

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET****DATE: 24 SEPTEMBER 2013****REPORT OF: MRS MARY ANGELL, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES****LEAD OFFICER: LAURA LANGSTAFF, HEAD OF PROCUREMENT & COMMISSIONING  
NICK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES****SUBJECT: CONTRACT AWARD – EARLY HELP (VOLUNTEER SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH A CHILD UNDER 5)****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The current contract for the provision of Early Help (Volunteer support for families with a child under 5) Services expires on 31 October 2013. It is therefore necessary to award a new contract, following a procurement exercise, to Home Start Surrey (HSS) on the basis described in the Part 2 Annex 1 (agenda item 18) to deliver Early Help Support Services starting on 1 November 2013.

The service will be provided in accordance with guidance from Social Care and Wellbeing commissioners to ensure continuous improvement throughout the lifetime of the contract. The Early Help Service will support children and families who require additional help and support, provided at an early stage before their problems or difficulties escalate and affect their chances of achieving the outcomes they aspire to.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the contract is awarded to the provider on the basis described in the Part 2 annex (agenda item 18) to deliver the Service.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The service will deliver increased quality through a strengthened and outcome focused service specification, ensure enhanced and clearly monitored contract delivery and move to a streamlined Countywide service model, with the lead Provider forming a consortia covering all Districts and Boroughs.

The recommended contract award ensures that the new service will be delivered at a reduced cost than currently paid and will move to a more coherent and streamlined service model, delivering services across the County of Surrey for the contract period of two years, with the option to extend for an additional year.

The Children's Social Care and Wellbeing commissioning team will be the lead commissioner for this contract.

Guildford and Waverley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will contribute to the funding of this contract annually, this is an historical arrangement. They will contribute 15% of the total contract value for this service for the first year and we will

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be seeking further contributions for the remaining contract duration. Colleagues from the CCG have been involved in the recommissioning process ensuring that both Social Care and Health needs are aligned.

The Council will also strongly benefit from the additional resources contributed to the service through fundraising, which will ensure additional services are delivered to families in Surrey.

<b>DETAILS:</b>
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1. As a result of the tender process, the recommended contract will enable the service to be provided Countywide at a reduced cost.
2. The Service will be available to families (with a child under 5) in all eleven Districts and Boroughs (the current contracts cover only nine Districts and Boroughs).
3. By awarding the contract, Surrey County Council will receive a high quality service at a competitive rate.

#### **Background and Options Considered**

4. The following options for the Early Help Service were considered:-
  - Option 1, continue as is with nine individual agreements across Surrey. The Council was unable to continue this arrangement due to the contracts expiring on 31st October 2013. The old system of contracts was cumbersome as there were nine contracts within Surrey with different organisations which did not cover the whole County leading to inconsistencies in service delivery across Surrey.
  - Option 2, reconfigure and retender. Reconfiguring the current service to deliver positive service user reported outcomes, will help the Council ensure quality and continuity of service for Surrey residents whilst streamlining contract arrangements and extending the service to cover the whole County. The intention being to adopt a one provider model approach to deliver the service across the whole County. The commissioning of the Early Help Volunteer Support Services will be aligned to the Early Help priority project area included in the Public Value Programme (PVP) work. This will ensure that the new contract reflects the requirements of the wider Children, Schools and Families Directorate. This was the preferred option.
  - Option 3, decommission. Early Help is a strategic priority for the Directorate. Decommissioning a successful service which provides help and support at an early stage in children's lives and helps prevent problems escalating is counter-intuitive. Maintaining and improving the Early Help Service is more beneficial to Surrey residents given the outcomes reported by current and past service users rather than decommissioning.
5. Surrey County Council is committed to working with the Provider to deliver a coherent and effective volunteer Early Help offer for children, young people and their families in order to improve the likelihood of positive outcomes and to reduce the demand for additional services.

6. The Service will provide free and confidential support to families with at least one child under five years of age who are referred to the service (predominately through health visitors, social workers and parents can also self-refer to the service). The Provider will work in partnership with other agencies for the benefit of families.
7. The Service is delivered to families by volunteers in the families' local communities. Volunteers will visit families in their own homes, offering regular support and practical assistance to families experiencing difficulties, helping to prevent family crisis and breakdown. Information, advice and guidance will also be offered as appropriate to the needs of the family.
8. The aim of the service is to support vulnerable families and those that are hard-to-reach. The service specification ensures that deprived areas, 'Priority Places' and isolated and/or marginalised families living in Surrey will be a priority for support and engagement.
9. The Early Help Service will deliver service outcomes and outputs which align with Surrey County Council's Children and Young People's strategy (2012-2017). The newly commissioned service will aim to provide robust and sustainable outcomes across the following areas:
  - Improvement in family resilience
  - Achievement of developmental milestones
  - Secure attachment between parents/carers and their children
10. One of the main features of the Early Help Support Service is that it will continue to be rooted in local communities delivering both benefits to the service users and also the wider community. The Provider will continue to:
  - Support access to employment for Surrey residents
  - Engage and support residents from deprived areas, across Surrey
  - Support learning and training including returning or entry to the job market
  - Encourage the use of community facilities e.g. Children's Centres
  - Link with local businesses and other organisations to support fundraising and sponsorship
11. This service is provided under S.17 of the Children Act 1989, which is a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area through provision of a wide range of services.
12. 'Priority Places' across Surrey will be a target group for this service. These are areas which have been identified as experiencing relative inequality and deprivation in Surrey. They are:
  - Stanwell North, Ashford North and Stanwell South (Spelthorne)
  - Maybury and Sheerwater (Woking)
  - Old Dean (Surrey Heath)
  - Westborough (Guildford)
  - Merstham (Reigate & Banstead)

**CONSULTATION:**

13. Commissioners from Children’s Social Care and Wellbeing, colleagues from Early Years, Finance, Legal, Procurement and Health have been involved in the project and consulted with.
14. Service users have informed the commissioning intentions of the service through representative groups and officers have engaged with them to ensure their views have been incorporated into the recommissioning, particularly at the evaluation stage through the involvement in presentations.
15. The project has also followed the Procurement Review Group (PRG) gateway process and has progressed through Gateway 3 prior to coming to Cabinet.

**RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

16. The contract includes a termination provisions which protects Surrey County Council in the case of an unsatisfactory performances of service and or any changes in Council Policy which will impact on the existing services. These provisions allow the Council to amend the contract with three months notice or if termination is required, six months notice will be given to the Provider.

Category	Risk Description	Mitigation Activity
Financial	Potential risk that during the life of the contract the Provider will request an inflationary increase against the annual service delivery cost.	The annual cost of the contact is fixed for the duration of the contract.  Surrey County Council’s inflationary intentions will also be communicated with all Providers on an annual basis.
Service	Poor quality of service and service does not deliver Local Outcomes.	Strong contract management and quarterly contract review meetings will mitigate the risk of a poor quality service.  Failure to meet the service outcomes and objectives will enable Surrey County Council to restrict payment based on performance and ultimately terminate the contract if performance does not improve.

**FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

17. Full details of the contract values and financial implications are set out in the Part 2 Annex (item 18).

**SECTION 151 - OFFICER COMMENTARY:**

18. The proposed contract award will deliver the same level of service as is currently being received, within the existing budget allocation. In addition to a

small saving on the contract cost itself, there will be some savings in officer time due to managing fewer contracts.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER:**

19. The legislative provisions and legal requirements in relation to these services and their procurement have been outlined in this report.

**EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY AND PUBLIC SOCIAL VALUE:**

20. The procurement process was undertaken through an EU Procurement procedure (Part B), which was advertised to allow Providers to express their interest. The tender was also advertised on the SCC’s website and Bravo to as to attract local businesses and SMEs.
21. As part of the market engagement work Surrey County Council held a Provider event to communicate the needs and vision for the services and encourage Provider engagement in the process.
22. The cost of the contract will be funded with Surrey County Council contributing 48% of the contract value and the Provider fundraising the additional 52%. This is the same model of funding for the current contract. The Provider will be responsible for making up any shortfall in the funding that is required for the delivery of these Services.
23. The contracts make it a legal requirement that the Provider complies with all relevant equality and diversity legislation (including but not limited to the Equality Act 2010) whilst delivering the services. This includes a clause which requires the Provider to ensure its personnel comply with all equal opportunities policies when dealing with both service users and staff.
24. The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as an annex to this report.

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**OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No implications arising from this report. Staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training in awareness and procedures.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

25. The timetable for implementation is as follows:

Action	Date
Cabinet decision to award	24 September 2013
Call in period ends	30 September 2013
Standstill Period ends	10 October 2013
Contract Award	Week commencing 14 October 2013
Contract Signature	Week commencing 21 October 2013

Contract Commencement Date	1 November 2013
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26. Colleagues from Procurement and Commissioning will work closely with the successful Provider to ensure a smooth transition from the current provisions to new services.

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**Contact Officers:**

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**Consulted:**

Ian Banner – Head of Children’s social services and wellbeing commissioning

Laura Langstaff – Head of Procurement and Commissioning

Christian George – Category Manager Adults and Children and Young People

Andrew Goulston – Principal Accountant

Carmel McLoughlin – Contracts and Procurement Lawyer

**Annexes:**

Part 2 Annex attached as agenda item 18

Equalities Impact Assessment

**Sources/background papers:**

Tender submissions (exempt information)

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