

Officer Decision Record – Executive Decision

Decision Ref. No. B008/24

OFFICER DECISION RECORD ⁱ

Subject: Contract Award for the provision of advocacy services for adults in Hertfordshire

Type of Decision: Executive

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Member: Tony Kingsbury

Portfolio: Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing

Officer Contact: Tara Mullaney

Tel: 07910 211 998

1. Decision

- 1.1 To award the contract for the delivery of advocacy services for adults in Hertfordshire.
- 1.2 The identity of the successful bidder and the value of the contract awarded to them is included in Annex A.

2. Reasons for the decision

- 2.1 The Care Act states that people should be involved in discussions and decisions about their care and support. Advocacy services play a crucial role in empowering and enabling people to participate in these discussions and influence decisions about their future as the experts in their own lives.
- 2.2 Connected Lives Practice Principle 5 says that people should have a clear understanding of the legal framework for adult social care, this includes the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Mental Health Act 1983 and further, 'The person should be at the centre and fully involved in their assessment and care planning process. Advocacy services should be used where needed.'
- 2.3 The ACS plan outlines the vision for adult social care where the Council and our partners work to create a place where people lead healthy, purposeful, self-supporting lives, and so help to prevent and reduce care and support needs. To enable people to realise this vision in their own lives, and as specifically stated in Theme 4 of the Plan, the Council need to ensure 'access to good quality information, advice and advocacy when people need it'.

- 2.4 Commissioners are confident that the new service will ensure that those who are seldom heard can have a voice in conversations about their care and support to promote individual choice and control in decisions that will affect their future.
- 2.5 The Provider being recommended for award represents the most economically advantageous tender, offering both a quality bid and value for money.
- 2.6 Award recommendations are based on the outcome of a robust procurement exercise.
- 2.7 Commissioners completed several activities to inform the on-going delivery of advocacy services. This included consulting with citizens and professionals through surveys and online workshops.
- 2.8 Commissioners also published a PPME questionnaire and met with the incumbents to explore some key lines of enquiry to inform the future model.
- 2.9 Feedback has been triangulated and common themes identified around gaps in the service and possible improvements for the new contract which have been built into the new service specification.

Qualification envelope

- 2.10 The Qualification questions are not scored as they are predicated on compliance with aspects of legal and corporate governance that are deemed essential for an operator of a contract let by the County Council. All Qualification questions are mandatory and providers who fail any of them will be excluded from the rest of the procurement process.

Commercial envelope

- 2.11 The commercial envelope was evaluated using the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) method as follows:

$$\text{Tenderer Points Scored} = \frac{\text{Lowest Tenderer Price}^*}{\text{Tenderer Price}} \times \text{Element Maximum Points Available (5)}$$

Technical (Quality) envelope

- 2.12 The quality factors were weighted according to their importance, with greater percentage being based on meeting the specification and service outcomes. There were 8 questions in total under the following key themes:

Theme of question	Total Weighting
Service Structure and Work Practice	10%
Mobilisation	5%
Service Pathway	20%
Service Delivery	15%
Working in Partnership	15%

Data recording and reporting	5%
Recruitment and retention – looking after staff and the wider network	15%
Independent Service	15%

Quality Evaluation

- 2.13 In total, there were three bids received on In-Tend by the closing date. One provider failed to achieve the minimum financial thresholds within the qualification envelope. Two providers progressed to the quality evaluation.
- 2.14 The quality envelope was scored separately by a panel of six evaluators which included commissioners, operational staff and two residents of Hertfordshire. Each of the eight questions was scored from 0 – 4 with 0 being unacceptable and 4 being good. To score a 4 Tenderers were required to identify factors that would offer potential added value.
- 2.15 Moderation meetings were facilitated by the moderation officer and all evaluators gave their comments and scores on the quality of the submission and responses to the questions. All evaluators expressed that overall, the tender was a good submission from an organisation with the skills and expertise to mobilise and deliver a quality service.
- 2.16 The winning provider submitted a robust mobilisation plan as part of their bid which reflected their experience in mobilising contracts of a similar nature. The detailed plan outlined tasks, risks and mitigations. This plan will form the basis of mobilisation meetings in which commissioners will focus on key milestones. Key considerations identified within the mobilisation plan include communication to professionals and events for stakeholders.
- 2.17 Overall, the evaluation panel felt that the tender submission evidenced significant experience of managing and delivering similar services. The submission provided clear evidence of promoting good integrated working and a strong ethos of coproduction alongside significant evidence of establishing relationships with a range of appropriate partners.

Equality Implications

- 2.18 An initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out by Commissioners and an Equalities Manager when the project was initiated and has remained live during the project having been refreshed at key milestones during the process.
- 2.19 The specification outlines the requirement for the Provider to be consistent in their approach to all service users whilst taking account of the different needs of individuals. The service will respond appropriately to the needs of adults from a variety of social, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and with a range of intellectual, physical, emotional and social developmental needs.

3. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 3.1 The opportunity was published on In-Tend, the Council's procurement portal with set qualification, technical and commercial criteria to ensure robust

assurance that the contract being awarded can deliver the Council's requirements.

- 3.2 The Provider being recommended for award represents the most economically advantageous tender, offering both a high-quality bid and value for money.

4. Consultation

Was any Councillor consulted? No

If yes:

(a) Comments of Executive Member:

(b) Comments of other consultees

5. Any conflict of interest declared by a councillor who has been consulted in relation to the decision

N/A

6. I am proceeding with the proposed decision.

Signed: Jackie Albery

Title: Director - Planning & Resources | Adult Care Services

Date: 12/03/2024

Copies of record to:

- All consultees
- hard & electronic copy (if required to be made available for public inspection) to Democratic Services Manager - Room 213 County Hall.ⁱⁱ

Summary of Requirements to Inform/Consult Councillors

Significance of Proposed Action	Controversial	Relevant Councillor(s) to be Consulted
Technical/Professional/ Routine	No	No need to inform or consult councillors
Technical/Professional/ Routine	Yes	Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member and, where appropriate, Local Councillor Non-Executive Functions: Relevant Committee Chairman and, where appropriate, Local Councillor
Local	No	Executive Functions:

		<p>Inform Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor</p> <p>Non-Executive Functions: Inform Local Councillor</p>
Local	Yes	<p>Executive Functions: Consult Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor</p> <p>Non-Executive Functions: Consult Local Councillor</p>
General or County-wide	No	<p>Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s)</p> <p>Non-Executive Functions: Consult relevant Committee Chairman</p>
General or County-wide	Yes	<p>Executive Functions: Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s) and the Leader of the Council</p> <p>Non-Executive Functions: Consult relevant Committee Chairman/Leaders all Political Groups</p>