



Executive

13 January 2014

Report from the Acting Director of Children and Families

Wards Affected:

ALL

Authority to award a contract for information, advice and guidance for families of children attending children's centres in Brent aged 0 - 5.

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report requests authority to award a contract for the provision of information, advice and guidance services for families of children attending children's centres in Brent aged 0-5 to the Council as required by Contract Standing Order No 88. This report summarises the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contract should be awarded.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive award the contract for the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance for families of children attending children's centres in Brent aged 0-5 to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for the value of £354k (for the first 2 years at fixed prices for each year) for an initial contract period of three (3) years from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2017 with an option for the Council to extend by any number of periods up to an aggregate of two (2) years.

3.0 Detail

Background

- 3.1 The Council currently provides through its Children's Centres free information and advice on a range of subjects which is confidential, impartial and independent. The aim of the service is to design and deliver a service that recognises and addresses the need to diminish the inequalities suffered by individuals and their families and more specifically to tackle child poverty. The service contributes to meeting the strategic priorities of the Department as outlined in the Children's and Young People Plan and Children's Centres commissioning strategy outcomes:
- Safeguarding health and well being
 - Accelerate the rate of improvement of underachieving groups, narrowing and eliminating gaps
 - Provide access for the most vulnerable groups.
- 3.2 These services are currently provided under contract to the Council by the Citizens Advice Bureau (hereafter referred to as CAB) who have held this contract in Brent since April 2010.
- 3.3 Following a report to the Executive on 17 June 2013, Officers were authorised to invite tenders for a contract for information, advice and guidance ("IAG") for families of children attending children's centres in Brent aged 0-5 and evaluate them in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria.

The tender process

- 3.4 As a high value contract, it was tendered in accordance with Council Standing Orders 88 and 89.
- 3.5 A one stage or open tender process was followed. Advertisements inviting interested companies/organisations to tender were placed in the local press, trade journals and on the Council's E-procurement system, Due North. The organisations that responded were sent a full set of Invitation to Tender documents.
- 3.6 The tendering instructions stated that the tender would be evaluated to identify the most economically advantageous tender having regard to price and quality.

Quality

The Quality criteria listed below formed 40% of the evaluation weightings:

- Tenderers proposals for meeting the requirement of the specification
- Children's safeguarding issues
- Value for money
- Tenderers ability to meet the requirements of the Council's Pre-qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) in terms of financial, economic standing and technical capability.

Price

Price consisted of 60% of the evaluation weightings.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a copy of the evaluation methodology detailing the criteria, the weighting attributable to each criterion and how the method statements forming part of the tender fed into the evaluation criteria.

- 3.7 Despite over 20 organisations downloading the ITT documentation, only one organisation submitted a tender by the deadline date for tender submissions on 19th November 2013, namely the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). Notwithstanding, the sole bid received, Officers carried out a full evaluation of the bid to ensure that the bid could meet all Council requirements and offered value for money and could therefore be recommended for award.

Evaluation process

- 3.8 Evaluation of the tender was carried out by a core panel consisting of three managers from the service area (including the Head of Service). Officers from Procurement, Legal and Central Finance provided support to the evaluation panel.
- 3.9 All panel members read through the tender areas allocated to them using evaluation sheets and noted down comments on how well each of the award criteria were addressed by the tenderer.
- 3.10 The core panel then met to agree scoring. Members will note in Appendix 2 that for the quality criteria the tenderer scored 32.4% out of a possible 40%, consisting of ten scores of “good” and one of “outstanding” for the different elements of the tender.
- 3.11. Officers evaluated the financial aspects of the tender rigorously to ensure it represents value for money. Tenderers had been asked to submit fixed prices for each of the first two years of the contract. The CAB tender indicated a total price for this period of £ 354k. Based on the current spend of £176k per annum or £352k over two years, this equates to a small average annual increase of £2k on the current price paid and will be the first price rise since 2010 when the contract was first let. Please see table below.

Citizens Advice Bureau Spend for 3 Years			
Financial Year	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12

	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
BUDGET	176	176	176
TOTAL SPEND	176	176	176

Evaluation Conclusions

- 3.12 Having evaluated and scored the tender, Officers consider that the tender from the Citizens Advice Bureau indicates that it will be able to provide the relevant services to a high standard with only a small increase in costs to the Council. Officers would therefore recommend that CAB should be awarded the contract for the provision of information, advice and guidance to families of children attending Brent's children's centres from the age of 0-5.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council's Contract Standing Orders state that contracts for supplies and services exceeding £250k or works contracts exceeding £500k shall be referred to the Executive for approval of the award of the contract.
- 4.2 The proposed contract award to CAB for the financial years April 2014 to March 2016 has a contract price of £354k. Should the contract run for the additional 3 years allowed for then the total spend for the service is an indicative figure of £891k. (The additional three years have been calculated using the price quoted for year two of the contract by the supplier of £179k.)
- 4.3 The average increase in annual contract price of £2k in years 1 and 2 will be absorbed by the service within existing budgets.
- 4.4 The existing contract is funded from the Councils core funding stream.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council has the necessary powers to enable it to enter into the proposed contract. Under the Children Act 1989 local authorities have various statutory duties in relation to children in need. Specifically, Section 17 of the 1989 Act provides that every local authority has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need by providing a level of

services appropriate to those children's needs. Disabled children and young people are defined as children in need by virtue of their disability.

- 5.2 In addition, the Council has powers under section 13 of the Childcare Act 2006 to provide independent advice and guidance service to its inhabitants and the general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 5.3 The provision of an Information, Advice and Guidance support service is classified as Part B Services under the Public Contract Regulations 2006 ("the EU Procurement Regulations") and as such is not subject to the full application of the EU Procurement Regulations (save that there must be a technical specification contained in the contract documents and on award of contract the Council must issue a Contract Award Notice in the OJEU within 48 days of award). The Information, Advice and Guidance support service is however, subject to the overriding EU Treaty principles of equal treatment, fairness and transparency in the award of contracts.
- 5.4 Officers advertised the tender requirements widely in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, however notwithstanding a number of organisations expressing an interest, only one bid was received; from the incumbent provider. On the basis that all relevant providers in the market that were made aware of the Council's service requirements, could have submitted a bid, but failed to, Officers were minded to evaluate the sole bid so as to ensure the continuation of the services.
- 5.5 The estimated value of the proposed this contract over the initial two year period is above the Council's Contract Standing Orders threshold for High Value Service Contracts (of £250,000), and the award of the contract is consequently subject to the Council's own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in respect of High Value contracts. As a result, Executive approval is required for the award of the contract stated in Para. 2.1.
- 5.6 As the recommendation is to award the contract to the Citizens Advice Bureau who are the Council's current provider, there are no implications relating to the Transfer of Employment (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE.")
- 5.7 Officers must place a Contract Award Notice in the OJEU, no later than 48 days from formal award of these contracts, should Members approve the recommendation.
- 5.8 The contract makes provision for the Council to reduce the scope of the service with due notice to the supplier at any time during its term.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 A new Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for the service and is attached.
- 6.2 Equalities issues are a core requirement for this contract and formed an important part of the evaluation of the tendering organisations' technical capacity through the assessment of the PQQ and in the assessment of the quality of service in the written tender.
- 6.3 Brent Early Years and Family Support service monitors usage of its services through regular monitoring and contract management using performance management systems developed with the supplier. Data covering areas such as race, gender and disability is collected on a regular basis.
- 6.4 Consultation on the service is provided by annual surveys such as 'tell us what you think', daily feedback following interventions with children and families and pre- and post project evaluation, case studies, feedback from partners in written and verbal form, complaints and compliments.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

- 7.1 This service is currently provided by an external contractor CAB. There are no implications for Council staff arising from retendering the contract and staff delivering the current contract will continue their employment with the existing contractor.

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 Executive Report of 17th June 2013: Authority to invite tenders for the provision of information, advice and guidance to families of children attending children's centres in Brent aged 0-5, is attached with this report.

Appendix 3

- Equalities Impact Assessment report (EIA) updated report is attached to this report as Appendix 3.

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IAG evaluation – Document f and k combined

Evaluation of bids

Bids will be evaluated in accordance with the methodology set out below.

Phase 1

This will involve an analysis of tenderers' responses to the Authority's PQQ .To move through to Phase 2 of the tender, bidders must pass all sections of the PQQ.

Phase 2

This will involve analysis of bidders' tender proposals in detail.

Overall evaluation criteria

Tenders will be evaluated to identify the economically most advantageous tender having regard to price and quality elements.

Price will carry 60% of the evaluation weightings, quality 40%.

Evaluation of Price

Price will consist of 60% of the evaluation weightings. The bidder with the lowest evaluated price will receive the highest score; other bidders will receive a proportional score to the lowest evaluated price.

Evaluation of Quality

The overall Quality weighting is 40%.

The criteria and their relative weightings¹ used to evaluate Quality are detailed in the table below.

Bidders are required to complete Method Statements detailed in Appendix 1. The Method Statements and their relative weightings are detailed in the table below.

Criteria Number	Criteria	Weighting	Method Statement	Method Statement Weighting
EC1	Proposed business model	34%	MS 1	23%
			MS 2	3%
			MS 3	5%
			MS 4	3%
EC2	Tenderer's proposed plans for ensuring effective quality management of the Services and maintenance of the Contract Standard, including self-monitoring and evaluation	27%	MS 5	15%
			MS 6	12%
EC3	Tenderer's proposed approach for working in partnership with the Council, Health, Children's Centres and any other relevant providers	25%	MS 7	15%
			MS 8	6%
			MS 9	4%
EC4	Health and Safety	4%	MS 10	4%
EC5	Tenderer's proposals for adhering to Child Protection requirements	10%	MS 11	10%

¹ Weightings detailed are a percentage of the Quality criterion

Scoring system

The scoring system to be used will be as follows.

Score	Acceptability	Bidder Response Demonstrates
0	Unacceptable	Information is either omitted or fundamentally unacceptable and/or there is insufficient evidence to support the proposal to allow the Authority to properly evaluate
1	Major Reservations	The information submitted has insufficient evidence that the specified requirements can be met and/or there are significant omissions, serious and/or many concerns
2	Some Reservations	The information submitted has some minor omissions against the specified requirements. The solution achieves basic minimum standard in some respects but is unsatisfactory in others and raises some concerns
3	Satisfactory	The information submitted meets the Authority's requirements and is acceptable in most respects, and there are no major concerns
4	Good	The information submitted provides good evidence that the specified requirements can be met. It is a full and robust response, and any concerns are addressed so that the proposal gives confidence
5	Outstanding	The information submitted provides strong evidence that the specified requirements will be exceeded, and provides full confidence with no concerns

For each method statement tenderness must score a minimum of 2. In order for the tender to be considered further.

Should a Tenderer fail to achieve a score of 55% for Quality criteria, this will preclude further consideration of the tender.

Evaluation panel

Tenderers responses will be evaluated by a team of Council officers, stakeholders and advisers drawn together by the Council with expertise in the delivery of these services

Appendix 2

Criteria Ref	Criteria	Aspect	Weighting (%)	Sub-Weighting (%)	Bidder 1 Score (0-5)	Bidder 1 Total Weighted Score
EC1	Proposed business model	34%	MS 1	23%	4	0.92
			MS 2	3%	4	0.12
			MS 3	5%	5	0.25
			MS 4	3%	4	0.12
EC2	Tenderer's proposed plans for ensuring effective quality management of the Services and maintenance of the Contract Standard, including self-monitoring and evaluation	27%	MS 5	15%	4	0.60
			MS 6	12%	4	0.48
EC3	Tenderer's proposed approach for working in partnership with the Council, Health, Schools and any other relevant providers	25%	MS 7	15%	4	0.60
			MS 8	6%	4	0.24
			MS 9	4%	4	0.16
EC4	Health and Safety	4%	MS 10	4%	4	0.16
EC5	Tenderer's proposals for adhering to Child Protection requirements	10%	MS 11	10%	4	0.40
Total Quality		100%		100%		4.05

Pricing costs (Yr1 + Yr2)					354375
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Quality scores (out of 40%)					32.4
Price Score (out of 60%)	least score gets 60%				60.00

Total score					92.40
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