

**Delegated Decision by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
25th February 2025**

Kingwood – Contract Extension

Report by the Director of Adult Social Care

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care is RECOMMENDED to

Authorise the extension of the following contracts for a further two years:

- (i) Contract for the Provision of Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Culver Lodge, Oxford between Oxfordshire County Council and Autism at Kingwood dated 03 June 2019. The 2-year extension would be from 29 September 2025 to 29 September 2027.
- (ii) Contract for the Provision of Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Abingdon, Didcot, Oxford, between Oxfordshire County Council and Autism at Kingwood dated 01 April 2019. The 2-year extension would be from 29 September 2025 to 29 September 2027.
- (iii) Contract for the provision of Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Wallingford, Carterton and North Leigh. The 2-year extension would be from 06 September 2025 to 06 September 2027.

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. The provision to extend supported living contracts allows consistency of support for individuals who require ongoing support and ensures efficiency of procurement activity for the Council to extend, where the contract is meeting an acceptable quality standard alongside supporting market sustainability.

3. This paper focuses specifically on contracts held by Autism at Kingwood – Specialist Learning Disability and Autism Supported Living Services at Abingdon, Didcot, Oxford, and Specialist Learning Disability and Autism Supported Living Services at Culver Lodge, Oxford, and Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services Wallingford, Carterton and North Leigh supported living contract extensions.
4. The hourly rate for Specialist Learning Disability and Autism Supported Living Services at Abingdon, Didcot, Oxford, and Specialist Learning Disability and Autism Supported Living Services at Culver Lodge, and Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services Wallingford, Carterton and North Leigh is £25.06. Annual uplifts will be in accordance with the contract price review mechanism. The current annual spend is £4,027,269.13.

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 an assessment under the Care Act (2014).
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. The recommendation to extend the Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Abingdon, Didcot, Oxford, Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Culver Lodge, Oxford, and Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Wallingford, Carterton and North Leigh contracts was agreed to go to key decision by the Directorate Leadership Team on 25th November 2024.
8. The original contracts were for 5 years, with a maximum permissible extension period of 5 years.
9. To enforce an extension the Council must provide a minimum of 6 months' notice, therefore the Council needs to notify Autism at Kingwood by 6 March 2025 for Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Wallingford, Carterton and North Leigh, and 29 March 2025 for Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Abingdon, Didcot, Oxford, and Culver Lodge, Oxford.

10. Feedback from the Council's Quality Improvement Team and Autism at Kingwood Operational Social Work Team was obtained. The recommendation from both was to extend these contracts for a period of time to allow Autism at Kingwood time to implement their transformation programme.
11. There are 22 people supported in 8 properties at Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services Abingdon, Didcot and Oxford.
12. There are 4 people supported in 1 property at Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services Culver Lodge, Oxford.
13. There are 16 people supported over 3 properties at Specialist Learning Disability Supported Living Services at Wallingford, Carterton and North Leigh.

Governance and Decision Making

14. Recommendations of this key decision were supported by the Adult Social Care Directorate Leadership Team.

Procurement Process

15. For the extension of these contracts, procurement will provide written notice to the contracted provider (Autism at Kingwood) of the contract extension to meet the terms of the existing agreement.
16. The price for these contract extensions will be maintained at a market sustainable level to reflect the level of complexity of the contract and support required. The hourly rate for 24/25 has already been set at £25.06. This hourly rate will be uplifted as per the council's uplift process for 25/26 onwards annually.

User and Family Involvement

17. For these contract extensions to be considered, feedback regarding contract performance was obtained through the Council's contract monitoring process, including experts by experience who use support and family members through quality checker questionnaires and interviews.

Council Priorities & Policies

18. 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 extensions contribute to this priority.

19. 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

20. 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

21. The price will be set based on the existing contract and review of needs to be met by Adult Social Care and will then be uplifted in accordance with an annual review mechanism considering inflationary changes, changes to National Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage and local market factors in Oxfordshire.
22. There will be no financial implications directly attributable to this contract extension.

Finance Comments Checked by;
Name – Stephen Rowles
Title – Strategic Finance Business Partner
Email – Stephen.rowles@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

23. The Council has a statutory duty to provide the services under the contracts to be extended under the Care Act 2014.
24. The contracts as originally procured each contain a unilateral right for the Council to extend them as proposed in this report. Such extensions are therefore compliant with procurement legislation and do not pose any legal risk

Legal Comments Checked by;
Name – Jonathan Pool
Title – Solicitor (contracts)
Email – Jonathan.pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

25. The contract is delivered by Autism at Kingwood and does 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.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

26. This supported living contract is 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.
27. 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).

The Quality & Improvement Team carry out regular monitoring of services and include equality items in their reviews.

28. 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.

Sustainability Implications

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

Recruitment

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

Staff Travel

31. These supported living contracts are for existing accommodation-based services. These are static workplaces unlike domiciliary care calls to multiple locations.
32. 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

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

Medical & Health Appointments

34. 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

35. 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

Risks in agreeing this recommendation.

36. There are no risks to this recommendation. The Recommendation is to extend the current contracts for a further 2 years, which would allow for continuity of care for the people supported.

Risk in not agreeing this recommendation.

37. Not agreeing this recommendation would have a negative impact on the continuity of services and contractual arrangements. It may also lead to less effective market shaping and impact on the Council's compliance with the new CQC assurance regime and the Care Act (2014).

Consultations

38. People who use support and family members have already been involved in feeding back on quality through quality monitoring processes. Autism at Kingwood, Quality Improvement, and the Social Work teams have also had the opportunity to feedback on the quality of the existing provision.

NAME Karen Fuller
Corporate Director of Adult Social Care

Contact Officer:

Name – Jordan Marsh
Title – Commissioning Officer – Adult Social Care
Email – jordan.marsh@oxfordshire.gov.uk

14th February 2025

[END]