

By: Mark Lobban, Director of Commissioning, Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

To: Supporting People Commissioning Body, 2 April 2014

Subject: Domestic Abuse Commissioning

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary

The following paper sets out the intentions for commissioning an Integrated Domestic Abuse Service in Kent, with a preliminary timeline for the commissioning process.

Recommendation

The Commissioning Body is asked to note the report

1. Introduction

- (1) During 2013, the Commissioned Services Team commissioned a thorough analysis of the housing related support needs in Kent, which consulted with a number of key stakeholders, partner organisations and service users. The resultant information was used to inform the Commissioning Plan.
- (2) In January 2014 the Kent Supporting People Commissioning Body approved the proposed Commissioning Plan for Housing Related Support in Kent, which set out the reconfiguration and re-commissioning of housing related support services across the County.
- (3) This report presents the intentions for commissioning Domestic Abuse services which are in 'Phase One', and proposes initial timescales.

2. Context

- (1) Domestic Abuse accounts for 25% of all violent crime reported to the police in Kent, with approximately 22,000 instances each year.
- (2) Approximately 23% of reported domestic abuse instances relate to a victim who has already made at least one report in that year (repeat victimisation).
- (3) The annual cost of domestic abuse in Kent, is estimated to be over £300 million per year through costs to health, criminal justice, social and housing services.
- (4) Commissioning of Domestic Abuse services in Kent has been inconsistent to date, with some pockets of good practice and some areas of limited provision. Through pooling budgets and integrating services into one holistic contract, Commissioned Services will work to deliver improved outcomes as well as economies of scale.

3. Relevant priority outcomes

- (1) Improved capacity to establish and maintain independent living amongst victims of domestic abuse.
- (2) Well protected and supported children and parents.
- (3) A reduction in the need for interventions by Families and Social Care Services.
- (4) A reduction in instances of domestic abuse and repeat domestic abuse.
- (5) A reduction in homelessness/repeat homelessness and placement in temporary/ emergency accommodation amongst people at risk of Domestic Abuse in Kent.
- (6) A promotion of wider choice in housing opportunities.
- (7) The ability to access and sustain suitable accommodation.

4. Overview of Domestic Abuse Commissioning

- (1) The current model of service provision has separate contracts for each of the 10 women's refuges across the county, as well as 2 contracts for floating support services. Services are delivered by 7 different providers.
- (2) It is proposed that a new model is introduced where a holistic, integrated domestic abuse service is tendered for East Kent (Thanet, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway, Swale and Ashford districts), and the same model is tendered in West Kent (Dartford, Gravesend, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone districts).
- (3) A competitive tendering exercise will be undertaken to commission with a prime provider of domestic abuse services in each area. The provider will be commissioned to deliver or sub-contract a range of domestic abuse services.
- (4) Prior to commencement of the formal tender process, events with provider organisations will be held to prepare for submitting bids, which will work to encourage providers to explore opportunities for consortia, particularly those from small charitable organisations.
- (5) Early communication is underway with Medway Council to explore the possibility of jointly commissioning a service which encompasses Medway into the model, to deliver cohesion across Kent and Medway, and possible efficiencies.
- (6) In addition, communications continue with other partner agencies to explore further opportunities for pooling of budgets and collaborative commissioning opportunities. These partners include Community Safety, Specialist Children's Services, Kent Probation and Housing Options Teams.

- (7) The service specification will be subject to extensive consultation and market testing, but preliminary information indicates that to deliver the best outcomes it should include provision of the following elements:
- a. Refuge Accommodation
 - b. Outreach services
 - c. A Sanctuary Scheme
 - d. A Rent Deposit Scheme
 - e. A Community Perpetrator Programme
 - f. An Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Service
- (8) The service will be gender neutral, providing sensitive and appropriate support to both women and men.
- (9) There will also be a focus on supporting sections of this client group who have traditionally been viewed as 'hard to reach', such as those from Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities, those with substance misuse and/ or mental health problems, gypsy/ travellers and those from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- (10) The service will include the capacity to support those at risk of honour based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- (11) Service performance will be measured by a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to service activity, quality and outcomes.
- (12) Key aspects of the tendering exercise are:
- a. An integrated contract to deliver consistent services across the county
 - b. One prime provider for each contract (East Kent and West Kent) to facilitate greater flexibility in provision
 - c. A coordinated approach to commissioning services, pooling budgets where possible to offer economies of scale and seamless service provision
- (13) The tendering process will take account of the lessons learnt through previous experiences, namely the commissioning of Home Improvement Agency Services in 2012. Some of the key lessons from this process, as identified in the Commissioning Body Report of 28th January 2014 include:
- a. Robust mechanisms of communicating intentions and progress with the Core Strategy Group and Commissioning Body through clear commissioning plans and progress reports.
 - b. A clear communication strategy which encompasses partners, stakeholders and bidders.
 - c. An appropriately formulated evaluation panel which includes professionals with specialist knowledge.

5. Delivery timescales

- (1) The table below summarises the proposed delivery timescales for the Domestic Abuse tenders and provides an update on each stage.

Timescale	Stage	Status
March 2014 – May 2014	Identification of commissioning streams, work with partners to integrate service provision, and align commissioning. Initial scoping of priorities and required outcomes to formulate draft specification.	
June 2014	Draft Integrated Domestic Abuse Service Specification and Equality Impact Assessment ready for public consultation	
July 2014 – August 2014	Undertake public consultations, market engagement event and publicise consultation report	
September 2014 – December 2014	Competitive tendering and tender evaluation	
1 January 2015	Contract award	
January 2015 – March 2015	Service transition and mobilisation	
April 2015 onwards	East Kent and West Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service fully operational	

6. Consultation

- (1) A full consultation will be undertaken to incorporate a range of service users, including those from hard to reach groups, stakeholders and partner agencies.
- (2) There will also be a robust market engagement process to test the market's appetite for the proposed procurement, and identify any required changes to the service model.

7. Financial Implications

- (1) Work continues to engage with partner agencies and commissioning organisations to look at opportunities to pool funding streams to deliver cohesive services, and possible efficiencies.

- (2) The final budget for each contract will be confirmed at a later date following the outcome of these discussions and configuration of each contract.

8 Risks

- (1) A risk register is being developed and will be maintained throughout the project.

9 Legal Implications

- (1) The competitive tendering process will ensure that contracts are tendered in a fair, open and transparent manner in line with Kent Commissioned Services commissioning framework.

10 Equality Impact Assessments

- (1) An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is underway, and work is being done to ensure that the service commissioned does not disadvantage any particular group.

11 Sustainability Implications

- (1) Commissioned Services remains committed to ensuring environmental sustainability of the services it commissions. The service specification for the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Services will include a requirement for the provider to minimise the adverse environmental impact of the services it delivers.

12 Conclusion

- (1) Kent Commissioned Services will be undertaking a robust commissioning and procurement process to enter into a contract with a single provider in each area to deliver a cohesive and integrated homelessness service. There will be two contracts awarded – one in East Kent and one in West Kent.

13 Recommendations

The Commissioning Body is asked to note the report.

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