

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b> 16 April 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	PART A – Contract for Mental Health Supported Living Scheme Topping Mill	
<b>Report of</b>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	

## Summary

- Following the [Topping Mill Supported Living Cabinet](#) report dated 7 November 2023, approval was given to the Community Commissioning Division to engage in a competitive procurement process to appoint a provider for the provision of mental health support at Topping Mill, Topping St, Bury, BL9 6DR. After review and procurement, this report requests the approval for the Division to award a contract to a care provider.
- The mental health supported living scheme will provide high specification accommodation for 14 people (18+ years) in self-contained apartments with support 24/7 from a team of staff to support their mental health and individual goals.

## Recommendation(s)

- The recommendation is for Cabinet to:
  - Award **Rethink Mental Illness** a 3-year contract for the mental health supported living tender for the Topping Mill scheme.
  - Enter a 3-year arrangement (July 2025 to Jun 2028), with an option to extend for +1 year and +1 year, subject to performance and review.
  - Delegate finalisation and sealing of this contract, including any clarification, to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director for Health and Care.

## Reasons for recommendation(s)

- The [Bury Housing with Additional Needs Strategy](#) and Market Position Statement analysed the existing provision of mental health supported accommodation services and predicted the growth needed to meet future demands. The Market Position Statement indicates that an extra 86 units of mental health supported accommodation is needed by 2025.
- Our commissioning intentions are to increase the provision of self-contained supported accommodation and reduce the number of units offering shared supported accommodation. The proposed scheme at Topping Mill offers ‘own front door’ apartments.

6. The proposed model for Topping Mill will offer medium term support for up to 5 years, supporting people to develop person-centred recovery towards greater independent living. The scheme will improve wider system flow creating accommodation and support options for people who are clinically ready for discharge from hospital, the scheme will offer 24/7 supported living and will fill a deficit in local provision.
7. A competitive procurement process has been completed to identify the most suitable care provider for this new scheme.

### **Alternative options considered and rejected**

8. The Public Procurement Contracts Regulations 2015 do not allow for light touch or direct award in this case.

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### **Background**

9. Following approval of the [Topping Mill Supported Living Report](#) by Cabinet on 7 November 2023, the Community Commissioning Division has engaged in a competitive procurement process to appoint a care provider for the new mental health supported living scheme at Topping Mill.
10. Topping Mill was a former industrial mill constructed in the mid to late 1800s. The building was originally occupied by the confectioners Scott & Rosse before they vacated in the 1960s. The property has been vacant for several years. It is currently being re-developed by the St David Group, the building work commenced in 2024, with expected completion in June / July 2025. See Appendix 1 for photographs of the site.
11. The property will offer 14 self-contained apartments, 4 of which will be ground floor and fully accessible for disabled people, provide a staff space and residents communal lounge.
12. St David Group have agreed a 20-year FRI lease with a Registered Housing Provider, Inclusion Homes for the finished building. Inclusion Homes will provide the landlord and housing management function. The rent setting has

been agreed in principle by the Bury Council's Corporate Finance Department.

13. Bury Council will have 100% nomination rights in perpetuity for all 14 units. Whilst the nominations agreement is in perpetuity, it can be ended with notice as per the terms of the care provider contract.
14. Bury Council will contract the appointed care provider on a block arrangement for all 14 placements. It is anticipated the care contract will commence in July and people will start to move into the scheme in July / August 2025.
15. Part B of the report includes financial information.

### **Developing the Service Specification**

16. A detailed service specification has been developed outlining the care provider requirements and this has been published with the tender documents.
17. The specification has been developed with mental health practitioners and people with living experience in mental health supported accommodation. Representatives from the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) have formed a specialist supported accommodation group to advise on the property specification and the expected support needs of the cohort.
18. The principles of this service are:
  - People are at the heart of the service.
  - People are supported in safe quality accommodation to help them through their mental health recovery journey.
  - The provider shall take a strengths-based approach, focused on enabling people to do as much as they can for themselves.
  - Commissioners and the provider shall work collaboratively to secure the best outcomes for people; they should be outward looking, seek opportunities to learn from best practice and to continually improve.
  - Providers will adhere to principles outlined in the Bury Housing with Additional Needs Strategy 2022-2025.
19. The service will support males and females, aged 18+, who are willing to engage in recovery, support will be provided to deliver positive outcomes:
  - Improve their mental health and live happier healthier lives.
  - Develop independent living skills to support the next stage of their recovery journey.
  - Develop social skills and connect with others.
  - Improve their physical health and wellbeing.

- Develop strategies to reduce the risk of a relapse in their mental health.
  - Establish connections with the local community.
  - Explore opportunities to access education, training, voluntary work or paid employment
20. The scheme will be staffed 24 hours a day, to provide the required level of support. It is anticipated that people will live in the scheme for up to a maximum of 5 years, so that people who require more sustained support for independent living, can have the best chance for future tenancy success, when they are ready to move into settled housing. The care provider will support people to achieve personal move on goals to more independent living.
  21. The service specification outlines a person centred, strengths-based approach and is flexible as needs change. This approach has been led by people with lived experience, to move away from rigid models with a fixed number of one-to-one support hours.
  22. Bidders were invited to propose a service delivery model that underpins the principles of the service and delivers the outcomes. Rethink Mental Illness have proposed a strong recovery-focussed model that offers a breadth of support.
  23. CMHT will identify people suitable for this new scheme, including people in hospital, people who need to step up from a lower level of care and people who are currently living out of borough and wish to return to Bury. Identification of people suitable for the scheme may be from other spaces too, such as the Health and Adult Care department. All allocations will be considered via the Living Options Group, which is facilitated by the Community Commissioning Division.

## **Procurement Process**

24. The Invitation to Tender documents were published on The Chest on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and with a deadline submission date of 12 March. Due to the high volume of clarification questions received, the submission deadline was extended until Monday 17 March. Submissions received by the deadline have been evaluated by a Panel, including commissioners and a mental health practitioner.
25. Submissions were evaluated against price and quality criteria, including service outcomes, service delivery, staffing, quality and performance and social value. The panel evaluated the bids individually and Procurement facilitated the moderating of the scores.
26. A high number of bids were received, clarification meetings were held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 with the Panel.

27. Establishing a block contract for a scheme provides savings opportunities. The procurement process invited providers to submit costs for 14 units for 3 years with the option to extend for up to two periods of one year each. Spot purchasing individual care packages is notably more expensive, this approach offers savings for the Council and stability for the provider.
28. The financial information relating to this project is recorded in Part B.

### **Contract Monitoring**

29. The Community Commissioning Division will work proactively with the appointed provider, quarterly reports will be submitted by the provider and monitoring will be ongoing to ensure high quality provision. Monitoring will also include a qualitative approach which 'tells the story' of people that have moved into the scheme and how their lives have been improved by the provision.
30. The Rethink Mental Illness is registered with the CQC and has over 25 registered services.
31. A performance framework will be developed and will focus on a range of areas, including outcomes achieved, duration of stay, modelling of staff hours, service feedback, safeguarding, leadership and complaints.

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### **Links with the Corporate Priorities:**

32. The Housing for Adults with Additional Needs Strategy aligns to the Bury Let's Do It Strategy which provides the vision to enable people of all ages to live well within their neighbourhoods, supported by the integration of public services with our neighbourhood hubs. The procurement of mental health supported accommodation meets the aspirations of the Let's Strategy.

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- **Local**

- Local housing options for local people by providing accommodation for people with mental illness in Bury.
- Developing and regenerating the unique townships where people live
- Prevent the need for Bury residents to have to move out of the borough to have their needs met.
- Bring Bury residents back in borough if its right for them.
- Work with local developer's and providers who know the local area.

- **Enterprise**

- Encouraging enterprise to drive inclusive economic growth through our business community.
- Enterprising innovation and creative solutions to current housing issues, including a mixed housing portfolio.
- Be bold in our housing solutions and future developments in Bury.

- **Together**
  - Working together to commission quality supported accommodation, fit for purpose homes for people with additional needs in Bury.
  - Working together with service users and their carers to shape accommodation options and positive move on.
  - Working together to ensure inclusivity throughout the housing agenda.
- **Strengths**
  - Taking a strength- based approach to recognise the assets and strengths of communities to settle people in their new homes.
  - Recognising the strengths of individuals enabling their independence, choice, and control for housing.

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### Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

An initial Equality Impact Assessment was completed in November 2023, a refreshed version is available as Appendix 2. The revised version has identified that this activity is likely to have a positive impact for several characteristics and circumstances with no negative impacts expected.

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### Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact [climate@bury.gov.uk](mailto:climate@bury.gov.uk) for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact [c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk) for advice)*

33. All 14 apartments will be delivered to an EPC 'B' rating, improving the overall energy efficiency of the building and future proofing the in line with the expected changes from central government around minimum EPC standards. In terms of biodiversity, bat boxes are to be installed upon completion of the build. There is no outside space for this property.

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### Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Increase in demand for mental health supported accommodation	The report considers existing provision and Housing with Additional Needs priority recommendations to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet the needs of local people.

<p>Voids at the scheme placing financial risk on the authority</p>	<p>The risk is low as the demand is high in the borough for mental health accommodation. However, to mitigate the risk further, the Council has developed a Specialised Housing Allocation Policy and will monitor movement of tenants and utilisation. Also agreed to share 50% of the voids risk with the nominated care provider after 12 weeks of a void</p>
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### **Legal Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Monitoring Officer.*

The accommodation at Topping Hill forms a key part of the provision of accommodation for adults with social care needs arising from a mental health need which may be assessed as required under section 18 Care Act 2014.

In addition, the proposals support the reduction in delayed transfers of care from hospitals and the integration of health and social care services.

The procurement exercise was carried out in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as it was commenced prior to the Procurement Act 2023 coming into effect on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

### **Financial Implications:**

*To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.*

34. The contract cost will be funded from the existing Adult Social Care Community Care Budget and will not require additional financial resource.
35. In addition to the Block contract provision offering better value for money than Spot placements for similar schemes it is likely that additional savings over and above the Cabinet agreed 2025/26 Health & Adult Care Directorate saving programme will be delivered by bringing 'out of borough' placements back into the borough of Bury.
36. As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle, Finance, Commissioners and Social work teams will triangulate and track the expenditure and savings linked to the provision set out in this report ensuring that all expenditure aligns to the funding provided and savings are recorded and reported accurately.
37. Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.

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### **Appendices:**

- 1. Photographs of Topping Mill in development
- 2. Equality Impact Assessment March 2025

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**Background papers:**

*Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.*

[Bury Housing with Additional Needs Strategy](#)

[Bury Housing with Additional Needs Market Position Statement](#)

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**

Term	Meaning
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
IHM	Intensive Housing Management
RP	Registered Housing Provider
CMHT	Community Mental Health Team