

Contract award for Better Care Fund Partnership Services

For Cabinet on 08 February 2024

Summary

- Lead Member:** Hugo Pound, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning
- Lead Director:** Paul Taylor, Director of Change and Communities
- Head of Service:** Gary Stevenson, Head of Housing, Health and Environment
- Report Author:** Sue Oliver, Private Sector Housing Manager
- Classification:** Partially Exempt from Disclosure – Exempt Appendix A exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended): Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information

Wards Affected: All

Approval Timetable	Date
Management Board	08 January 2024
Communities CAB	24 January 2024
Cabinet	08 February 2024

Recommendations

Officer/Committee recommendations as supported by the Portfolio Holder, that Cabinet:

1. Give the Head of Housing, Health and Environment delegated authority to award the Better Care Funded Partnership Services contract to Supplier A referred to in the Exempt Appendix A, and to enter that contract with Supplier A for a period of one year from 1 April 2024 with the option of four annual extensions.
2. Give delegated authority to the Head of Legal Services and s.151 Officer to undertake all legal and financial requirements necessary to complete the contract.
3. Give the Head of Legal Services delegated authority to negotiate and complete the contract and all ancillary documents as may be necessary.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC), Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (T & MBC) and Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) have contracts in place with Town and Country Housing to provide a hospital discharge service, home straight service (to assist people with hoarding behaviours) and a handy person service. One of the contracts, for the hospital discharge service is a joint contract across all three authorities, whereas the others are specific to one local authority only.
- 1.2 These contracts expire on 31 March 2024, and the councils have undertaken a procurement process to award a contract to a suitably experienced, competent and qualified contractor. TWBC led on the procurement on behalf of T & MBC and SDC.
- 1.3 The lots were as follows:

Lot number	Name	Partners
1	Hospital discharge service	SDC T & MBC TWBC
2	Handy person service	TWBC only
3	Handy person service	T & MBC only
4	Home Straight Co-ordinator	TWBC only
5	Home Straight Co-ordinator	SDC only
6	Better Care Fund Co-ordinator	SDC only

- 1.4 A brief explanation of each service is as follows:

Hospital Discharge Service

This service provides practical support to help patients with a housing related issue to leave hospital and go home in a safe and timely manner, and to deliver interventions to prevent hospital admission or readmission. The service works closely with NHS colleagues within the hospital discharge teams at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust. The service consists of two Health and Housing Co-ordinators based across Maidstone and Pembury hospitals, and one associated handy person to carry out small works required to enable someone to return home in the three local authority areas.

Handyperson Service

This service provides a minor household repairs and small works service in TWBC and in T & MBC, which is separate to the handy person role described in the paragraph above.

Home Straight Co-ordinator Service

This role works with people with hoarding behaviours and engages the customer to work towards de-cluttering their home, working with partner agencies and services, and achieve long term change, in SDC and in TWBC.

- 1.5 The term of the contract is one year from 01 April 2024, with the option of four possible annual extensions to reflect that the annual Better Care Fund allocation from Government is only certain until 31 March 2025, although there is every reason to consider that it will continue.
- 1.6 It is important that the new contract prioritises quality given the sensitive nature of the services being provided in customers' homes or a hospital setting, and the client groups. The Invitation to Tender document allocated 60% of the marks to quality, 20% to price and 20% to the interview.
- 1.7 All three councils signed off on the procurement documentation and were involved in the evaluation process.
- 1.8 The lots that are the subject of this report are Lot 1, the shared lot, and Lots 2 and 4, the TWBC only lots. T & M will award lot 3 and SDC will award lots 5 & 6, as none of these have any implications or impact on the Council.
- 1.9 As regards the governance procedures for Lot 1, SDC have advised that their Chief Officer will sign the contract, and their internal Procurement Advisory Group will need to be advised. T & M have advised that "*TWBC may undertake the tender process on our behalf and take lead and in accordance with their internal procurement processes, which may result in awarding the contract on TMBC behalf*". Therefore Cabinet will be awarding Lot 1 on behalf of all three councils.

2. New Contract

- 2.1 A fully compliant tender was undertaken in line with current legislation.
- 2.2 There were 35 expressions of interest in the contract and two submissions were received on time. Seven opted out of the process, and there were 26 no responses.
- 2.3 Two submissions were considered for evaluation. However, Supplier B was found not have submitted a key document for each lot and so were excluded from further evaluation as they could not meet the minimum score.
- 2.4 The submissions from Supplier A for all six lots were evaluated, taking both cost and quality into consideration, and they are the preferred provider. Supplier A offered a discount of on average 4.6% across the lots if they were awarded all six lots.
- 2.5 A tri-partite agreement will be set up between SDC, T & MBC and TWBC to govern the percentage payments of the annual contract sum, based on the use of the service in each area in the previous financial year.
- 2.6 Tenderers were asked to submit a comprehensive service level agreement which includes how the service will be delivered and monitored, with key performance indicators and management information. Quarterly monitoring reports and statistics are required, along with an annual report, and quarterly review meetings will be held.

3. Background to the Preferred Provider

- 3.1 Supplier A has previous experience of delivering these services and met all mandatory procurement provisions.

4. Options Considered

- 4.1 The following options have been identified together with the advantages and disadvantages of each. This is followed by a comparison of the estimated cost of each option:

Option 1: Do nothing

This would lead to the councils no longer being able to provide these services, which are much valued by the service users.

Option 2: Award the Contract to Supplier A

This supplier meets all the criteria set and has presented a cost-effective submission.

5. Preferred Option and Reason

- 5.1 The preferred option is Option 2 – Award the Contract to Supplier A.

Recommendation from Communities Cabinet Advisory Board

The Communities Cabinet Advisory Board was consulted on 24 January 2024 and agreed the following:

*The Communities Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on 24 January 2024 and agreed to support the recommendations to Cabinet **TBC***

- 5.2 A Contract will be drawn up and issued to Supplier A to commence from 1 April 2024.

6. Appendices and Background Documents

Exempt appendices:

- Exempt Appendix A: Tender Evaluation Matrix

7. Cross Cutting Issues

A. Legal (including the Human Rights Act)

The procurement process has been undertaken with the Council's Procurement team.

Legal Services have been asked to draw up the contract documentation and tri-partite agreement.

Sue Oliver, Private Sector Housing Manager 12 January 2024

B. Finance and Other Resources

The services are funded from the Better Care Fund allocation which is received annually. The Government's commitment to the fund comes to an end on 31 March 2025, however it is anticipated that it will continue (the allocation also funds mandatory disabled facilities grants). The contract term will be one year with the option of four one year extensions to safeguard this position.

The cost of these services can be accommodated within the annual Better Care Fund allocation.

There is provision within the contract for an annual uplift in line with CPI.

Sue Oliver, Private Sector Housing Manager 12 January 2024

C. Staffing

There are no staffing issues.

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D. Risk Management

Risk management budgetary issues have already been covered within the finance section.

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E. Environment and Sustainability

Suppliers were asked a tender specific question which was scored, to describe how they would deliver the service sustainably to support the social, environmental and economic policy aims of the councils.

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F. Community Safety

There are no community safety implications.

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G. Equalities

The award of this contract will ensure continued service provision to elderly people, people with a physical and/or mental disability, and those on low incomes.

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H. Data Protection

The supplier has a privacy notice on their website, and our website will contain a link to it.

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I. Health and Safety

There are no health and safety implications to this report.

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J. Health and Wellbeing

The award of this contract will lead to improvements in housing conditions and discharge from hospital to the home, which has a positive impact on health.

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