

STAGE 1 FORM - APPROVAL TO PROCEED TO TENDER

Following the introduction of new Spend Control Processes, this form must be completed for all procurements above £25,000. If contract value is over Cabinet approval threshold (£500,000) this form shall be appended to the Cabinet report - this form will be "open" for publication.

Once completed, this form must be sent to the relevant Category Manager.

1.	CONTRACT DETAILS		
1.1	Contract title	Shared Lives Scheme	
1.2	Reference number	PS-2024-155	
1.3	Responsible Officer	Ian Gleadell	
1.4	Directorate	Adult Social Care and Community Development	
1.5	Contract description	<p>The provision of the Shared Lives scheme in Thurrock. This includes the assessment of service users moving into a Shared Lives placements and the ongoing management, monitoring and review of those placements, service users and carers alike.</p> <p>It also includes the recruitment, vetting, assessing, and training of Shared Lives carers, along with the provision of support groups, social activities and events designed to promote strong networking amongst Shared Lives carers.</p>	
1.6	Applicability of off payroll working (IR35) rules*	Is this an applicable contract?	No
		Employment status for tax**	N/A
1.7	Proposed contract start	01/10/2025	
1.8	Proposed contract end	31/03/2031	
1.9	Proposed extension options	Two years in one year increments	
1.10	Estimated contract value	Excluding VAT	£3,920,250.18 (see 3.3)
		Including VAT ¹	£3,920,250.18 (see 3.3)

2.	BUSINESS CASE		
2.1	Business case	<p>The Council is committed to the priorities and commitments outlined in Thurrock's Integrated Care Strategy, The Case for Further Change, published in 2022 by Thurrock Integrated Care Alliance (TICA) Case for further change, 2022-2026 Health and well-being strategy Thurrock Council.</p> <p>At its core is the design of a health and care system underpinned by place, prevention, and personalisation. The strategy reflects the move from a 'one size fits all' top-down, centralised and deficit driven approach to one that recognises the uniqueness of each resident and sets out a vision based on Human Learning Systems (HLS).</p> <p>Shared Lives is one of a range of care services available to adults</p>	

¹ Required solely to determine whether the contract value exceeds the UK public procurement threshold (which includes VAT)

		<p>across the UK, and although a national scheme, it accounts for only a small proportion of adult social care provision. It was formerly known as adult placement.</p> <p>The Shared Lives scheme operates on the basis that an adult Service User in need of accommodation care and support, can live with, or have regular stays or visits with, an approved Shared Lives carer, with whom the service user has been matched for compatibility.</p> <p>Shared Lives schemes are also another respite option for unpaid family carers to have a much-needed break from their caring role.</p> <p>Service users may include adults with learning and physical disabilities, mental health problems, young disabled adults, substance abusers, care leavers and older people.</p> <p>Following matching of the service user to a Shared Lives carer, the carer's home is used as the basis of the care provision, whether on a full time residential basis, for respite care purposes or on an occasional basis, as the needs of the situation require.</p> <p>The Shared Lives carer is appointed and managed by the provider, the provider must comply with the terms and conditions of the Provider's contract with the council and with all relevant statutory, regulatory, and good practice obligations.</p> <p>The Shared Lives carer is appointed and managed by the provider, the provider must comply with the terms and conditions of the Provider's contract with the council and with all relevant statutory, regulatory, and good practice obligations.</p> <p>The total placement fee is paid to the provider.</p> <p>The provider then removes the management fee, and the carers break payment and then pays the self-employed Shared Lives carers the remainder of the placement fee. The fee is based on the band identified following a full care and support assessment.</p> <p>The provider then recruits, inducts and trains respite carers, the carer break payment is then paid to the respite carers and this enables the Shared Lives carer to take a break from their caring role.</p> <p>The Shared Lives scheme is based on several principles, such as rigorous assessment and approval by an independent panel, provision of training that matches to the care certificate, careful matching of service user to Shared Lives carer (who will operate on a self-employed basis), partnership, support within the community, objectives and outcomes setting, cost effectiveness and high standards of care provision and management.</p> <p>Shared Lives is a service delivered by individuals and families, providing care and support to people placed with them. The users of the service live in the home of the Shared Lives carer, having been placed there by the local authority. Following a full need led Care Act assessment and robust compatibility matching, to ensure best fit between Service User and Shared Lives carer.</p> <p>Shared Lives is regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and arises from a number of statutory sources, including the Care Act 2014 and the Health and Social Care Act 2008. Significant research guidance and support is also available from Shared Lives Plus.</p> <p>Shared Lives can offer highly positive outcomes for individuals, with</p>
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		<p>people reporting feeling settled, valued, and part of their local community. Shared Lives also costs less than alternative forms of care.</p> <p>The intention is to work with Shared Lives carers and those receiving support to co-design a comprehensive and detailed service specification to then be able procure a provider that can articulate a clear and robust strategy that evidences how they will maintain existing placements whilst growing the scheme.</p> <p>They will also need to be able to demonstrate how they will approach the increased recruitment of Shared Lives carers to support the growth of the scheme.</p> <p>The Shared Lives scheme represents a unique, qualitative, and cost-effective option. It provides people with a warm and compassionate family environment, from which they can exercise their rights as active citizens.</p> <p>Re-tendering the service will ensure the procurement of a specialist Shared Lives Provider that can be set clear performance and growth targets.</p> <p>Current expenditure and predicted spend are directly related to the maintenance and growth of the scheme, as the scheme grows shared lives costs will increase but external budget expenditure avoidance will improve.</p> <p>If the service does not grow as expected, and is only able to maintain existing placements, it will still represent a cost-effective option and continue to support external budget expenditure avoidance.</p> <p>If the scheme grows the external budget expenditure avoidance becomes increasingly significant. This represents best value for the council as Thurrock will commission a specialist Provider, that is financially incentivised to grow the scheme.</p> <p>Shared Lives will support the delivery of Thurrock Council's Market Position Statement, enabling people to be connected and contributing members of their community, to stay well and independent and increase choice and control by adding diversity to the market.</p> <p>It will provide lower cost, higher quality and personalised alternatives to residential care and supported living, enabling the council to make better use of its resources..</p>
2.2	Expenditure control criteria	The spend is for essential statutory services, goods and/or works
2.3	Expenditure control justification	The local authority has statutory obligation to provide support to those that meet the Care Act 2014 eligibility criteria. If this support was provided via alternate provision, it would cost more and it would lead to increased external purchasing budget expenditure.
2.4	Award criteria	<p>60% Quality - In terms of quality it is vital to procure a high quality, experienced organisation to provide the service.</p> <p>To ensure compliance the Care Act 2014 obligations to promote wellbeing in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect) • physical and mental health and emotional well-being. • protection from abuse and neglect.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control by the individual over day-to-day life (including over care and support, or support, provided to the individual and the way in which it is provided). • participation in work, education, training or recreation. • social and economic well-being. • domestic, family and personal relationships. • suitability of living accommodation. • the individual's contribution to society. <p>High quality services are less likely to breakdown.</p> <p>Placement breakdown is not only very distressing and unsettling for Service users, it is also likely to lead to the potential of having to seek alternate placements at higher cost.</p> <p>40% Price – There is a clear expectation of value for money. A detailed rationale as to how funds would be utilised to ensure the best possible outcomes for would be a key part of the procurement process.</p>
2.5	Social Value	The intention is to clearly identify the expectation of social value within the service specification, that will be co-designed by Shared Lives carers and Service users. Areas we are likely to include are: The recruitment of local people, including training and career development. The use of local suppliers when purchasing equipment and resources, the development of social opportunities for Shared Lives service users
2.6	Previous contract	PS/2022/010 (1st March 2022 to 1st October 2025)

3.	FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	
3.1	Previous contract spend	Variable spend, due to nature of the contract. Current spend based on 13 placements is £316,333.38p per annum.
3.2	Scope of changes	The new contract will include a growth target of two new placements per year.
3.3	Budget considerations	<p>Assuming an average placement cost of £467 per week, with growth of two new placements per year, the cost breakdown is as follows:</p> <p>Oct 25 to Mar 26 - 14 placements - £170,445.66 Apr 26 to Mar 27 - 16 placements - £389,590.08 Apr 27 to Mar 28 - 18 placements - £438,288.84 Apr 28 to Mar 29 - 20 placements - £486,987.60 Apr 29 to Mar 30 - 22 placements - £535,686.36 Apr 30 to Mar 31 - 24 placements - £584,385.12 Apr 31 to Mar 32 - 26 placements - £633,083.88 Apr 32 to Mar 33 - 28 placements - £681,782.64 TOTAL - £3,920,250.18</p>
3.4	Expenditure type	Revenue
3.5	Cost centre	SL200-2618-00000 and SP200-2618-00000
3.6	Anticipated savings	No savings are anticipated, it is however anticipated that the maintenance and growth of the scheme will represent external purchasing budget expenditure avoidance.

4.	PROCUREMENT ROUTE		
4.1	Procurement route	Open tender	
4.2	Rationale	To ensure the best possible organisation is procured to both maintain and grow the scheme. The marketplace is relatively small, and so there is no requirement for a shortlisting stage.	
5.	INDICATIVE PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE		
5.1	Procurement timetable (subject to change)	Publish Contract Notice	24/02/2025
		Selection Questionnaire return	04/04/2025
		Invitation to Tender issue	24/02/2025
		Tender return	04/04/2025
		Notification of result	06/05/2025
		Standstill period	16/05/2025
		Expected award	19/05/2025
		Contract commencement	01/10/2025
6.	RISKS, CONSULTATION AND MANAGEMENT		
6.1	Risk management	<p>We may not get the necessary expected interest, meaning we may not be able to find a suitable provider, this would mean we would be in breach of our statutory obligation, and therefore we would need to source adult placements at a much higher rate via the external purchasing budget.</p> <p>The existing provider has anecdotally confirmed their intention to tender and there are a number of Shared Lives Providers that are operating in the region that will hopefully express an interest.</p> <p>We will also be issuing the contract for 5.5 years with the possibility of two further years in 1-year increments. Hopefully the length of the contract will attract bidders, as it allows them to implement and develop long term growth plans with ability to financially forecast for the long term.</p>	
6.2	Contingency	If unsuccessful we will have to extend the contract with the existing provider whilst we consider our options. That could be to either join the scheme of a neighbouring authority or bring the scheme in house.	

6.3	Consultation	<p>Ongoing engagement and performance monitoring of the incumbent provider.</p> <p>Regular contact with Shared Lives Officers regarding raising the profile of the scheme.</p> <p>Quarterly Shared Lives champions meeting, that includes fieldwork services, commissioning lead and both Managers and Shared Lives officers of the incumbent provider.</p> <p>This an opportunity to work with fieldwork services to try and predict future need and demand. The nature of individualised support needs means this is based on potential's not certainties.</p> <p>I am awaiting a contribution from Louise Brosnan in terms of potential placement growth.</p> <p>These meetings are also an opportunity to support the incumbent provider in the endeavour to recruit Shared Lives carers. This has been and remains an issue.</p> <p>Quarterly contract performance review.</p> <p>Lead Commissioning Officer attendance at the incumbent providers planning workshop, that included, Shared Lives Managers, Shared Lives Officers and Shared Lives Carers and Service Users.</p> <p>Lead Commissioner has met with a group of Shared Lives carers and those receiving support to ascertain their views and to generate interest in them being part of a group that will co-design the new service specification.</p> <p>Lead Commissioner will attend the incumbent Providers annual celebration event on 14th November that brings together Shared Lives Officers, Shared Lives Carers and Service Users, to consult further and attempt to widen the service specification co-design group.</p> <p>Further engagement is ongoing with those individuals and professionals that are engaging with the current service provision to ascertain their views and to encourage them to become a part of the co-design of the new service specification.</p> <p>The Service Manager for Contracts and Brokerage, Contract Compliance, and Placements has confirmed that there continues to be demand for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults with Physical Disabilities - supported living/accommodation placements. • Adults with Mental Health issues - supported living/accommodation placements. • Adults with Learning Disabilities - supported living/accommodation placements <p>Over the last two full years there have been on average 50 new placements per year in the service areas above. The vast majority of which being, support for those with a Learning disability and those with Mental health issues.</p> <p>Although there is no guarantee that any new placements will be suitable for the Shared Lives scheme, it represents a high-quality cost-effective option. It is also a good model for young people that are not yet emotionally ready to move out of a foster parent's home.</p>
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		The Adult Directorate Management Team have reviewed and support the recommendations of this paper as it supports the Human Learning Systems approach being embedded in the service area.
6.4	Data Protection**	The contractor will process personal data and will be expected to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) form prior to contract commencement.
6.5	Project and contract management ²	Tier 2 - Medium Level Contract Management
		Quarterly performance monitoring, annual review/s, Shared Lives carer and service user liaison, service user satisfaction survey's, Shared Lives champions meetings, lead commissioner to sit on the Shared Lives panel.
6.6	Will TUPE apply to the proposed contract?	No
		Incumbent provider has confirmed that the Shared Lives Officers they employ work across a number of contracts.
6.7	Community and Equalities Impact Assessment****	A Community and Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and there appears to be no negative impact in terms of the procurement process.
6.8	Exit strategy	The nature of the service means any exit will be carefully managed by the two provider, incoming and outgoing and this will overseen by the lead commissioner. There is a significant amount of time allocated to do this 19th May to 30th September 2025.strategy. The current provider is well aware of the expectation that a measure and sensitive handover. I do not envisage any issues with the transition from the old provider to the new one.
6.9	Collaboration	The contract reflects the bespoke nature of adult placements. It's a collaborative approach between the individual, social work colleagues, the Shared Lives provider and the Shared Lives carer. It would not be appropriate to adopt a corporate approach to this, as the needs of the individuals that may use the scheme are complex and person centred.

7.	PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS	
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7.1	Category Manager comments	Procurement agrees with the approach set out and the tender process will be carried out in compliance with procurement regulations. The Procurement Act is due to come into force on 24th February 2025, and if it does, the tender process will comply with the Act. If the tender is published early, or the Procurement Act is further delayed, the tender will be carried out in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
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8.	LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
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8.1	Legal Officer comments	
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9.	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	
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9.1	Is the budget in place? If not, where will this contract be funded from?	
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² Refer to the contract management framework or your category manager for guidance

9.	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	
9.2	Will this contract present any additional financial pressures?	
9.3	Are there any other considerations to be taken into account?	

10.	APPROVALS	
10.1	Executive Director	In accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules, I confirm the accuracy of the information contained within this form and authorise this request to proceed to tender.
		Comments
		Name Rob Persey
		Signed
		Date
10.2	Strategic Approval Panel	Decision
		Panel members
		Date of decision
		Comments
		Decision sent by
10.3	Procurement	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Procurement implications
		Name Kiri Mason
		Signed
		Date
10.4	Legal (only required if spend is above £75k)	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Legal implications
		Name Kevin Molloy
		Signed
		Date
10.5	Finance	I confirm that I have been consulted and agree with the information contained in this report in so far as it relates to Financial implications
		Name Vena Kaur Bhakar
		Signed
		Date
	Responsible Officer	I confirm that this procurement will be carried out in accordance with Rule 5 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (Chapter 9, Part 2 of the Constitution).

10.6		Name	Ian Gleadell
		Signed	
		Date	
10.7	Cabinet (only applicable if £500k or over)	Minute number	TBC
		Date	TBC

*Guidance on the rules surrounding contractor employment status for tax can be found on the below link:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-off-payroll-working-ir35>

**The Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) tool can be found on the below link:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>

***Information on Data Protection and the DPIA form can be found on the following link:
<https://intranet.thurrock.gov.uk/services/information-management/data-protection/>

****You can search for Community and Equalities Impact Assessment guidance using the following link:
<https://intranet.thurrock.gov.uk/document-store/>