

Decision Report - Executive Decision
Forward Plan Reference: FP/23/05/10
Decision Date – 4 October 2023
Key Decision – Yes



Contract award for the appointment of providers to deliver housing related support and accommodation for 16-25 year olds

Executive Member(s): Cllr Tessa Munt, Lead Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture

Local Member(s) and Division: All

Lead Officer: Claire Winter - Executive Director for Children, Families and Education Services, Chris Hall - Executive Director for Community Services

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Summary / Background

1. Following a non-key decision taken in May 2023 to go out to tender, a 2-stage restricted procurement procedure (Selection and Award) has taken place in order to identify providers who demonstrated the most advantageous tender in terms of their ability to work with the Council to deliver housing related support and accommodation for 16 to 25 year olds. Alongside this a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) will be launched to provide additional beds if and when required. The DPS is a flexible contracting arrangement which will allow pre-approved providers to join an open arrangement.
2. Following 3 market engagement events held on 23rd March 2023, 30th March 2023 and 25th April 2023, the procurement process commenced with the release of the first stage (Selection) of the procedure being the selection questionnaire and a draft specification on the 12th May 2023. 17 individual consultation sessions were held with providers to answer any queries and informed the final specification.

The response from the market was extremely positive with 36 bidders submitting compliant responses to the selection questionnaire. Following evaluation of the selection questionnaires, 29 bidders passed the selection stage and were

therefore invited to submit a response to the ‘Invitation to tender’ (Stage 2 Award).

3. The ‘Invitation to tender’ (Award) and final specification were launched on the 19th June 2023 with a briefing for bidders held on the 22nd June 2023. 14 compliant bid responses were received by the closing date of 20th July 2023 and these submissions were evaluated against the following criteria in order to identify the most advantageous tender:

- Capacity and capability to deliver
- Approach to recruitment and retention
- Innovation and service improvement as a result of listening to young people
- Value for money and operational efficiencies
- Supporting young people to gain learning independence skills
- Safeguarding young people
- Support for moving in (Young people set and scored this question)
- Social value commitments

4. The duration of the block contracts will be an initial period of five years ending on the 31st March 2029. The contract will contain an extension period of up to two further two year periods until the 31st March 2033.

5. The Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) will be in place for a period of 10 years ending on the 31st March 2034.

Recommendations

6. The Executive:
- a. Approves the award of a 5-year contract for the appointment of suppliers to deliver housing related support and accommodation for 16 to 25 year olds, based on the most advantageous tender, to the proposed suppliers (as per the confidential evaluation report (Appendix B), commencing on 01/04/2024.

Lot Number	Support Level	Awarded Suppliers (see Appendix B for details)
Lot 1 - Supported Accommodation for 16-25 year old children in care and care leavers, including Emergency accommodation		

Lot 1A	High	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 1B	Medium/Low	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2 – Supported Accommodation for 18-25 year olds who are homeless, eligible and reason to believe in priority need, including Emergency accommodation		
Lot 2A	High	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2B	Medium	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2C	Low	Bidder O / Bidder D
Lot 2D	Emergency	Bidder O / Bidder D

- b. Agrees to delegate authority to the Executive Director for Children and Family Services and the Executive Director for Community Services in consultation with the relevant Lead Members to evaluate and take a further decision on the two 2-year extension options at the appropriate time.
- c. Approves the set up and operation of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to provide further anticipated beds, as and when required. This will entail the set-up of the system itself, the approval of providers to join the DPS through a Selection process and the ongoing award of call-of contracts through the system. The maximum spend over the term of the DPS will be £100,000,000. The term will be 10 years commencing on 01/04/2024.
- d. Agrees the case for applying the exempt information provision as set out in the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and therefore to treat the confidential Appendix B in confidence, as it contains commercially sensitive information, and as the case for the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing that information.
- e. Agrees to exclude the press and public from the meeting where there is any discussion at the meeting regarding exempt or confidential information (as set out in Appendix B).

Reasons for recommendations

- 7. A compliant tender exercise in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Treaty Principles has been conducted and following evaluation of the

bid submissions the preferred suppliers have been identified based on the criteria listed in 3. above.

8. The confidential Appendix B contains commercially sensitive information relating to the contract and the Council's financial and business affairs. Officers recommend that this is treated as exempt information. "Exempt information" is defined by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972, and by Schedule 12A to that Act:

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)”

The public interest test is then applied and, in this instance, it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Other options considered

9. Should the preferred suppliers not be appointed at this stage of the procurement process the only option would be to cease the process and re-start or not take forward the procurement. If the contract was not awarded, it would significantly affect the Council's ability to meet its statutory duties in relation to the prevention of youth homelessness. This would leave approximately 250 vulnerable single young people without access to support and accommodation. This would increase unsuitable options such as sofa surfing and street homelessness leading to longer term higher costs.

Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

10. This contract award will contribute towards the following strategic objectives:

Council plan 2023 – 2027

- A greener, more sustainable Somerset
- A healthy and caring Somerset
- A fairer, ambitious Somerset
- A flourishing and resilient Somerset

Children and Young People's Plan (2019-2022):

- **Healthy Lives:** More children and young people will have good emotional health and wellbeing, are emotionally resilient and equipped to manage their lives.
- **Great Education:** Every child will achieve well above expectations and will not be held back by their social and personal backgrounds, special educational needs or disabilities.
- **Positive Activities:**
 - All children have a safe place to live in which they can grow, thrive and reach their potential.
 - Vulnerable young people and their families are directly involved in helping themselves and others.

Financial and Risk Implications

11. This contract award affects 2 budgets across the Council; namely Children's Services and housing. No additional funding is being requested as part of this report. The contract spend will be monitored closely as usual.

Lot Number	Description	No of beds	Responsible budget
1A, 1B	Supported Accommodation for 16-25 year old children in care and care leavers	100	Children's Services
2A, 2B, 2C, 2D	Supported Accommodation for 18-25 year olds who are homeless, eligible and reason to believe in priority need	90	Housing

12. Risk: Increased costs to the combined children's services and housing budgets.

Likelihood	3	Impact	3	Risk Score	9
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Mitigation: The new contract offers an opportunity to attain a more balanced and sustainable position. It will contribute to longer term financial planning bringing more predictability to a volatile and increasing area of spend. Significant cost avoidance is possible in the longer and medium term.

13. Risk: Recruitment of staff

Likelihood	3	Impact	4	Risk Score	12
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Mitigation: A range of mitigations would be helpful including: developing and promoting a career pathway across the whole sector, engagement with local further education colleges and training providers, linking with existing council recruitment campaigns and further understanding of the local labour market.

14. Risk: Lack of suitable and affordable move-on accommodation could result in the service becoming full leading to additional beds being required.

Likelihood	3	Impact	4	Risk Score	12
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Mitigation: Strategic development of a future housing strategy may help to offset future costs and support throughput through the service.

The DPS can be utilised to commission additional beds.

15. Risk: Over the lifetime of this service, the financial, legal and policy context for this set of services could alter. These could result in increased spend in this area or reduction in the resources available to support this cohort of young people. Budget changes and pressures could occur.

Likelihood	3	Impact	3	Risk Score	9
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Mitigation: Robust financial reporting will be in place throughout the lifetime of the contract and pricing mechanism will ensure costs are known throughout the contract.

Legal Implications

16. The Council has a statutory duty under section 22G of the Children Act 1989 to take steps that secure sufficient accommodation within its area. There are also responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The delivery of this service will help to ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties.
17. Any provider of this service for 16 and 17 year olds must be registered with Ofsted under the Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023.

18. Procurement has been carried out in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Standing Orders. Legal services have been instructed in order to advise on the tender in general and also to provide expertise in the drafting of the Contract Terms and Conditions for both the Block and Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) arrangements.

HR Implications

19. There are no HR implications for the Council in this decision since the effect of TUPE will be limited between the existing provider(s) and the new contractor(s) appointed following the proposed procurement. All relevant information has been shared between organisations and they have been briefed on seeking their own, independent legal advice on liabilities.

Other Implications:

Equalities Implications

20. The tender documentation has been developed in accordance with the statutory obligations as set out in Equality legislation and under the umbrella provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

The equalities impact assessment identifies that this service will impact positively upon the experiences and outcomes of 16 to 25 year olds who find themselves in need of support and accommodation. This is an inclusive approach to supporting young adults to remain within their local communities and within Somerset.

The Local Authority Equality Officer has been consulted and has provided advice for the Equalities Impact Assessment that is appended to this report.

Community Safety Implications

21. The tender documentation will set out community-based activities which successful bidders will positively promote to foster good community relationships and enable young people to become actively engaged within in their community, mitigating negative public perceptions.

The successful providers will be fully supported in developing the Council's approach to responding to, and safely managing, complex safeguarding and

child protection matters that might arise encompassing County Lines, Child exploitation and adolescent safeguarding matters.

There is no anticipated impact on local crime rates. Young adults will be positively supported to be actively engaged within their communities and supported provisions to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

22. The tender will request properties are located close to travel network links to enable young people to travel to employment and training. Also, that properties are aligned with the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy.
23. The tender will set out that this cohort of young adults are fully supported to engage with education, employment and training opportunities.

Health and Safety Implications

24. There are no specific health and safety implications arising from this decision but all documentation will include references to Health and Safety legislation and the Ofsted regulation of supported accommodation.

Health and Wellbeing Implications

25. This service, through the provision of appropriately skilled and qualified staff, will improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for young adults, some of which who experience complex mental health, emotional, social, and behavioural issues.

Social Value

26. The tender expects successful bidders to demonstrate their ability to add economic, social and environmental value above and beyond the tendered service. There is a clear expectation held by the Council that successful bidders will work with local supply chains and frameworks to commit to Social Value initiatives and work under the Council's Social Value Policy Statement.

Scrutiny comments / recommendations:

27. This decision has been reviewed by both the Scrutiny Committee - Communities and Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families, and are fully supportive.

Background

28. The award of this contract allows the Council to meet many of its obligations under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014 in a way that achieves best value and provides a basis from which individuals with vulnerabilities develop their tenancy and daily living skills and move on to live independently. This contract award supports the Council's response to the prevention of youth homelessness for 16 to 25 year olds.
29. Individuals within this group are either Looked After by the local authority and come under Children's Services or are young people "who are believed to be homeless, eligible for assistance and reason to believe in priority need" who come under the housing authority. Both groups face very similar challenges and have experienced similar levels of disruption to family life.
30. Young people over the age of 16 have the right to choose whether to become Looked After and may decide not to, Some will be over 18 and not care experienced, but this does not mean they do not need a similar level of support, especially with regard to safe accommodation, consistent relationships, access to educational, training and employment opportunities and information and guidance to improve their physical and emotional health and to build positive relationships.
31. In addition to the previous contractual arrangements a group of around 40 young people were living in supported accommodation which were spot purchased arrangements due to their level of complexity and who require specialist support. These new arrangements have been brought together into a block contract as part of this procurement exercise.
32. This service will also include supported accommodation for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). Children seeking asylum who have no responsible adult to care for them, are separated or 'unaccompanied' are automatically children looked after under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989.
33. The concept of the service is to prevent youth homelessness by providing targeted prevention measures. If prevention is not possible the service will allow young people with housing related support needs to progress along a pathway of outcome-focused, needs-led provision with support until they are

able to sustain independent living. Young people are also supported to enter into some form of education, employment or training.

34. The service will support young people with low, medium and high level needs and offer a range of good quality, flexible accommodation with strong transport links so young people are close to employment, education and training opportunities across Somerset. Properties will be staffed according to levels of need and expected to deliver some floating support to young people who move on from their services.
35. The service will expect providers to work together and adopt an alliance approach to share resources and training where appropriate. An outcomes framework will be co-designed with providers to ensure we are monitoring improved outcomes for young people.

Background Papers

36. None

Appendices:

- Appendix A – Tender evaluation report - Housing related support and accommodation for 16-25 year olds in Somerset
- Appendix B – CONFIDENTIAL Tender Evaluation Report
- Service specification for Housing related support and accommodation for 16-25 year olds




Report Sign-Off

	Officer Name	Date Completed
Legal & Governance Implications	David Clark	21/09/2023
Communications	Peter Elliott	21/09/2023
Finance & Procurement	Nicola Hix	22/09/2023
Asset Management	Oliver Woodhams	12/09/2023
Executive Director / Senior Manager	Claire Winter Chris Hall	21/09/2023 21/09/2023
Strategy & Performance (inc workforce)	Alyn Jones	11/09/2023

Executive Lead Member	Councillor Tessa Munt Councillor Federica Smith- Roberts	21/09/2023 20/09/2023
Consulted:		
Local Division Members	n/a	
Opposition Spokesperson	Councillor Frances Nicholson Councillor Andy Dingwall	21/09/2023 Sent 11/09/23
Scrutiny Chair	Councillor Leigh Redman Councillor Gwil Wren	21/09/2023 15/09/2023

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or
www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment

Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)	 Somerset Council	x	 NHS Somerset	 NHS Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
Version	1	Date Completed	12/04/2023	
Description of what is being impact assessed				
<p><u>Re-commissioning of housing related support and accommodation for 16–25 year olds</u></p> <p>The Council is re-commissioning the above service to be in place on 1st April 2024. The current ‘Pathways to Independence’ (P2i) contract is currently delivered by YMCA Brunel Group (in Mendip and South Somerset) and YMCA Dulverton Group (in Sedgemoor and Somerset West and Taunton) and provides a range of supported accommodation (179 beds) across the county for looked after children, care leavers and homeless young people with priority need aged 16-25.</p> <p>Individuals within this group are either Looked After by the local authority and fall under Children’s Services or are young people who are believed to be homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need under homelessness legislation who fall under the housing authority.</p> <p>This service enables the Council to meet many of its obligations under the Homelessness Act 2017, the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014. The concept of the service is to prevent youth homelessness by providing targeted prevention measures. If prevention is not possible</p>				

the service will allow young people with housing related support needs to progress along a pathway of outcome-focused, needs-led provision with floating support until they are able to sustain independent living.

Accommodation is currently located in Minehead, Bridgwater, Taunton, Frome, Street and Yeovil. The new service will replicate this plus other locations such as Glastonbury and Chard.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

Current service data and trends:

Age breakdown and statutory responsibility for P21 residents – (as at February 2023)

	16		17		18		19		20		21		22		23		24		25		Total	Average Age
	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H	C	H		
C=Children's Social Care																						
H=Housing																						
YMCA Brunel Group:	0	0	4	0	9	5	3	6	1	3	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0		
Mendip	0		4		14		9		4		3		0		2		1		0		37	18.9
	0	0	6	0	4	3	0	7	0	2	3	6	0	2	0	4	0	1	0	0		

There is also a cohort of young adults who, due to their high levels of complexity are living in bespoke supported accommodation arrangements outside of the P2I service.

Age breakdown of young people in separate spot-purchased supported accommodation arrangements outside of the P2I service

	16	17	18	19	Total
As at 12th February 2023	13	27	11	1	52
As at 22nd March 2023	10	21	8	1	40

Current Child Looked After (CLA) and Care Leaver (CL) population snapshot data as at 23/03/2023:

Breakdown of age and sex/gender

Age	Male (M)	Female (F)	Non-Binary	Transgender		
16	43	42	0*	0*	No of 16 & 17's	192
17	62	39	0*	0*		
18	52	38	0*	0*	No of 18-21	350
19	54	45	0*	0*		
20	62	48	0*	0*	No of 22-25	45
21	25	18	0*	0*		
22	13	9	0*	0*	Total	587
					Male (M)	324
					Female (F)	249

23	8	5	0*	0*	Non-Binary	7
24	5	4	0*	0*	Transgender	7
25	0	1	0*	0*		

*Redacted data to prevent individuals from being identified.

Breakdown of Asylum status as at 23rd March 2023.

	Male (M)	Female (F)
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	37	2
Adult Asylum Seeker	5	0
Indefinite Leave to Remain	7	2
Refugee Status	24	1
Exhausted Asylum	1	0
Human Protection under the European Court of Human Rights applied for	1	0
Total	75	5

There is a strong male bias for young people seeking asylum and if these young people were not included in the CLA/CL data above the male to female ratio would be much closer to 50:50 (249:244).

Breakdown of Ethnicity:

White British	446
White Irish	2
White European	13
White Other	3
Black British	19
Asian British	13
Mixed White & Asian	12
Mixed White & Black African	3
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	7
Mixed Other	8
Traveller Irish Heritage	2
Gypsy Roma	7
Vietnamese	3
Any Other Ethnic Group	49
Total	587

The 2021 Census data indicates that 8.4% of Somerset households comprise of residents from different ethnic groups but this data indicates that 24% of the CLA/CL cohort are from different ethnic groups. However, if the 80 young people seeking asylum were not included in this data 12% would be from different ethnic groups, which is above the Somerset baseline figure.

Breakdown of religion

Atheist	19
Baptist	1
Christian	93
Church of England	46
Jehovah Witness	2
Muslim	73
None	244
Other	8
Other Christian	7
Refused	1
Roman Catholic	7
Unknown	78
Blank	8
Total	587

The 2021 Census data noted a large increase since 2011 in the number of Somerset residents identifying with no religion (total 40%) and a corresponding decrease in those identifying as Christian, which reflects a national trend. Within this cohort there is also 40% of young people identifying with no religion.

Breakdown of sexual orientation

Heterosexual	183
Other	26
Prefer not to say	56
Blank	322
Total	587

Breakdown of marital status

Married	3 (<1%)
Single	281
With partner	17
Unknown/blank	286
Total	587

Breakdown of disability

Yes	234
No	353

Total 587

Breakdown of CLA/CLAs with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Active EHCP 170

Category

Cognition & Learning 26

Communication & Interaction 16

Emotional, Behavioural, Social 22

Sensory, Physical, Medical 1

SEN Primary Need

Social, Emotional, Mental health 100

Moderate Learning Disabilities 11

Profound, multiple Learning Disabilities 1

Severe Learning Disabilities 14

Autistic Spectrum Disorder 12

Speech, language, communication 26

Physical disability 1

Breakdown of housing data from April 2022 – February 2023

For the period this data refers to, there were 4 separate housing teams across the previous 4 district councils in Somerset; Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton and South Somerset. The data recorded varies between the 4 areas but in the future this will be consistent now that we are a unitary authority.

	Mendip (East)	Sedgemoor (North)	Somerset West and Taunton (West)	South Somerset (South)
Total enquiries	163	320	352	267
Male	75	152	154	86
Female	85	168	192	181
Unknown/other gender	3	0	6	0
White British	152	143	Not Known	132
Different Ethnic Group	8	18	Not Known	13
Ethnic group blank/not known	3	159	Not Known	122

Specific housing issues for young people:

- Young people aged 16 and 17 are unable to have a tenancy without a guarantor and so need to be able to access supported accommodation.
- It is harder for young people to access private rented accommodation due to lack of references; a deposit/rent-in-advance; a track record of successfully living independently and are also only entitled to the shared accommodation rate.¹ The private rented sector is also shrinking. This supports the need for young people's accommodation.

Accommodation needs to be high quality and furnished as residents may not have the skills and resources to do this themselves. Providers will be encouraged to make the accommodation as homely as possible with good communal spaces to encourage positive peer relationships.

¹ Care leavers are entitled to the one-bed rate until they are 25.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

- Young people and current residents within the P2I service
- Two market engagement events have been held in March 2023 to understand the market response
- Members of the P2I board which include representatives from all 4 housing teams
- Children’s Social Care teams

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation needs to be situated close to employment, education and training opportunities and other community services. • Accommodation needs to be geographically spread across the county to enable young people to maintain their support networks due to limited public transport access. • Accommodation needs to be affordable (local housing allowance rates) or be ‘specified accommodation’ as defined by housing benefit regulations because people under the age of 35 receive the shared accommodation 	□	□	☒

	<p>rate which is lower than the one-bed rate unless they are living in specified accommodation. Additionally, apprentices and young people under the age of 22 have lower National Minimum Wages than the National Living Wage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people will have a private bedroom to provide privacy and personal space in addition to shared areas. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new service will continue to offer provision to young people aged between 16 and 25 who are looked after children, care leavers or homeless and in priority need. • There is currently a specific, enhanced offer for children looked after aged 16 and 17 which will be expanded alongside the main service to reduce the need for expensive bespoke spot purchasing arrangements. • Ofsted are introducing new legislation around regulating supported accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds and providers will need to have registered by October 2023. • Young people will receive housing related support to develop the skills they need to live independently and sustain their own accommodation. 			
<p>Disability</p>	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the service there will be some accessible accommodation and providers will be encouraged to undertake an accessibility audit and carry out reasonable improvements. • The service will provide safe, supported accommodation for young people transferring into adults' services. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people with additional learning needs or disabilities may be at a disadvantage if the service is not provided in a way that is tailored to their specific needs. 	<p>□</p>	<p>⊗</p>	<p>□</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers will offer inclusive, person-centred support and ensure that deaf young people have access to British Sign Language interpreters to enable them to communicate effectively. 			
Gender reassignment	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation will be gender neutral. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service specification will require gender neutral accommodation which is inclusive to young people of binary, non-binary or fluid gender and avoids stereotypical approaches to ensure equality of services and experience. The service specification and contract will specify that staff will model appropriate language and preferred pronouns and appropriate challenge should be made where language or behaviour (by staff or other young people) is not inclusive. Occupancy agreements will require residents not to impact other residents' peaceful occupation of the accommodation. 	□	□	☒
Marriage and civil partnership	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be some accommodation for married and 'established' couples within the service. On review of the data there is no impact on this group. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On review of the data there is no impact on this group. 16 and 17 year olds are not able to marry. Married couples will receive individual housing related support as well as support in relation to a joint application for housing. 	□	□	☒

<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the service there will be accommodation suitable for pregnant women and parents with their children, although not every bedspace will be suitable for children. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person automatically has priority need when homeless if they are pregnant, live with a pregnant woman or have dependent children living with them, who are reasonably expected to live with them. • Providers will be expected to support pregnant women to move on to appropriate alternative accommodation before the baby is born if they are living in supported accommodation that is unsuitable for a baby. This may include: their own accommodation, dispersed or specialist supported accommodation, Family and Assessment Support Team within fostering. 	□	□	☒
<p>Race and ethnicity</p>	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On review of the data there is no impact on this group. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of supported accommodation should take account of cultural requirements and ensure that staff have access to translator services where necessary and have a good understanding of a range of cultural needs. • Appropriate and inclusive language should be used by Providers, residents and visitors. • Special consideration should be given to language used by staff where a young person's first language is not English. This is particularly important in regard to health and safety advice e.g. for physical activities or fire safety information. Providers will offer inclusive, person-centred support 	□	□	☒

	<p>and ensure that young people have access to translation services to enable them to communicate effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate challenge should be made where language or behaviour (by staff or other young people) is not inclusive. • Providers will be asked to demonstrate how services will be sensitive, respond to any disadvantage and provide positive affirmation of racial and ethnic origins. 			
Religion or belief	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist accommodation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) should have a prayer space/space for reflection. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people should be supported to access provision that meets their cultural needs and allows them to practice their faith without discrimination. • Providers should provide prayer mats and religious texts in resident's home language where required. • Welcome packs and location risk assessments should identify closest places of worship, halal retailers and other community services/resources and residents should be supported to access these. 	□	□	☒
Sex	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities (including toilets and bathrooms) will be unisex and non-gender specific. • On review of the data there is no impact on this group. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p>	□	□	☒

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers will be asked to demonstrate how services will ensure that equal opportunities for males and females are promoted, and that stereotypes are avoided in relation to activities interests and hobbies. • Appropriate and inclusive language should be used by Providers, residents and visitors. 			
Sexual orientation	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On review of the data there is no impact on this group. <p><u>Service Delivery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers will be asked to demonstrate how services will promote equal opportunities for young people of all sexual orientation and that a child or young person’s sexual identity (including when there is uncertainty) is respected and positively affirmed. • Providers will consider matching residents as part of placement planning. • Appropriate challenge should be made where language or behaviour (by staff or other young people) is not inclusive. 	□	□	☒
Other, e.g. carers, veterans, homeless, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<p><u>Accommodation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency accommodation will be part of the service to help young people who are ‘homeless tonight.’ • The cost and availability of transport should be considered when developing accommodation. • The location of accommodation should be considered to provide housing across Somerset that does not lead young people to become isolated. 	□	□	☒

Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Somerset Council and the successful providers will develop the service in response to all elements highlighted above as part of the launch of the service.	01/04/2024	Julie Breeze, Strategic Commissioner, providers	Through contract monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>The service specification requested accommodation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• geographically spread across Somerset;• close to employment, education and training opportunities and services;• has transport links;• is affordable and gender neutral;• provides some accessible bedspaces and some bedspaces suitable for married couples and/or parents with children with them. <p>It will also include service delivery that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provides person-centred support;• sensitively responds to disadvantage;• uses inclusive language, preferred pronouns and appropriate challenge;• provides access to British Sign Language and translation services;• positively affirms protected characteristics;	01/10/2023	Julie Breeze, Strategic Commissioner,	Through contract monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> carefully matches residents through placement planning; has welcome packs providing information about the support provided, access to wider support and expectations about behaviour. 				
<p>If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.</p>				
<p>None</p>				
<p>Completed by:</p>	<p>Suzie King, Children's Commissioning Officer</p>			
<p>Date</p>	<p>12/04/2023</p>			
<p>Signed off by:</p>	<p>Tom Rutland/Julie Breeze</p>			
<p>Date</p>	<p>28/04/2023</p>			
<p>Equality Lead sign off name:</p>	<p>Tom Rutland</p>			
<p>Equality Lead sign off date:</p>	<p>28/04/2023</p>			
<p>To be reviewed by: (officer name)</p>	<p>Julie Breeze</p>			
<p>Review date:</p>	<p>April 2024</p>			