council. Following this agreement, where the Council judges that a provider is best able of the providers to provide the service to a young person, it shall enter into an individual placement agreement with the provider, (referred to as a “call-off” contract).
- 3.4 All existing placements agreed between the Council and successful tenderers for the new framework shall transfer onto the terms and conditions of this new framework from the date of commencement. Where the price for an existing individual placement is lower than the price under this framework, the lower price shall continue to apply until the end of that placement.
- 3.5 The evaluation team will comprise representation from the framework local authorities and trusts as detailed below. The evaluation criteria reflect the

requirements of the service specification and a weighting of 60:40 quality:price will be applied to the scores.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Organisation (if not WCC)</b>
Cathryn Greenway	Commissioning Manager	Birmingham Children's Trust
Nirmla Badhan	Commissioning Officer	Birmingham Children's Trust
Julie Kendall	Commissioning Officer	Coventry City Council
Shain Akhtar	Commissioning Officer	Dudley Council
Jon Brown	Project Support Manager	Dudley Council
Sian Hickman	Commissioning Officer	Dudley Council
Kim Clarke	Commissioning Support Officer	Herefordshire Council
Rakesh Mistry	Commissioning & Placements Manager	Sandwell Children's Trust
Joanne Jackson	Procurement Officer	Sandwell Children's Trust
Alison Davidson	Procurement Support Officer	Sandwell Children's Trust
Catherine Davis	Procurement & Performance Support Officer	Sandwell Children's Trust
Nicki Gilbert	Commissioning Officer	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Aimee Wright	Commissioning Manager	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Kelly Mountford	Commissioning Officer	City of Stoke-On-Trent Council
Carla Gater	Senior Commissioning Officer	City of Stoke-On-Trent Council
Sharon Smith	Commissioning and Contracts Officer	Telford & Wrekin Council
Mark Davis	Commissioning Officer	Telford & Wrekin Council
Jacque Soulier	Commissioner	Warwickshire County Council
Erica Johnson	Commissioning Support Officer	Warwickshire County Council
Rachel Pitts	Contracts Management Officer	Warwickshire County Council
Justine Bishop	Group Manager-Placements & Sufficiency	Worcestershire Children First
Craig Wheeler	Placement and Resources Team Manager	Worcestershire Children First
Paul Webber	Outreach Team Manager	Worcestershire Children First
Nicki Dolton-Deeley	Placement and Resources Monitoring Officer	Worcestershire Children First
Andrea Cooke	Commissioning Manager	Walsall Council
Raji Bains	Commissioning, Consultation and Contract Management Officer	Walsall Council
James Brookfield	Accommodation Officer	Staffordshire County Council
Andy Sjurseth	Commissioning Manager	West Midlands Regional Commissioning Hub
Charlotte Woolley	Commissioner	West Midlands Regional Commissioning Hub
Supriya Padwal	Data Analyst	West Midlands Regional Commissioning Hub

## **4.0 Evaluation of Alternative Options**

4.1 All alternative options are included within this report under the sections “Background” and “Local Context”.

## **5.0 Reason for Decisions**

5.1 The reasons for the recommendations are included within this report under the sections “Background” and “Local Context”.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

6.1 During financial year 2020/21, the annual cost of young people in care aged 16 to 17 and care leavers supported by the regional framework contract is estimated to be in the region of £347,000 funded from Children’s Transition budget. The total potential spend over the 4 years of the framework is £1,338,000.

[JG/13052021/B]

## **7.0 Legal Implications**

7.1 The procurement will be an Open procedure (above threshold) in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules.

7.2 Councils have a duty to arrange for the accommodation and care of children for whom they have a responsibility pursuant to the Children Act 1989 Amended 2004. Accommodation will be secured for children and young people in care which will meet the needs of the child/young persons as outlined in the Sufficiency Duty (Children Act 1989 Section 22G) that are both economically advantageous and offer the highest quality.

[SZ/17062021/P]

## **8.0 Equalities Implications**

8.1 An initial equality analysis has been completed. It evidences that there are no equalities implications. This will continue to be reviewed as our young people are placed through the framework.

8.2 The Council is committed to promote equality and diversity, giving every individual the chance to achieve their potential, free from prejudice and discrimination.

## **9.0 Corporate Landlord Implications**

9.1 There are no implications for the Council's property portfolio arising from the recommendations within this report.

## 10.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications

10.1 Giving children and young people the best possible start in life is one of the City of Wolverhampton Council's key priorities.

## 11.0 Covid Implications

11.1 Providers will comply with all government guidelines relevant to Covid.

## 12.0 Schedule of Background Papers



12.1 Report to CRP 26 April 2016

Procurement report  
to CRP 26 April 2016 v6.1



12.2 IEDN 11 January 2017

170111 Individual  
executive decision not

## 13.0 Recommendation

13.1 Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, in consultation with the Director of Children's and Adult Service, to approve the award of call-off contracts under the West Midlands Regional Supported Accommodation Flexible Framework Agreement 2021 when Staffordshire County Council awards contracts to successful providers under the framework agreement.