

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

TITLE: Recommissioning of Services for People with Multiple Needs (aged 16-24 years)

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	17 August 2022
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Public Health and Communities
Key Decision	Yes
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the Business Case for re-commissioning the Multiple Needs Service for 16–24-year-olds (Appendix 1)

Council Plan Priority	Outcome
Healthy Barnsley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People are safe and feel safe.• People live independently with good physical and mental health for as long as possible.• Reduced inequalities in health and income across the borough
Learning Barnsley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People have the opportunities for lifelong learning and developing new skills, including access to apprenticeships.• Children and young people achieve the best outcomes through improved educational achievement and attainment.• People have access to early help and support.
Growing Barnsley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People are supported to have safe, warm, sustainable homes.
Sustainable Barnsley	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People live in great places, are recycling more and wasting less, feel connected and valued in their community.
All items contribute to the priorities and outcomes of the Council Plan 2021/2024 and performance management framework.	

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the re-commissioning of the Multiple Needs Service for 16–24- year-olds as detailed in the business case, via a competitive procurement process.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the business case for recommissioning the Multiple Needs Service for people aged 16-24 years. The service has operated in Barnsley since 2017 and provides accommodation and support to young people experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage.
- 1.2 Severe and multiple disadvantage is a term used to describe those experiencing several support needs at the same time. These typically include, but are not limited to, homelessness, substance misuse, poor mental and physical health, contact with the criminal justice system and domestic violence or abuse.

1.3 Evidence Base

- 1.3.1 The prevalence of severe and multiple disadvantage in Barnsley is highlighted by the findings of the local needs assessment¹, the incumbent provider's performance activity and data from specialist services.
- 1.3.2 The demand for the existing service is high; the capacity of the accommodation provision is 23 units occupied at rates of 95% and above between April 2021 and March 2022. It is positive to see that during the same period, 69.25% of people leaving the accommodation provision successfully accessed long-term, sustainable independent living accommodation.
- 1.3.3 The number of people aged 16-24 who were homeless or threatened with homelessness remains high. 495 individuals in this age group presented to the council's Housing Options Team for assistance between April 2021 and May 2022, equating to an average of nine per week, from this group, 67 were aged 16 or 17 years.
- 1.3.4 Young people aged 16 and 17 have a particular challenge, as they cannot legally hold a tenancy without a guarantor until they reach 18. They typically have fewer life skills and require more intensive support.
- 1.3.5 Discussions with people with lived experience supported the importance of specialist accommodation for 16-24-year-olds, especially those aged 16/17 years, highlighting the potential risk of sexual exploitation, coercion and domestic abuse in larger congregate settings.

¹ Appendix 2 – Multiple Support Needs – Needs Assessment Executive Summary

Such risks will be mitigated, alongside addressing challenges outlined in 1.3.4, by implementing changes to the service specification as outlined in section 2 of this report.

1.3.6 Demographic findings show factors contributing to the occurrence of severe multiple disadvantage within the 16-24 age group to be at higher levels within the borough. Evidence, detailed in the business case (appendix 1), also highlights children and young people under 16 are experiencing issues that are likely to evolve into severe and multiple disadvantage as they progress into the 16-24 age bracket, including mental health issues, domestic violence, substance misuse, offending behaviours and vulnerabilities associated with looked after children. Thus, highlighting the importance of the 16-24 years' multiple needs service to support those younger people whose needs are still prevalent upon reaching this age group.

1.3.7 There is a prevalence of severe multiple disadvantage in the 16–24-year age group within Barnsley, (further details within the business case, appendix 1), and so where we are still seeing young people presenting with associated needs, the service addresses this, as outlined below:

- Since 2017 the service has supported young people experiencing severe multiple disadvantage to address their presenting complex needs while simultaneously equipping them with the life skills required to successfully access and sustain their own tenancies and move onto successful independent living.
- The service has enabled people who use the service to reach their full potential and contribute to society, for example, by supporting people to access educational, training, volunteering and employment opportunities.
- Where appropriate, and in the best interests of the young person, the service provides mediation to successfully resettle them back into the family home.
- Where this is not the most appropriate option the service supports people to secure their own tenancies, for example, with Berneslai Homes or other social or private landlords.
- The floating/community support element of the service provides support to help ensure such tenancies are successfully sustained and people do not re- present to the service.

1.3.8 The service works effectively in partnership with specialist services where required and alongside the positive outcomes outlined in section 1.3.7 provides an essential function by:

- Providing support to address complex needs at an early stage, lowering the risk of such needs becoming entrenched behaviours that will significantly limit the life chances of young people.

- Mitigating the risk of repeat homelessness and exacerbation of complex needs as the younger cohort reach the 25+ age group, with needs in this age group becoming much more established and harder to address.
- Reducing the use and associated costs of Bed & Breakfast accommodation for discharging homelessness duty, by ensuring all referrals are made via the Councils Housing Options Service.
- Reducing the negative effects on young people, family and wider society related to the behaviours and needs of this cohort, alongside supporting individuals to contribute to society and ultimately living fulfilled lives.
- Reducing pressure on the 25+ multiple needs service by supporting those that would potentially become people that would use the older age group service without such early preventative support.
- Reducing operational and financial pressures on emergency services where young people without such support would typically present in crisis.

2. PROPOSAL

Re-commission the Multiple Needs Service for 16–24-year-olds

- 2.1 Evidence detailed in the business case demonstrates a need for a commissioned service that responds to the needs of people aged 16-24 years who are experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage.
- 2.2 It is our recommendation that the current specification is revised to allow the provision of a dedicated accommodation facility for 16–17-year-olds to address the gap highlighted in the needs assessment. This will require the reconfiguration of the existing accommodation attached to the contract but will not reduce the overall number of bed spaces available.
- 2.3 The remainder of the existing specification be retained to deliver the following elements:
 - Assessment facility – for initial stays to allow people to be assessed with closer monitoring and support.
 - Longer stay accommodation – to provide more independence as people who use the service gain life skills and offer a transition back into mainstream housing while still receiving regular support.
 - Crash pad – emergency accommodation providing very short stay provision. This is often used to give space and time for family mediation during family breakdowns or when a young person is found to be rough sleeping and needs immediate accommodation.
 - Floating / outreach support - provides support to promote and help sustainable move on from the accommodation elements of the service.
 - Trauma-informed / holistic support provision - the recommissioned service will utilise a trauma-informed approach to support, delivered in a psychologically informed environment.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

Financial

Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director of Finance (S151 Officer) and are summarised below.

The proposal is to recommission the Multiple Needs Service for 16-24 year olds. The current commissioned Multiple Needs Service for 16-24 years is provided by Centrepont at a cost of £499,863 per annum (2022/23 value) and is base budget funded.

The contract will be offered via a 'most economically advantageous tender', ensuring finance will be a material factor when selecting a new provider, balanced with quality. Should the re-commissioning exercise result in the selected provider coming in at a lower price than the current contract value of £499,863 the saving would be offered up as part of the MTFS.

The reconfiguration of the existing accommodation will not involve additional costs, as the current configuration of the service is provided across two properties that are owned by South Yorkshire Housing and Home Group and the service will continue to be provided in these properties. Currently both properties are used to accommodating all age ranges. As part of the re-commissioned contract it is proposed that Quarry View will be used to accommodate 18-24 year olds and Highfield Terrace will be used to accommodate 16-17 year olds.

The contract has synergies with the Housing Options Team Complex Lives Service in that the Housing Options Team place clients in the Multiple Needs Service, which alleviates the need for temporary accommodation, such as Bed and Breakfasts.

The business plan identifies other services across the Authority that touch on Multiple Needs Services for 16-24 years, some of which attract external funding. The Healthier Communities Commissioning Team, in liaison with Finance Business Partners will explore the use of funding in order to maximise the use of external funding resources and release base budget funding.

Risk

The latest MTFS / Transformation Paper, which requires the Services of the Authority to undertake zero-based service reviews, covers a period to the financial year 2025/26 – the recommendation to re-commission this contract for an initial 5-year basis would extend beyond that period.

3.2 Legal

As a local housing authority, the Council has a statutory duty under the Housing Act 1996 to provide a homeless applicant with accommodation pursuant to that Act. Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Council has a duty to try to deal with or prevent homelessness at an early stage. The Council has separate statutory duties under the Children Act 1989 to accommodate persons aged 16 – 17 years pursuant to that Act. The recommendation in this report aims to support the lawful discharge of those statutory functions.

The Council is a local authority and a best value authority with duties and powers to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way it exercises its functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness pursuant to Part I of the Local Government Act 1999. The recommendation in this report to re-commission these services through a competitive re-procurement process is supported by the Council's powers under that Act.

As a contracting authority under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Council has a duty to comply with the requirements of those Regulations in its re-procurement of these services. The recommendation in this report to re-commission these services through a competitive re-procurement process supports the discharge of the Council's duty under the Regulations.

3.3 Equality

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to support the business case, the summary findings being:

The EIA identified the need to revise the service specification to better meet the needs of very young people.

Services will also be recommended to consider extra needs for pregnant service users, such as the need to attend hospital appointments or breastfeeding facilities and tailored information relating to substance misuse and pregnancy.

The service should also include support for those with physical disabilities and/or mental ill-health and learning disabilities to improve access to health and wellbeing services.

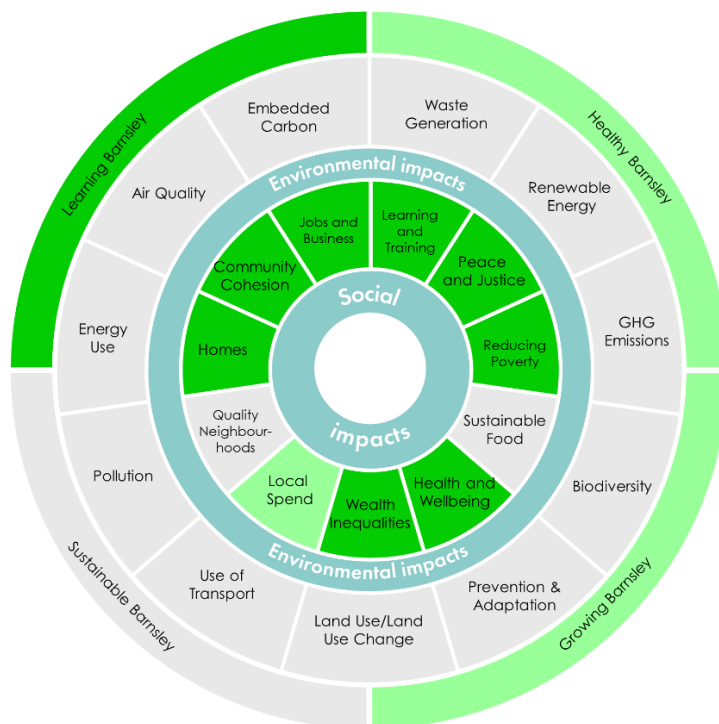
3.4 Sustainability

The service aims to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping via the provision of a range of interventions, working collaboratively with the council's Housing Options Team to facilitate access to safe and appropriate housing.

Education and training is at the heart of the service offer, supporting people who use the service to access appropriate learning and employment opportunities and identifying those with basic academic skills below the national average to provide targeted interventions.

Support is provided to make sure people who use the service have access to primary health care and access complementary services to deliver a holistic provision.

The service reports social value based on the employment of local staff, which during 2021/22 generated a social value of £476,000.



3.5 Employee

There are no direct council employee implications. Staff employed by the commissioned service are funded via the cost of the contract.

3.6 Communications

In the event of the service being recommissioned, a communications plan will be developed and actioned to inform relevant organisations of the provision.

The communications and marketing team will support the team with communications to any services, and link with our engagement team to speak to people in the service where necessary. The team will also support media enquiries and any wider comms where needed.

4. CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken during the needs analysis with partner organisations and stakeholders, along with people who use the service and people with lived experience. These findings have been used to steer the business case and recommendations. Further details of the consultation activity and outcomes are contained within the business case, attached as Appendix 1, with the full needs assessment report available on request via the governance unit, as detailed in section 9.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The future commissioning options available are:

Option 1 – Do nothing

If no action is taken, the existing contract will end 31/03/2023. The impact of service loss will increase pressure on emergency and crisis services and reduce the local authority's ability to discharge its statutory homelessness duty. It will also leave a substantial gap in the homelessness accommodation pathway, leading to a possible increase in homelessness/risk of homelessness for younger people. For these reasons, this option is not recommended.

Option 2 – Recommission the existing service specification

To renew the contract beyond the current end date, the existing service specification would be offered back out to the market, via a competitive procurement process to comply with procurement legislation. This would make sure that a service continues to be provided to people with multiple needs but would fail to deliver the recommendations of the research and may result in some duplication of service delivery with the new Housing Options Team Complex Lives service and prevent the implementation of the recommendations of the commissioned research.

Option 3 – Recommission in accordance with the recommendations of the business case

The service for people aged 16-24 years will be offered via a competitive tender using a revised specification, with a support and accommodation offer aligned to the research findings, reflecting recommendations set out in the business case, with the offer including a dedicated provision for 16/17-year-olds. The new service will commence on 1 April 2023 on an initial 5-year basis, with the option to extend for a further two years (in one-year increments).

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The findings from the needs analysis and the business case demonstrate a need for a service to support people aged 16-24 experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage. Based on this feedback, Option 3 – commissioning a service with an updated specification to include a dedicated provision for 16/17-year-olds, via a competitive procurement process is recommended.

7. GLOSSARY

None

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Business Case

Appendix 2 Needs Assessment Executive Summary

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Needs Assessment – Full report

If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Avanda Mitchell 30 June 2022
Legal consultation & sign off	Joanne Haslam 23 June 2022

Report Author: Anne Asquith
Post: Senior Commissioning Manager
Date: 08/06/2022