

Report to Alison Challenger, Director of Public Health

July 2022

Community Advice and Support Service - Award of Contract

Report by Daniel McIntyre, Head of Public Health

Electoral division(s): All

Summary

This report seeks authority to award a Community Advice and Support contract following a compliant procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR).

Recommendation

The Director of Public Health is asked to approve the award of the contract to Citizen's Advice West Sussex. The service will commence from 1st September 2022 for a two-year seven-month initial period to 31st July 2025 with the option to extend for a further period of up to three years (the first extension period), and an additional final year (the second extension period). The total Contract Term (including the Initial Period and any Extensions) shall not exceed six (6) years and seven (7) months, expiring no later than 31st March 2029.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The decision to commence a procurement process for the Community Advice and Support Service was taken on 10th December 2021: [Report Ref: PHW02 21/22](#)
- 1.2 Following this decision, a tender utilising the PCR Open Procedure was advertised on 1st April 2022 via the Council's SE Shared Services Tendering Portal, Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service (Ref 2022/S 000-008754).
- 1.3 Compliance checks were taken on the tender submissions on the 18th May 2022 to ensure all schedules that were required were duly submitted and that tenders were correct.
- 1.4 The technical element of the tender featured responses to method statement questions to determine the ability of the bidder to deliver the required services.

- 1.5 The tenders were evaluated by the evaluation panel between 18th May – 14th June 2022 with a moderation meeting taking place on the 15th June 2022 to discuss and agree final scores.
- 1.6 Following the moderation meeting, the bidders technical scores were added to the scores achieved from the commercial evaluation and bidders were ranked from the highest scoring to the lowest scoring.
- 1.7 Bidders were required to submit their financial information and Commercial Finance carried out checks to ensure their financial stability.
- 1.8 The appointed Procurement Manager has ensured that the procurement process was compliant.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Director for Public Health approves the award of the Community Advice and Support Contract to the following Service Provider:

Lot No.	Contract Description	Successful Bidder	Annual Contract Value
	County-wide Community Advice and Support	Citizen’s Advice West Sussex (the incumbent provider)	£1,073,201

- 2.2 The service will commence from 1st September 2022 for a two-year seven-month initial period to 31st July 2025 with the option to extend for a further period of up to three years (the first extension period), and an additional final year (the second extension period). The total Contract Term (including the Initial Period and any Extensions) shall not exceed six (6) years and seven (7) months, expiring no later than 31st March 2029.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 Alternative options were considered as part of Decision Report ref [AH10 \(20/21\)](#).

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 The Funder-Partners consider the current service model and Service Specification to be appropriate for the commissioning of a seven-year service. 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 remain relevant for the proposed procurement; however, it is recognised that a survey post the pandemic period would be appropriate and would correspond with 2nd period of the contract award.
- 4.2 The incumbent Service Provider undertakes a regular client satisfaction survey and additional evidence had been collected from stakeholders to allow for commissioning in 2021 through effective performance monitoring.

5 Finance

5.1 Revenue consequences

The final cost proposal following the re-procurement of the contract is £1,073,201 per annum, just under the ITT total value of £1,073,476. However, as this re-procurement has been undertaken in partnership with the 7 District and Borough Councils, the total cost to West Sussex County Council is £350'000 plus in-kind contract management support. The funding contribution from the District and Borough Councils and County Council is as follows

AUTHORITY	CONTRACT PRICE FOR THE FIRST CONTRACT YEAR
Adur District Council	£83,785
Arun District Council	£120,511
Chichester District Council	£86,261
Crawley Borough Council	£140,530
Horsham District Council	£92,961
Mid Sussex District Council	£119,365
Worthing Borough Council	£79,790
West Sussex County Council	£350,000
TOTAL	£1,073,201

During the first financial year of the contract, the annual payment contribution for the each of the West Sussex Local Authorities will be 7/12 of the above figures, to reflect the start date of the contract (1st September 2022).

5.2 The effect of the proposal for award:

(a) **How the cost represents good value**

The Community Advice and Support Service provides a service to over 25,000 customers county-wide every year. The investment in this service enables people facing debt, housing, benefit, pension, health and well-being issues to access the advice and information needed to avoid crisis. The service brings significant amounts of benefit entitlements into the County, enabling people to support themselves and families. The service model employs significant numbers of trained volunteers, benefiting those individuals and reducing staff costs.

The Service specification requires increased performance, quarterly monitoring with countywide, District and Borough Council data. There will also be further development of the Digital Service programme with targets for an annual increase in the number of cases being dealt with.

The successful bidder will deliver an increase in service delivery in the following areas, as stated in 5.1 above:

Increase in customer numbers receiving a service	5000 per year
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Increase in customer issues addressed	3000 per year
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(b) **Future savings/efficiencies being delivered**

The Community Advice and Support service supports people to access all financial entitlements, reduce levels of debt and prevent personal and family financial crisis in West Sussex. As well as delivering benefits to the wider economy, the service supports people in maintaining their mental health and well-being with positive outcomes for the wider health and social care system. There will be no cashable savings.

(c) **Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact**

There are no TUPE implications as CA West Sussex are the incumbent provider of this service.

There is no impact on IT or Assets.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Risk of Challenge	A fully Compliant process that meets standing orders and procurement regulations.
Risk of Supplier failure	As part of the tender process, financial standing checks have been undertaken by WSCC Commercial Finance. The Service Provider passed the relevant checks and the awarded contract is within the value limits recommended by WSCC Commercial Finance.
Risk of disruption due to change in service provider	Not applicable as the incumbent provider will be awarded the contract
Risk of provider failure impacting on services available to customers during the life of the contract.	The Public Health Commissioning and Contracts team will ensure appropriate levels of contract management, performance monitoring and quality assurance. Monitoring of financial due diligence of providers with high risk or high impact of provider failure.
Increasing costs of services	Monitoring of increased costs and mitigation options discussed and agreed with provider

7 Policy alignment and compliance

7.1 Community Advice and Support services contribute to the following West Sussex Plan Objectives:

- Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations
- A sustainable and prosperous economy
- Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential

7.2 The service will work in the communities of West Sussex, and so support the local economy with recruitment of a strong local workforce as well as offering significant volunteer opportunities and apprenticeships.

7.3 **Equality and Human Rights Assessment**

All West Sussex residents have a right to access these services.

7.4 **Social Value and Sustainability Assessment**

Social Value was included within the procurement process and the proposal therefore includes consideration of the positive impact the Service Provider will have on social value and sustainability in West Sussex.

7.5 **Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment**

There are no anticipated Crime and Disorder implications.

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Appendices

None

Background papers

None