



Specification of Requirements

Housing First

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1. Introduction

Spelthorne Borough Council (the Authority) is inviting Bidders to submit proposals which fully meet the requirements of this Specification, and which demonstrate value for money.

Bidders are asked to provide their detailed responses to demonstrate their technical capacity and professional ability in delivering the requirements set out in this document.

Additionally, Bidders should fully complete the Pricing Schedule with a detailed price breakdown for all elements of the Specification.

The Authority will evaluate Bidders' proposals based on a Quality to Price weighting of 60% Quality and 40% Price.

2. Background

The Borough of Spelthorne has an excellent location immediately to the south of Heathrow Airport and adjacent to the River Thames in the economically buoyant area to the west of London.

Spelthorne Borough Council is the administrative body for the area, providing a wide and varied range of local services to residents and businesses, from community buildings, planning and housing support through licencing, permits and food safety to parks and car parking. The Council's main administrative office is at Knowle Green, TW18 1XB.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2021 – 2023 sets out five Corporate Priorities as shown below:



To put our communities at the heart of everything we do, building strong relationships with our residents and businesses, and helping to forge links within those communities, so that they feel empowered, included, supported, safe and healthy.

To deliver housing which meets the needs of all sections of our communities, building new homes, helping people to stay in their existing accommodation and ensuring that none of our residents are homeless.

To provide support and guidance to our residential and business communities to enable them to recover from the significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To work with our communities and partners to minimise our effects on the environment, play our part in tackling the threat of climate change and to maintain a clean, green and attractive Borough, which recognises and protects biodiversity.

To deliver efficient and effective services which meet the changing needs of our communities, adapting to meet new challenges, new ways of working and different ways of interacting with our communities.

The Authority has a duty to provide housing and homelessness advice to residents of the Borough who are threatened with or who are facing homelessness, which upon investigation, may lead to a main housing duty. The Authority currently commissions a Housing First support service which provides intense wraparound support for

residents with multiple and complex needs. The current agreement comes to an end on 31 May 2022, and the Authority are inviting tenders to recommission the provision of a Housing First Service.

Chronic homelessness among people with serious mental illness appeared irresolvable for many until the appearance of a new approach to combining housing and support, known as Housing First.

An important component of Housing First includes providing individuals some choice of accommodation.

In addition to assistance with moving into, and furnishing a new home, Housing First services include portable and intensive community support. Other aspects of the Housing First approach include an emphasis on consumer choice and empowerment, harm reduction, community integration, and recovery.

The receipt of Housing First services is expected to enable the client to rapidly exit homelessness and establish housing stability in the first 6 months. Improvements in health status, quality of life, and community integration follows, ultimately leading to longer-term recovery.

3. Scope of the Contract

The Housing First Service (the Service) is to be delivered to households of single people or childless couples, who are identified by the Council to be most at risk of eviction and therefore rough sleeping and/or have a history of tenancy failure.

Bidders must have suitable bedsits/1-bedroom properties available within Spelthorne Borough to house clients as part of the Service. The rent and service charge are to be covered through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit collections. The contract for the Service will be managed by the Authority's Data and Contract Officer, to ensure that a minimum void period is maintained during the contract term; however a small amount of money (the value to be agreed with the Authority) can be set aside to cover any void period.

The Service is to be delivered in the spirit of and in accordance with the Housing First principles <https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/principles-housing-first>)

The Service Provider shall administer a budget for households identified by the Authority to support sustainment of existing accommodation, or access to alternative accommodation. This may include, for example, support towards reducing arrears, support with costs associated with accessing specialised support services, or support towards deposits and rent in advance. The expenditure is to be reported to the Authority quarterly.

The Service Provider shall provide support to those who are recovering from sleeping rough and to improve their wellbeing and prospect of tenancy sustainment.

4. Detailed Requirements

4.1 The Service Provider shall:

- make available 10, bedsits/1-bedroom properties within the Spelthorne Borough to house Housing First residents for the lifetime of the contract. In exceptional circumstances, a small number of units (to be agreed with the Authority) may be provided in an adjoining borough, providing those details are agreed in advance with the Authority. The Housing First nominations are to be made by the Authority. The properties can be owned by the Service Provider or sourced through the private rented market. In exceptional cases, a small number of units may be provided in an adjoining borough, details to be agreed.
- offer security of tenure to the Housing First clients for the duration of the contract. All properties must meet H&S requirements and be of a decent standard. deliver high quality, person-centred support to the clients in accordance with the Housing First Principles (<https://hfe.homeless.org.uk/principles-housing-first>)
- give due consideration to individual circumstances, recognising that some clients may need intensive support prior to being housed and alternative arrangements for accommodation before being housed.
- at all times provide a service to enable clients to sustain their tenancies by promoting independence, freedom and choice. coordinate the Housing First offer within the Authority by assessment of referrals and engage with prospective clients using a person-centered approach. Key to this role will be liaising with health professionals, other agencies, such as police, CMHT, and more, and colleagues as appropriate.
- ensure that clients are fully aware of the support available, their financial obligations, their rights and responsibilities under their tenancy/occupation arrangements.
- agree and review client Independent Living Plans and Risk Assessments on a quarterly basis, and fully deliver the contracted hours of support to achieve the required outcomes, as shown in 4.4
- flexibly deliver the support identified in an Independent Living Plan through regular person-centered contact as appropriate, taking follow up action and coordinating wraparound support if required from other agencies (for example Adult Social Care, Criminal Justice, Health services) and internal departments
- forge and maintain links with partner agencies and other key stakeholders as appropriate to ensure that good communication and co-operation is maintained.
- manage and facilitate access to the personal fund to support the clients
- report any concerns relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable people using the correct procedures, attending case conferences and other meetings as required.
- ensure that all relevant documentation and records are completed and submitted in an accurate and timely manner.
- actively contribute to the collection of data to be used in statutory returns
- handle complaints and representations and undertake any necessary investigations.

4.2 Staff requirements

All staff appointed by the Service Provider to undertake the execution of the contract shall

- demonstrate exceptional relationship skills, including empathy, mutual acceptance, supportive and constructive challenge; strength-based approach, setting positive expectations for the future.
- Have a good understanding of the Housing First Model and a belief in the values and principles.
- be highly professional and value led demonstrating integrity, inclusivity and respect for diversity.
- be able to work flexibly outside of standard office hours, as required, to deliver services, following lone working procedures.

4.3 Funding conditions

- The Service Provider will employ 1.5 FTE Support Officers and include a provision of staff cover for periods of sickness and annual leave, where appropriate.
- The Support Officers will only work on cases as agreed by the Authority.

4.4 Functional Requirements

The primary expected outcomes for the assessment of effectiveness of Housing First will be the achievement of housing stability and improvement in community functioning (i.e., level of ability to live independently in the community). This is known as hard outcomes. Secondary expected outcomes will be improvements in self-rated physical and mental health status, substance use problems, quality of life, community integration, and recovery. This is known as soft and person specific outcomes.

Hard outcomes (see KPIs)

- Tenancy sustainment (for a minimum of two years)
- Financial inclusion and budgeting skills
- Improvements in mental and physical health
- Reduced drug and/or alcohol use
- Management of medication
- Reducing re-offending and anti-social behaviour
- Reconnecting with family or children
- Engaging meaningfully with services – including a move from use of emergency services to planned appointments.

Soft outcomes

- Becoming more independent and less institutionalised
- Change in self-worth, self-understanding/reflection and self-esteem/confidence
- Increased trust in the Housing First worker, services and themselves

- Willingness to take responsibility and reduction in requests for support
- Awareness of personal choices and the impact of these on others
- Taking healthy risks and returning for support when mistakes are made
- Being resilient
- Being safe in their own environment and managing their visitors
- Taking pride in their home
- Feeling part of a community and citizenship
- Families working better together
- Changes in personal hygiene.

Person-specific outcomes

This will vary from client to client depending on their specific circumstances. However, examples of the type of outcomes which may be expected are below:

- Asking for a piece of equipment or item of furniture after living in a property for a short while – showing that the individual is beginning to settle
- Reporting being a victim of domestic abuse for the first time – showing increased confidence and desire to protect themselves.
- Deciding to get a haircut – showing increased self-esteem and personal care
- Having a smiling face – showing real improvements in mental wellbeing

4.5 Performance Requirements

See Appendix A - Performance Schedule and KPIs

4.4 Exit Strategy

At the end of the contractual term, the Service Provider shall work with the Authority and the new Provider (where applicable) to hand over all data and information about the clients supported as part of Housing First service.

5. Sustainability

5.1 Environmental

Where possible the Service Provider shall consider environmentally friendly resources for the provision of service, i.e., use of environmentally friendly form of transport.

5.2 Economic

Where possible the Service Provider shall engage with local charitable organisations to provide resources, such as white goods and furniture, at minimal cost.

5.3 Social

The Service Provider shall consider the impact on the community when placing clients as well as to support clients to making a positive contribution to the community.

In addition to the social value delivered by the scope of this this contract, the Service Provider shall consider additional means of enhancing the social wellbeing of the clients and the community impacted by this service.

6. Contract Management and Review

The Contract will be managed by the Council's Data and Contract Officer. The Service Provider shall report on the agreed KPIs at the required frequencies and submit a report to the Authority no later than 5 Working Days after the last calendar day of each quarter of the Contract Term.

Where contract performance falls short of the required KPI standards, the Service Provider will be expected to attend (in person or virtually) a Contract Review meeting to discuss the measures the Service Provider will implement to address the issues, and the timeframes for the improvements.

Contract review meetings are to take place every quarter.

7. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA)

The Service Provider shall duly observe all their obligations under the Data Protection Legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, which arise in connection with the performance of this Contract.

The Service Provider shall perform its obligations under the Contract in such a way as to ensure that it does not cause the Authority to breach any of its applicable obligations under the Data Protection Legislation.

The Service Provider shall be liable for and shall indemnify (and keep indemnified) the Authority against each and every action, proceeding, liability, cost, claim, loss, expense (including reasonable legal fees and disbursements on a solicitor and client basis) and demands incurred by the Authority which arise directly from a breach by the Service Provider of its obligations under the Data Protection Legislation. This includes every action, proceeding, liability, cost, claim, loss, expense (including reasonable legal fees and disbursements on a solicitor and client basis) and any

demands, including, without limitation, those arising out of any third party demand, claim or action, or any breach of contract, negligence, fraud, wilful misconduct, breach of statutory duty, or non-compliance with any part of the Data Protection Legislation by the Service Provider or its employees, servants, agents or Sub-Contractors.

The Service Provider agrees that it shall enter into a data sharing agreement (or a revised data sharing agreement) with the Authority, if required to do so, at the Authority's absolute discretion, so as to set out the Parties' obligations in relation to any personal data which may be shared between the Parties.

8. Contract Period

The Contract shall be for a 3-year main term with options to extend for a further 3 x 1 year extension periods, in the Authority's sole discretion, to be reviewed in light of future funding available, and the Service Provider's contract performance.

Appendix A – Performance Schedule and KPIs

KPI No.	KPI Description	Measure	Target KPI
1	<p>Provision of 10 properties within the Spelthorne Borough (with a maximum of 3 in any period in adjacent boroughs by exception) for clients identified by the Authority.</p> <p>The properties to be let on secure tenures to tenants.</p>	Number of property tenancies signed with clients identified by the Authority	100% identified households housed within 7 days since nomination to specific property agreed with the Authority
2	Tenancy sustainment	Number of clients sustaining the required tenancy of a minimum of two years	80% of clients achieve a minimum of 2 years' tenancy sustainment
3	Improvements in mental and physical health	Feedback from jointly agreed professional health assessment against mental and physical health baseline measures	A minimum of 80% of clients have improved mental and physical health
4	Reduced drug and/or alcohol use	Feedback from jointly agreed professional health assessment	A minimum of 80% of applicable clients have reduced their drug and alcohol use

		against drug and alcohol usage baseline measures	
5	Reduction of re-offending and anti-social behaviour	Feedback from jointly agreed professional assessment against offending and ASB baseline measures	A minimum of 75% of applicable clients have reduced re-offending and anti-social behaviour
6	Engaging meaningfully with services – including a move from use of emergency services to planned appointments.	Support services identified and a client plan put in place to prevent use of emergency services	A minimum of 90% of applicable clients have a client plan and have engaged with the support services identified
7	Financial awareness and budgeting skills	Provision of basic financial training and assistance for all clients.	A minimum of 80% of clients have attended at least one financial awareness and budgeting skills training session
8	Health and safety performance reporting	All health and safety incidents, accidents are recorded in a designated record log. Any RIDDOR-reportable accidents must be reported in accordance with statutory requirements.	Health and Safety log with 100% of accidents and incidents recorded