

Finance and Resource Committee

10am, Thursday, 29 October 2015

Framework Agreement for Fostering Placements –

Ref: CT 967

Lot 1 – Core Placements

Lot 2 – Specialist Placements

Item number

Report number

Executive/routine

Wards

All

Executive summary

This report seeks the approval of the Finance and Resource Committee to approve the award of the Framework Agreement for Fostering Placements, Lot 1 – Core Placements and Lot 2 – Specialist Placements. The term of the contract will be two years with an option to extend for either one or two years.

The Council has utilised its own contract for the supply and delivery of foster care placements from independent and voluntary fostering providers for the past 4 years which came to an end November 2014. A waiver has been put in place to continue until November 2015.

Links

Coalition pledges

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Single Outcome Agreement

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Framework Agreement for Fostering Placements

Ref: CT 967

Lot 1 – Core Placements

Lot 2 – Specialist Placements

Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve the appointment of the following providers for two years, with the option to extend up to one or two years:
 - 1.1.1 Lot 1 – Core Placements:- Core Assets Fostering and Fostering Relations
 - 1.1.2 Lot 2 – Specialist Placements:- Aberlour Child Care, Action for Children, Barnardos, Core Assets Fostering, Fostering Relations, Fosterplus Limited, SWIIS Foster Care Scotland Ltd, The National Fostering Agency (Scotland) Ltd.

Background

- 2.1 This report outlines the result of the procurement of Framework Agreement for Fostering Placements, Lot 1 – Core Placements, Lot 2 Specialist Placements.
- 2.2 A National Contract is in place via Scotland Excel, however this does not meet all of the City of Edinburgh Council's demand and on occasions the Council must go out to other independent providers to purchase relevant services.
- 2.2 The Council will continue to use the National Contract as well as its own contract, for core placements, but would like to widen opportunities to include specialist placements which are not part of the National Contract and avoid spot purchases/off contract spend.
- 2.3 The Council commissioned a Framework Agreement to include Lot 1 – Core placements (companies not on the National Framework) and Lot 2 – Specialist Placements.

Main report

- 3.1 This service falls within The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2012 Part B services. Although a Part B Services Contract is not subject to the full rigours of the regulations, the requirement for openness, transparency and fair and equal treatment remains, as does the need to comply with the Council's Standing Orders.
- 3.2 An open tender was placed on the Public Contract Scotland and Public Contracts Scotland Tender website on 4 June 2015 resulting in 14 organisations noting interest in the opportunity. From those noting interest 9 organisations submitted a tender on 14 July 2015, 3 for Lot 1 and 9 for Lot 2. Of these, one organisation did not pass the qualification stage.
- 3.3 To ensure only the highest quality proposals were considered a quality threshold rating of 50% was applied to the qualitative evaluation. All organisations who met this standard were then evaluated on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender with 70% overall for quality and 30% for price.
- 3.4 The scoring methodology is set out in Appendix 2. The resultant score for the tender is as follows:-

Lot 1 – Core Placements

Provider	Quality (Max 70)	Price (Max 30)	Overall Rank
Core Assets Fostering	50.75	30.00	1
Fostering Relations	42.88	25.82	2

- 3.5 The bids submitted ranged from £40,871 to £61,737 per annum, prices vary depending on circumstances for each child, including age, respite, and added support.

Lot 2 – Specialist Placements

Provider	Quality (Max 70)	Price (Max 30)	Overall Rank
Action for Children	56.00	23.63	1
Core Assets Fostering	53.38	22.93	2
Barnardos	49.00	26.59	3
SWIIS Foster Care Scotland Ltd	48.13	26.93	4
The National Fostering Agency (Scotland) Ltd	49.00	22.71	5
Fosterplus Ltd	38.50	30.00	6
Fostering Relations	44.63	22.20	7
Aberlour	45.50	20.69	8

- 3.6 The bids submitted ranged from £50,839 to £75,592 per annum, prices will vary depending on circumstances for each child, including age, respite, and added support.
- 3.7 Price evaluation - The successful providers to the Framework will be ranked in descending order of price. Ranking will be on price only but if at any point in time a discount is triggered we would review the ranking.

Measures of success

- 4.1 A successful tender process has been completed, and is compliant with European Union (EU) part B Regulations and Contract Standing Orders.
- 4.2 The Framework Agreement offers Best Value for Money, including Lot 1 – Core Placements and Lot 2 – Specialist Placements.

Financial impact

- 5.1 Based on previous years average expenditure levels the estimated expenditure during the life of this contract (two year contract plus up to two annual extensions) is £8.1m which equates to £2.025m per year. The Council is actively seeking to increase its own foster care capacity and has a target to reduce expenditure with independent providers by approximately 50% over the

- period 2013 to 2018. Should this be successful future expenditure levels will reduce accordingly.
- 5.2 To ensure best value is demonstrated annual review meetings will take place with providers regarding Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) and price. If at any point in time a discount is triggered ranking will be reviewed.
- 5.3 The costs associated with procuring this contract are estimated at from £20,001 and £35,000.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 This contract is required to comply with EU procurement regulations (Part B). Procurement of Fostering Framework Lot 1 and Lot 2 will ensure that off contract buying will cease and placements will be sourced through the Framework Agreement.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 An equalities impact assessment was conducted as part of the procurement process and there were no equalities issues identified.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Community benefits proposal incorporating 'Looked After and Active Programme', training, sponsorship, work experience and job opportunities have been included as part of providers submissions.

Background reading/external references

[Regulation of Care \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#)

[Looked After Children \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009](#)

[Looked After Children \(Scotland\) Amendment Regulations 2014](#)

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Links

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Appendix 1 – Summary Tender Process

Summary of Tendering and Tender Evaluation Processes

Contract	Employee Assistance Programme
<i>Contract Period</i>	1 November 2015 to 31 October 2014 with the option to extend for up to two annual periods
<i>Estimated contract value</i>	£2.025m (Annual) £8.1m (Total including extensions)
<i>Standing Orders observed</i>	Open Procedure
<i>EC Directives</i>	2004/18/EC – Part B
<i>Tenders Returned</i>	9
<i>Tenders fully compliant</i>	8
<i>Recommended Provider/s</i>	8
<i>Primary Criterion</i>	Most economically advantageous tender to have met the qualitative and technical specification of the client department'
<i>Evaluation criteria and weightings and reasons for this approach</i>	Quality (70%) – minimum threshold 50. Price (30%); Quality was of higher importance due to the nature of the provision; minimum threshold ensured low quality bid could not win.
<i>Evaluation Team</i>	Officers from Children and Families

Appendix 2 – Award Criteria

Qualitative Criteria

Lot 1 – Core Placements

Award Criteria	Weighting (%)
Capacity to Deliver the Service	25%
Implementation Plan	10%
Community Benefits	10%
Key Outcome 1 – Safe	5%
Key Outcome 2 - Healthy and Active	5%
Key Outcome 3 - Nurtured and Achieving	5%
Key Outcome 4 - Responsible	5%
Key Outcome 5 – Respected and Included	5%
Service User Participation	5%
Quality Standards	5%
Complaints Procedure	5%
Equalities - Children and Young People	5%
Strategic Awareness	5%
Partnership Working	5%

Qualitative Criteria

Lot 2 – Specialist Placements

Award Criteria	Weighting (%)
Service Delivery Capacity	15%
Implementation Plan	10%
Scenarios	10%
Community Benefits	10%
Key Outcome 1 – Safe	5%
Key Outcome 2 - Healthy and Active	5%
Key Outcome 3 - Nurtured and Achieving	5%
Key Outcome 4 - Responsible	5%
Key Outcome 5 – Respected and Included	5%
Service User Participation	5%
Quality Accreditation	5%
Complaints Procedure	5%
Equalities - Children and Young People	5%
Strategic Awareness	5%
Partnership Working	5%

Appendix 3 – Scoring Methodology

Scoring Methodology

Score	Description
0 Unacceptable	Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.
1 Poor	Response is partially relevant but generally poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.
2 Acceptable	Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas.
3 Good	Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.
4 Excellent	Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.