Customer Services Directorate

No First Night Out

Specification of Service

This document is to be completed in accordance with the Invitation and Instructions for Tendering for receipt, via the London Tenders Portal, with all relevant documentation by no later than **noon on Friday 27 October 2017.**

No First Night Out

Homelessness Service

Specification

1. **Introduction**
   1. This supplementary service specification sets out the service requirements for the SE London No First Night Out (NFNO) Shared Accommodation Scheme.
2. **Aims and Objectives of the Service**
   1. The focus of the service will be on the provision of a scheme to assist people threatened with homelessness access shared private rented sector accommodation. An overview is available as Appendix 1. The service will:

* Accept appropriate referrals from the South East London No First Night Out panel
* Enable single homeless people to access and maintain accommodation in the private rented sector
* Procure suitable and accessible shared PRS accommodation, preference will be for properties containing less than 5 units. The successful provider will be supplied with a copy of each Borough’s Licensing Scheme and any relevant information from Boroughs for landlords
* Focus on the sustainment of high quality tenancies and finding long-term solutions to people’s homelessness
* Enable service users to live independently after 12 weeks resettlement support. This would include with longer-term support from relevant local services where they are available
* Enable landlords to access the NFNO Rent Deposit Guarantee Bond Scheme
* Encourage landlords to rent to shared households
* Support landlords to positively navigate challenges to tenancy sustainment (eg, legislative change, Universal Credit)
* Build relationships between the voluntary sector and private rented sector landlords.

Additional Aims and Objectives

* Provide up to 12 weeks resettlement support for each placement
* Provide pre-tenancy training to each service user accessing accommodation to enable them to manage future tenancies
* Support tenants in sustaining current shared accommodation
* Access, move-to and maintain more appropriate accommodation if required
* Link service users into local savings schemes, eg, Credit Unions and encourage them to save for their future accommodation needs. Maximise and maintain income
* Reduce social isolation and develop and maintain social networks
* Maintain personal safety and security
* Access appropriate community based services and activities such as employment, education and training, financial capability support and access to health services
* Prevent and respond to tenancy breakdown through crisis intervention and support to landlords and service users
* Ensure that service users pay their rent and do not fall into rent arrears.

1. **Availability of the Service**
   1. The service must be available according to the table shown in Appendix 2.
   2. The service provider must provide access to IT for staff.
   3. Staff must be able to be mobile across the local authority areas of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lewisham, meaning that they will be able to operate from the four partner council bases throughout the service.
2. **Referral and Eligibility Criteria** 
   1. The referral route is via the SE London No First Night Panel.
   2. The provider will sit on the SE London NFNO Panel.
   3. Eligibility for the NFNO Shared Accommodation scheme will be assessed by the SE London NFNO Panel, it is expected that providers will accept all referrals made by the NFNO Panel unless a referral’s level of risk is identified as too high for the NFNO Shared accommodation scheme.
   4. The following process shall be adhered to by the provider:
   5. Referrals should be processed and assessed by the provider within 5 working days of receipt
   6. The provider will match referrals to accommodation on the basis of accommodation need
   7. The provider will apply to the relevant referral borough for a rent deposit guarantee for clients referred to the NFNO Shared Accommodation scheme
   8. The provider will operate and monitor a fair quota system ensuring each of the SE London NFNO boroughs have access to the NFNO scheme as decided and reviewed by the NFNO Steering group
   9. Further information on referrals is available in Appendix 3.
3. **Staffing**
   1. The staff team should have experience of and be able to procure properties from the private rented sector and maintain relationships with private landlords as well as provide support and resettlement assistance to users of the service.
   2. Staff will be expected to have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide holistic support to service users, supporting them to access and maintain accommodation.
   3. The provider will be expected to ensure that staff have the necessary skills knowledge and commitment to deliver a high quality service in accordance with this service specification and that staff are assisted to this end through their line management structures.
   4. Staff should have experience in building relationships and working with other voluntary and public sector partners.
   5. The table in Appendix 4 should ensure that the Service is sufficiently resourced at the Commencement Date and throughout the Contract Period.
4. **Support Levels**
   1. The service will work with low to no need clients. It is envisaged that there will be intensive work at assessment and resettlement stage with support reducing once the client has been successfully rehoused.
   2. Appendix 5 outlines varying levels of need in terms of hours of support per week.
   3. Tenancy reviews will be conducted with all clients every three months following successful placement.
5. **Outcomes** 
   1. In addition, the service will also be expected to achieve the following outcomes:

* The number of people arriving at the NSNO hub from the four local authority areas is reduced
* All service users are assisted in initial Housing Benefit claims and in paying any relevant service charges
* Service users have access to savings schemes for future accommodation
* The number of service users who are occupying settled accommodation one year after moving on from the service is monitored
* Access to the private rented sector for single homeless people is increased, in particular for those between 18-35 who have been affected by welfare reform.
* Tenancy sustainability in the private rented sector for this client group is increased through measures including pre-tenancy training, signposting to other services and links to training, work and volunteering opportunities.
* More high quality tenancies in the private rented sector are available for this client group both on a short-term and long-term basis.
* Positive relationships between the voluntary sector and private landlords are developed in order to house this client group successfully.
* Single homeless clients aged 18 plus are capable of living independently after 12 weeks of resettlement support.

1. **Safeguarding Adults and Children**
   1. Providers must ensure that they fully extend their Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults procedures to include safeguarding of children according to the procedures detailed in the London Child Protection and Practice Guidance: <http://www.londoncp.co.uk/>
2. **Monitoring Arrangements**
   1. Organisations will have to demonstrate that they have the appropriate systems in place to be able to provide a level of data to meet with the Council’s monitoring requirements which can be found in Appendix 6.
   2. Service outputs will be monitored quarterly, in the form of a report from the service for each individual referring borough, to be discussed in a meeting and include;

* The number of referrals received
* The number of referrals processed and assessed within 5 working days
* The numbers and type of homes successfully procured and their location.
* The numbers of people housed and their profiles
* The number of newly signed tenancies
* The number of people still in a successful tenancy after 6 months
* The number of people still in a successful tenancy after 12 months
* The number of failed tenancies and the reasons why
* The numbers of tenants/prospective tenants receiving tenancy support training and for how long
* The number of tenants referred/signposted for additional support after 12 weeks and the reasons why
* The number of tenants linked into training, volunteering or work opportunities
* Level of client and landlord satisfaction with the service.
* The service will also be monitored against the following KPIs:

**KPIs**

90% of referrals are processed and assessed within 5 working days

90% of service user tenancies are sustained 6 months after referral to the service

100% of service users are invited to contribute their views on the service

80% of service users contributing their views report improved tenancy skills

100% of landlords are invited to contribute their views on the service

80% of landlords contributing their views report improved understanding of the management of shared accommodation

100% of service users accommodated through the NFNO Shared Accommodation scheme do not appear on CHAIN as new rough sleepers within 6 months of referral to the service provider

* 1. In addition to reporting on progress around the expected outputs and outcomes as stated above, the organisation will also have to provide monitoring evidence on their governance and key aspects of their human resource management, for example around safeguarding, health and safety etc. For example, details of staff/volunteers receiving enhanced DBS checks, staff accessing appropriate training, providing committee minutes etc.

**Appendix 1 -Service Description**

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| --- | --- |
| **Name of Service** | SE London No First Night Out Shared Accommodation Scheme |
| **Type of service** | Property Procurement and Resettlement Team |
| **Capacity** | Expectation of at least 324 clients over the 2 year life of the contract |
| **Type of Tenure** | Private Rented Sector |
| **Level of Service** | Low Need |
| **Duration of Support Service** | Short term intervention of up to 12 weeks |

**Appendix 2 – Availability**

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| --- |
| Hours of cover |
| 9am – 5pm M-F |

**Appendix 3 - Referral and Eligibility Criteria**

**1 Referral Routes**

1.1 Via SE London No First Night Out Panel

**2 Eligibility criteria**

2.1 The service will be available to people who:

* Are aged 18 +
* Have access to public funds
* Have a local connection to Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich or Lewisham
* Have low to no needs

**And**

* Are under threat of homelessness or in difficult housing circumstances in any housing tenure
* Willing to work with service provider to ensure that they are able to access shared PRS accommodation
* Are not already rough sleeping and have no prior history of rough sleeping
* Are single – defined for these purposes as a single client without dependents

**Appendix 4 - Staffing Schedule**

This schedule sets out the staff support hours provided to this service. Any changes to the level of support must be agreed between the Council and the preferred provider.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Post** | **Total weekly hours (on this service)** | **Weekly support hours (on this service)** | **Holiday entitlement – range applicable to the post** | **Locum cover arrangements** |
| Members of staff who spend some or all of their time on support services and work directly with service users |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |
| Managers of front line staff charged in total or part to support activities at this service |  |  |  |  |  |
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**Appendix 5 - Levels of Support to define low need for the purpose of this service**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level 1** | **Low** | It is envisaged that Service Users will require no more than 1 to 2 hours support per week. |
| **Level 2** | **Medium** | It is envisaged that Service Users will require 3 to 4 hours of support per week. |
| **Level 3** | **High** | It is envisaged that Service Users will require at least 5 or more hours of support per week. |

**Appendix 6 – Monitoring Arrangements**

Monitoring arrangements will be set out in the contract as follows:

‘A Council’s Authorising Officer may at all reasonable times audit and / or inspect the Service provided to the Service User under this Contract and the performance of the Provider in meeting the quality standards and other conditions required under the Contract as outlined in the Service Specification. The level of monitoring will depend on individual circumstances but there will be a minimum of one visit per year for the annual review.

# The Provider shall at all times co-operate with the reasonable processes of the Council for monitoring, evaluation and quality audit in whatever way is reasonably requested by the Council. The Council reserves the right to visit the Premises and the Service at any reasonable time without giving notice and without prejudice.