

PROCUREMENT GATEWAY 3 - CONTRACT AWARD REPORT - PART I

PEO23085 Resettlement Support Service



I. INTRODUCTION

This contract award report is in relation to the outcome of a commissioning process including the procurement of a Resettlement Support service. This service will provide advice, support and guidance to assist persons with recourse to public funds arriving through all government managed resettlement schemes or granted leave to remain via the asylum systems. The aim of the service will be to support individuals to settle and integrate into Plymouth, build on their assets and attributes to enable them to participate and contribute fully in society

The anticipated duration of the contract is for a 4-year period with an option to extend by up to a further 5 years (3yrs +2yrs). Contract will commence 1st May 2024.

It is recommended that the contract is awarded to PATH led Plymouth Resettlement Partnership, consisting of the following organisations: PATH, Open Door International Language School (ODILS), Students and Refugees Together (START), Devon and Cornwall Refugee Service (DCRS), Plymouth and Devon Race Equality Council (PDREC) and Bridges.

2. BACKGROUND

The procurement included using an assurance process to commission an innovative, trauma-informed service that provides place-based, person-centred support. The aim of the service will be to support individuals to settle and integrate into the host community. The outcomes of this contract will be to assist service users to meet their aspirations and feel socially included, build on a persons' assets and attributes to enable them to participate and contribute fully in society. The specific outcomes of the service will include:

- Improved access to housing;
- Increased self-sufficiency via employment and maximisation of welfare benefits;
- Improved independence through the strengthening of social connections, language skills and digital inclusion;
- Improved cultural competency to help local communities and services to become more refugee friendly;
- Attainment of positive health outcomes;
- Improved English language acquisition by providing support and assistance to access ESOL;

The Resettlement Support Service will:

- Be a recognised partnership able to contribute towards improved community cohesion within the city;
- Generate evidence about what works, to be able to evaluate the impact of funded projects on refugee integration and self-sufficiency;
- Provide evidence to inform future policy, programming, and mainstream service delivery;
- Support other organisations to become more culturally aware and competent when supporting people from refugee communities, offering expertise to help ensure they are

accessible and culturally sensitive towards the needs of the cohort including advocating for those people that may have experienced discrimination;

- Work in support and collaboration with members of the Refugee and Asylum Seeker (RAS) forum in Plymouth;
- Be expected to participate in statutory bodies led by the Council such as Plymouth Prevent and Safer Communities and other ad hoc focus groups which require input from providers on the specific needs of this cohort;
- have a strong and consistent focus on cross-partnership delivery that aligns and draws on the support of mainstream services;

This commissioning process has been underpinned by co-production and design values. An initial series of market engagement co-design workshops with providers took place at which were laid out the background and high-level service outcomes and at which providers were invited to refine and also to define the activities required to deliver outcomes, using a theory of change framework.

Following the first stage of the tender, having only one emerging partnership allowed us to proceed with the assurance process involving dialogue and discussion and a much more collaborative approach to developing service design. The assurance process commenced at the second stage and involved dialogue or assurance meetings with the emerging partnership, preceded by a series of method statement questions for which the partnership was required to set out their plans for service delivery against a set of published criteria. These responses were evaluated by a panel of council staff and two people with lived experience. A series of clarifications and questions emerged from this process that were set to the providers, and which formed basis of dialogue meetings. Eventually the stage was reached by which the evaluators and partnership were satisfied with agreed offer that met required standard to be able to award a contract.

Involving people with lived experience has been an integral part of this process. An expression of interest was issued that was shared by colleagues at the university that lead on the Routes to Wellness project. Two people with lived experience responded; their involvement has been invaluable in helping to shape method statement questions and evaluation criteria, and they have been involved in the evaluation and present at all the assurance meetings.

3. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The procurement process consisted of a 2-stage approach.

A Contract Notice published on Find a Tender Service (FTS) reference number [2023/S 000-023106](#) was dispatched on 08/08/2023.

(1) Stage 1 – Supplier Selection Questionnaire (SQ)- The aim of this stage was to test the capability and capacity of potential provider collaborations and to identify whether there would be more than one capable provider partnership. The numbers would determine the next stage, i.e., either (a) A competitive process (if more than one capable provider partnership is identified at Stage 1), which would involve dialogue and assessment of bids against published evaluation criteria and weightings; or (b) A partnership “Assurance Process” with a single group, if only one capable provider partnership identified at Stage 1.

The Supplier Selection Questionnaire (SQ) identified one capable provider partnership suitable to proceed to Stage 2.

(2) Stage 2 was therefore conducted as a partnership “Assurance Process” with the one capable provider partnership (the Tenderer).

The indicative timetable published for the tender was as follows:

Activity	Date/Target Date
FTS PIN/ Contract Notice Published	08/08/2023
Contracts Finder Notice Published	08/08/2023
Issue SQ	08/08/2023
Return SQ	29/08/2023
SQ Shortlist notification	01/11/2023
Dispatch of ITT	5/12/2023
Initial meeting between partnership, commissioners, people with lived experience	2pm to 4pm 18/12/2023
Deadline for Tenderer ITT Clarifications	03/01/2024
Deadline for Council Responses to Clarifications	08/01/2024
Return for initial tender submission	10:00am on 15/01/2024
Notification of scores and points for discussion	29/01/2024
1st assurance dialogue meeting	05/02/2024
Notification of outstanding points for discussion	07/02/2024
2nd assurance dialogue meeting	12/02/2024
Deadline for Partnership to re-submit tender based on agreed changes	16/02/24
Notification of scores and points for discussion (if required)	22/02/24
3rd assurance dialogue meeting (if required)	27/02/24
Partnership final submission deadline	05/03/2024
Successful tenderer Notification & standstill start	19/03/24
Self-certified policy, procedures and information requested	19/03/24
Regulation 87 standstill period (10 calendar days) end	19/03/24 to 29/03/2024
Contract award	01/04/24
Mobilisation	01/04/24 to 30/04/2024
Estimated Service Commencement	01/05/2024

4. TENDER EVALUATION CRITERIA

4.1 Supplier Selection Criteria (Suitability Assessment Stage)

The following criteria were used to assess the submissions at Suitability Assessment stage:

Section	Title	Type of Question	Weighting (%)
1	Supplier information	Information only	Not evaluated and scored
2	Grounds for Mandatory Exclusion	Pass/fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
3	Mandatory and discretionary grounds relating to the payment of taxes and social security contributions	Pass/fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
4	Grounds for Discretionary Exclusion	Pass/fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
5	Economic and Financial Standing	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
6	Parent Company Details	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
7	Technical & Professional Ability	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
8	Insurances	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
9	Modern Slavery Act	Pass/fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
10 ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS			
10.1	Health & Safety	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated, and they will be eliminated from the process.
10.2	Equality and Diversity	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated and they will be eliminated from the process.
10.3	Quality Management	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission

			will not be evaluated and they will be eliminated from the process.
10.4	Business Capability	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated and they will be eliminated from the process.
10.5	Safeguarding	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated and they will be eliminated from the process.
10.6	Data Protection	Pass/Fail	In the event of a supplier being awarded a 'fail', the remainder of their submission will not be evaluated and they will be eliminated from the process.

In the event of the Supplier being awarded a 'fail' on any of the above criteria, the remainder of their SQ was not evaluated and they were eliminated from the process.

4.2 Supplier Award Criteria (ITT Stage)

4.2.1 Disqualification Criteria

If any of the following applied, then the **tender** would be disqualified:

- Delivery of all elements of the specification not included;
- Schedule 5 and 6 certificates/declarations not completed and/ signed;
- Price above Affordability Criteria;
- Price breakdown (costs) unrealistic and service not sustainable;
- Unacceptable amendments to Terms and Conditions;

4.2.2 Affordability Criteria

The contracts are going to be delivered for up to 9 years (4yr+3yr+2yr). The total maximum contract value is £4,950,000.

The estimated maximum contract value for the initial 4-year contract period is £2,200,00. Tenders exceeding this estimated value would be disqualified from the tender exercise.

4.2.3 Award criteria

The high-level award criteria was as follows:

Criteria	Thresholds
Price	Affordability (initial 4-year contract period is £2,200,00).
Quality	'Good' (Score 3)
Social Value	'Good' (Score 3)

The following questions were asked in order to test the quality of the submission:

EVALUATION CRITERIA
TECHNICAL RESPONSE – METHOD STATEMENTS
Question: MS 1 Service Delivery Model MS 1 Please describe your service delivery model including your vision and ambition for an inclusive and effective service in Plymouth
MS 2 Coproduction How will you improve your service by involving people who use it, ensuring their voices are at the heart of it, and taking into account protected characteristics
MS3 Partnerships MS 3 a) Please describe how you will work together with each other within your partnership to deliver the different service elements and outcomes MS3 b) Please describe the key external partners you will work with and how you will maintain productive working relationships
TECHNICAL RESPONSE – SOCIAL VALUE
Social Value Schedule 4 SV1 and SV2 NT1a: No. of full time equivalent local direct employees (FTE) hired or retained for the duration of the contract which are TUPE transfers
NT39: Mental Health campaigns for staff on the contract to create community of acceptance, remove stigma around mental health.
NT 41: Percentage of staff on contract that is paid at least the relevant Real Living wage as specified by Living Wage foundation

4.3 Tender evaluation

Tenders were evaluated using the following scoring:

- Strength of proposals to comply with the Council’s specification - evaluation made on contract delivery proposals submitted in response to the requirements set out in specification and taking into consideration the Council’s aims for the service.

Pass/Fail Questions- Questions identified as PASS/FAIL were evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Each question clearly indicated what response constitutes as PASS and what response constituted as FAIL. In the event of the Tenderer being awarded a ‘fail’ on any of the criteria, the remainder of the Tender would not be evaluated and would result in elimination from the process.

Scored Questions -

Questions identified as SCORED were evaluated using the Scoring Table I below:

Scoring Table I

Response	Score	Definition
Very good	4	Response is particularly relevant. The response is precisely detailed to demonstrate a very good understanding of the requirements and provides details on how these will be fulfilled.
Good	3	Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements/outcomes will be fulfilled.
Average	2	Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirements/outcomes but lacks details on how the requirement/outcomes will be fulfilled in certain areas.

Poor	I	Response is partially relevant and/or poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirements/outcomes but contains insufficient/limited detail and explanation to demonstrate how the requirements/outcomes will be fulfilled.
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The Council decided to take a '**consensus**' scoring evaluation approach to this procurement. This means that, following the independent evaluation of submissions, where there was a difference in individual evaluator scoring for any question, a moderation session with all evaluators for that question, took place to arrive at an agreed, consensus score.

In the Invitation to tender (ITT) documents it stated that we will only proceed to contract award if after the discussion meetings and evaluation of the final tender submission, the score reached at least 'Good' for every method statement.

4.4 Assurance Dialogue Meetings

The assurance process consisted of the following steps:

1. Initial meeting between partnership, commissioners and people with lived experience:
 - The purpose of this meeting was for the tenderer to ask any questions or raise any clarifications or points you may have.
2. Initial Tender Submission:
 - The Tenderer was required to answer all sections and submit an initial tender within the specified timescale.
3. Evaluation, Dialogue and Tender Resubmission
 - The Council evaluated the initial tender submission and notified the tenderer with preliminary scores and details of points identified for discussion.
 - Following this, two scheduled meetings took place to discuss these points. This provided the tenderer with an opportunity to explain their rationale and where their submission had not reached a 'Good' score for all sections we entered into dialogue with the tenderer to agree their tender could be improved to achieve this. This reshaping could include changing, adding or removing elements of their bid but all changes agreed had to be kept within the published pricing threshold.
 - The Tenderer was required to submit a reshaped tender within specified timescale.
4. Acceptance of Final Tender submission
 - The Council evaluated the re-submitted tender and notified the tenderer that a 'Good' score has been achieved for all sections so this tender will be accepted as their final tender.

4.5 Evaluation of self-certified sections on Contract Award

Self-certified sections (including insurances and polices/procedures) will be evaluated for the successful bidder at the contract award stage.

These documents will be evaluated against current legislative requirements and the minimum criteria published in the ITT documents. The documents will be scored as follows:

Definition	Criteria	Consequence
Award	Documents fully comply with criteria detailed in SQ Annex A.	Contract awarded to successful tenderer
Award subject to	Documents mostly fully comply with criteria detailed in SQ Annex A and only	Contract awarded to successful tenderer subject to them updating documents to a

	minor amendments are required to bring them to full compliance.	satisfactory standard before contract commencement
Fail	Documents do not or only partially comply with criteria detailed in SQ Annex A and major amendments are required to bring them to full compliance.	Successful bidder will be disqualified from the process. Consideration will be given to approaching the next placed bidder.

5. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Following advertisement of the procurement opportunity as set out in Section 3 above, four submissions were received by the deadline of 12:00 on 29/08/2023.

Part 1: Selection Questionnaire (SQ)

Four submissions were received on time. Two of these were from individual organisations who were disqualified as the ITT documents clearly stated that the requirement is for a partnership of providers to deliver the service. Another submission constituted a partnership but was disqualified due to incomplete submissions of the SQ for some members of this partnership and also failure of some sections. The remaining submission was complete and passed onto the second 'Assurance' stage.

Part 2: Contract Award

The Tender which passed the Selection criteria was then assessed using the Contract Award evaluation criteria and methodology as set out in Section 4 above.

Details of the tendering organisations and their scores are provided in "Resettlement Support Service Contract Award Report Part 2".

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial provision has been made within the budget. Details of the contractual pricing are provided in Resettlement Support Service Contract Award Report Part 2".

The duration of contract awarded will be 4 years, and the Council will then have an option to offer an extension for a further 2 extensions of 3 years plus 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.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON PROCESS

It is recommended that a contract be awarded to PATH led Plymouth Resettlement Partnership on Service Agreement Terms & Conditions, at a value of £2,200,000 for 4 years, with options to extend for 3 years and 2 years (4+3+2). The contract will commence on 1st May 2024.

This award will be provisional and subject to the receipt from the supplier of the satisfactory self-certification documents detailed in the suitability assessment questionnaire.

This award is also subject to the outcome of any challenge made during the call-in or mandatory standstill period.

9. APPROVAL**Authorisation of Contract Award Report**

Author (Responsible Officer / Project Lead)			
Name:	Kate Lattimore		
Job Title:	Commissioning Officer		
Additional Comments (Optional):			
Signature:	<i>Kate Lattimore</i>	Date:	18/03/2024
Head of Service / Service Director [Signature provides authorisation to this award report and award of Contract]			
Name:	Gary Walbridge		
Job Title:	Interim Strategic Director for People		
Additional Comments (Optional):			
Signature:	<i>GWalbridge</i>	Date:	18/03/2024