

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject:	Contract Award – Domestic Abuse Victim Support, Recovery and Prevention Services
Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	6 August 2013
Cabinet Member:	Councillor McDonald
CMT Member:	Carole Burgoyne (Director for People)
Author:	Kate Lattimore, Project Officer
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Ref:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Part:	I

Purpose of the report:

This report summarises the recent tender process for two separate services for victims of domestic abuse.

Service A will support people assessed as being at a ‘higher risk of serious harm’ and incorporates:

- Qualified Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs),
- Support for victims going through the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts,
- Support to people staying at the women’s Refuge,
- A service for the children of victims,
- A Devon & Cornwall Probation funded victim liaison officer,

And

- A volunteer co-ordinator.

This service will replace the current domestic abuse victim support contract which is due to end on 30 November 2013.

Service B is new provision that will focus on supporting people who have been assessed as being at a ‘lower risk of serious harm’ to prevent escalation of their needs. This service will also be required to create initiatives to raise awareness amongst agencies and the general public of domestic abuse.

The report recommends the awarding of the contracts to the winning provider(s).

The provision of support services to enhance safety, promote recovery, provide measures of protection and provide support to prevent re-occurrences to victims of domestic abuse, and their children, is one of the key recommendations in the Commissioning Plan for Domestic Abuse Services approved by Cabinet in 2012.

The level of expenditure on the future services to replace this provision required a full competitive tender in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders. This competitive procurement was run a two stage process.

Contract award information is submitted to Cabinet as a separate confidential report.

The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17

Caring Plymouth City Council

- **Prioritise Prevention:** By creating initiatives that raise awareness of domestic abuse and measures to combat it, whilst supporting people to recover and build their self-esteem and confidence and thus prevent choosing unhealthy relationships in future
- **Children, Young People and Adults are Safe and Confident in their Communities:** By targeting services in the areas with highest prevalence of domestic abuse within the City, most of which are also areas with highest deprivation levels; and by working closely with Police and Probation to ensure protection and safety of victims, prosecution of perpetrators and increase the reporting of domestic abuse
- **Help People Take Control over their Lives and Communities:** By supporting people who use services to have choice, control and influence over how those services are developed and provided; and building individual capacity and resilience amongst people who have been victims of domestic abuse (through the development of pattern changing skills and promotion of recovery).

Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land

As this is a priority service area for the City it was agreed that additional investment would be allocated to focus on awareness raising and prevention. This alternative approach will enable the city to achieve a reduction in demand for crisis intervention and longer term support over the full life span of the contracts.

The current annual spend on the existing specialist domestic abuse victim support contract is £510,495 per annum. This includes partnership funding from Devon & Cornwall Police.

Overall the costs of the new service provision totals £1,745,618 for the period 2013 – 2016 and £1,585,560 for 2016-2018. This includes a commitment for partnership funding from Devon & Cornwall Probation Services and Devon & Cornwall Police.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:

- **Child Poverty:** part of the service will provide support to the children of victims, supporting them to overcome any adversity they may have suffered as a result of witnessing domestic abuse, helping them to thrive and develop into well-functioning adults.
- **Community Safety:** this service will aim to increase brought to justice outcomes by working closely with the Police Domestic Abuse Unit to provide support to victims; by providing support to victims attending the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts, by attending the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference - a victim-focused meeting where

information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic abuse between criminal justice, health, child protection, housing practitioners) and by raising awareness about domestic abuse to the public.

Equality and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. No adverse impact was identified as a result of this however contract monitoring arrangements will continue to assess any impacts post contract award.

www.plymouth.gov.uk/eia_domestic_abuse_commissioning_plan.pdf

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

To award a three year contracts, containing an option to extend the contracts for a further three years, to the 'most economically advantageous tenderers' as identified the Contract Award Report (Part II report).

Alternative options considered and rejected:

The option of not awarding any contract was considered but disregarded due to the importance of ensuring Domestic Abuse Victim Support, Recovery and Prevention Services continue to be available.

Published work / information:

Commissioning Plan for the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership 2012-2019

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/mgInternet/documents/s40866/Domestic%20Abuse%20Commissioning%20Plan%20Final%20Appendix.pdf>

Background papers:

None

Sign off:

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Originating SMT Member Dave Simpkins													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

I. BACKGROUND

Domestic Abuse is a serious social problem and human rights violation. It is hugely underreported, widespread and has no boundaries, affecting anyone regardless of age, sex, culture, ethnic or religious group, gender, sexuality, disability, income or lifestyle. Domestic abuse has physical, emotional, social and economic consequences. However, with good service provision that includes awareness raising and prevention, many people affected by domestic abuse can lead healthier and happier lives.

A Commissioning Plan for Domestic Abuse Services was approved by Cabinet in 2012 and contained information showing that although there has been a decrease in the number of people who are repeat victims, there continues to be a high prevalence of domestic abuse in Plymouth (27% of all violent crime in the City is domestic abuse related, compared to a national figure of 16%). This is despite local investment in preventative and support services and the commitment and work of the members of the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

Combating the prevalence of domestic abuse requires on-going investment to allow the continuation of the current victim support recovery model and increased investment in prevention and early intervention to meet the city's vision and strategic aims

2. CURRENT SITUATION

Currently there is one jointly commissioned service working holistically with victims/survivors of domestic abuse. It works with victims aged 16+ and their families:

Service provider	Name of service	Annual contract value
Sanctuary Supported Living	PDAS (Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service)	£510,495

The service consists of different elements, although they may be bridged according to need, and are as follows:

- Qualified Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVA's)
- Measures of support, recovery protection aimed at helping re-build lives and preventing the cycle of domestic abuse.
- Support into the women's Refuge (11 units for women and their children) and 13 dispersed units, or 'safe houses' which are adapted social houses with additional security features, located in different parts of the City
- Support through the specialist domestic abuse courts
- Children's service
- Volunteer co-ordinator

The current contract expires 30th November 2013.

The service was commissioned in 2008 and its creation brought together what were previously three separate contracts and this integrated support model has been recognised as a significant step forward for the City. This type of integrated model of service design is recognised nationally as best practice as it allows for a rapid response in meeting victims needs which is so crucial when dealing with those cases deemed high or medium risk of serious harm or murder. Due to the overwhelming demand for this service, and the emergence of a new national risk assessment tool called the DASH that was rolled out for use by Police and all agencies dealing with domestic abuse in 2009/10, it was agreed that this service would only deal with those cases assessed a high or medium risk using this

tool. This has left a gap for those lower level cases which if captured early could be prevented from deteriorating into a more serious situation.

3. NEW SERVICES

In light of the above, one of the key recommendations of the Commissioning Plan was to procure two victim support, recovery and prevention services:

- **Service A** to support people assessed as being at ‘higher risk’. This service was to retain the key positive elements of the existing service; i.e. providing an integrated service consisting of qualified Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), support for victims going through the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts, support in the women’s Refuge, a service for the children of victims, and a volunteer co-ordinator and introduce a new element a probation funded victim liaison officer
- **Service B**, a new service, to focus on prevention, early intervention and awareness raising. This service will provide information, guidance and support to victims of domestic abuse who have been assessed as standard or low level risk in accordance with the DASH risk assessment, using measures that aim to prevent escalation of need, thus helping to reduce overall prevalence and re-occurrence of domestic abuse. This service will also create initiatives to raise awareness amongst agencies and the general public of domestic abuse and the measures available to combat it, aiming to reduce overall prevalence of domestic abuse.

4. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

A competitive procurement was run as a two stage process with a Pre-Qualification Stage (Pre-Qualification Questionnaire) followed by an Invitation to Tender (ITT).

The invitation to tender document was published electronically via the Devon Procurement Portal (www.devontenders.gov.uk) in accordance with the following timeline:

Activity	Date: Service A
Return of PQQ	4.02.13
Dispatch of ITT for Service A to successful applicants	1.3.13
Tender Return Date	4.4.13
Evaluation of tenders completed and selection of successful Tenderer	2.5.13
Dispatch of ITT for Service B to successful applicants	5.4.13
Tender Return Date	9.5.13
Evaluation of tenders completed and selection of successful Tenderer	4.6.13
Estimated Service Commencement	1.12.13

The Pre-Qualification Stage

This stage required Providers to submit a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ). Each PQQ was assessed and scores were used to select which Providers were to be shortlisted for the next stage of the procurement.

The following sections of the PQQ contained mandatory questions, the responses to which were reviewed and treated as pass or fail criteria:

Professional and Business Standing

Financial

Insurance

Data Protection

Timescales

In addition the following sections of the PQQ were evaluated and awarded a score.

Section	Weighting (%)
Prime Contractor/Sub-Contracting	5
Quality Management	10
Health & Safety Policy	5
Health & Safety	6
Equality & Diversity Policy	5
Equality & Diversity	6
Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy	9
Safeguarding Vulnerable People	10
Disputes	5
Business Capability	32
Recent Contracts/References	7

These weightings and the scoring methodology for each section were published in the PQQ documentation.

A minimum of two references were required. All Providers invited to ITT stage received good and relevant references.

A total of 10 PQQ's were received. Of these, six providers for each contract were shortlisted and invited to tender.

5. TENDER EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The project evaluation weightings were agreed prior to despatch of each tender documentation and were published in the ITT:

Higher Risk Service A:

Award Criteria	Weighting (%)	Sub Criteria (%)	Weighting (%)
Financial	15	Price	15
Technical	85	Purpose	20
		Service details	59
		Management and operation	6

Lower Risk Service B:

Award Criteria	Weighting (%)	Sub Criteria (%)	Weighting (%)
Financial	15	Price	15
Technical	85	Purpose	45
		Service details	32
		Management and operation	8

The completed tenders were evaluated by a team of individuals / stakeholders with various skill sets from across the business, in order to ensure both transparency and robustness.

The ITTs were evaluated to identify the extent to which each tenderer had the ability, experience, and capacity to deliver the service. The technical responses were evaluated to identify how well each tenderer would meet the service specification requirements. The commercial responses were evaluated on price offered.