

PROCUREMENT GATEWAY 3 - CONTRACT AWARD REPORT PART I

PEO/22035 - Supplementary health and social care agency services for children and young people



1. INTRODUCTION

This contract award report is in relation to the procurement of supplementary health and social care services to meet the needs of children and young people. The scope of the requirement includes the provision of safe, effective care, support or supervision for children and young people with a range of health and/or social care needs, in a range of circumstances, as detailed in the background to this report, below.

Contract Duration: five years, with an optional extension period of a further two years.

2. BACKGROUND

The requirement is to create a framework agreement through which the Council can commission health and social care staffing agencies to deliver supplementary services on a 'call-off' basis as and when required to meet the needs of children and young people in a range of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Bespoke 'short break' care/support in the community for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or in the family home of a child or young person with profound and complex physical or mental disabilities;
- 'edge of care' support, to avoid a child or young person becoming 'looked after' by the local authority;
- Short term care/support for a child or young person entering local authority care in response to an 'emergency' or 'crisis', whilst arrangements are made for an appropriate matched placement to meet their assessed needs;
- supporting stability and continuity where the placement of a looked after child or young person is at risk of breaking down, or supporting a transition between placements as a result of changing needs;
- Supporting the process of reunification between a child or young person with their family, following a period of being looked after by the local authority.

The key purpose of the new framework is to ensure delivery of services for children and young people which are effective in:

- preventing health and/or social care needs escalating - and managing and de-escalating crises - to ensure that children and young people experience feeling safe and cared for, in stable and nurturing living arrangements;
- ensuring that children and young people's voices are heard - including appropriate involvement in planning how their needs will be met.

Ultimately, the services in scope will make a key contribution to enabling children and young people to live safely and happily - within their family home wherever possible, or in the care of the local authority -to maximize their life opportunities and participation and to achieve their full potential.

3. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The procurement was conducted as a one stage Open Procedure in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ('the Regulations') and Plymouth City Council Contract Standing Orders.

The Invitation to Tender (ITT) was advertised on the Find a Tender Service (FTS) via the Supplying the South West Proactis procurement portal on 22 May 2023. As an Open Procedure, the number of suppliers invited to participate in the procurement opportunity was not limited and any interested organisation could express an interest to access the procurement documents and submit a bid.

The indicative timetable published for the Tender was as follows:

Activity	Date/Target Date
FTS Contract Notice Published	22/05/2023
Contracts Finder Notice Published	22/05/2023
Dispatch of ITT	22/05/2023
Deadline for Tenderer ITT Clarifications	08/06/2023
Deadline for Council Responses to Clarifications	14/06/2023
Return of ITT	8am 21/06/2023
Notification of successful Tenderer	20/09/2023
Regulation 87 standstill period (10 calendar days)	21/09/23 to 02/10/2023
Contract Award	03/10/2023
Estimated Service Commencement	01/11/2023

4. TENDER EVALUATION CRITERIA

The selection criteria used to appoint suppliers to the framework agreement was as follows:

Part I: Suitability Assessment - Evaluation Criteria and Methodology

This section assessed the Tenderers' suitability to undertake the contract requirement.

Each section within the Tender Return Document was identified as being evaluated on a pass/fail basis, or as being 'for information only'.

Each of the pass/fail questions indicated what response would constitute a pass, or a fail.

The following pass/fail sections were included in the Suitability Assessment:

SA Section 2	Grounds for Mandatory Exclusion
SA Section 3	Grounds for Discretionary Exclusion
SA Section 4	Economic and Financial Standing*
SA Section 5	Parent Company
SA Section 6	Technical and Professional Ability
SA Section 7	Modern Slavery Act 2015
SA Section 8.1	Insurance
SA Section 8.2	Schedule 1 Health & Safety
SA Section 8.3	Equality & Diversity
SA Section 8.4	Business Capability
SA Section 8.5	Safeguarding

SA Section 8.6	Data Protection
SA Section 8.7	Behaviour Management policy including Restraint
SA Section 8.8	Food Hygiene
SA Section 8.9	Infection Prevention and Control
SA Section 8.10	Lone Working Policy
SA Section 8.11	Medication Administration

* Tenderers’ economic and financial standing was evaluated in accordance with the ‘Assessing and Monitoring the Economic and Financial Standing of Bidders and Suppliers Guidance Note’ published by the Government Commercial Function:
[Assessing and monitoring the economic and financial standing of suppliers guidance note May 2021.pdf](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90200/Assessing_and_monitoring_the_economic_and_financial_standing_of_suppliers_guidance_note_May_2021.pdf) (publishing.service.gov.uk). The procurement was assessed as ‘SILVER’ using the ‘Tiering Tool’ recommended in the guidance.

In accordance with the Regulations, wherever possible the Council permitted Tenderers to self-certify that they met the minimum PASS/FAIL requirements of the Suitability Assessment without the need to attach evidence or supporting information with their tender submission.

However, where Tenderers were permitted to self-certify, evidence will be sought from the successful Tenderers on publication of this contract award report. **Therefore the contract awards set out in this report are subject to Tenderers being able to provide all requested evidence to the satisfaction of the Council within a reasonable period. If the successful Tenderers are unable to do this, the Council reserves the right to amend the contract award decision accordingly.**

Part 2: Contract Award - Evaluation Criteria and Methodology

This section assessed how the Tenderers proposed to deliver the required service as detailed in the Specification.

The high level award criteria is as follows:

Criteria	Weighting
Commercial	20%
Quality	75%
Social Value	5%
TOTAL	100%

Weightings for individual sub-criteria contained under each of the above are detailed below.

Commercial:

The notice period which Tenderers required in order to end a service package was evaluated using the following comparative scoring methodology:

Lowest notice period (in calendar days) allocated full marks (20%). All other Tenderers’ scores were determined as follows:

$$\left(\frac{\text{Lowest Tenderer notice period (in calendar days)}}{\text{Tenderer's notice period (in calendar days)}} \right) \times 20 = \text{Weighted score (\%)}$$

Pass/Fail Threshold - The maximum acceptable notice period was 28 days.

Quality:

Scored questions were evaluated in accordance with the following sub-criteria and weightings:

25%	Method Statement 3: Delivery Model	Description of the practice models and interventions to be utilised to meet the needs of children and young people (20%) Description of approach to achieving continual service improvement (5%)
25%	Method Statement 4: Workforce Development and Engagement	Approach to Recruitment and Induction (5%) Approach to Management guidance & support and Supervision model (5%) Performance appraisal & development and Review of Workforce Development plans (5%) Formal Learning programme and other CPD opportunities provided (5%) Engagement, commitment and retention of a competent workforce (5%)
25%	Method Statement 5: Supporting a Young Person with Complex Needs	Description of steps to be taken, additional information sought from the Local Authority. Matching of staff, relationship building and structure of young person's time
5%	Social Value Commitment	More local people in employment (1%) More opportunities for disadvantaged people (1%) Improving staff wellbeing (2%) Carbon emissions are reduced (1%)

Evaluation Approach

The scoring system below was used for the Quality criteria questions evaluated on a scored basis:

Response	Score	Definition
Excellent	5	Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a broad depth of relevant experience and excellent level of expertise with all areas covered to a very high standard.
Very good	4	Response is very relevant and very good. The response is precisely detailed to demonstrate a very good amount of experience and expertise covering all aspects.
Good	3	Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good amount of experience and expertise covering all aspects.
Satisfactory	2	Response is relevant and acceptable. Demonstrates a reasonable amount of experience and adequate level of expertise but lacks detail in certain areas or with some aspects missing.
Poor	1	Response is partially relevant and poor. Provides little or limited evidence of experience and competence in the required field.
Unacceptable	0	No response, an unacceptable or irrelevant response provided.

Minimum Threshold Scores

Tenderers were required to achieve at least the minimum scores detailed below for each scored section. Any section receiving less than these minimum threshold scores resulted in the Tender being rejected and the Tenderer being disqualified from the process.

Section Ref.	Section	Section details	Min threshold (SCORED-STANDARD Score)
CI	Commercial	Notice Period	N/A
MS3	Delivery Model A	Practice Models and Interventions	3
	Delivery Model B	Continual Service Improvement	2
MS4	Workforce Development A	Recruitment & Induction	3
	Workforce Development B	Management Guidance & Support	2
	Workforce Development C	Performance Appraisal	2
	Workforce Development D	Formal Learning	2
	Workforce Development E	Engagement, Commitment & Retention	2
MS5	Supporting a Young Person with Complex Needs	Case study	3
SVI	Social Value A	Local People	2
	Social Value B	Opportunities for disadvantaged people	2
	Social Value C	Improving Staff Wellbeing	2
	Social Value D	Carbon Emissions - programme	2

5. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Following advertisement of the Procurement opportunity as set out in Section 3 above, fifteen submissions were received by the deadline of 8am on 21/06/2023, of which seven were incomplete and were therefore disqualified from the procurement process. The remaining eight submissions constituted complete Tenders.

Part I: Suitability Assessment

The eight complete Tenders were assessed using the Suitability Assessment evaluation criteria and methodology set out in Section 4 above. Of those eight, two Tenders were assessed to have not met the Council's requirements and were therefore disqualified from the procurement process. The remaining six Tenders passed the Suitability Assessment.

Part 2: Contract Award

The six Tenders which passed the Suitability Assessment were then assessed using the Contract Award evaluation criteria and methodology set out in Section 4 above.

All six Tenders were assessed to have met the Council's Commercial and Social Value requirements. However, three of the Tenders were assessed to have not met the Council's Quality requirements and were therefore disqualified from the procurement process.

The remaining three Tenders met Council requirements across all evaluation criteria.

Details of the tendering organisations and their scores are provided in Supplementary Health and Social Care Agency Services for Children and Young People Contract Award Report Part 2.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The services which will be purchased through this framework agreement on a 'call off' basis are intended to be used 'as and when required' and for the shortest period of time necessary to meet the needs of children and young people who are in care or who might otherwise need to become 'looked after' by the local authority.

Whilst the level of annual expenditure will vary according to the unique needs of children and young people, based on historical patterns of expenditure it is anticipated that the total value of services to be 'called off' through the framework agreement by the Council will be approximately £3 million per annum. Provision for this expenditure will come from the revenue budgets of the Council's departments for Children, Young People and Families and Education, Participation and Skills.

The duration of contracts awarded to join the framework agreement will be 5 years, and the Council will then have an option to offer an extension for a further 2 years.

The Council has undertaken this procurement to ensure that the services commissioned are of good quality and offer value for money in the use of public funds. The establishment of a new framework agreement aims to ensure the Council is able to call on a range of good quality agencies to provide care and support for children and young people as and when needed, whether to help them remain safe and well at home, or support them as part of a placement in the care of the local authority. The framework agreement also provides the Council with a transparent schedule of prices charged by each agency for supplementary services, and removes the risk of cancellation fees being charged by agencies, thereby supporting value for money and budget planning.

Torbay Council is also exercising an opportunity to join the new framework agreement as an additional contracting body and anticipates commission services through the framework with an anticipated value of approximately £2.1 million per annum.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that contracts to join the new framework agreement be awarded to the following three suppliers whose Tenders met the Council's requirements across all evaluation criteria set out in this report:

1	Frontline Health Professionals Ltd
2	Newcross Healthcare Solutions
3	Promoting Independent Care Ltd



The contracts will be let under PCC Framework Agreement Terms & Conditions and PCC Standard Services Terms and Conditions for call-offs.

These awards will be provisional and subject to receipt from each supplier of the satisfactory self-certification documents detailed in the suitability assessment questionnaire. These awards are also subject to completion of a Regulation 87 standstill period (10 calendar days).

It is also recommended that following this initial procurement process to establish the new framework agreement, the Council will undertake an annual review to determine whether the framework is providing sufficient choice and capacity of high quality services to consistently meet the needs of children and young people. Subject to the outcome of this annual review the Council may carry out a further procurement process to give additional suppliers the opportunity to submit a tender to join the framework.

8. APPROVAL

Authorisation of Contract Award Report

Author (Responsible Officer / Project Lead)			
Name:	Andrea Langman		
Job Title:	Commissioning Officer		
Additional Comments (Optional):			
Signature:		Date:	5 January 2024
Head of Service / Service Director [Signature provides authorisation to this award report and award of Contract]			
Name:	David Haley		
Job Title:	Director for Children's Services		
Additional Comments (Optional):			
Signature:		Date:	19 January 2024