

Executive Director People Services	Ref No: OKD08 19/20
June 2019	Key Decision: Yes
Commissioning of community advice services from Citizens Advice in West Sussex	Part I Report Part II Appendices
Report by Senior Contracts and Commissioning Officer	Electoral Division(s): ALL

Summary

The community advice service in West Sussex is a universal service with a high-profile brand identity that is well known to the general public. The service is often the first point of contact for people in crisis situations and works with other voluntary and statutory sector organisations that operate within county, district and borough and parish boundaries.

Key Decision [AH15\(18/19\)](#) approved the procurement of the commissioning of the community advice service from Citizens Advice in West Sussex (North, South, East) ("CAWS").

The Executive Director People Services has delegated powers to award the Contract to CAWS. This report seeks the approval of the Executive Director People Services to award the contract and to delegate any extension after the initial period to the Director of Public Health as the responsible commissioner.

West Sussex Plan: Policy Impact and Context

The universal advice offered through this service contributes to the following key West Sussex Plan objectives:

- Best start in life
- A prosperous place
- A strong, safe and sustainable place
- Independence for later life
- A council that works for the community

The service in West Sussex is 80% delivered by volunteers and supports volunteering opportunities across the county. It supports better partnership working between the voluntary and statutory sectors including West Sussex County Council, for example in promoting place-based local service delivery and the future development of volunteering.

Financial Impact

The contract will be for 9 months+1+1 years in order to provide an incentive to both progress with and show evidence of service remodelling which is a key requirement to meet the changing needs and demographic of West Sussex and to move the service onto a financially sustainable footing. There will be no inflationary uplift from West Sussex County Council during this period and there will be an option for West Sussex County Council to reduce its funding element by up to 10% in the final year (April 2021 to March 2022) by negotiation and agreement prior to

the start of the final contract year. This decision will be subject to a review of the progress being made on service remodelling and performance. The contract value is £1,065,700 per annum, with £350,000 of this total being the contribution from West Sussex County Council.

Recommendation

The Executive Director People Services is asked to award the contract to CAWS for a period of 9 months with an option to extend for 1+1 years. The contract is to commence on 1st July 2019. The authority to extend the contract after the initial period is delegated to the Director of Public Health. If extended up to two years the contract would have a final expiry date of 31st March 2022.

Proposal

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 The current contract that is in place for this service concludes on the 31st May 2019.
- 1.2 In summer 2018 the County Council working in a funding partnership with the District and Borough Councils agreed the award of a single tender contract to continue the current service provision for 2019-22 on a 9 months+1+1 basis.
- 1.3 The Cabinet Member approved the commencement of a single tender procurement process, detailed within the report AH14(18/19), to recommission this service with effect from the 1st July 2019.
- 1.4 Breakdown of year one funding allocations by each member of the funding partnership is as follows. All figures shown are per annum. For the first contract year the figures will be pro-rated under the contract for the 9 month period.

Local authority	Yr. 1 allocation
West Sussex County Council	£350,000
Crawley Borough Council	£140,600
Mid Sussex District Council	£119,400
Arun District Council	£117,000
Horsham District Council	£93,000
Worthing Borough Council	£79,800
Adur District Council	£83,800
Chichester District Council	£82,100
Total Per Annum	£1,065,700

Procurement Process

- 1.5 The tender documentation was made available to the identified provider through the West Sussex e-Sourcing Portal.

The tender submission was received by the due date of 7th May 2019 in accordance with the tender documents made available on the e-Sourcing portal.

- 1.6 Procurement services undertook compliance checks of the tender submissions on the 8th May 2019 to ensure all schedules that were required were duly submitted and that the tender was correct.

- 1.7 The tender evaluation criteria and assessment model as detailed below, was agreed by officers, and was included in the tender documentation:

Criteria	Weighting (100%)
Technical	
Method Statement Questions	100%
Commercial	
Affordability	Pass/Fail

- 1.8 The tender was evaluated by the evaluation panel between the 8th May 2019 and 10th May 2019 and a moderation meeting was held on the 13th May 2019 to discuss and agree final marks. The evaluation panel comprised of County Council contract officers and representation from equivalent officers from District and Borough Council partners making up membership of the funding partnership.

- 1.9 The appointed Procurement Officer has ensured that the procurement process was compliant.

2. Proposal Details

Factors taken into account

- 2.1 It is proposed that as a result of the procurement process the contract be awarded to CAWS.
- 2.2 This award is subject to a democratic process standstill period of ten days. Once the standstill period has been completed a formal award letter together with the Contract in duplicate will be sent to the successful provider for execution. The County Council will complete the contract execution process.
- 2.3 The services will commence on 1st July 2019 for a period of 9 months with a 1 + 1 possible extension period.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 The partners consider the current specification to be sufficient for the single tender period 2019-22 subject to the service remodelling requirement. In

2014 a survey was conducted to gauge the opinions of residents around the provision of information and advice and its availability within West Sussex. The outcomes of the survey were used to develop the specification for the service from 2018-19.

4. Financial (revenue and capital) and Resource Implications

- 4.1 The contract is let at the same price as the current contract with an option to reduce the West Sussex County Council funding element by 10% in the 3rd and final year, subject to available budget, negotiation with funding partners and overall service performance.
- 4.2 This will be a large single tender award with specified outputs and outcomes for a period of up to three years. The proposal can be met from existing approved budgets, as shown in the table below.

	Year 1 2019/20 £m	Year 2 2020/21 £m	Year 3 2021/22 £m
WSCC Revenue budget	0.350	0.350	0.350
Cost of Proposal	0.350	0.350	0.350**
-Saving or Shortfall	0	0	0**

** For exemplification this does not take account of the option for WSCC to reduce its funding by up to 10% in the final year – if this option was implemented in due course, the saving in 2021/22 would be up to £35k.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The general duty to provide information and advice services and prevent escalation to long term care services is provided within the Care Act 2014.
- 5.2 In 2010, when the original contract was let, CAWS was the only provider capable of delivering all key service requirements. In 2018, the funding partnership reviewed the potential of other providers in the market. It found the market unchanged and whilst certain service elements, including legal advice, might attract a wider market, CAWS is the dominant and likely sole provider of universal generalist advice required under the contract.
- 5.3 Therefore, in light of the funding partnership's review and given that the County Council proposes the continuation of an existing direct award to CAWS, it considers the risk of challenge from other providers to be low.
- 5.4 The legal implications were considered in further detail as part of the Key Decision Report ([Ref: AH15 18/19](#)).

6. Risk Assessment Implications and Mitigations

- 6.1 There will be regular quarterly local (District and Borough Councils) contract reviews and bi-annual collective contract review with all partners to monitor the countywide service performance. These reviews will ensure that the

remodelling will be effectively managed each year and for the duration of the contract. Performance will be addressed through the terms and conditions of contract and has the flexibility to enforce a break clause if required.

- 6.2 Linked to the above and as set out on Appendix 2, there are sustainability risks attached to CAWS' financial model. The combination of required service remodelling, new payment terms, and the flexibility within the proposed contract, help mitigate these risks.

7. Other Options Considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 7.1 Alternative procurement options were considered as part of the Key Decision Report ([Ref: AH15 18/19](#)).

8. Equality and Human Rights Assessment

There are no foreseeable equality and Human Rights Act implications associated with this proposal.

9. Social Value and Sustainability Assessment

- 9.1 The social value outcomes proposed in the aims of the service support the ambitions of the West Sussex Plan through:

- Ensuring more opportunities for disadvantaged people and promoting local skills and employment
- Supporting more local people into employment
- Supporting the growth of local businesses
- Helping people live a healthy family, home and work life
- Utilising volunteering opportunities and local partnerships with the VCS to provide a sustainable and thriving business and strengthen social and community capital
- Supporting a strong community to reduce the risks of families in temporary accommodation
- Empowering residents to take responsibility for their choices to improve their lives, health and wellbeing

- 9.2 This service will deliver value for money by addressing complex and multiple issues at the earliest opportunity to prevent escalation to crisis. This generates wider social and economic benefits amongst other local services by reducing demand and resolving complex issues before there is a need to access intensive support services.

- 9.3 The service will operate multiple access points to increase sustainability and reduce the impact on the environment by operating in local areas and offering a telephone, email and online chat service. It will consider the impact of transport in the provision of the service by utilising assets in local communities, ensuring that travel is kept to a minimum and the carbon footprint of the service is low.

- 9.4 This service will generate added social value by utilising an effective and diverse volunteer workforce to achieve its aims, reflective of the local community and the citizens using the service. The recruitment, training,

support and retention of volunteers and the building of skills for employment will form part of its core business ethos. The volunteer base has equal opportunities in all areas of the service, including job opportunities and professional skills development.

- 9.5 The service will also promote a positive infrastructure for volunteering within West Sussex. The service will be a centre of excellence for recruitment, training, deployment and retention of volunteers in the delivery of triage and general advice services. This includes recruiting volunteers that can accommodate the diversity of language needs in West Sussex to broaden the accessibility of the service.
- 9.6 The service will take an active role in local and county partnerships in order to fulfil their role as an influencer and maximise social value. It will develop effective links with other public and voluntary sector services and work with all relevant partners to enable clear pathways.
- 9.7 It is also expected that where the service is asked to support funding partners in the delivery of a targeted service in a particular area or tackling a specific issue (e.g. a benefit take-up campaign or raising awareness of scams) that it will respond positively within its resources and remit. Work will be carried out at a local level and include other organisations in the community and the local authority where appropriate to maximise the impact of the proposed social value benefits.
- 9.8 The service will ensure that its customers and other organisations can contribute to its development. This will enable the service to identify trends and respond to changing needs and effectively report on the service provision gaps in West Sussex that may inform future commissioning decisions and investment in preventative services.

10. Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment

None.

Contact Officers:

Kim Curry

Executive Director for People Services

Tel: 033 022 24980

Seth Gottesman

Senior Contracts and Commissioning Officer

Tel: 033 022 28706

Appendices:

Part II Appendix 1 – Evaluation Model

Part II Appendix 2 – Evaluation Summary

Background papers: None