

**Delegated Decision by Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care  
21 January 2025**

**Dimensions – Henley, Oxford, Wallingford, Didcot, Abingdon,  
Banbury lot 1, 2, 4 and 5 contract replacement**

**Report by Director of Adult Social Care**

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) agree to the re-tender of the supported living services currently provided by Dimensions under four separate service contracts – Henley, Oxford, Wallingford, Didcot, Abingdon, Banbury (HOWDAB) lot 1, 2, 4 and 5 (“Current Service Contracts”);
- b) agree to separating the services provided under the Current Service Contracts into two different contracts based on the needs of the people supported (“New Contracts”); and
- c) delegate the completion of New Contracts to the Director of Adult Social Care following the selection of a provider or providers under the mini-competition process of the Live Well Supported Services Framework Agreement under Lot 1.

**Executive Summary**

1. 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.
2. This paper focuses specifically on the HOWDAB (Henley, Oxford, Wallingford, Didcot, Abingdon, Banbury lot 1, 2, 4 and 5) contract replacement.

**Background**

3. The start date of the HOWDAB Dimensions contract was 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The end date of the contract is 6<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
4. There are 102 people supported over 31 properties.
5. There is an option to extend the current contract for a maximum of five years, the recommendation is to not utilise this extension, which will allow for a replacement contract to transform services. The replacement contracts will

include key performance indicators with a focus on quality-of-life outcomes and greater efficiencies for the council.

6. The projected annual value for Contract 1 is £3,041,744 at an hourly rate of £22.94.
7. The projected annual value for Contract 2 is £4,687,742 at an hourly rate of £23.50.
8. There will be 51 people supported within each contract.

## **Council Priorities & Policies**

9. The prevention and relief of homelessness and achievement and maintenance of independent living continues to be a priority for Oxfordshire County Council. These Supported Living contracts contribute to this priority.
10. Accommodation based support services adopt 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**

11. 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 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 including input from Social Workers, Brokerage and Commissioning. 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**

12. The price will be set based on the Live Well Supported Services Framework (Lot 1), market tested rates of £22.94 for lot 1 and an enhanced rate of £23.50 for lot 1 where needs are more complex (previously supported at key decision for the recommended hourly price range for the framework). These rates will feature within the annual fee review mechanism which considers inflationary changes, changes to National Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage, local market factors in Oxfordshire and affordability.

Comments checked by: Stephen Rowles, Strategic Finance Business Partner –  
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## **Legal Implications**

**The legal implications section should be completed by a member of the legal service**

13. The Council's statutory powers and duties to provide the supported living services which are to be re-tendered are set out at Part III of the National Assistance Act 1948, the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 and the Care Act 2014.
14. To comply with procurement law 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).

Comments checked by: Jonathan Pool, Solicitor (Contracts) –  
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## **Staff Implications**

15. The current contract/new contracts 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.
16. It is anticipated that the workforce directly connected to the current contracts would transfer across with the new contracts via TUPE, with expectations built into the contracts to work with staff to transform services.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

17. These supported living contracts are designed to meet the specific needs of people with a learning disability, autism, 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.

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).

## **Sustainability Implications**

- 18. At present a Climate/Environmental Policy is not required by providers.

### **Recruitment**

- 19. Recruitment for care and support mostly attracts a local workforce, therefore limiting the amount of extensive travel time.

### **Staff Travel**

- 20. These supported living contracts are for existing accommodation-based services. These are static workplaces unlike domiciliary care calls to multiple locations.
- 21. People living in supported living are unlikely to attend day centres as support is generally provided by the main supported living contract and therefore are less likely to access vehicles which transport people to and from the day services. 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**

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

### **Medical & Health Appointments**

- 23. 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**

24. 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. This will be embedded into skills training maximising the persons independence long term.

## **Risk Management**

### **Risks in agreeing this recommendation**

25. There are no risks to agreeing this recommendation. This recommendation will allow for a competitive tendering process involving support providers who have obtained a place on the Live Well Supported Services Framework.

### **Risks in not agreeing this recommendation**

26. If this recommendation is not agreed this would not allow for the Council to undertake a competitive tendering process between support providers who have obtained a place on the Live Well Supported Services Framework. Allowing the existing contracts to end without procuring replacement contracts will leave 102 vulnerable adults in shared supported accommodation where they have their own tenancies without support. Not providing adequate support would mean the council were not fulfilling its duties under the Care Act 2014.

## **Consultations**

27. People who use support and family members have been involved in feeding back on quality through quality monitoring processes. The current provider, Quality Improvement Team and Operational Social Work have also had the opportunity to feedback on the existing provision.

**Karen Fuller**  
**Corporate Director of Adult Social Care**

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## **ANNEX**

### **Annex 1**

Replacement contracts for tender for supported living schemes requiring procurement of support provider.

Number	Title	Description	Contract Length	Hourly rate	Predicted Annual Value
1	Contract 1	<b>Replacement contract</b> Learning disability with autism supported living – Lot 1	5-years, plus 5-years extension	£22.94	£3,041,744
2	Contract 2	<b>Replacement contract</b> Learning disability with autism supported living – Lot 1 enhanced rate	5-years, plus 5-years extension	£23.50	£4,687,742

21<sup>st</sup> January 2025

**[END]**