

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 25 January 2021

**Report Title**

Domestic Abuse Services

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

**Report Author(s)**

Sam Barstow, Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services  
Sam.barstow@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

Domestic Abuse remains a key priority for the Council and its partners through the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP). The current Commissioned Domestic Abuse Support service contracts come to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. A range of consultation, engagement and review activity has taken place in respect of domestic abuse services and this knowledge and understanding is used to identify the key issues to be overcome through the recommissioning process and establishment of a new system of support for victims of domestic abuse. This new system will be supported by additional funding for Domestic Abuse support of £150k per year, bringing the total commissioning value to £660k per annum.

The report seeks approval to enter into a market engagement process, followed by a competitive procurement process for the support services. This will seek to establish a new delivery model for victims of Domestic Abuse. This will offer a seamless service for victims, increased focus on prevention and early intervention alongside improving access to information and support. By combining the two existing support service contracts, the Council will be able to ensure sufficient flexibility to meet the needs of all communities, including ethnic minorities, refugees, same sex relationships and transgender.

The Refuge provision will be recommissioned in the immediacy, maintaining current provision as a minimum and with an outcome focussed specification, which is focussed on meeting the needs of victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse and ensures a female-only refuge space.

## **Recommendations**

1. That the two Domestic Abuse support services are combined into a single contract and subject to a competitive procurement process to establish a new delivery model, for an initial contract period of three years with an option to extend by a further two years (total five years).
2. That the refuge service will be commissioned in the immediacy, for a two year period, with an option to extend by a further 1 year period (total 3 years) as a single contract maintaining current provision as a minimum and with an outcome focussed specification, which is focussed on meeting the needs of victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse and ensures a female-only refuge space.
3. That an outcome-based specification is co-produced for Domestic Abuse Support services in line with the key issues detailed in section 2, ensuring appropriate engagement with the Cabinet Member and the Council's Improving Lives Select Commission.
4. That authority is delegated to the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment to enter in to the contract with the successful organisation following the procurement process.
5. That the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates staff employed by the Council are proposed to be retained in the employment of the Council and the service will be integrated with Commissioned Services, providing seamless support for victims.
6. That Cabinet support the objective to recommission the services by March 2022 and further support the seeking of an extension of the support service contracts to continue the current service delivery up to September 2022 at the latest to enable effective mobilisation.

## **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Equality Impact Analysis Part A and B

## **Background Papers**

The Rotherham Domestic Abuse Strategy

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

## **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES

1.	<b>Background</b>																														
1.1	<p>The Council commissions and delivers a range of services for victims of Domestic Abuse (DA). The commissioning of services primarily delivers outreach support and refuge provision, which sits alongside in-house delivery of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) service and wider services including Housing. A breakdown of the funding allocations for commissioned services is provided below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="304 557 1497 1256"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5" data-bbox="304 557 1497 591"><b>Related Funding Forecasted 2020-21 for Domestic Abuse Service</b></th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="304 591 549 658"><b>Provider</b></th> <th data-bbox="549 591 783 658"><b>Service Description</b></th> <th data-bbox="783 591 951 658"><b>Contract Value p.a</b></th> <th data-bbox="951 591 1283 658"><b>Current Service Arrangements</b></th> <th data-bbox="1283 591 1497 658"><b>Funding Source</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 658 549 831">Rotherham Rise</td> <td data-bbox="549 658 783 831">Floating support for Domestic Abuse victims</td> <td data-bbox="783 658 951 831">£170,000</td> <td data-bbox="951 658 1283 831">Voluntary Community Faith Sector (VCFS) Commissioned Service</td> <td data-bbox="1283 658 1497 831">Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 831 549 1066">Rotherham Rise</td> <td data-bbox="549 831 783 1066">Floating Support for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) people</td> <td data-bbox="783 831 951 1066">£120,000</td> <td data-bbox="951 831 1283 1066">VCFS Commissioned Service</td> <td data-bbox="1283 831 1497 1066">Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 1066 549 1205">Rotherham Rise</td> <td data-bbox="549 1066 783 1205">10 Unit Refuge and associated support</td> <td data-bbox="783 1066 951 1205">£220,000</td> <td data-bbox="951 1066 1283 1205">VCFS Commissioned Service</td> <td data-bbox="1283 1066 1497 1205">Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 1205 549 1256"></td> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="549 1205 951 1256">Total: £510,000</td> <td data-bbox="951 1205 1283 1256"></td> <td data-bbox="1283 1205 1497 1256"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Related Funding Forecasted 2020-21 for Domestic Abuse Service</b>					<b>Provider</b>	<b>Service Description</b>	<b>Contract Value p.a</b>	<b>Current Service Arrangements</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	Rotherham Rise	Floating support for Domestic Abuse victims	£170,000	Voluntary Community Faith Sector (VCFS) Commissioned Service	Council	Rotherham Rise	Floating Support for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) people	£120,000	VCFS Commissioned Service	Council	Rotherham Rise	10 Unit Refuge and associated support	£220,000	VCFS Commissioned Service	Council		Total: £510,000			
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1.2	<p>The commissioned elements of the service outlined in the table above at 1.1 constitute the main part of the Domestic Abuse delivery offer. The services currently provided by Rotherham Rise are due to come to an end on 30 September 2021 following the award of contracts to Rotherham Rise in 2019 to pilot new ways of working in addition to delivery of core services. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, further detailed work on the pilot to inform the future specification has not been possible and as a result, further engagement with providers is required. Officers will therefore be seeking to continue the current support service contracts until September 2022 in order to allow sufficient time for market engagement, co-production and procurement processes to take place. This will also afford a reasonable mobilisation period which will allow the provision to be embedded within the new ways of working. As noted within the recommendations, current Refuge provision will be maintained and as a result, this will follow a standard procurement process based in principle on the current service specification.</p>																														
1.3	<p>The options below have been developed based on a range of key documents and evidence, including: the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) Domestic Abuse Strategy; an Independent peer review of Domestic Abuse services; a partnership review led by Children's and Adults commissioners; a range of Domestic Homicide</p>																														

	Reviews; service user engagement and professional engagement.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<b>Seamless Service</b>
2.2	The pathways for domestic abuse victims can be complex and victims are often passed between services due to the nature of the current service provision, which can be fragmented for the end user. Firstly, the Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAME) service and the general service are commissioned separately, albeit delivered by the same provider, and the service only works with victims up to medium risk. High risk victims are currently transferred to the in-house Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) service. The focus of domestic abuse services as a whole is to reduce risk and, therefore, when a victim moves from high to medium or standard risk, they could again be transferred between services.
2.3	Not only was this identified within the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) Domestic Abuse strategy but additionally, during 2018, the SRP invited City of Bradford Council and partners to conduct a thorough peer review of Domestic Abuse Services in Rotherham, to both provide a health check and inform future delivery. Delivery of an independent review was also a key recommendation of the improving Lives Select Commission. The final outcome report noted that there were: <b><i>‘Complex systems - The team observed that there are a number of points at which disjointed practice is evident in relation to Domestic Abuse.’</i></b>
2.4	The Safer Rotherham Partnership’s Domestic Abuse Priority Group, asked commissioners of both Adult and Children’s services to undertake a full review of domestic abuse services in Rotherham on behalf of the partnership, supported by the Community Safety Officer with responsibility for domestic abuse. The review was underpinned by a robust co-production approach where the views and lived experiences of Rotherham people, service users, specialist workers and professionals from the wider workforce. The review highlighted that locally: ‘It is not unusual for a service user to fluctuate between high and medium risk - this is evidenced by the number of repeats at MARAC [Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference] (in 2017 38% of MARAC cases were repeats). This may result in a disjointed and repetitive pathway between the IDVA Service and the commissioned specialist service.’
2.5	The range of services in their current form does not allow consistency of support for victims throughout their journey, as risk is regularly reviewed and often fluctuates between high, medium and standard. Service user feedback gathered within the review also showed that the four most common things that would have improved the service to victims were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only having to tell my story once;</li> <li>• Easier access to services;</li> <li>• Better access to Housing security;</li> <li>• Having one key worker throughout the support journey.</li> </ul>
2.6	As part of the review, a benchmarking exercise in relation to models of delivery locally was undertaken. All of the South Yorkshire authorities are at varying stages of implementation, though all have issued contract award notices for Domestic Abuse

	<p>services. Barnsley, having moved to an integrated approach in 2017, are showing early reductions in repeat victims, all have sought an integrated approach, as have the Council's peer review partners for Domestic Abuse, Bradford City Council.</p>
2.7	<p>In 2017/18 IDVAs report that out of 427 referrals that year, 118 engaged and had a planned positive exit (constituting 28% of the total caseload). 68 of these cases were referred to Rotherham Rise on exit from the IDVA Service. This tells us that 68 victims were required to engage with at least two services within their journey. The figures do not provide information about any subsequent support provided for the balance of 50 cases. Of all cases heard at MARAC that year, 38% were repeats, which would have been passed back in to the IDVA services, subject to engagement. The high level of hand-offs does not by its nature offer the best support for victims, and this is reflected in the service user feedback above.</p>
2.8	<p>The need to recommission 'floating' support services may present an opportunity to address this challenge through a revised service specification or secondment of personnel, subject to the desired approach. This will be one of the key elements to further develop through the market engagement. The recommissioning of services also provides opportunity to ensure that they are accessible for all. The combining of the two support contracts, which includes the floating Support for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) people, will allow greater flexibility within the service to continue to meet BAMER needs alongside same sex, transgender, male victims and co-abusive relationships.</p>
2.9	<p><b>Housing Provision (Refuge)</b></p> <p>Domestic Abuse housing provision consists of 10 units of accommodation for domestic abuse victims. The total cost of refuge is £220,000 per annum. The data shows 2019-20 and 2020-21 having the highest levels of utilisation at 86% and 90% respectively. It should also be noted that in 2015 a Women's Aid Survey reported an average of 77.6% of women access refuge outside of their Local Authority area and therefore the utilisation figures are not a reflection on Rotherham residents requiring refuge. The reason the numbers of victims accessing refuge provision outside of their Local Authority Area is one of safety and Refuges have also worked on reciprocal arrangements across areas. Due to the nature of refuge provision and the multiple points of access for services there is no current data available on the numbers of Rotherham residents seeking refuge. Collation of accurate data about local demand and use of refuge provision will form part of the new contract tenders.</p>
2.10	<p>What is known from local statistics within the Rotherham Refuge is that generally over 75% of users are from outside of the Rotherham area. The total utilisation of the refuge provision is detailed below.</p> <p>2016 - 2017 = 81% utilised  2017 - 2018 = 83% utilised  2018 - 2019 = 74% utilised  2019 - 2020 = 86% utilised  2020 – 2021 (to date) = 90% utilised</p> <p><i>* Utilisation data is based on occupancy rate. When not utilised this will include time to prepare the accommodation for reletting and unoccupied time.</i></p>

2.11	The building is owned by Together Housing and leased to the providers (Rotherham Rise). The Refuge has the following staffing level:
2.12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 x Manager</li> <li>• 1 x Part Time Family Service Manager</li> <li>• 2 x Case worker</li> <li>• 2 x project worker</li> <li>• 1 x Family project worker</li> <li>• 4 x PT Play workers</li> <li>• 1 x Housekeeper (funded from housing income)</li> </ul>
2.13	A report by Women's Aid in 2017 report showed that 60% of women seeking refuge have children. The same report also suggests that 90.5% of women in refuge have housing needs. Locally agencies have seen an anecdotal increase in the use of target hardening. The provision of refuge, whilst retaining a women-only provision also needs to be inclusive and ensure male victims, women with teenage sons, pets or disabled relatives alongside transgender victims of Domestic Abuse are able to access this type of support. It is envisaged that this will be offered through the dispersed property offer, with the main multi-occupancy refuge maintained as women only.
2.14	Through the course of the current refuge contract, innovation has been delivered with and by the provider. The current provision includes 6 self-contained flats and two communal flats within a single core building. A further two dispersed properties are also available. Direct support is provided within the refuge seven days a week with a 24 hour on call provision. The refuge also provides a playroom and a young person's room with tailored one to one support plans. The Council also retains a duty in respect of provision of housing accommodation and has provided a number of units of temporary accommodation for victims of Domestic Abuse along with supporting longer term accommodation options through general housing provision, where victims of Domestic Abuse receive priority.
2.15	As recommended, the procurement of the refuge service/s will seek to maintain at least the current level of provision outlined above. The value of the Refuge contract is £220k per annum
2.16	<p><b>Principles Developed</b></p> <p>Arising from all the work to date, the key elements being referenced above, partners have developed a set of principles around future delivery of the domestic abuse support service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One integrated domestic abuse support service that will ensure a seamless service for victims and their families across all levels of risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is key that the IDVA Service and wider domestic abuse workforce work in an integrated way. Not only will this avoid handovers between the services, it will enable systemic practice and key worker relationship building and will capitalise on the skills and expertise of both workforces. This integrated service (which includes contracted services as well as in-house provision) will combine a range of provisions; have an extended</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>helpline and digital offer, and responsibility for workforce training and development. This model could be delivered in number of different ways and this will be explored through the development of the specification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater focus is required in relation to prevention through education and engagement.</li> <li>• A clear offer of support for victims in co-abusive relationships</li> <li>• A diverse offer of provision which meets the needs of victims, particularly those with protected characteristics</li> <li>• A training offer needs to be considered as part of any new integrated domestic abuse model to ensure consistency, upskilling of services, awareness raising and accountability. Following this it is likely that there will be an increase in referrals at an early prevention stage and from minority communities or groups.</li> </ul>
2.17	<p>As shown in the table in section 1.1, the total value of commissioned support services is £290k per annum. The funding for these services has been protected to date, ensuring no reductions within Domestic Abuse services. However as a result of various pressures including inflation, rising demand for support services and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, budgets are under significant pressure, the impact of which can be seen within support services where there are fluctuating levels of victims awaiting further support following initial assessment and safety planning. As a result of these pressures, the budget for support services is proposed to be uplifted by a further £150k, bringing the total for this element of service to £440k per annum.</p>
2.18	<p>Work has progressed since June 2019 in relation to developing the outline proposal for a pilot model. This focussed on a deeper assessment of risk and complexity in order to make informed decisions about the allocation of worker which would allow for a longer-term approach and consistent support provision. As a result of the impact of Covid-19, the physical pilots have understandably not been delivered to the anticipated level. However, it is essential that the Council allows sufficient time to undertake the procurement process (commencing with market engagement / consultation activity) and mobilise the new service once awarded.</p>
2.19	<p>Whilst the remainder of this report is focussed on the contractual or in-house provision of Domestic Abuse support it is recognised that to continue to strengthen the response to Domestic Abuse requires a whole system approach. This has been captured in the current Domestic Abuse strategy which runs to 2020 and is further embedded in the draft version of the new strategy, which will be subject to consultation prior to agreement. Through the Safer Rotherham Partnership, the refreshed strategy and the key partnership priority group work will continue in its widest sense to improve services, support and processes for victims of Domestic Abuse.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Options considered and recommended proposal</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Commissioning Intentions and the Procurement Options</b>
	<p>The recommendations are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the two Domestic Abuse support services are combined into a single contract and subject to a competitive procurement process to establish a new delivery model, for an initial contract period of three years with an option to</li> </ol>

	<p>extend by a further two years (total five years).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. That the refuge service will be commissioned in the immediacy, for a two year period, with an option to extend by a further 1 year period (total 3 years) as a single contract maintaining current provision as a minimum and with an outcome focussed specification, which is focussed on meeting the needs of victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse and ensures a female-only refuge space</li> <li>3. That an outcome-based specification is co-produced for Domestic Abuse Support services in line with the key issues detailed in section 2, ensuring appropriate engagement with the Cabinet Member and the Council's Improving Lives Select Commission.</li> <li>4. That authority is delegated to the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment to enter in to the contract with the successful organisation following the procurement process.</li> <li>5. That the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates staff employed by the Council are proposed to be retained in the employment of the Council and the service will be integrated with Commissioned Services, providing seamless support for victims.</li> <li>6. That Cabinet support the objective to recommission the services by March 2022 and further support the seeking of an extension of the support service contracts to continue the current service delivery up to September 2022 at the latest to enable effective mobilisation.</li> </ol>
3.2	<p>Working alongside colleagues within procurement, Officers have considered the options available in the relation to procurement of Domestic Abuse services with consideration to the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longer term approach</li> <li>• Increased flexibility to address demand over a longer time period</li> <li>• Flexibility – to address any issues in the forthcoming domestic abuse bill</li> <li>• Building on local knowledge and experience</li> </ul>
3.3	<p><b>Longer Term Approach</b> – it is at the Council's discretion to determine the length of contract based on proportionality, the complexity of the services to be delivered and ensuring consistency of delivery. It is proposed that, with regards to support services, the agreement be awarded on the basis of an initial three-year term, with the option to extend for up to a further two years. This would allow the service enough time to further develop the delivery model to meet the specified outcomes, whilst affording sufficient checks and balances to enable the Council to effectively oversee the effectiveness of the service.</p>
3.4	<p>With regards to Refuge provision, it is proposed this contract is established for a two-year term with the option to extend for a further year. This will allow for greater exploration of new ways of working alongside the collection of wider data to inform</p>



	next steps. This will also ensure that any changes required as a result of the Domestic Abuse Bill can be contractually enacted if required.
3.5	<p><b>Flexibility</b> – the commissioning approach will be structured in a manner that is outcome focused. The service specifications will highlight parameters the provider will need to operate within but not dictate how the service is operated (although in the case of the refuge, a minimum standard will be prescribed) – it will outline the expectations and will be written in a manner that sets out the key outcomes to be achieved (along with any minimum requirements that must be adhered to). It is proposed that the service specification will be co-produced through the market engagement work, which will incorporate feedback from relevant stakeholders including potential service providers. The work will seek to engage all providers in an open and transparent way, focussing on key elements of services such as the most effective method of assessment, allocation and management across the commissioned and in-house IDVA service. Some of the key outcomes identified to date are as follows:</p>
3.6	<p><u>Support Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A seamless service where victims are not transferred between domestic abuse support services</li> <li>• Resources (both internal and commissioned) are appropriately allocated based on both risk and complexity</li> <li>• Victims feel supported and services work together, taking a whole family approach</li> <li>• The number of cases progressing to medium and high risk are reduced through the development/implementation of effective early interventions</li> <li>• People in co-abusive relationships have clear access to victim support services alongside appropriate interventions to support to support health relationships.</li> <li>• Opportunities to tackle offending behaviour are taken, working closely with partners</li> <li>• A clear online offer for Rotherham which provides a single point of access into domestic abuse support services</li> <li>• A single contact point for anyone suffering domestic abuse within the Borough</li> <li>• Services are tailored to meet the needs of BAME, LGBTQ+ and male victims ensuring appropriate service provision.</li> </ul>
3.7	<p><u>Refuge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated single refuge which provides a minimum of 10 units for victims</li> <li>• Local pathways in place to support timely onward movement</li> <li>• Diverse accommodation options are available to those fleeing domestic abuse</li> <li>• Refuge provision in its widest sense (including dispersed) is available to all, ensuring a whole family approach and access for protected characteristics</li> <li>• A women only service will be retained</li> </ul>
3.8	<p>The tender process will be used for potential bidders to clearly detail and articulate how they propose to deliver the service to meet these key outcomes. Responses will be evaluated on a combination of factors, taking into account quality, price and social value considerations. Approaching the market in this manner allows the market to innovate and draws on their knowledge and expertise as how best to deliver these services.</p>

3.9	Linked to the previous point above around a longer-term approach, there are contractual options the Council can consider ensuring that the contract remains flexible and allows the development of a partnership style approach with the successful organisation(s). This could involve options such as reviewing the outcomes required and the proposed method of delivery at key intervals throughout the contract, allowing jointly agreed modifications, new ideas to be documented and implemented ensuring the service remains fit for purpose.
3.10	Extensive pre-market engagement (soft market testing) will be undertaken in relation to Domestic Abuse Support services with potential tenderers and relevant stakeholders to ensure they are engaged with the process and they can feed back any areas that may give significant cause for concern that the Council can consider before it engages in the formal competitive procedure. This engagement will take place following Cabinet approval of this report and will conclude at the end of May 2021. This will build on previous market engagement led by the Council. Key points from these soft market engagement sessions will be used to assist in informing the development of the outcome-based service specification.
3.11	<p>The key focus of the pre-market engagement will be to work with providers to co-produce the detail within the specification prior to formally tendering the contract. The elements of the future service provision that will benefit from wider market engagement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Method of assessment of victims/cases in order to allocate appropriate support workers for the duration of engagement with services (removing 'hand offs')</li> <li>• The level of integrated management arrangements required to effectively coordinate Council staff and commissioned services</li> <li>• The benefits of an more intensive and holistic element of service focussed on individuals with complex lives, including the operation of such a service</li> <li>• BAME and LGBTQ+ requirements</li> </ul>
3.12	<p>Following detailed consideration of all the procurement options, including detailed discussions with legal and procurement experts and social enterprise from outside of the Council, the recommendation is to seek to use an open procurement process. Whilst innovation partnerships have been fully explored, the nature of the services and the existence of effective models and good practice elsewhere mean that this is not an appropriate model for the recommissioning of services. The aim of the process is to facilitate a new delivery model for Domestic Abuse services ensuring that individuals accessing the service receive the best possible support.</p> <p>Through extensive pre-procurement engagement including co-production of the service specification and soft market testing the procurement aims to ensure tenders received deliver high quality services steeped in the principles of meaningful social value, localism and working to the principles of a public benefit partnership.</p>
4.	<b>Consultation on proposal</b>
4.1	As detailed in section 2, a range of consultation has already taken place with service users, professionals and providers.

4.2	The proposals for the support services will be subject to further soft market testing engagement events with providers in order to develop the final specification prior to the launch of the tendering process. The purpose of the stage 2 soft marketing engagement will be to refresh the current position, feedback on what came out the previous soft market and engagement and the final review and recommendations in this Cabinet report. Providing an opportunity for providers to engage in further feedback which will inform the final service specification. This will be open to all providers and aims to ensure fair and consistent provision of information to ensure all providers are equally equipped to effectively tender whilst also improves the shape of the service being sought by the Council.
5.	<b>Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision</b>
5.1	As noted above, the procurement and implementation processes for the support services must be complete by September 2022 at the very latest. Market engagement will take place until May 2021, with the procurement being advertised in the Summer of 2021. The support services will mobilise following conclusion of a robust evaluation process and new contracts commencing no later than October 2022.
6.	<b>Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)</b>
6.1	<p>When procuring commissioned services, the Council must adhere to the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) for contracts above the relevant EU threshold. Domestic Abuse services are defined in the Regulations as Social and Other Specific Services (“SOSS”). The threshold for SOSS is £663k therefore the Regulations would apply to DA services.</p> <p>For SOSS, there is a requirement to competitively procure the services, in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, however the Council has the flexibility to design its own procedure, but must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the general principles of equal treatment and transparency are applied</li> <li>• the procedure is carried out in conformity with the Contract Notice placed; and</li> <li>• that the timescales used in the procurement are reasonable and proportionate.</li> </ul>
6.2	The new model of service provision as procured and implemented is estimated to cost in the region of £660,000.
6.3	Existing funding for Domestic Abuse services has been protected to date however inflation, rising demand for support services and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic has placed budgets under significant pressure. Addressing the pressures and the move from the 3 contracts to 2 contracts, a female only refuge and One Support Service Contract will result in an anticipated increase of £150k to the support services contract. This will need to be included within the budget setting process for 2022/23.
7.	<b>Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)</b>

7.1	<p>Procurement comments are provided in section 6 of this report regarding these aspects. This procurement is to be conducted under the 'light touch regime' for Social and Other Specific Services.</p> <p>Officers should consult with Procurement and Legal Services regarding the detailed requirements of this procurement.</p> <p>Also, officers should consult with Legal Services regarding the contractual arrangements.</p>
8.	<b>Human Resources Advice and Implications</b>
8.1	<p>Consultation and engagement will be necessary with the affected staff group and Trade Unions regarding future delivery/ways of working and any proposed changes to organisation structures and alignment of job roles.</p>
9.	<b>Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults</b>
9.1	<p>Domestic Abuse services provide support directly to children and young people alongside vulnerable adults. Children's and Adult services have been key partners in the process of reviewing Domestic Abuse services and have positively influenced the current priorities for future service delivery. This includes taking a whole family approach, ensuring refuge provision is maintained and diverse along with delivering excellent services.</p>
10.	<b>Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications</b>
10.1	<p>See attached equality analysis. Primarily the proposals seek to continue to improve Domestic Abuse services for all victims. Accessibility of service will be closely monitored.</p>
12.	<b>Implications for Partners</b>
12.1	<p>Domestic Abuse is a key partnership issue and is currently a priority through the Safer Rotherham Partnership. Partners have been fully engaged in the review processes to date and are kept updated through the partnership priority group.</p>
13.	<b>Risks and Mitigation</b>
13.1.	<p>Procurement timescales could present risks and as a result, an extension to current service delivery will be sought to September 2022 with the ambition of the recommissioned services being in place by March 2022. This timescale should allow for any slippage in the procurement process.</p>
14.	<b>Accountable Officers</b>
	Sam Barstow, Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services
	Tom Smith, Assistant Director for Community Safety and Street Scene
	Nathan Atkinson, Assistant Director for Adults Commissioning

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers:-

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	11/01/21
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	11/01/21
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Bal Nahal	11/01/21

*Report Author: Sam Barstow, Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services*

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