

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 16 September 2024

**Report Title**

Recommissioning of Post CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) Services

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

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

**Report Author**

Scott Matthewman, Assistant Director, Strategic Commissioning, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

This report sets out the recommendations for the future of the Post Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Support Services at the end of the current contracts in December 2025. Post CSE Support Services are non-statutory services that were set up to support victims and survivors of CSE to help overcome the impact of the trauma experienced.

**Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the recommissioning of Post CSE Support Services, through a competitive procurement process, for a three-year term from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028.
2. Agree to delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health to award the contracts following the competitive procurement process.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1 Part A Equality Analysis

Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Analysis

**Background Papers**

[Cabinet report on the 15 June 2020](#)

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

None

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Recommissioning of Post CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation) Services

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Commissioning Activity:

In 2016, the Council commissioned support services for young people and adults who had experienced child sexual exploitation (CSE). The young people and adults are referred to as victims and survivors.

1.2 Following an open tender process which was in line with Public Contract Regulations 2015, contracts were awarded to three local, voluntary sector organisations. The successful providers were Rotherham Rise, GROW and Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service (Rothacs). All of whom have developed specialist support for survivors within Rotherham.

1.3 The Post CSE support services were recommissioned via a competitive procurement process in 2020 by Children and Young People's Services (CYPS), following a Cabinet report on the 15 June 2020. The services were tendered as three separate lots, with all three incumbent providers being successful and awarded a contract. The contracts commenced on the 1 January 2021 for a three-year term, with a two-year extension option.

#### 1.4 Aims of the Services:

The Post CSE support services aim to support victims, survivors, and their families to overcome the impact of the trauma experienced. The following outcomes are outlined in the specification:

- Start to recover from their trauma.
- Build resilience and develop coping strategies for everyday life.
- Improve their self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Improve their mental health and wellbeing.
- Be supported in fulfilling their maximum potential.
- Reduce the risk of harm.

1.5 The Post CSE support services were commissioned on the basis of three individual lots/ contracts as follows:

Service	Provider	Annual Budget
Lot 1: Practical, emotional support and advocacy	GROW	£33,000
Lot 2: Evidence based therapeutic interventions	Rothacs	£45,000
Lot 3: Practical, emotional support and advocacy, and evidence based therapeutic interventions	Rotherham Rise	£78,000

1.6 Contracts for the Post CSE support services have been extended, utilising the permitted contract extension clause, for an additional two years, and will now end on the 31 December 2025.

1.7 **Health Commissioning - Partnership with the Trauma and Resilience Service (TRS):**

The three Council commissioned providers work in partnership with the Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH) Trauma and Resilience Service (TRS). There are bi-monthly partnership hubs and clinically led consultations. This helps to build bespoke, holistic packages of care for victims and survivors. The TRS also supports across organisations with trauma stabilisation and advice, providing education and awareness of trauma, increasing the availability of professional services where survivors may safely share their stories.

1.8 Data provided at the point where people leave the Council commissioned services in 2023/24, shows that 35% of the cases had been presented at the TRS Hub. This is greater than the findings from July and September 2019 where 25.71% were referred via the TRS Pathway (Needs Analysis, 2020). This suggests an increase in multi-agency working on these cases.

1.9 The TRS roadmap for adult CSE highlights the partnerships across Rotherham, and the different and flexible routes to accessing services. It has been purposely designed to allow flexible access to the service at a time that is right for victims and survivors, see Figure 1.

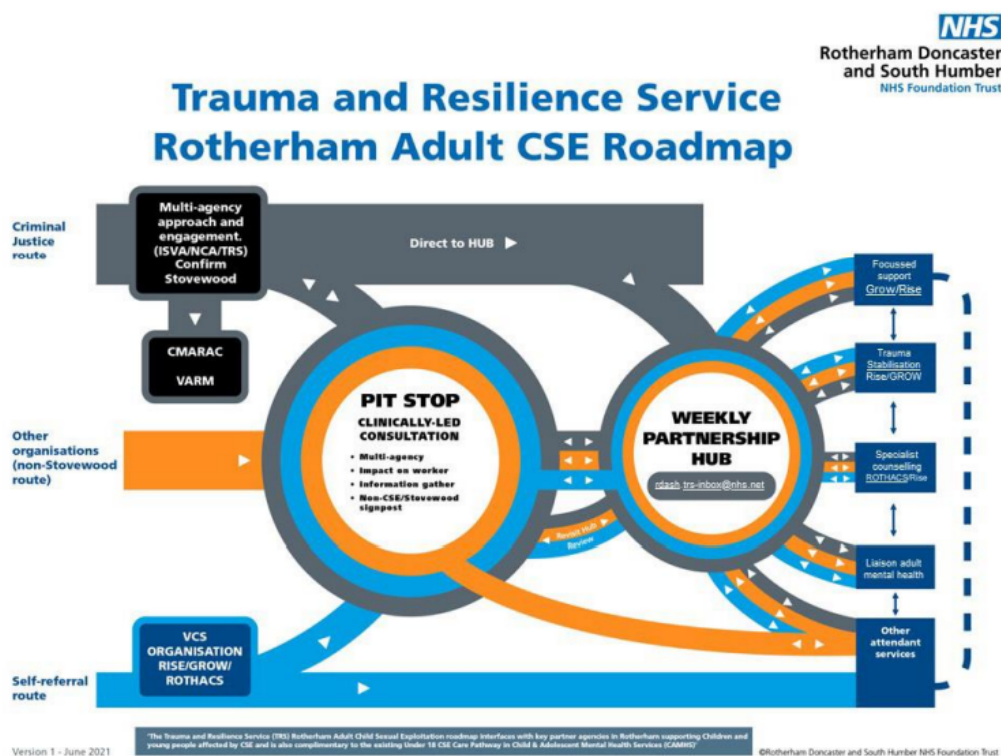


Figure 1. The TRS Rotherham Adult CSE Roadmap

#### 1.10 **Needs Analysis 2024:**

To ensure the services continue to meet the needs of people who have experienced CSE, a needs analysis has been undertaken which clearly demonstrates the continued need for these services to work as part of the TRS pathway.

1.11 A project board was established to oversee a needs analysis and recommissioning process, which included stakeholders from across the Council, National Crime Agency (NCA) and Rotherham Place South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (SYICB). The project board also included a co-production sub-group comprising of service providers, TRS and other key stakeholders (NCA, South Yorkshire Police and Voluntary Action Rotherham) to ensure the voice of victims and survivors as captured via the service providers was used to inform the future service offer and commissioning proposals.

1.12 Strategic Commissioning have also made links with Dr Hamer, Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) who has previously published two service evaluations of the TRS. These findings capture the voice of victims and survivors and have been incorporated into the needs analysis. Dr Hamer is currently undertaking a fellowship focusing on a trauma informed community in Rotherham, and as part of this, is again capturing the voice of victims and survivors, working alongside the TRS and the voluntary sector providers. This work is due to be completed in the Autumn 2024, and the findings will be used to inform the ongoing development of the Post CSE support services.

#### 1.13 **Commissioned Services Performance:**

The commissioned Post CSE support services work alongside both statutory and non-statutory services, to meet the needs of victims and survivors of CSE across Rotherham.

1.14 Referrals are received via a multitude of sources, including self-referrals, ISVA team, Social Care, Mental Health Services and from the other Post CSE support providers, as well as the Trauma Resilience Hub.

1.15 The number of open cases has remained at a similar level since the start of the contract, showing steady demand for the services. This averages around 65 open cases at any one time, between the three commissioned services.

1.16 The average length of time in service is less than six months, with 66% of service users accessing services for less than six months (during 2023/24). However, the service offer is tailored to individual need and some victims and survivors access support for over a year.

#### 1.17 **Outcomes:**

For the people leaving the service where outcomes were captured in 2023/2024, the following headlines were observed:

- 83% rated their mental health and wellbeing as maintained or improved.
- 81% rated their feelings/ thoughts about themselves as maintained or improved.
- 84% rated the effect of their trauma as maintained or improved.
- 70% rated their relationship with family and/or social network as maintained or improved.

1.18 Outcomes experienced from the Post CSE Support Services have been overwhelmingly positive. Additionally, quotes from service users and case studies from services demonstrate the value these services have for victims and survivors of CSE.

## **2. Key Issues**

### **2.1 Predicting the Need:**

The future need for post CSE support services is hard to fully quantify. Evidence from research and feedback from local services indicates recovery from trauma is a lengthy and unpredictable process. People access services at different points in their life, when they feel like support is required, e.g., during a significant life event, including criminal investigations. To quantify the number of people who will access support services due to being sexually exploited as a child is difficult, due to the nature of underreporting and the time periods between the events and accessing support services.

2.2 The Post CSE support services are compassionate and accommodating to victim and survivor trauma recovery. The needs analysis shows that victims and survivors may access support from multiple providers, e.g., receive trauma stabilisation from GROW, and then at a later date may receive counselling from Rothacs. The flexible approach of the pathway offers choice for victims and survivors of CSE.

### **2.3 Contract Value:**

The contract values have remained relatively static over the term of the contracts. It is therefore proposed that an additional 10% is applied to reflect the continued demand on services and the financial challenges which continue to be experienced around cost of living and operating costs. This will represent an overall contract value of £171,600 per annum, an increase of £15,600 on the current contracts. This funding has been identified by the Adult Care, Housing and Public Health directorate. The contracts will be let as three separate lots, as per the current contractual arrangements, following the competitive procurement process.

## **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 Cabinet are asked to note the identified need which has informed the proposal for the future commissioning of Post CSE support services. There are a number of options:

- 3.2 Option 1 (not recommended). The Post CSE support services are terminated at the end of the contract term on the 31 December 2025. This option is not recommended as the needs analysis presents evidence of need for post CSE support services, some of which will be related to Operation Stovewood. This option would impact survivors and victims of CSE across Rotherham.
- 3.3 Option 2 (not recommended): Undertake a competitive procurement process for the recommissioning of Post CSE support services with the same contract value of £156,000 per annum across the three contracts. Due to inflation this will result in a real time value disinvestment into services and therefore could be associated with a reduction in caseloads and people accessing the support services they require.
- 3.4 Option 3 (recommended): Undertake a competitive procurement process for the recommissioning of Post CSE support services with a revised contract value of £171,600 per annum and award as three separate lots. This will respond to the needs which have been identified to continue to provide a Post CSE offer to survivors and victims of CSE.

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 The Post CSE support services project board and co-production group have been made aware of the options during the recommissioning process. Consultation with victims and survivors has been undertaken by providers and from external research.
- 4.2 Feedback is collected from people using the service on exit from the service. This has been incorporated into the needs analysis work. Victims and survivors have given positive feedback about support for example saying 'Feeling like I am normal' is a phrase that is used by clients frequently. Some other comments were "This is the first time anyone has believed how I feel," "I used to think there was something wrong with me... I didn't realise my trauma was abuse; but now, I get that it was bad" and "I finally understand my own thoughts and behaviour," showing the impact of the services.
- 4.3 Positive feedback has been received about the timeliness of access to services e.g., "The speed at which I was taken onboard meant that I did not have time to back down from attending my first session." One person fed back that it had taken her thirty years to access services, further demonstrating that there is no set length of time in which someone will access support.
- 4.4 The Post CSE co-production group will be involved in the development of the specification and associated outcomes for the contracts.

## 5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

### 5.1

Activity	Target Date	Accountable
Approval of route to recommission via a competitive procurement process.	September 2024	Cabinet
Development of specification with co-production group, incorporating findings and feedback from service providers and Dr. Hamer - trauma informed community research.	January 2025	Strategic Commissioning
Develop performance and outcomes monitoring with co-production group.	January 2025	Strategic Commissioning
Develop contract terms and conditions.	January 2025	Legal/ Strategic Commissioning
Undertake competitive procurement process.	March 2025	Procurement/ Strategic Commissioning
Award and mobilisation of contracts.	October 2025	Procurement/ Strategic Commissioning
Post CSE support services commence.	January 2026	Strategic Commissioning

## 6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The existing service contracts were procured in line with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended).
- 6.2 The procurement of these services will be conducted in line with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and the Procurement Act due to go live 28 October 2024.
- 6.3 There is sufficient budget to pay for this service and additional funding has been identified to support the increase in contract value by the Adult Care, Housing and Public Health directorate.

## 7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 As stated above the procurement of the services described in the report will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2024. At the conclusion of that process, contracts will be concluded with the relevant parties setting out the Council's requirements in terms of service provision, as stated in the report.



## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 There are no Human Resources Implications arising from this report.

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 The services support Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults. The implications are documented in the main body of the report.

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 The specification will be co-produced utilising the existing Post CSE co-production group and where applicable including the research from Dr. Hamer (SHU).

10.2 The contracts will include Equality, Diversity and Accessibility monitoring and access to services will be for survivors and victims from a wide range of backgrounds.

10.3 The findings of equality and diversity data from the Post CSE needs analysis present similar data to SYP victim data from 2022. Equality and Diversity in terms of access to the services will continue to be monitored.

10.4 An Equality Screening Assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 1.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 The impact on the Council and borough CO2 emissions and climate change are considered to be small.

11.2 See Appendix 2 for the Carbon Impact Assessment.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 A stakeholder map has been developed by Strategic Commissioning to ensure that all key stakeholders are involved at the right time to make the most of the experience within the sector that has built up over recent years and to ensure that the services are integrated into the community. This is overseen by the Project Board.

12.2 The TRS is a key delivery partner in the Post CSE support pathway, the recommissioning of the support services for the three year period, should allow the flexibility for the sector to continue to deliver alongside and access support from the TRS, who are also representative on the co-production group.

12.3 The NCA is a key partner in both the Post CSE project board and Post CSE co-production group, and the services will continue to support victims and survivors involved with NCA proceedings.

### 13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 There is an identified need for Post CSE support services in Rotherham. The needs analysis work and feedback from service providers of survivor and victim experience and outcomes supports the need to recommission services when the current contract term ends in December 2025. The project board and co-production group will continue to inform the development of the service specification and outcomes to ensure services are able to respond to local needs within Rotherham.
- 13.2 With any competitive procurement process there is a risk of disruption to the established pathways. This will need to be carefully mitigated as part of the service mobilisation.

### 14. Accountable Officers

Scott Matthewman  
Assistant Director of Strategic Commissioning  
Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	02/09/24
Assistant Director, Financial Services (Deputy S.151 Officer)	Rob Mahon	27/08/24
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	27/08/24

*Report Author:*

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