

	Officer Key Decision
	Report to the Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration
AUTHORITY TO AWARD CONTRACT FOR VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT SERVICE	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Appendix 1 and 2 is exempt as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)"
No. of Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Exempt – evaluation grid Appendix 2 – Exempt – social value commitments
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Lorna Hughes Operational Director Engagement Strategy and Communications, Regeneration Lorna.Hughes@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report concerns the tender process for a local Voluntary and Community Infrastructure Support service for voluntary and community organisations in Brent. This report requests authority to award contracts as required by Contract Standing Order 88.
- 1.2 The contract term will be for an initial period of two years with the option to extend for up to two years on a 2+1+1 basis.
- 1.3 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 Recommendation(s)

That the Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration:

- 2.1 Approves the award of a contract for the provision of Voluntary and Community Infrastructure Support services to CVS Brent for the sum of £760,000 over the contract term of two years with the option to extend for up to two years on a 2+1+1 basis.
- 2.2 To note the increased value of the Contract which reflects the greater level of services required in the specification.
- 2.3 To note that the increased contract value, while returning the contract to its original base value of £160,000 with some uplift to reflect inflationary pressures on suppliers

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Brent Council does not have a statutory duty to provide Voluntary Community Infrastructure Support. However, Brent Council is committed to supporting the Voluntary and Community sector to be strong, vibrant and diverse, and for Brent to be a place where communities are empowered to solve the problems important to them in order to build a fair, more equal society.
- 3.2 The aim of the contract is to support the local and voluntary and community sector through capacity building which will include supporting organisations with grant applications, organisational development, leading on large scale bids, training, lobbying and advocacy. The successful organisation will be able to demonstrate an expertise in supporting smaller BAME led and other diverse community groups and in addition, it is expected that it will act as a strong voice on behalf of the sector, building on existing structures.
- 3.3 Previously this contract was valued and tendered at £160,000. However, due to inconsistent service delivery, staff instability and concerns about functionality, the contract was reduced to £80,000 as part of a departmental savings exercise in 2018.
- 3.4 Since that time, internal staff changes and strengthened leadership within the Voluntary Sector, the performance has improved exponentially. A clear structure is in place for VCS partnership working with the council and leadership across the main Thematic Groups is sound.
- 3.5 In addition to the strengthened community sector voice, the post pandemic environment means that voluntary sector organisations continue to step forward to provide vital services needed by residents, particularly vulnerable and newly arrived communities.

- 3.6 To reflect the confidence and community support required, the value of the contract has been increased to its former level with an uplift to reflect inflationary pressures facing suppliers, meaning an increase to £190,000 per year.

4.0 The Tender Process

- 4.1 This procurement has been conducted in accordance with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). At the time of the commencement of this procurement exercise, the threshold for Schedule 3 services for the purposes of the Regulations was £663,540. Accordingly, as the value of the proposed contract exceeds the aforementioned threshold for this category of service, a Contract Notice was placed on the Find a Tender service, Contracts Finder service and the London Tenders Portal on 12th December 2022. Bidders were provided with a specification, details of the tender approach and invited to complete the published tender documents comprising of a selection questionnaire, quality questions, pricing schedule and a social value action plan using the Council's Electronic Tendering Facility.
- 4.2 The tendering instructions stated that the contract would be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous offer to the Council and that in evaluating tenders, the Council would have regard to the following criteria:

Award criteria	Weighting
Resources and Workforce	7.5%
Quality Assurance arrangements	7.5%
Access to Service	12%
Representation, Strategic Partnerships and Liaison	12%
Volunteering services	6%
Social value	10%
Price	40%
Presentation	5%

5.0 Evaluation process

- 5.1 The tender evaluation was carried out by a panel of officers from Strategy and Partnerships.
- 5.2 All tenders had to be submitted electronically no later than 20th January 2023, 1pm. 1 valid tender was received. Each member of the evaluation panel read the tender and carried out an independent evaluation of how well they considered each of the award criteria was addressed in the tender.
- 5.3 The panel met between 1st – 10th February 2023 and the submission was marked by the whole panel against the award criteria and each submission was moderated by Procurement in the presence of the evaluation panel.

- 5.4 Given there was only one bidder that submitted a response and they met the minimum quality threshold, the bidder was invited to present to the evaluation panel on a known presentation topic set out in the Invitation to Tender on the 3rd March 2023. The presentation was also evaluated by a Brent resident as a representative from the community.
- 5.5 The score received by the tenderer is included in Appendix 1. Officers therefore recommend the award of the contract to CVS Brent.
- 5.6 The contract will commence on 1st April 2023.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The total cost of the contract is £760,000 over the potential four year contract period which includes the optional contract extensions outlined in point 2.1 of the report. This contract is not subject to annual inflationary reviews during the course of the contract period, neither during the initial two year term nor when exercising the extension options.
- 6.2 This contract price is a significant increase of 138% from the previous contract. This will be funded from the Communities budget. Given that Communities is forecast to spend to budget for 2022/23, spending will need to be reduced on other things in 2023/24 within Communities in order to be able to fund this.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The value of this contract over its lifetime is in excess of the threshold for Services/Supplies and the award of the contract is therefore governed by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the "Regulations"). Due to the nature and estimated value of the proposed services that Officers are seeking to procure, the services fall under Schedule 3 services under the Regulations. Officers have advised in paragraph 3.3 of this report that the requirements of the Regulations for the procurement of Schedule 3 Services have been satisfied.
- 7.2 As indicated in paragraph 5.1, the award of the contract is subject to the Council's own Standing Orders in respect of Medium Value Contracts. Chief Officers have delegated to them power to award Medium Value Contracts in accordance with paragraph 9.5, of Part 3 of the Constitution.
- 7.3 The Council must observe the mandatory minimum 5 clear day call-in period before the contract can be awarded. Therefore, once the Corporate Director Communities and Regeneration has authorised the award of the contract to the successful bidder, the incumbent provider, a minimum 5 clear day period will then be observed before the contract is awarded – this period will begin the day after the successful bidder have been sent notification of the award decision.

As soon as possible after the call-in period ends, the successful bidder will be issued with a letter of acceptance and the contract can commence.

- 7.4 Any other legal implications relevant to the particular contract to include TUPE and human rights matters – There are no other legal implications relevant to the procurement for this service. TUPE does not apply since the proposed contract would be awarded to the incumbent provider. See paragraph 8 below.

8.0 Equality Implications

- 8.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and Officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

9.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 9.1 The then Strategy and Partnerships team worked closely with stakeholders to develop the service specification for the tender.
- 9.2 A survey was carried out with voluntary and community sector to ascertain their capacity building requirements; this and other consultations carried out by the Council's Grant Team was used to inform the development of the specification.
- 9.3 The Strategy and Partnerships service also consulted with the lead member and included a service user as part of the evaluation panel.

10.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

- 10.1 This service is currently provided by an external contractor and there are no implications for Council staff arising from retendering the contract. Relevant information with regards to TUPE was shared with the bidders during the procurement process. There is unlikely to be TUPE implications as the successful bidder is the incumbent provider.
- 10.2 CVS Brent is the incumbent provider of the service with a registered office at SEIDs Hub, Empire Way Wembley HA9 0RJ. CVS Brent will be expected to provide the service from their own premises.

11. Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

- 11.1 The Council is under a duty pursuant to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 ("the Social Value Act") to consider how services being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area; how, in conducting the procurement process, the Council might act with a view to

securing that improvement; and whether the Council should undertake consultation. Officers have had regard to considerations contained in the Social Value Act in relation to the procurement.

11.2 Social value had a weighting of 10% of the evaluation score and in evaluating tenders, the Council requested proposals address the following initiatives:

- Employment support and skills provision, including significantly increasing the take-up of apprenticeships
- Initiatives to involve disengaged and under-represented groups, including work experience opportunities provided to disengaged and under-represented school pupils and college aged Brent students.
- A Cleaner, More Considerate Brent, including promoting, encouraging and actively working to change behaviours around recycling and making sustainable choices

11.3 This contract will deliver the social value benefits set out in Appendix 2.

Report sign off:

Zahur Khan
Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration