

Report for: Cabinet Member Signing - 7 December 2021

Title: Contract Award for the new Information, Advice and Guidance Service

Report authorised by: Charlotte Pomery, Assistant Director for Commissioning

Lead Officer: Gill Taylor, Strategic Lead – Single Homelessness & Vulnerable Adults, 07872 965929, Gill1.Taylor@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1. This report details the outcome of an open tender process and seeks approval to award the contract to the successful tenderer for the Provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Service in accordance with Contract Standing Order (CSO) 9.07.1 (d).

1.2. Subject to approval, the contract should be awarded for a period of four (4) years commencing from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026 with an option to extend for a further period or periods of up to a total of three (3) years. The maximum length of the contract will therefore be seven (7) years, if extended.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

2.1. The Council is committed to ensuring that residents who need information, advice and guidance have access to high quality services. These services help to prevent homelessness, manage debt, provide employment support and legal advice, and they support the health and wellbeing of Haringey residents overall. This service has a real impact in supporting people to live independently and well in Haringey. Following on from the pandemic we have both seen the importance of this kind of support and the different ways it can be delivered to best suit people's needs.

2.2. The Information, Advice and Guidance contract is therefore strategically important, and I recommend the award of the contract so that we can continue to effectively meet the needs of a range of different residents across the borough.

3. Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is asked:

- 3.1. To approve the award of a contract to the successful tenderer (identified in Appendix 1 - Part B (exempt information) of this report), in accordance with CSO 9.07.1(d) for an initial term of four (4) years, commencing from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026 with an option to extend for a further period(s) of up to a total of three (3) years.
- 3.2. To approve the value of the contract for the initial period of 4 years will be £3,059,100 inclusive of London Living Wage (LLW). For a duration of 7 years (if extension clauses are invoked) would be £5,353,425.
- 3.3. To note that funding for the Information, Advice and Guidance service is through a partnership between the Council's Adults and Health Department and North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (NCL CCG). NCL CCG contribute £133,000 to the annual funding for the service, of which £55,000 is from the Better Care Fund (BCF). This funding is offered on an annual basis and in the event that it were no longer available, the successful provider is aware that the associated activities would cease.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1. There is a clear need in Haringey to tackle the issues that place residents at risk of homelessness, unemployment, social isolation, poor health outcomes and escalating social care need. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the current IAG service saw a 28% increase in demand, and successfully adapted its operating model to offer information, advice and guidance in a more diverse range of settings, platforms and formats. The recommissioned IAG service will continue this growth and development, meeting changing need in the borough with a refreshed IAG offer which will work with people to find solutions to complex problems.
- 4.2. It is in the Council's overall interest to award this contract as it will benefit individual residents and reduce pressure on reactive statutory services such as Housing Needs, Adults Social Care and Children's Services. This will be achieved by ensuring people have access to high quality information, advice and casework support to prevent and resolve issues related to debt, unemployment, housing, barriers to healthcare, immigration status and a wide range of other life experiences.
- 4.3. The decision to award a contract to the successful tenderer is based on the conclusion of a competitive procurement process. The proposed recommendation to award the contract is made according to the outcome of

the Most Economically Advantageous Tender, as detailed in section 6 of this report.

- 4.4. The recommended provider submitted a strong tender bid that clearly demonstrated their expertise and experience in providing the services required, and to meeting the service outcomes as specified. They were able to demonstrate a strong track record of delivering Information, Advice and Guidance services.

5. **Alternative options considered**

- 5.1. **Do nothing:** The Council could elect not to recommission the IAG service as it is not statutorily required to do so. However, this would leave Haringey residents without access to timely, local and specialist information and advice on key areas of need and inequality in the borough. This would be highly likely to increase the human and financial pressure on key Council and statutory services, which would have a further detrimental impact on the residents affected. Therefore, the option of doing nothing was considered and rejected.
- 5.2. **Extend existing contracts:** The available extension periods available within the existing contract have been exhausted, and no further extensions are possible.
- 5.3. **Deliver the services in house:** Extensive consideration was given to the possibility of in-house delivery for this service. However, on reviewing the options available, insourcing was deemed to be unsuitable on the basis that a key aspect of the service was independent advice for people seeking to review or appeal decisions made by the Council and our statutory partners.

6. **Background information**

- 6.1. The IAG service will deliver three key outcomes for Haringey residents:
1. **Delivery of IAG** - Haringey residents are able to access high quality information, advice and guidance at the time they need it on a platform that meets their needs.
 2. **Building capacity** - having received information, advice and guidance, people will feel better equipped with the knowledge and skills to manage future situations independently.
 3. **Quality of information** - the information, advice and guidance is of high quality and those accessing the service feel their issue or query has been handled considerately and resolved.

- 6.2. The service will work with a minimum of 8,000 people each year, made up of both short and medium-term interventions as needed. The service is borough-wide, with resident being able select on-line or in-person support as preferred. The service will operate from community locations across the borough, which will reflect demand and engagement and will change over the life of the contract to maximise access to the service for those in need.
- 6.3. The service specification, which describes the IAG service to be commissioned, has been significantly reshaped in the last 12 months. This process has been undertaken in consultation with residents, staff and stakeholders. The result is a service model that is responsive to the changing demographics of the boroughs population, to the increased demand for digital service delivery and the strategic priorities of the borough. A key change is increased integration with the work of the Council's Connected Communities team and the move to locality working arrangements.
- 6.4. The newly commissioned service will not only provide IAG but will act as a gateway into IAG services across the borough, including from a range of community organisations, health professionals, advocates and advisers; the Haringey IAG Network. People will be able to access IAG on-line, via the telephone, in person through drop-in surgeries and outreach support in community locations and through professional referral.
- 6.5. The IAG service will be delivered in a partnership with three organisations that will be offering specific, tailored and locally based interventions for older people and adults living with mental ill-health.
- 6.6. The IAG service is commissioned in partnership, by Haringey Council and the North Central London North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (NCL CCG). The service is funded by general fund contributions and the Better Care Fund (BCF).
- 6.7. The Better Care Fund includes a range of Early Help and Prevention services/schemes which are aimed at reducing health inequalities and improving resident's health and wellbeing. These services tackle the social determinants of health such as education, economic stability, social and community, neighbourhood and environment and health care. The BCF contribution to this contract will be used to focus on ensuring Haringey residents achieve their version of 'a good life' by being able to access integrated information and support around their health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on ageing well.

Procurement Process

- 6.8. An open tender process was carried out in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, and the Council's Contract Standing Orders.
- 6.9. A Market Engagement event was held on 15th June 2021. This event was intended to communicate and share information with potential providers to help them understand the commissioning intentions and offer potential suppliers the opportunity to raise any questions and present their views.
- 6.10. The Market Engagement event indicated that this is a specialist service and the nature of the market for this type of service is limited. Therefore, an 'Open' tender process was selected as the most efficient route to market.
- 6.11. The procurement process started on 10th August 2021 with placing a contract notice on Find a Tender Service (FTS) and Contracts Finder websites.
- 6.12. The Invitation to Tender (ITT) and supporting documents were uploaded on to the Haringey Procurement and Contract System (HPCS) e-sourcing portal, where following a registration process, the potential tenderers can access the tender documents and submit their tenders electronically.
- 6.13. By the closing date of the tender (13th September 2021), 8 organisations registered their interest on HPCS e-sourcing portal. Out of 8, one organisation indicated it was withdrawing from the process and two tenderers submitted bids. Organisations who submitted tenders are listed in Appendix 1 (Part B Exempt Information) of this report.
- 6.14. The submitted tenders were checked for completeness and compliance with minimum requirements prior to full evaluation. Tenders were evaluated on the basis of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) methodology with a split of 30% price and 70% quality, as set out in the tender documentation.
- 6.15. The table below details the scores obtained by each bidder. Further information about the tender evaluation is contained in Appendix 1 (Part B Exempt Information) of this report.

Tenderers	Quality Scores (out of 700 points)	Price Scores (out of 300 points)	Total scores (out of 1000 points)
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Bidder A	570	300	870
Bidder B	327	285	612

- 6.16. The successful tenderer is committed to pay London Living Wage to staff engaged in delivering this contract. They have also extended the London Living Wage to Apprentices and registered for Living Wage Accreditation.
- 6.17. As part of the contract the Service Provider will be required to develop strategies to recruit minimum of 10% Haringey residents and retain a competent, sustainable workforce staff, with effective pay, terms and conditions, contracts, training, support and professional development. This requirement will be monitored during the contract meetings.

Transition and Contract Management

- 6.18. To ensure successful service delivery on 1st April 2022, a 3-month transition and mobilisation period has been included.
- 6.19. Contract management is a key element of good service delivery. Key Performance Indicators and qualitative methods of monitoring outcomes are integrated within the service specification and will be monitored through regular contract monitoring meetings, data reporting requirements and service visits.
- 6.20. Monitoring meetings will be held monthly for the first six months and quarterly thereafter. The purpose of monthly monitoring meetings will be to examine the implementation of the service, monitor delivery of the service at an operational level and to foster partnership working to facilitate early resolution.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1. The provision of a robust IAG service contributes significantly to the Council's strategic outcomes under the Borough Plan 2019 – 2023, in particular:
- **Priority 1: Housing** - *We will work together to prevent people from becoming homeless, and to reduce existing homelessness.*
 - **Priority 2: People** - *Strong communities where people look out for and care for one another.*
- 7.2. The service will support the Council to meet its prevention duties under the Care Act (2014) and the Homelessness Reduction Act (2018).

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

8.1. Finance

8.1.1 The new contract to be awarded for 4 years commencing 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2026 with option to extend for a further 3years. The estimated cost for the 4 years is £3,059,100. If the 3 years extension is invoked, the estimated cost is £5,353,425.

8.1.2 The cost of the contract will be funded from the approved general fund budgets in Commissioning with contributions from North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Better Care Fund (BCF) as outlined in paragraph 3.3.

8.2. Procurement

8.2.1. The tendered services are within remit of Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, and as such were duly advertised and competed for under one of the prescribed processes, an open tender.

8.2.2. The request to award the contract to the successful bidder is in accordance with CSO 9.07. Moreover, the tender outcome represented good value as it returned an efficiency of 6% or £358,575 over the life of the contract.

8.2.3. To mitigate against service delivery risk and to ensure key performance indicators are met, commissioning will regularly monitor provision via monthly meeting in the first instance, as well as the review of the Contractor's data report submissions and site visits.

8.3. Legal

8.3.1. The Head of Legal and Governance notes the contents of the report.

8.3.2. The report confirmed that the open tender procedure was followed during the tender process and as such the procurement was in line with the provisions of the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSO) 9.01.1 and 9.01.2(a) and it is therefore compliant with the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

8.3.3. In accordance with the provisions of CSO 9.07.1(d), Cabinet may approve the award of a contract if the value of the contract is £500,000 or more and

as such Cabinet has power to approve the award of the contract in the Report.

8.3.4 In accordance with the provisions of CSO 16.02, the Leader may allocate the making of a decision reserved for Cabinet to the Cabinet member having the relevant portfolio responsibilities and as such the Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Well-Being has power to make the decision in the report so long as the decision making has been allocated to them by the Leader.

8.3.4. The Head of Legal and Governance sees no legal reasons preventing the approval of the recommendations in the report.

8.4. **Equality**

8.4.1. The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

8.4.2. The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. The first part of the duty applies to marriage and civil partnership status only.

8.4.3. The proposed decision is for Cabinet to award a contract to the successful tenderer for Information, Advice and Guidance services. The services will impact all residents experiencing difficulties in relation to housing, economic security, health and other issues who seek access to information and advice services in Haringey. The service is aimed to people of all backgrounds and ages, among whom disabled households, those from BAME groups, and lower socioeconomic backgrounds are likely to be overrepresented. It also affects those at risk of homelessness, among whom women-headed households from BAME groups, lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and those with long-term health issues are overrepresented.

8.4.4. The proposed decision aims to provide support through the provision of information, advice and guidance in pursuit of a key strategic agenda of

preventing homelessness and the escalation of health and care needs, recognising its prevalence in the borough and the devastating impact it has on individual residents, communities and society at large. It is anticipated that the decision will lead to improved outcomes for households at risk of homelessness, experiencing debt and unemployment or facing barriers to accessing health and other statutory services. Households from BAME or certain faith groups, single parent households, those experiencing poverty, and people with long-term health issues are most affected by these issues and over-represented in current services. The proposed decision therefore represents a measure to address a known inequality that disproportionately affects these groups.

8.4.5. As an organisation carrying out a public function on behalf of a public body the successful tenderer will be obliged to have due regard for the need to achieve the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as stated above. Appropriate contract management arrangements will be established to ensure that the delivery of the service does not result in any preventable or disproportionate inequality.

8.4.6. The Council and the service provider shall take steps to collect demographic data about service users in order to identify any inequalities in service provision that may arise and to inform future equalities analysis.

9. Use of Appendices

9.1. Appendix 1 – PART B Exempt Information

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1. This report contains exempt and non-exempt information. Exempt information is contained in the exempt report and is not for publication. The exempt information is under the following category: (identified in the amended schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 (3)) information in relation to financial or the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).