

Update on the Closure of A2Dominion

Last year we were required to retender all Housing Related Support contracts for Young People, Young parents and Single Homeless, due to contracts expiring on 1st April 2024 with no ability to further extend the existing contracts. At Cabinet on 12th September 23, delegated approval was given to proceed with the procurement exercise to re-commission all housing related support services to meet the identified needs of single homeless, young people and young parents within the approved budget of £1,198,642.12.

Invitation to tender was released to providers which included A2Dominion on 25th September 23, with a deadline for receipt of tenders of 7th November 23. As part of the pre tender submission A2Dominion had made the decision that they did not want to submit a tender to continue with the Young Person supported housing provision as they had decided as an organisation they would like to move out of Wiltshire as part of their stock rationalisation. They then commenced serving notices on tenants for accommodation in which they leased in Wiltshire so Housing started to deal with a number of clients who were being asked to leave with no alternative housing provision being sourced. As part of the pre tender qualification process A2Dominion announced that they would be willing to put forward the opportunity to lease the accommodation at The Foyer for any potential provider wishing to tender.

The young people housing related support contract was to provide high and medium level support for young people aged 16 – 21 and care leavers 18+ up to the age of 24. The aim of the service is to support young people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to develop the necessary skills for independent living and move into education, training and employment. The overall purpose of the service is to support service users to successfully move on to greater independence. The annual budget was in the region of £430,000 and the indicative number of hours available was 18,600 per annum which previously provided 60 bed spaces. We did not seek to make any cost savings from the housing related support contract, but we did recognise that with increasing costs since the last tender we may see a reduction in the amount of overall bed spaces. The formal notification of contract award was issued on 7th December with a 10 day standstill period from 8th Dec until 18th December. We only received one successful tender for this service which was Alabare who tendered to provide 18,600 hours of support with a total of 31 bed spaces. No provider came forward to take advantage of the possible lease of The Foyer and as A2Dominion did not submit a tender we made contact shortly after contract award to discuss how they intended to run down the service as the contract they had would cease at the end of March 24.

The Foyer closed on 1st April 24 and the intention of its long term use has not yet been decided by A2Dominion, but approaches have been made to consider the viability of making use of the accommodation at The Foyer. The Housing team from the beginning of 2024 worked extremely hard with the staff at The Foyer, Children Services PAs, Housing Case workers and Housing Tenancy Sustainment Officers to secure alternative accommodation for the remaining 20 young people at The Foyer who had been served notice to leave by the end of March 24. All young people were moved on into alternative accommodation before The Foyer closed. Since The Foyer closed we have leased a 7 bed property for single homeless clients with on site support, as well as acquiring a dedicated 2 bed property for young 16-17 year olds and are in the final stages of agreeing a lease to acquire 2 further 2 bed properties which will also be dedicated for young 16-17 year olds.

There remains funding available which will be used to procure further accommodation and support for young people. Housing have commenced discussions with children services who are also currently in the process of re commissioning services for young people so opportunities may be available later this year.

People Services Adult Social Care