

Delegated Decisions by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

21 October 2025

Procurement of Replacement Contracts for HOWDAB2 Brandon Trust

Report by Corporate Director for Adult Social Care

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care is **RECOMMENDED** to:
 - a) Agree that the Council extend the Henley, Oxford, Witney, Didcot, Abingdon and Banbury (HOWDAB)2 Supported Living contracts Lot 1, 2, 4, 8 and 9 that are currently delivered by the support provider Brandon Trust for 3 months;
 - b) Agree that the Council procure two replacement contracts (based on the needs of the people supported) for the HOWDAB2 Brandon Trust Supported Living contracts using the call-off contract award process under the Live Well Supported Services (Adults) Framework Agreement; and
 - c) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Head of Legal, to enter such call-off contracts following the completion of the procurement process for the replacement contracts.

Executive Summary

2. A range of supported living contracts exist within the Council to ensure quality of life standards for people whose care and support needs require more specialist services. These contracts enable people to live as independently as possible within Oxfordshire.
3. The provision to extend supported living contracts allows continued and consistent levels of support for individuals who require support in relation to their learning disability and ensures efficiency of procurement activity for the Council to carry out an appropriate and fair procurement process, where the new contracts can be defined to meet an acceptable quality standard alongside supporting market sustainability.

4. Where a contract for supported living is not appropriate to extend or has reached its maximum extension, there is a continued need for individual's ongoing support to transfer to a new replacement contract.

Background

5. The requirement to extend contracts for supported living enables Oxfordshire County Council to meet people's needs with a Learning Disability and / or Autism as identified by a Care Act 2014 Assessment.
6. This is in line with the vision of Oxfordshire County Council (The Council) to provide adult social care for our residents, enabling everyone to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible. The Council seeks to provide residents good quality support that will have a positive impact on their lives.
7. To meet the future contracting requirements of supported living, the Live Well Supported Services Framework was developed in June 2023. There are currently 57 providers who have been quality assured on the Framework. Any new contracted activity for supported living will be progressed through the framework.
8. HOWDAB2 is made up of several historic supported living contracts in Henley, Oxford, Witney, Didcot, Abingdon and Banbury.
9. The start dates of the HOWDAB2 contracts were 4th May 2021. There are 101 people supported over 31 properties. Within these supported living properties, each person has their own tenancy agreement, giving them the legal rights and responsibilities of a tenant.
10. The Corporate Director of Adult Social Care agreed the extension of the HOWDAB2 Brandon Trust contracts for 1 month to 30th April 2026 under delegated powers within the Council's scheme of delegation.
11. The Corporate Director has now identified the need for a further extension from 1st May to 31st July 2026 which requires a Key Decision in line with the Council's Constitution.
12. The further contract extension is required to secure successor provision. The recommendation is to commission 2 separate contracts that reflect the needs profile of the target population. This requires a further Key Decision.
13. The Live Well Supported Services (Adults) Framework will be utilised to support the procurement of the new replacement contracts through tender process summary with a value outlined in Annex 1.

Proposal

14. The contracts need to be extended to allow time for the procurement process through the Live Well Supported Services Framework to take place.
15. For the contract extension of the HOWDAB2 Brandon Trust contracts, meetings have taken place with the provider. Procurement and Contract Management Hub will provide written notice to the contracted provider of the contract extension to meet the terms of the existing agreement. The provider is obligated to accept the council's decision.
16. The two replacement contracts will be tendered through the Live Well Supported Services (Adults) Framework. The notification of the tender opportunity will be available to the providers on the framework via the Southeast Business Portal - Proactis.
17. The replacement contracts will be for 10 years, which will:
 - a Provide an ongoing continuity of care and support to vulnerable people that help ensure their independence and personal wellbeing and development is maintained and/or improved.
 - b Will create an efficiency for the Council in terms of reducing the need for a new and regular procurement process, where the incoming provider is delivering the quality and outcome required by the contract.
18. Key Performance Indicators will be included within all new contracts to improve the quality of supported living.
19. The contracts will improve outcomes for the people living in the accommodation. They will introduce an outcomes-based tool to be implemented for all residents. This will enable residents, the provider and the Council to evidence and measure the impact of the support on an individual, service and County wide basis to improve quality of life outcomes over the lifetime of the contract.
20. The contracts will include break clauses in year 5 and year 8, which will require one-years notice. This is beneficial for both the Provider and the Council to review quality and financial sustainability.
21. The replacement contracts are predicted to be a maximum value of £76,982,937 over 10-years.

User and Family Involvement

22. Experts by experience who all have capacity to make decisions around their care and support will be involved in providing feedback to inform the new specifications and evaluation questions. The provider will be required to involve and work alongside people who use support and their families during

the mobilisation period to contract delivery go live and for the lifetime of the contracts.

Council Priorities & Policies

23. The prevention and relief of homelessness and achievement and maintenance of independent living continues to be a priority for Oxfordshire County Council. The Supported Living contract replacements contribute to this priority. These contracts contribute to this priority by ensuring that individuals maintain their tenancy through specialist housing and support providers preventing homelessness.
24. Accommodation based support services adopts a person-centred and outcomes focused approach to secure and maintain a sustainable housing tenancy with the opportunity to maximise independence and potentially step down / move on as assessed.

Financial Implications

Supported Living Contract Costs

25. Financial assumptions have been made with the supported living contracts in terms of support delivery and existing hours of support individuals require. The supported living contracts are set up with core shared hours (between residents) and 1 to 1 hours that can increase or decrease dependant on individual needs. Estimates on the level of core hours of support and the 1:1 hours have been predicted from previous spend on existing contracts based on assessed needs profiles. Care Act assessments will determine the level of support each person requires. Models to determine how to maximise the core support within and between properties (core and cluster) has been developed for each scheme.

Hourly Rates & Uplifts

26. The price point and quality requirements are sufficient to deliver the level of expertise required. This is affordable within the current budget.
27. The hourly rates of the two replacement contracts will differ, based on the needs of the people supported. One contract will be set at £24.55 (improve and enable), with the other at £25.15 (improve and enable, enhanced). One property within the Improve and Enable – Enhanced contract will be priced at £26.81 due to the provider needing to have a TTDI (Treatment of Disease, Disorder and Injury) CQC registration to support people within this service. The service will provide accommodation and support to people funded by Adult Social Care, and NHS Continuing Healthcare. The pricing model and rates have been agreed by NHS Continuing Healthcare.

28. The agreed framework rates will not be subject to any further uplifts in year 1 of the contract. In year 2, the rates will be subject to the council's annual price review mechanism with a 0.5% reduction on any agreed increases within this sector. In year 3, these rates will be reviewed as part of the annual review process.

Finance Comments Checked by.
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Legal Implications

29. Under s18 Care Act 2014 the Council has a statutory duty to meet the eligible needs of adults with physical and/or learning disabilities. The supported living services to be purchased under the proposed contract extensions and procurement activity promote independence, safety, and wellbeing and are a way of meeting those needs.
30. The proposed contract extensions are options exercisable by the Council which were part of the original contracts. They do not therefore constitute a modification under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended) and do not require consideration under the modification rules governed by those regulations.
31. The proposed call-off contracts must be procured in accordance with the award mechanism set out in the Live Well Supported Services (Adults) Framework Agreement. Providers on such framework agreement were themselves selected competitively under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended).
32. The new replacement contracts will be commissioned for 10 years, with break clauses in year 5 and year 8. One year's notice will be required to trigger the break clause.

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Staff Implications

33. Both the replacement contracts will be delivered by support providers and therefore do not involve services or staff directly provided by the Council. Therefore, there is no impact on the Council's workforce as a result of these recommendations.

34. As the service contracts will be awarded to a new provider / provider's, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations will apply. Information provided by the existing provider will be made available to bidders during the procurement process, to ensure bidders can assess this impact on their projected delivery budget.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

35. The new contracts will support the Oxfordshire County Councils objectives in relation to:
- Objective 2 - Tackling inequalities in Oxfordshire
Objective 3 - Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents
Objective 4 - Support carers and the social care system
36. These supported living contracts are designed to meet the specific needs of people with a learning disability, complex health, and physical disabilities. The expectation of care providers is to deliver person centred support which ensures:
- a Provision of in-county accommodation so people with Care Act needs are not moved away from their networks.
 - b The least restrictive care to support greater independence for people. People are integrated into their local communities, with their individual needs and preference are met.
 - c Their cultural and religious beliefs are supported to be observed, specific dietary requirements.
 - d People can become economically sufficient by supporting people to access training, learning, voluntary and employment opportunities.
 - e People are supported to have better access to universal services.
 - f Competition in the market to support people to have choice in their care provider.
37. These Supported Living contracts include the requirement for the provider to have an Equalities Policy. Providers are required within the replacement contracts to self-certify that their organisation has an active Equality & Diversity Policy in keeping with the Equality Act 2010 (a requirement under the Live Well Supported Services Adults Framework).
38. The Quality & Improvement Team carry out regular monitoring of services and include equality items in their reviews.
39. The Care Act assessment and subsequent support planning will be done in conjunction with the individual, their family and support network to ensure the support is tailored to their specific needs and is made clear to the care provider. Routine reviews of care alongside contract monitoring reports will enable the Council to monitor how the provider is upholding.

40. The service will provide accommodation and support to people funded by Adult Social Care, and NHS Continuing Healthcare.

Sustainability Implications

41. As current properties are reviewed and replaced, Oxfordshire Climate and Environmental Policy will be considered for any new developments.

Recruitment

42. The replacement contracts will continue to recruit staff local to the areas where the people supported live, maintaining positive job opportunities within their communities.

Staff Travel

43. These supported living contracts are for existing accommodation-based services. These are static workplaces unlike domiciliary care calls to multiple locations.
44. People living in supported living are unlikely to require formal transport to attend day centres as transport needs are generally provided by the main supported living contract. Instead within the course of supporting someone staff will be required to travel alongside the individual often on public transport both for accessing the community and for travel training where this is part of an individual's support plan.

Staff Training

44. Many of the support providers contracted offer training online so their staff are not having to travel.

Medical & Health Appointments

45. Where possible support staff will work with an individual to access online appointments. If a face-to-face appointment is required then staff will use public transport, unless this is not possible e.g. risks posed to travel.

Shopping

46. Where possible support staff will work with an individual to access their shopping online. Where it is practical to do so they will carry out online shopping for several people to limit the number of deliveries. Where online shopping is not possible staff will endeavour to use public transport unless it is unsafe to do so.

Risk Management

47. The recommendation to tender replacement contracts, utilizing only four months of the available five-year extension period, has been discussed and agreed with Brandon Trust. The provider is working collaboratively with the Council to ensure that all necessary information is transferred promptly to support the procurement of new contracts. Replacing these contracts will enable qualified providers to deliver high-quality support for individuals with disabilities or complex and specialist needs, ensuring that people continue to receive appropriate care within their local communities in Oxfordshire.

Consultations

48. People who use support and family members have already been involved in feeding back on quality through quality monitoring processes.

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ANNEXES

Annexe 1 Contract extensions and new replacement contracts for tender for supported living schemes requiring procurement of support provider.

Number	Title	Description	Extension Dates/Contract Length	Hourly rate	Extension cost	Annual Value
1.	Brandon Trust Contract Extension	One-month contract extension agreed by the Departmental Leadership Team	1 st April 2026 – 30 th April 2026	£22.31 - £24.56	£628121.315	N/a
2.	Brandon Trust Contract Extension	Three-month extension to be agreed by Key Decision	1 st May 2026 – 31 st July 2026	£22.31 - £24.56	£1,884,363.945	N/a
3.	Brandon Trust Contract Replacement (Improve and Enable)	Replacement contract Learning disability with autism supported living.	10 years (2 break clauses in year 5 and year 8)	£24.55	N/a	£4,653,029.65
4.	Brandon Trust Contract Replacement (Improve and Enable – Enhanced)	Replacement contract Learning disability with autism supported living.	10 years (2 break clauses in year 5 and year 8)	£25.15 - £26.81	N/a	£3,045,264.07

October 2025

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