

## **Freedom of Information – Response – 26951**

*I would be most grateful if you would provide me, under the Freedom of Information Act, details in respect to the contract below.*

*Social work and related services:*

*Stoke Quay LD Supported Housing*

*The details we require are:*

*What are the contractual performance KPI's for this contract?*

Please see the attachment named: 'Service Specification'

*Actual spend on this contract from the start of the contract to the current date*

£2,028,902.00

*Start date & duration of contract?*

2nd July 2018, 3 years + 36 months

*Could you please provide a copy of the service specification given to all bidders for when this contract was last advertised?*

See attachment named: 'Service Specification'; note, individual service spec and overarching specification linked to the Framework when the service was commissioned included.

*Is there an extension clause in the framework(s)/contract(s) and, if so, the duration of the extension?*

Yes. Current extension of 36 months in place.

*Has a decision been made yet on whether the framework(s)/contract(s) are being either extended or renewed?*

Yes. The contract will continue to run whilst decisions are made in respect of all commissioning / procurement activity in response to the Local Government Review outcome. This contract will be incorporated into the decision making for procurement activity of all Supported Housing across Suffolk.

*Who is the senior officer (outside of procurement) responsible for this contract?*

Amy Rowntree



## **Avalon Court, Stoke Quay, Ipswich**

### **Accommodation Details**

Avalon Court is self-contained accommodation consisting of 15 flats. The service is part of a larger building which is a mix of general needs, supported housing for people with a physical disability and people with a learning disability. The service being tendered is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and is for people with a learning disability.

Evening meals are also provided as part of the tenancy agreement.

The building is owned and managed by Genesis Housing Association and the successful provider would be expected to sign up to an SLA.

### **Current Support Hours**

One flat is occupied by a couple and support is provided to both individuals. Therefore, a total of 16 people supported at the service currently. 'Floating' hours are available to any customer that requires them outside of their 1:1 hours.

In addition to the support hours, Genesis Housing Association also provide a wellbeing service. The wellbeing service consists of at least two members of staff on duty during the day and 1 waking night member of staff 8.00pm to 8.00am. As a result, no night cover is currently provided by the support provider.

The Provider will be expected to review allocation of both shared and individual hours with Adult Community services within 6 months of contract start date.

### **Needs of current Customers (General – not person specific)**

1.Diagnosis: Learning Disability, Autism, all flats and accommodation is suitable for people with additional physical support needs Mental health conditions

2. Support Needs: minimum of 6 hours support required, need to be able to be left alone in flat on own without support

3.Communication: no restrictions

4.Interests/activities: any activities that provide independent stimulus and /or developmental opportunities

5. Family/Friend connections: family and friends engagement is encouraged



# Service Specification Supported Housing

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## Service Specification

<b>Service</b>	<b>Supported Housing Support Services</b>
<b>Contract Period</b>	<b>4 Years</b>

**1. Introduction**

In entering into a contract with Suffolk County Council (SCC), the Provider agrees to comply with this service specification. This specification sets out Suffolk County Council's requirements and is part of the contract for the delivery of Supported Housing services.

**2. Supported Housing Services Definition and Statement of purpose**

This specification is for the care and support element of Supported Housing services. The Council would require the care and support provider to source the housing ideally in partnership with a recognised social landlord. All of the housing management cost must be covered by rental income.

A full strategic housing review looked at all housing related to customer groups directly relevant to ACS services. This considered the future commissioning and procurement of Supported Housing services for all customer groups other than those commissioned from the mental health pooled fund.

Both the full strategic review of specialist housing and the process of implementing Suffolk's Learning Disability Strategy has continued a strong focus on co-designing change which was a hallmark in the development of the strategy itself. The implementation of a new approach to Supported Housing has actively engaged with customers, providers and practitioners in a continuation of this co-design work through events, focus groups and engagement with individuals. The culmination of this co-design work is a set of agreed design principles which should be the hallmark of how Supported Housing services are delivered under this framework.

Suffolk's Supported Housing Design Principles are:

1. **My house is my home, not a placement** – All supported housing should be regarded and feel like the customer's **own home**, in a way that we would all expect in a similar housing environment (e.g. tenant's right equivalent to those expected in general needs secure or assured tenancies). This includes feeling safe at home and in the local community.
2. **Freedom to take risks and to learn** – Extending choice and control to customers includes freedom to make bad choices. Customers have told us that they have learned from making bad choices, grown from that and achieved greater independence as a result.
3. **Being in the community means being part of the community** – The support given to customers in supported housing should take account of the need to ensure that connections are made between customers and their local community, outside of engagement with specialist day, evening or weekend services. This would include opportunities to build personal relationships.
4. **Procurement approaches have to work in the best interests of customers** – Any system of procurement must be flexible, be able to facilitate the development of services around the needs of individual customers and offer customer choice; alongside ensuring consistent quality, fairness to providers and good value for money.
5. **Clear information and understanding that empowers** – Having clear information which is accessible is essential for customers and their families to understand their rights and responsibilities. This would relate to tenancy agreements, alternative housing options or more general information.
6. **Choice, control and flexibility** – Customers must have choice over their care and support provider and where they live. This may not be absolute choice (for example supported

housing may only be available in certain locations), but within those parameters, choice must be able to be exercised by customers.

7. **It's about the customer's needs and wants not the needs and wants of organisations** – Organisations including providers and statutory partners who help support customers need to ensure that there is good and regular communication to ensure support to customers is effective. Organisational boundaries do not need to, and should not get in the way.
8. **Value for money, not care on the cheap** – Public bodies need to ensure good value for money is achieved, working with providers to ensure charges are fair, proportionate to the support needs of customers and as cost effectively delivered as possible - to ensure sustainable good quality care and support.

Suffolk County Council want to support innovative providers who are flexible, responsive, person centred and at all times take into account and respect an individual's dignity, independence and choices. Including the right to make poor choices and take calculated risks.

### 3. National/ local context

#### The Care Act 2014 and housing

*"Integrated services built around an individual's needs are often best delivered through the home. The suitability of living accommodation is a core component of an individual's wellbeing and when developing integrated services, local authorities should consider the central role of housing within integration, with associated formal arrangements with housing and other partner organisations."*

Care Act Guidance 4.90 The Care Act 2014 provides the legal framework for making care and support more personalised, preventative and integrated. The Act has broadened the scope of councils' responsibilities beyond people who are eligible for adult social care, and they now have extensive general responsibilities for their local population, as well as some specific duties. The use of the term 'support', alongside 'care' is therefore quite deliberate. A fundamental principle is the shift from entitlement to particular services, to an approach based on promoting wellbeing and achieving agreed outcomes for individuals.

#### Local context

The Supporting Lives Connecting Communities (SLCC) model is based on some **key principles** including Prevention, Enablement, Personalisation, Integration, Community responses, and simplifying responses to our customers to achieve their desired outcomes.

The SLCC model offers the opportunity for our social work practitioners to connect people to all kinds of organisations, voluntary and community services. We know that many communities are very good at supporting the people who live within them. SLCC is all about building on that resourcefulness and helping people to remain independent in their homes. In summary, SLCC has been designed and rolled out with the aims of:

- helping people to stay more independent, for longer
- providing a better response to everyone, as well as those the county has a statutory duty to support
- improving personalisation, so that people have greater choice and control over how they meet their needs
- strengthening partnership with community-based services and resources to facilitate a 'whole community' approach to improving choice and control
- developing a more preventative approach, to avoid people's health and social care needs from escalating wherever possible

<http://www.thesuffolkcongress.org.uk/files/health-subgroup/2012-11-15%20Suffolk%20Adult%20Care%20presentation.PDF>

#### [Suffolk's Learning Disability Strategy](#)

We have a locally agreed Joint Learning Disabilities Strategy that has a clear vision:

## The Vision

People with learning disabilities live good lives as part of their community, with the right support, at the right time, from the right people.

[The implementation of the strategy is currently being rolled out and this framework should be seen in that context. The programme of implementation is being guided by self-advocates and customer champions for each of the work streams; Supported Housing is one of those workstreams.](#)

[Providers are strongly advised to appraise themselves of this important work, further information can be found at:](#)

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/learning-disabilities/>

### **Specialist provision – Positive Behavioural Support**

When supporting people with learning disabilities who are at risk of behaviour that challenges we would expect to see:

- Ongoing functional behaviour assessments for everyone
- Behaviour support plans for everyone (and the quality standard they must reach)
- The need for leaders to visibly support PBS behaviours
- Environmental standards
- Specialised training requirements
- Internal quality assurance standards and processes needed to understand challenging behaviour in the service.

Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) is recognised as an effective and ethical way of supporting people with learning disabilities who are at risk of behaviour that challenges. It and/or its key components have been recommended in a number of policy documents and professional guidelines including the NICE guidelines for Challenging Behaviour; Ensuring Quality Services; Positive and Proactive Care: Reducing the need for Restrictive Interventions; A Positive and Proactive Workforce; and Supporting Staff who work with people who Challenge Services.

<http://pbsacademy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/PBS-Academy-Specification-for-contracts.pdf>

### **Customers with Learning Disabilities and Mental Health Issues**

For customers with a Learning Disability, there is specific “NICE” guidance on mental health problems affecting this customer group. Provider should ensure that they have good awareness of that guidance and put in place approaches that take due regard of this guidance. Full details can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng54/resources/mental-health-problems-in-people-with-learning-disabilities-prevention-assessment-and-management-1837513295557>

## **4. Latest information about housing support need in Suffolk**

Supported Housing is an important component of the provision of Care and Support for people with a range of care and support needs. This Framework would be used to encompass the procurement of care and support in Supported Housing for all customers outside of services commissioned by the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust (Mental Health pooled fund) – see details below.

The cohort of customers that are being discharged from long stay NHS hospitals under the Transforming Care agenda would also form part of the customer groups commissioned for under this



framework.

The County Council are currently embarked on a full review of Supported Housing looking at the best models, that deliver the most efficient and effective care and support for customers. This review will be driven by the aims of both the Learning Disability Strategy and the Design Principles we have developed as a result of the co-design work driven by that Strategy. The Council would expect providers to be active participants in that work, engaging with the Council to ensure any changes are successfully achieved in the best interest of customers.

Our work on assessing the potential future demand shows that an increased supply of Supported Housing is likely to be needed in the medium and longer term. Although the shape of that supply is being determined through our full review it is likely to feature more opportunities for sharing care and support costs between customers and the greater use of assistive technology both in the assessment of need and in the provision of care.

## 5. Aims and Objectives

We want to commission services in a sustainable, fairly priced market which:-

- Provides support services driven and orientated by Suffolk's Supported Housing design principles
- Are personalised to each individual Customer
- Demonstrate robust systems to ensure that health, safety and wellbeing is maintained at all times
- Seizes opportunities in the use of assistive technology to determine the most appropriate package of care and support for customers and that assist them to maximum independence
- Are based on co-production with providers, commissioners and customers; sharing knowledge and responding to challenges together
- Maintain and improve levels of independence and prevent decline
- Offer the right service in the right place at the right time – links with local community resources
- Focuses on outcomes rather than outputs
- Are able to respond and flex with the changing needs of Customers
- Fully accounts for and delivers health care objectives for individual customers

In addition, services are delivered in a manner that is consistent with and supportive of Suffolk County Council's *Supporting Lives, Connecting Communities* Transformation Programme - <http://www.thesuffolkcongress.org.uk/files/health-subgroup/2012-11-15%20Suffolk%20Adult%20Care%20presentation.PDF>

### Service Outcomes and Principles

Services must always be provided in a way that enables the people using the Service to maximise their independence, health and wellbeing and supports their social, spiritual, emotional and healthcare needs. The Service Provider must ensure that all staff work in an enabling way to support customers in achieving these outcomes. Staff must be adequately trained, skilled and supported in order to tailor the care and support service to meet the needs and outcomes of people using the Service, as set out in Care and Support Plans, Health Action Plans and all other relevant documentation.

Accommodation must be appropriate to the needs of Customers and provide an environment that is a home, not an institutional placement. This would mean for example that anything personal to an individual customer, including medication is kept in the customer's own room (if in shared accommodation), secured if necessary, rather than in separate office space.

Providers will be required to adopt an approach to the provision of care and support that:

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- Is focused on a developmental approach which equips customers to have maximum choice and control over their lives and works to minimise their dependency and maximise their independence. This would include the support needed to access training, education, leisure and employment opportunities outside of the home.
- Ensures customer's feel a sense of value and self-esteem, are confident about voicing their opinions, and are able to influence service delivery. Customers should be supported to make their own decisions, take control of their own lives and to maintain independence.
- Develops a flexible model of support to ensure that people using the service get the right care and support, in the right place with the right professionals involved. This will include engaging with customers to jointly plan care and support and collaborating with people's families, networks of support and advocates as appropriate and other organisations in order to meet the outcomes agreed with and for people using the service.
- Supports people to manage behaviours that challenge proactively adopting a Positive Behavioural Support approach, seeking professional input and advice through, for example health services whenever this is appropriate.
- Ensures that where there are supported transfers between Supported Housing and other support settings, that there is a formal transfer of information to any new Providers. This must be both in writing and through a verbal discussion.
- Support people using the service to improve/maintain a healthy lifestyle through a balanced diet, exercise, regular medical and dental checks, proper management of medication, and promotion of self-awareness of medical and other conditions. This includes being proactive in supporting them to seek guidance and advice from appropriate organisations on matters relating to their health.
- Assists customers as necessary, to register with the normal community health facilities including the General Practitioner and Dentist of their choice (assuming the agreement of the GP. and the Dentist); assist customers to access medically related services such as dentist, chiropodist, optician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, hospital outpatient as required.
- Always ensures that people using the services health care needs are recognised, identified and addressed through their individual care and support plans and also through ensuring that Health Action Plans are in place, understood and delivered as appropriate, with responsibility for delivery clearly identified. Where a pre-health check is required, the service will facilitate this. The service will ensure that people using the service are registered with a GP and support people in accessing primary and secondary care as well as community health services. Support staff will be skilled to notice changes or deterioration in people's health, and facilitate these being addressed.
- Recognised that people of all ages with all levels of learning disabilities can be affected by mental health problems. When a person is not able to describe or express their distress, and when they have coexisting physical health problems, their mental health problems can be difficult to identify. This leads to mental health problems remaining unrecognised, which prolongs unnecessary distress. Providers should train all staff supporting customers with a Learning Disability to understand the nature of mental health problems in people with LD, how to recognise problems, how presentation differs from people without LD, risk factors for Learning Disabilities and Mental Health (LDMH) and how and when to refer to specialist services.
- Staff working with people with LDMH should be able communicate effectively, taking into account the person's communication needs and level of understanding. Care staff should also understand the concepts of consent, capacity (incl Mental Capacity Act) in decision-making and be prepared to contribute to work with individuals and other agencies in decision making.
- Takes due account of people's health, medical health and physical wellbeing, and to build these needs into all support plans, so as to ensure that all aspects of such plans are understood and delivered, with responsibility for delivery clearly identified. Providers will be expected to work proactively together with social work teams, health services, other care and

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support providers, community groups, leisure services, education and training services and other relevant organisations providing support or developmental opportunities for customers. The Service will need to adapt to meet expectations of emerging and developing integrated health and care service models arising from the Health and Care Review in Suffolk and other drivers.

Staff members will have the specific knowledge and skills to work with people using the service to achieve optimal wellbeing. Members of staff will be expected to demonstrate to the Council their understanding of health promotion and how they work with people using the Service to maintain health and wellbeing. This will include working closely with those who know the person best, including Family Carers and Advocates as appropriate.

Organisational development will include consideration of staff understanding of how to maintain good health; local health services (and how to access them), approaches that maximise independence for customers thereby enhancing wellbeing and learning from best practise in these regards from other providers.

The provider will also demonstrate a commitment to preventative care as a means of reducing the number of emergency admissions and understands the specific service requirements of people customers. They will be aware that certain conditions, such as epilepsy, constipation and conditions related to dysphagia or swallowing (such as chest infections, pneumonia and gastro-oesophageal reflux disease) have been identified as one of the top five reasons for hospital admissions for people with learning disabilities (IHaL) and as such will invest in appropriate support and training, to help reduce admissions from these conditions.

Providers should understand that poor oral hygiene can lead to a number of serious health conditions including heart disease. They will be aware that pain can also cause behaviour that challenges services and ensure that this is not overlooked when providing care services and support. The provider will ensure that staff working with people using the Service understand and maintain good oral hygiene and are accessing the dentist at least annually, where this is their choice or in their assessed Best Interests.

The Council expects the Provider to both proactively identify and advise of further opportunities for Progression, Recovery or Enablement, but also to alert Practitioners including health practitioners to any concerns regarding deterioration in the abilities of people using the Service which may indicate further assessment and/or professional input.

### **6. Supported Housing customer groups**

Suffolk currently provides a range of Supported Housing services to vulnerable people, including;

- Customers with a Learning Disability, included those with dual diagnosis and challenging behaviour
- Customers with Autism, included those with dual diagnosis and challenging behaviour
- Customers with a Physical Disability
- Customers with a Sensory Disability coexisting with a Learning Disability
- Customers with Acquired Brain Injury

Customers can have combinations of support needs for example Learning Disabilities with a Physical Disability or Autism with Mental Health issues; the list above is therefore an indication of the primary definition of needs rather than an exhaustive list of all needs.

The Commissioning of Supported Housings service for people whose primary need is related to Mental Health is covered by the pooled fund and is outside of the remit of this specification

### **7. Service capacity**

All supported housing services outside of those commissioned by the pooled fund will be awarded

under this framework. The individual specification of the service needs will be driven by the Social Work assessment of the customer's care and support needs. All supported housing providers who are part of this framework will have an opportunity to bid for individual contracts, provided that they can guarantee the provision of housing, either in partnership with a separate housing provider or by themselves, on a long term basis. All costs related to housing management must be covered by rental income, either directly or with housing benefit support.

Whilst there is no restriction on housing and support being provided by the same organisation, should the care and support element not prove suitable for the customer or the customer wishes to exercise choice in their care and support provider, the exercising of such choice should not lead to those customers losing their tenancy or lease.

The service will provide the services defined in the individual spot purchased contracts subject to review of the customer's needs.

## **8. Service Access**

### **Geographic coverage / boundaries**

The provider needs to define their area of operation in relation to District and Borough Boundaries (i.e. providers can provide services in one or several of the District and Borough areas in Suffolk). The relevant boundaries being the districts or boroughs of:

- Babergh
- Forest Heath
- Ipswich
- Mid Suffolk
- St Edmundsbury
- Suffolk Coastal
- Waveney

### **Customer Groups**

We expect the fundamentals of the approach as defined in other areas of this specification to be common for all customers. However, the specialist approach needed for each customer group is recognised and we would require providers to define the customer group that they can provide services for along with their specific experiences and skills that enable them to provide that support.

### **Standards and contract monitoring**

We would require the provider to facilitate access to services in order for the Council to assess the well-being of customers and the maintenance of quality. We would require providers to work with the Council on meeting:

- Standards of service set out under CICH Service Quality Tool (or similar).
- Dealing with any safeguarding concerns
- Complying with the requirements in terms of contract management, including diversity and performance monitoring.
- Comply with local protocols and other requirements regarding information sharing, needs and risk assessment.
- In the assessment or re-assessment of customer's care and support needs

### **Countywide Allocations system**

The Council is reviewing the current system for the allocation of supported housing. Providers will be required to continue to work under the current arrangements, but work with the Council in the implementation of any new system. The hallmarks of the new system are likely to be:

- Direct access for providers to an on-line system for notifying the Council of vacancies

- Performance information to be fed into the system by providers
- Council maintaining up to date information and a housing waiting list; with clear criteria for prioritising customers on that waiting list
- The continuation of allocation panels to undertake more detailed work in matching customers to suitable supported housing

#### **Publicising the service**

- The Provider will publicise the service it provides and what it can offer in a range of accessible formats and monitor the effectiveness of these arrangements, making adjustments as necessary to ensure equality of access
- The provider will promote and publicise routes into its service(s) so that access and decisions about access are clear to individuals and referral agencies. This will be supported by a published clear and transparent allocation decision making process whereby referrals to the service are considered solely on need and all referrals will be considered equally
- Providers will be required to add details of their service to Suffolk InfoLink, which is a directory of organisations, services and activities for all ages in Suffolk. There is no charge to do this, and being on InfoLink will help individuals find out about your service. You can find the directory at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/infolink](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/infolink)

#### **Information and Guidance**

Section 4 of The Care Act 2014 places a duty on the Council to put in place measures that ensure customers are supplied with appropriate information and advice. Therefore providers are required to supply the following information;

- When and how to ask for an assessment from Suffolk County Council
- Basic information on Suffolk County Council Services
- Basic information on what financial support is available from Suffolk County Council
- Signpost to independent financial advisors
- Basic information on the advocacy service and when and how to use it

### **9. Service model**

In the delivery of the services providers should ensure that they apply Suffolk's Supported Housing Design Principles in their approach. Suffolk County Council employ an approach that critically examines what we do by asking ourselves if what we do takes us closer of further away from the outcomes we seek to achieve; we expect the same approach from providers. In all aspects of service delivery providers should critically evaluate what they do and how they do it, asking themselves, does what we do take us closer of further away from the Supported Housing design principles.

Providers will be evaluated for inclusion on the framework on the basis of a quality assessment. The award of any new services under this framework will be evaluated on a call-off basis, using the templates shown at Appendix 1 and 2.

#### **The Service will:**

- Provide support to customers that is personalised, builds upon their strengths and assets to address their individual needs and focus on the outcomes they wish to achieve.
- Provide flexible support that aims to develop and increase the independence of customers, maximising their choice and control and reducing their dependency on support.
- Support Customers to access work, leisure and other activities in the local community that enhance their wellbeing and independence.
- Build on customer strengths with an asset based approach to develop links within the local community.

- Establish and maintain strong and effective working relationships, practices and protocols with other providers and agencies and services that facilitate the achievement of positive outcomes for customers.
- Enable and empower customers through the delivery of effective support in an environment where independence, social inclusion, change and recovery are actively promoted.

**The service provider will ensure:**

- Suitable and safe accommodation is provided (see section 11 Accommodation standards)
- With regard to the property the Provider will work with the landlord (or their own landlord services if relevant) to ensure that accommodation is suitable for purpose and conforms to prevailing standards.
- Provide conditions in any tenancy agreement or other conditions affecting the right of occupation that are no more restrictive than one would normally expect for any other tenant or occupants in similar types of occupation. For example, there would be an expectation that the standard tenancy terms and conditions for a given social landlord would apply to tenants in supported housing tenancies.
- Work cooperatively and in collaboration with the allocations process for supported housing.
- Have in place appropriate tools to ensure that customers can effectively lead their own support planning (e.g. Recovery Star) if appropriate for that customer
- Ensure services and facilities are suitable for the customer group
- Have kitchen facilities available to customers to prepare and cook meals as part of developing independent living skills in shared accommodation.
- Ensure accommodation and services are accessible for people with physical/ sensory disabilities
- Support customers to access the internet to enable people to access housing, education and employment opportunities and other information for personal development
- Where possible offer a peer mentoring scheme to support customers new to the service
- Wherever possible use the experience of volunteers to support customers to develop life skills, take part in meaningful day-time activities, find work, stay in education or take up training.
- Develop and review customer's support plan with a particular focus on assessing skills developed that enable progress towards greater independence.

**Developing the Service**

- The provider will be expected to develop the service during the life of the Contract to ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of the services.
- The Provider will seek and act on feedback from a range of stakeholders including customers in order to develop and improve the service.
- There will be a requirement for providers to work with Suffolk County Council in the development of supported housing services, therefore services that are included in the provision at the outset of the specification but may be requested in the future.
- It is anticipated that a partnership protocol will be developed in each locality which the provider will be expected to assist to develop, agree and work within. This will include expectations to work collaboratively including around such matters as information sharing and proactively sharing and managing risk.
- In recognition of the best value duty placed on the Council by the Local Government Act 1999, the Service Provider and the Council shall work together to identify how the Services can be continuously improved. Service Providers in accordance with its obligations under the Framework Contract and subsequent Call Off contracts, provide a service that represents value for money.

**10. Accommodation Standards**

**General**

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- The accommodation provided or secured by the Service Provider may be approved and inspected by, or on behalf of, the Council. The Service Provider is required to permit entry and access to the premises when requested for the purposes of talking with customers who are resident or to inspect the premises.
- The accommodation shall be located in the area of Suffolk. The building should have easy access to transport routes and other facilities and be situated in a location where vulnerable people can live safely and enjoy privacy.
- There is a requirement for a Service Level Agreement, lease or management agreement to be in place between the care and support provider and the landlord. Such an agreement should incorporate arrangements to comply with the standards set out below.

### **Physical standards and facilities**

- The accommodation will provide homely accommodation for those living there, with good facilities that can accommodate visitors.
- The accommodation shall create a positive impression both inside and outside, such that customers would be pleased to invite relatives and friends to their residence.
- In shared accommodation customers will have the key to their own bedroom/bedsit/flat which will be of at least sufficient size to accommodate a bed, wardrobe, bedside cabinet, chair and small table.
- There is a requirement to have reasonable access to the internet and where possible Wi-Fi.
- The Service Provider shall undertake monthly Health & Safety risk assessments of premises, to identify health and safety and security risks to staff and customers.
  - The Service Provider will maintain records of the assessments, the participants, key findings and actions taken.
  - They will also include any risks faced by lone workers.
  - There will be an emergency escape plan that all staff and customers are familiar with and have practiced so they know what to do in an emergency.
  - Welcome/information packs will explain this for customers
- At all times, the Service Provider shall ensure, through their agreement with the landlord, compliance with the requirements of the Housing Acts, Public Health Act, Fire Precautions Act 1971, Furniture and Furnishings Fire Safety Regulations 1988 and as amended 1989 and 1993, and any other national and local regulations as to the safety and standards of housing.
- The accommodation will comply with standards required by the Chartered Institute of Housing Service Quality Tool (SQT) (<http://www.cih.org/sqt>) and Environmental Health services and the Service Provider shall work with customers to ensure such standards are maintained. The Council may update the quality assessment tool used during the lifetime of the framework.
- The accommodation will have a satisfactory up to date NICEIC electrical safety certificates and CORGI gas safety certificates where appropriate. A copy of the certificates will be available for inspection purposes.
- The Service Provider is required to adhere to all Health and Safety Regulations and Guidelines and place smoke and carbon monoxide detectors (for gas appliances) in the accommodation. Where there is a statutory requirement; providers will provide fire doors, extinguishers, smoke blankets and fire exit signs. Regular inspection by the Fire Officer will be certified for inspection where appropriate.
- There will be a member of staff trained as a first aider
- First Aid kits will be kept in the property where a customer has ready access to them and will be fully stocked and regularly checked.

### **11. Key relationships and interdependencies**

- The key working relationships will be with the customers, other accommodation/support providers, local communities, agencies that provide critical services for customers, referral

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agencies, social work teams and commissioners of Suffolk County Council and where appropriate move on accommodation providers (including the private rented sector)

- Working relationships will be developed and maintained and will be positive and cooperative and always in the interest of the best outcome for the customer.
- A key aspect of the service will be to work proactively to ensure that working relationships are developed and maintained. It is vital that these are based on trust, honesty and effective communication and needs/risk information sharing arrangements
  
- Key Partners include:
  - District and Borough Councils
  - Other supported housing providers
  - Accommodation providers
  - Adult and Community Services
  - Community Mental Health Teams
  - Voluntary and Community organisations
  - DWP/ The Work Programme providers
  - Public Health
  - Employment, Education and Training services
  - Primary health care including GPs
  - The individual's network of connections and communities

### **12. Next steps to independence and move-on**

The main aim in the commissioning of Supported Housing Services is to provide long term homes for customer in need of ongoing care and support. However, there is a strong focus on maximising independence for customers and this could include, where appropriate and in the best interest of the individual customer, moving into general needs housing with appropriate floating support as needed. Supported Housing providers would be expected to support customers to access general needs housing in these circumstances.

The provider will support and work with the customer, families and carer's to enable them to use assistive technology. This will include taking full advantage of opportunities for development and progression to reach their potential to be as independent and as safe as possible in their homes and communities. Where possible assistive technology will be used to reduce the reliance on constant staff support and supervision.

### **13. Operational policies**

- The Provider will have a comprehensive set of operational policies in place to govern the service delivered whilst a customer is accommodated within their service to complete a programme of support.
- The range of policies should include parameters governing a person's access and entry to the service, their behaviour whilst there (e.g. criminality, anti-social behaviour, substance use/misuse, personal relationships) and the process of leaving (e.g. moving on, eviction).
- However, the operation of any policy will be mediated by the needs of the individual, and a personalised, flexible approach to interpretation and enforcement will be adopted.



#### 14. Safeguarding

Service providers will ensure that all their policies and procedures take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This will include:

- A robust Safeguarding policy including a clear equality and diversity statement in line with Suffolk LSCB guidance
- Children Missing Policy and effective procedures in place should a child be missing from accommodation
- Arrangements in place to reduce the risk of Child sexual exploitation and Radicalisation
- Service providers will have staff that have appropriate safeguarding and safe practice training consistent with their role and function and adhere to safeguarding guidance and policy, both the service provider and any additional requirements associated with working as part of the service.
- Service providers will ensure that information is shared efficiently and effectively in respect of issues that may affect the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This will include:

- Records, including images relating to children/young people stored securely and safely
- Secure emails and appropriate encryption for sharing sensitive information.
- Service providers will comply with policy and guidance relating to confidentiality and information sharing
- Service providers will be familiar with and deliver services that comply with the Safeguarding policies and practice procedures of Suffolk for both children and adults. - all documents can be found on: <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/procedures/lscb-policies-guidance-and-protocols/> and <http://www.suffolkas.org/>
- Service providers will have in place a Whistle Blowing Policy which is made known to all staff and volunteers. It should contain a clear duty to report to an appropriate authority any circumstances or occurrence which is considered likely to significantly harm the safety, rights or welfare of a young person.

#### 15. Equality and Diversity

- As part of the Equality Act 2010, Suffolk County Council is committed to providing services that are fair and accessible for everyone.
- The County Council also has a responsibility to ensure that its partners, companies and organisations that are commissioned to provide services on its behalf take the same positive approach to equality.
- In line with the Equality Act's (specific duties) Regulations 2011, Suffolk County Council's equality objectives aim to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
  - Advance equality between everybody
  - Foster good relations between communities, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding
- The Act further explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
  - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
  - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

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- The service provider will be expected to deliver services in line with the above Suffolk County Council equality objectives.
- The service provider shall consider the cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic and gender needs of people. Access to interpreters may be required for people whose first language is not English or have a sensory impairment. Providers shall take into account a range of needs and support people to integrate as fully as possible into local community networks, facilities and services as appropriate.
- The service provider shall keep and maintain equality monitoring for all customers against all the protected characteristics

### **16. Notification of critical incidents**

The Provider will notify SCC and the Lead Commissioner as soon as it is practical to do so, if any or the following occur:

- The death of a customer.
- Outbreak of notifiable infectious disease in the Service.
- Any emergency situation e.g. fire, flood affecting the continuation of the service.
- An investigation involving the Police and/or Customer First related to Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults or children

### **17. Housing management and security**

- Where the support provider is also carrying out the housing management function the full cost of carrying out this function must be covered in rental income.
- This cost should include all staff costs associated with the housing management function and a proportion of costs and overheads.
- The cost of providing any staff time, equipment or services and (a proportion of overheads) associated with security and/or enhanced housing management should be met through the service charge
- The Provider should be mindful in its rent and service charge setting policy of the potential for rent and service charges to be unaffordable for those who gain paid employment during their stay.
- Where the landlord and provider of support are different there should be a Service Level Agreement (SLA) or other form of contractual agreement in place.

### **18. Staff Competencies**

- The Provider will ensure the availability of competent, trained, knowledgeable and experienced staff to deliver the service effectively and achieve successful outcomes.
- The Provider will have clear requirements for staff in terms of core training, skills and competencies and the timescales to achieve and refresh these. This will include requirements for manager's and/or supervisor's training, skills and competencies in order for them to be effective in management and supervision of support staff.
- Staff must be appropriately supervised and supported to be effective in their work. They should have resources, facilities and time to keep abreast of relevant legislation, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Staff will be knowledgeable about the range of services and the diversity of the locality where they are working.
- The Provider will seek and take opportunities to share and learn from good practice in the locality (or County) in terms of staff development.
- The Provider will work cooperatively and in collaboration with partners to identify and participate in opportunities which develop staff, such as secondments, job swaps, job shadowing, joint training, attending other agency team meetings.
- The people accessing the service are likely to have a wide range of needs including some or a number of the following –

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- Help with personal care
- Experience of living in an institutional setting
- Challenging behaviour
- Difficulties with communication
- Lack of independent living skills
- An incomplete or poor education
- Lack of a family or family breakdown
- Limited or no social network
- Need support to access community services
- Social isolation
- Low self-esteem and confidence
- Physical disabilities
- Learning disabilities, in some cases coexisting with Mental Health Issues
- Autism, in some cases coexisting with Mental Health Issues
- Staff will have a sound understanding of how to effectively support people with challenging behaviour, lack of motivation and/or multiple or complex needs and to understand the barriers that people face when accessing and being part of the wider community

### **19. Customer consultation and co-production**

- The Service will actively seek feedback from customers formally and informally in relation to the service they have received and their views on improving the service and this feedback will inform ongoing service delivery, and will be acted upon to improve outcomes for customers.
- Feedback can be through a variety of methods, but there is expectation that there will be 1:1 feedback obtained from customers on a regular basis.
- The provider will ensure that customers are made aware of how their feedback has been acted upon.
- The Provider will be proactive with regard to co-production with customers; effectively involving and empowering customers in their own support planning and the quality management, evaluation and development of the service.

As a minimum the Provider will ensure that:

- Customers are supported to design and agree their support, build upon their strengths and assets to recognise progress to meet the outcomes they would like to achieve towards independence
- Customers are offered a range of opportunities to give their views, make comments, offer ideas - both individually and in groups - about the services provided.
- Customers are encouraged to take part in active decision making about their accommodation and the services they receive and their views and wishes are taken into account

### **20. Performance reporting and contract management**

The service provider will be expected to comply with all reporting requirements including regular (frequency to be determined) reports regarding service performance and outcomes

- The Council will carry out a formal Contract Review. The Service Provider should be prepared to attend, at 4 weeks notice, an annual meeting with the Council to review performance under the contract. The meeting should be used to share good practice and to agree areas for improvement.
- The Provider will also be required to work with Commissioners during the period of the contract to further develop the outcome measures. The outcome measures put in place will be reviewed, and revised as appropriate.
- Performance information will be required – we will shape the format and frequency of that with Providers

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- Reporting requirements both in terms of content and mechanisms may change and develop during the period of the contract as the referral gateway develops.

At the request of the Council, the Service Provider will return the following additional information on an annual basis;

- a) Business Continuity Plan.
  - b) Accounts for the most recent completed financial year (audited if required by law).
  - c) Insurance Schedules and Certificates.
  - d) Results from the Service Providers customer feedback survey about the quality and performance of their services.
  - e) A copy of the Service Provider's annual report including their Service improvement plan.
  - f) A copy of their training matrix for all staff.
- The Service Provider acknowledges and agrees that Officers of the Council may take evidence of risks and concerns identified during contract monitoring visits, including photographs and photocopies, and for this to be used to formulate a plan of action to ensure the Service Provider complies with the Contract.
  - The Council is part of the eastern region collaborative and as such may share information gained through the above monitoring with regional partners. Also Council's within the region may conduct monitoring visits with, or on behalf of, other regional authorities.
  - The Council is developing opportunities for Electronic Monitoring Systems that support the demonstration of individual and service outcomes. These will also be reviewed as part of Performance monitoring.

### 21. Quality assurance

- Service quality will be monitored on a regular basis
- Failure to achieve acceptable levels of quality would lead to improvement plans and if issues persist possible termination of contracts

### 22. Social Value

The 2012 Social Value Act requires that public authorities consider wider social and environmental benefits when they choose suppliers, rather than basing commissioning decisions solely on price and quality. The following table provides a read-across between SCC priorities, key policies and relevant social value outcomes that can be delivered by housing support services.

All Suffolk housing support providers will be monitored in terms of their ability to deliver the outcomes relevant to Housing related support, in italics below;

SCC Priority (2014/15)	SCC Key Policy	Social value outcomes
<b>Raise educational attainment and skills</b>	Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve environmental awareness</li> <li>• Reduce waste and increase re-cycling</li> <li>• Support education on environmental awareness</li> </ul>
	Diversity and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve attainment for minority ethnic groups in Key Stages 2 and 4</li> <li>• <b><i>Support protected groups</i></b></li> </ul>
	Economic Development and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Prepare young people for the world of work</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Develop relevant skills to support the local economy</i></b></li> </ul>
	Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To address safe methods of work and educate workforce and customers on health and safety</li> </ul>

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	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving accessibility to schools and places of learning</li> <li>Providing opportunities for access and learning in the countryside</li> </ul>
<b>Support the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) to increase economic growth</b>	Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing local business opportunities</li> <li>Support communities to be self-sustaining</li> <li>Support reduction of carbon and mileage</li> </ul>
	Diversity and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Helping people with protected characteristics into work</b></li> <li>Use of ethical supply chains</li> <li>Fair Trade</li> </ul>
	Economic Development and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting use of local supply chains</li> <li>Developing new business sectors through existing businesses</li> <li>Promoting innovation</li> <li><b>Local skills development and apprenticeships</b></li> <li><b>Reducing unemployment</b></li> <li>Increasing the value of local spend through the supply chain by x%</li> <li><b>Encourage resource efficiency and best practice sharing</b></li> </ul>
	Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting best practice in Health and Safety</li> </ul>
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the need for travel</li> <li>Use of sustainable transport</li> <li>Local employment</li> </ul>
<b>Maintain roads and develop Suffolk's infrastructure</b>	Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support growth in sustainable travel and reduced emissions</li> <li>Reduce environmental impact of infrastructure development</li> </ul>
	Diversity and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve accessibility for all sectors of the community</li> </ul>
	Economic Development and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure investment for infrastructure, growth and exports</li> <li>Develop transport links</li> </ul>
	Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure safe methods of working are employed by all contractors throughout the supply chain.</li> </ul>
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure investment for infrastructure</li> <li>Improve connectivity and accessibility for communities</li> <li>Facilitate sustainable transport options</li> </ul>
<b>Support those most vulnerable in our communities</b>	Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help for insulation</li> <li>Renewable energy sources</li> </ul>
	Diversity and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Inclusive services</b></li> <li><b>Developing projects to support communities</b></li> <li><b>Social integration</b></li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social clubs and activities</b></li> </ul>
	Economic Development and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tackling unemployment</b></li> <li>• <b>Work skills development</b></li> <li>• Promoting growth</li> </ul>
	Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure safe working practices are adopted to support the most vulnerable</b></li> </ul>
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community transport options</li> <li>• opening up public transport capacity</li> <li>• Develop more accessible transport links</li> </ul>
<b>Empower local communities</b>	Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood planning</li> <li>• Countryside access and community projects</li> </ul>
	Diversity and Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Effective community engagement</b></li> <li>• <b>Developing links with communities</b></li> </ul>
	Economic Development and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting local businesses and business opportunities throughout the supply chain</li> <li>• Tackling specific local issues to get people into work or training</li> </ul>
	Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting communities to take appropriate risk</li> </ul>
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support area based solutions</li> <li>• <b>Volunteering opportunities</b></li> <li>• Sustainable transport</li> </ul>

**23. Payments**

- Current payment arrangements will remain in place for now however, the council reserves the right to move to different payment arrangements, including the option of paying only for units used, once the call off contracts are in place.
- Payments by the council to the provider will be made via BACS to a bank notified in writing by the provider to the council.
- The provider shall notify the council immediately, in writing, of any changes to the nominated bank account.
- The provider shall notify the council of any changes that would affect the delivery of the service and the payment process.