

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES



DECISION NO: P&C78

SUBJECT: WE Care and Repair Home Improvement and Independent Living Centre Framework Contract. Contract held by Bristol City Council on behalf of Bath and North East Somerset Council and North Somerset Council who draw down services from the Framework. An Inter Authority Agreement was agreed in order for this contract to be procured and managed.

DECISION: To agree up to a 23 month extension of the Draw Down agreement and support future joint procurement.

Background:

A Framework Agreement for commissioning HIA services was procured in 2012. Any decisions to extend the current services under this Framework must be taken prior to 24 July 2016 in order to meet the contract terms. Bristol City Council (BCC) and Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) recommend that the current service be extended by 23 months, to 31 September 2018, in order to align the procurement of the HIA services with the current timescale for procurement of the Community Equipment Service (CES) in BCC, the latter which North Somerset Council will not be part of unless determined otherwise in the interim period. BCC need to make a Key Decision on the 22 June 2016, which will outline the timescale for commissioning Home Improvement Agency (HIA) services, this decision must be taken after the Mayoral Election and before the contract deadline.

BCC Cabinet in January 2012 agreed to commission the HIA service in a joint procurement involving, at that time, BCC, BCCG (the Bristol Primary Care Trust), NSC, B&NES, South Gloucestershire Council and South Gloucestershire CCG. (The South Gloucestershire agencies subsequently withdrew). WE Care and Repair was appointed, and received a formal contract (a 'call-off' from the Framework) lasting to 31 October 2016 – four years.

This HIA service delivers a total of 16,000 client interventions each year, with a majority of these taking place in Bristol. The types of work delivered include:

- Handyperson
- Technical housing projects
- Hospital discharge projects
- Home Independence and Mobility Support
- Advice and Guidance
- DFG services
- Independent Living Service at the Motex Centre in WsM

Opportunities

There are opportunities for efficiencies and process improvements if the procurement for the HIA and the ICES are conducted at the same time and in a coordinated way.

This does not necessarily mean that the HIA and ICES services would be provided by the same organisation. It is at least as likely that the current HIA and ICES services could be structured such as they are provided by more than two organisations, depending how many 'lots' are procured, and for which elements of the services.

A significant period of pre-procurement analysis and consultation is needed to conduct this process safely, for a number of reasons:

- The current outcomes delivered by the services need to be reviewed;
- The range of outcomes sought need to be reviewed, particularly if the relative weight of different parts of the service has changed over time, for instance the balance of Hospital Discharge work, compared with DFGs;
- The specification of each element in the services need to be developed, tested and consulted on – for instance commissioners have to be clear on which elements must be delivered by the same organisation, and which could be discrete;
- Significant market preparation will be required, such as there is an adequate level of competition, and such that individual organisations, including third sector organisation, have the ability to consider appropriate consortium arrangements where this may be beneficial;
- Contract mobilisation is likely to be significant. In particular, if there is a need to implement new technology and to review legacy equipment catalogues and processes, this may take longer than for simpler procurements.

Risks

Timescale - Once a decision is taken to call-off an extended service, this decision cannot be changed after 24 July 2016.

This means that, at present the Councils can decide whether to provide an extension for either one or two years, but would not be possible to extend for one year and then decide to extend for another year – i.e. there will be an absolute deadline by which the procurement must have been completed. This would militate toward a longer rather than a shorter extension.

Partnerships

WoE Councils and CCGs derive very strong benefits from commissioning jointly with partners, and it is important that these partnerships are maintained.

It is very likely that not all partners will want the same range of services – i.e. if NSC and B&NES choose a joint procurement with BCC and BCCG for the HIA services, it is quite likely they would not wish to procure ICES services at the same time. This means that the 'menu' of lots needs to be designed with all partners' needs in mind.

It is also likely that SGC colleagues may wish to collaborate with BCC and BCCG over the procurement of the ICES service, but may wish not to be involved in the

procurement of the HIA. This equally means that the offer for procurement options for the ICES needs to reflect all partners' views.

In 2012 an Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) was established between the contracting authorities and remains in place. A similar IAA will be needed to regulate the relationship between each public body.

Financial Implications

By undertaking this action the required budget reductions will be achieved in 2016/17 and 2017/2018. If a contracted provider fails to agree the reduced contract value either party may terminate through a 'no fault' clause of six months.

By taking this decision procurement costs will be spread over the participating councils with BCC Procurement Team acting on behalf of others as they did successfully for the current HIA contract.

Implications for Future Years

The decision to extend the current HIA contract will not preclude NSC from deciding to procure HIA services separately in future should the proposed procurement arrangements or service specification not meet its needs.

Recommendations

To authorise a call-off of a further HIA service under the current HIA Framework, to end on 30 September 2018.

To support work on a coordinated procurement of Home Improvement Agency and Community Equipment Services, for implementation on 1 October 2018, even if the latter is not take advantage of.

Reviewed: Gerald Hunt
Gerald Hunt
Assistant Director – Finance, Resources and Strategic Commissioning

Signed: Sheila Smith
Sheila Smith
Director, People and Communities

Dated: 6.5.15

