

**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL
DECISION
DECISION OF: DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES
WITH ADVICE FROM: S151 OFFICER AND HEAD OF STRATEGIC
PROCUREMENT
DIRECTORATE: PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**



DECISION NO: PC60 (2019/20 SCHEME)

SUBJECT: AWARD OF DOMESTIC ABUSE CONTRACT

KEY DECISION: YES

REASONS:

The current contractual arrangements end on the 31 March 2020. Current performance monitoring and feedback from service users and partners indicated that the current service is effective. However, a significant increase in referrals to the IDVAS and floating support service means that the workers are stretched to capacity.

The current units of accommodation which are used for domestic abuse are not fully utilised and have a high void rate. The nature of the shared accommodation means that it is often not suitable for victims with problematic behaviour due to their complex needs such as substance misuse, mental health issues or with male children over the age of 14 years old.

The new service will include:

- Provide a single access point for both the general public and stakeholders;
- Support victims irrespective of gender; but ensure that the support is tailored to any specific needs which female and male victims may have and that it reflects the demand for services from each gender.
- Include support to victims of so-called 'honour' based violence and forced marriage and provision to assist children of such victims.
- Include victims aged 16+ as Clients
- Support for children affected by Domestic Abuse.
- Pattern changing courses for individuals affected by domestic abuse to enable them to reduce vulnerability to domestic abuse.
- A response to referrals where there is no clear perpetrator.

- Support workers including accredited Independent Domestic Abuse Violence Advisers.
- Emergency accommodation for victims and children.
- Opportunities for victims to receive and provide peer support.

BACKGROUND:

Specialist Domestic Abuse Support Services supports several Corporate Plan aims:

- Enable residents to make healthy choices and promote active lifestyles, which reduce ill health and increase independence.
- Support Families to give their children the best start in life.
- Build and sustain great places to live and visit – vibrant, accessible and safe.
- Empower people to contribute to their community and communities to provide their own solutions.

The initial contract term will be over 4 years.

There will be the potential for an extension period for 2 years (that can be used in 1 year increments).

The contract will start on the 1st April 2020.

The tender process was undertaken with, and following advice from the Legal Team and Procurement Team.

The tender was advertised on the 9th September 2019 through an open tender process via OJEU Light Touch Number 2019/S 175-426566.

The tender was evaluated on a 100% quality. One of the method statement questions focused on the financial aspect of the contract (asking for a price breakdown) aiming to ensure value for money and sustainability. The specification lists core activities which need to be delivered within the budget, as well as desirable elements which could be included with the use of external grants/funding. Method statement themes and % breakdown that were used to evaluate are set out below:

Essential Services (80%):

- Service Delivery (16%)
- The Financial Budget (16%)
- Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion (8%)
- Safeguarding (8%)
- Social Value (8%)
- Performance Monitoring & Outcomes (8%)
- Service Implementation & Mobilisation (8%)
- Service Delivery by Experience (8%)
- Desirable Services (20%):
- Funding Streams & Innovation (20%)

Presentations were used for tender clarifications.

The bidders submitted a tender and were evaluated by a multi-disciplinary panel. The winning bidder received a combined overall score of 91%.

The funding for this service comes from the People and Communities Directorate budget and a pooled budget from the Corporate Services Directorate, both Directorates have been consulted on this decision.

DECISION:

To award the contract of Domestic Abuse Services to Missing Link (Registration Number 24218R Head Office DUNS number 23-206-3081). Missing Link is the parent company to Next Link who are specialist in domestic abuse support provision.

Next Link's tender showed they have an excellent reputation and experience of providing responsive services in both city and rural settings, that keep survivors safe and support them to seek justice and build their resilience to prevent re-victimisation. Their case management system is specifically designed for Domestic Abuse agencies and it showed that it can meet the performance monitoring and outcomes of the contract and that the Provider will use this data to look at trends, gaps and unmet need and then would address this through SMART targets. Next Link's tender evidenced an extensive track record of making successful bids that would build on existing services within North Somerset. Next Link play a key strategic role to influence local and national policy and guidance around domestic abuse and participate in the prevention agenda.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

To continue with separate contracts, however this would not provide the best service going forward. To reduce the amount of safe accommodation; however this would not meet need or government expectations

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**Costs**

Bidders were asked to submit a detailed transparent financial breakdown as part of their tender submission, this covered the first 4 years of the contract, this was to make sure that the Council was receiving value for money and sustainability. The winning bid was able to provide the Domestic Abuse Service detailed in the specification within the yearly £300k budget allocated.

The total spend over the 4 years of the contract from the winning bidder is £1,196,660.00, which includes no implementation costs to The Council. The winning bid can deliver all the essential elements of the specification and 2 elements of the desirable elements within the allocated budget. Where the winning bidder has not been able to offer the other two elements of the desirables within the current budget envelope, their bid demonstrated that they could offer these as part of their overall service delivery of the contract.

Funding

The cost of the contract will be met from pooled budgets and the contract will include a provision to review the specification and contract price on an annual basis in order to adjust for future budget pressures.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

Domestic Abuse support is a requirement and is covered by the following:

- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- S.143 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Police Reform Act 2002
- Police and Justice Act 2006
- Government Policy Paper Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-2020
- Domestic Violence, Crimes Victims Act 2004

- A domestic abuse Bill “Transforming the Response to Domestic Abuse: Consultation Response and Draft Bill” is currently being processed by the government

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

As part of the contract monitoring process we will address and prioritise the climate change emergency with the provider. This will form part of the social value question through the performance indicators of the contract (this includes sustainable transport, use of electronic systems, waste reduction / responsible recycling etc.).

CONSULTATION

Consultation is continuously carried out through the domestic abuse service and strategy development. This includes regular meetings with users of the current services, meetings held with the multi-agency Domestic Abuse Strategy Group and its subgroups and the current Task and Finish group which is currently writing the next domestic abuse strategy 2019-2022. Feedback from this consultation has influenced the proposed re commissioning of the service .

RISK MANAGEMENT

Provider failure will be mitigated by robust contract monitoring and compliance of the contract. Performance indicators have been set for the contract with the monitoring of these undertaken jointly by The Contracts and Commissioning Team and Corporate Services.

The following meetings and report requirements are expected from the successful provider:

- Monthly data reports
- Quarterly KPI meetings, and data reports
- Yearly – full reports including social value

The funding from the community safety partnerships is committed only an annual basis, all external funding opportunities are actively pursued in the instance that this funding no longer becomes available.

The contract includes a provision to review the specification and contract price on an annual basis

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and no equality issues or risks have been highlighted

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Domestic abuse support is a council priority.

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

PC104 Commissioning Plan Domestic Abuse
 PC29 Procurement Plan Domestic Abuse
 EIA

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed: Shruti Subh

Title: Director, People and Communities

Date: 20.11.19

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed: Sheel

Title: S151 Officer

Date: 20.11.19

Signed: Jmw

Title: Head of Strategic Procurement

Date: 20.11.19

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable:



