

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Extension of regional supported accommodation framework agreement for 16 - 17 year olds
Date of decision:	15 January 2019
Decision maker:	Director for Children and Families
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>A decision was undertaken by the cabinet member for young people and children's wellbeing (now children and families) on 6 September 2017 to join the sub regional supported accommodation framework for 16 - 17 year olds authorising;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (a) approval for Herefordshire to join West Midlands sub-regional framework for supported accommodation, terminating no later than 8 January 2021; and • (b) the director of children's wellbeing (now children and families) be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to maintain Herefordshire Council's participation in the framework having regard to the favorability of the fees, terms and conditions established by the framework and provider performance. <p>http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?id=4745</p>
Ward:	All wards
Consultation:	No formal consultation has been undertaken as this relates to an extension of current framework arrangement, and there is no opportunity to amend terms and conditions. However framework providers have been asked, by Staffordshire as the lead commissioner, for their views regarding the intention to take up the 2 year renewal option. Whilst communication is on-going, it is anticipated at least 75% of providers will be in agreement to continue; Staffordshire expect to be able to confirm by 18 January 2019 which providers want to remain or withdraw from the framework.
Decision made:	To exercise the option to extend the framework agreement up to 8 January 2021.
Reasons for decision:	<p>The current sub regional framework agreement is due to expire 8 January 2019, and there is an option to renew for a further 2 years. The 12 other councils have or are considering the independent decision to renew the framework for 2 years which takes us to 8 January 2021. During which time it is proposed that the region will undertake a joint re-procurement exercise to develop a new contractual arrangement to ensure that there would be a continuation of a regional approach once the framework arrangement expires.</p> <p>Herefordshire usually has fewer than six active placements via the current framework at any one time at costs ranging from £400 to £2750 per week depending on the level of support required for each young person. These placements tend to be out of county due to a limited local market. The framework agreement on a</p>

	<p>regional level seeks to provide some further options for the placement of looked after children aged 16/17 when there is either limited local availability or it is in the best interests of the young person to be accommodated elsewhere.</p> <p>During 2018 (January to December), approximately 3900 agency supported accommodation bed nights were purchased, of which 1150 (30%) were purchased through the framework agreement. It is estimated spend on agency supported accommodation during the period was £680k, of which £165k was via the framework. The average nightly bed night cost of a framework placement is £143 compared to £187 for placements on a spot purchase agreement. However this is dependent on needs of the individual.</p> <p>Based on the bed nights purchased, it is estimated that cost avoidance in the region of £50,000 have been achieved through the framework during 2018.</p> <p>The above data includes a number of young people who have remained in placement following their 18th birthday, to support transition to adult services.</p> <p>The West Midlands councils monitor and review providers to ensure any changes or issues raised about a provider's ability to maintain a quality service are assessed. If a council has concerns about a framework provider, this is communicated to all participating councils and jointly monitored.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>The existing supported accommodation framework ceases on 8 January 2019 and if the option to renew for a further two years is not exercised, all agency supported accommodation placements will transfer to spot purchase arrangements.</p> <p>Prior to and during the life of the framework contract agreement, there are robust quality assurance processes in place to ensure providers deliver a quality service and meet the needs of the young people placed. The framework is monitored by the 13 West Midlands councils, who have signed up to the framework.</p> <p>Placements are purchased from framework providers on a call-off basis and spot purchase arrangements are only made when there are no framework options available. Therefore, depending on the authority's level of demand for placements, the amount of spend can vary.</p> <p>Extending the framework includes the option for providers to request a price uplift in November 2018, which 2 providers have taken up, neither of which Herefordshire has placed with. A further option to request a price uplift will be available to providers in November 2019.</p> <p>Finance have confirmed a 2% price uplift has been included in the budget forecasting.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do nothing. Herefordshire would spot purchase all independent supported accommodation placements as and when required.

<p>rejected:</p>	<p>Spot purchase arrangements are likely to be on average £40 per night more expensive than pre-agreed framework rates. This could equate to an additional £50k pressure per annum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission a Herefordshire only supported accommodation framework agreement. This is not recommended because Herefordshire is a relatively small local authority with limited purchasing power. Previous framework agreements have demonstrated that collaboration with regional partners achieves better placement prices. • To extend the block contract with local social housing provider to provide additional places. The provider has stated due to the model they operate, it is not compatible to supporting young people with higher levels of need, and therefore would be unable to support such a request. • To commission independent supported accommodation placements on a block contract arrangement. Children’s commissioners are working in conjunction with the Adult and Communities Directorate, to complete a detailed analysis of future demand to better inform supported living sufficiency planning. Subject to need, a business case will be made to commission an external provider to provide either floating support or supported accommodation for young people with higher levels of need.
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Signed

Date: 15 January 2019