

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 25 June 2020

## Adult Sensory Impairment Services Contracts – Extension and Awards

Executive/routine  
Wards all  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

---

- 1.1 That the Committee approves the award of four contracts for Adult Sensory Impairment Services for a period of three years with the option to extend for two periods of up to 12 months, at the sole discretion of the Council, as follows: -
  - 1.1.1. Lot 1 "Visual impairment rehabilitation and mobility service, equipment provision and retention of statutory Certificate of Vision Impairment Register" is to be awarded to Royal Blind School with a five year value of £1,034,920.
  - 1.1.2. Lot 2 "Eye Clinic Support Service" is to be awarded to Visibility Scotland with a five year value of £251,630.
  - 1.1.3. Lot 3 "Specialist social work service for deaf people, with British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation/translation duty service" is to be awarded to Deaf Action with a five year value of £574,810.
  - 1.1.4. Lot 4 "Specialist deaf equipment service for deaf people: Deaf BSL users, hard of hearing people, deafened people and deafblind people" is to be awarded to Deaf Action with a five year value of £454,905.
- 1.2 That the Committee notes that the total value of the four lots over the maximum lifetime of the contract will be £2,316,265.
- 1.3 That, separately, the Committee approves the temporary extension of the sight loss components of the existing contract (equivalent to Lots 1 and 2 plus specialist social work) by the current provider Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) for six months prior to awarding the contracts for Lots 1 and 2 to the two new sight loss

service providers, and social work delivery moving to the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership locality teams in April 2021.

**Judith Proctor**

**Chief Officer, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership**

Contact: Mark Grierson, Disability Support & Strategy Manager

E-mail: [mark.grierson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:mark.grierson@edinburgh.gov.uk)

# Report

## Adult Sensory Impairment Services Contracts – Continuation and Awards

### 2. Executive Summary

---

- 2.1 This report seeks the approval of the Committee to award four contracts for Adult Sensory Impairment Services. The contracts will begin on the following dates;
- 2.1.1 Lot 1 "Visual impairment rehabilitation and mobility service, equipment provision and retention of statutory Certificate of Vision Impairment Register" – April 2021;
  - 2.1.2 Lot 2 "Eye Clinic Support Service" – April 2021;
  - 2.1.3 Lot 3 "Specialist social work service for deaf people, with BSL interpretation/translation duty service" – October 2020; and
  - 2.1.4 Lot 4 "Specialist deaf equipment service for deaf people" – October 2020.
- 2.2 The contracts will last for a period of three years with the option to extend for two periods of up to twelve months, undertaken at the sole discretion of the Council. The total value of the contract over five years is estimated to be £2,316,265.
- 2.3 This report separately seeks approval of the extension of the sight loss component of the current contract with RNIB for a period of six months from 1 October 2020 prior to awarding lots 1 and 2 to the new providers from 1 April 2021.

### 3. Background

---

- 3.1 In December 2019, the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board agreed an approach to service delivery for people with sensory impairments, and directed the Council to commission services for a 3-year contract period with 1+1-year optional extensions within a financial envelope of £471,000 per annum.
- 3.2 Services for people with sensory impairments (people with sight loss, Deaf BSL users, people with hearing loss, deafened people and deafblind people) are currently delivered through a contract with the Lothian Sensory Partnership (LSP) from 2016, a partnership of two service providers, Deaf Action and RNIB. This contract expires at the end of September 2020 and as a result a tender exercise was undertaken.

- 3.3 This report provides the outcomes of the tendering process and seeks the approval of the Committee to award contracts as required by Council Standing Orders.
- 3.4 The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP) Executive Management Team intends to extend the sight loss components of the current contract for a period of six months to ensure service continuity for visually impaired people, prior to awarding contracts to the two new providers in April 2021. Social work assessment and care management for visually impaired people would also commence delivery through EHSCP locality teams in April 2021. Tenderers for the two sight loss lots have confirmed their willingness both to delay contract start by six months and fix prices.
- 3.5 The Executive Management team also intends to award the two new deaf services contracts to Deaf Action in October 2020 as this organisation was the sole bidder hence service continuity is assured with limited transitional impact.

## **4. Main report**

---

- 4.1 An extensive programme of engagement with LSP providers, other providers in the sensory field, and people using sensory services was carried out over the first nine months of 2019 (detailed in section 7). This identified that it was not necessary to deliver sensory services through one provider or partnership provided strong partnership working was put in place.
- 4.2 Moreover, the partnership depended on the presence of two large organisations who could deliver all requirements holistically, the ability to sustain this was impacted by the decision of RNIB to indicate withdrawal from delivering the majority of these services at the end of the contract. Subsequently the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) on 10 December 2019 agreed to separate the services into four distinct lots as detailed below, which could be delivered by one or more providers.
  - 4.2.1 Lot 1 - Visual impairment rehabilitation and mobility service, equipment provision and retention of statutory Certificate of Vision Impairment Register;
  - 4.2.2 Lot 2 - Eye Clinic Support Service;
  - 4.2.3 Lot 3 - Specialist social work service for deaf people, with BSL interpretation/translation duty service; and
  - 4.2.4 Lot 4 - Specialist deaf equipment service for deaf people: Deaf BSL users, hard of hearing people, deafened people and deafblind people.
- 4.3 A Prior Information Notice was advertised on Public Contracts Scotland in December 2019 which indicated eleven organisations which had an interest in delivering some or all of these services.
- 4.4 On 10 February 2020 a tender was published on Public Contracts Scotland, as set out in the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

4.5 A quality/cost ratio of 70%/30% was applied to ensure that quality was of a high standard whilst also ensuring value for money.

4.6 The outcome of the Tender process was as below;

4.6.1 Lot 1 - Visual impairment rehabilitation and mobility service, equipment provision and retention of statutory Certificate of Vision Impairment Register

<b>Tenderer Name</b>	<b>Cost Score</b>	<b>Quality Score</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Royal Blind School	28.6	61.3	89.8
Tenderer 2	30.0	51.6	81.6
Tenderer 3	28.0	43.8	71.8

4.6.2 Lot 2 - Eye Clinic Support Service

<b>Tenderer Name</b>	<b>Cost Score</b>	<b>Quality Score</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Visibility Scotland	30.0	63.9	93.9
Tenderer 2	28.5	60.4	88.9
Tenderer 3	28.6	38.5	67.1

4.6.3 Lot 3 - Specialist social work service for deaf people, with BSL interpretation/translation duty service

<b>Tenderer Name</b>	<b>Cost Score</b>	<b>Quality Score</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Deaf Action	30.00	55.1	85.1

4.6.4 Lot 4 - Specialist deaf equipment service for deaf people: Deaf BSL users, hard of hearing people, deafened people and deafblind people

<b>Tenderer Name</b>	<b>Cost Score</b>	<b>Quality Score</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Deaf Action	30.00	52.5	82.5

4.7 Although it was disappointing that only one Tender was received for Lots 3 and 4 respectively, this was to be expected as it is a specialist service.

4.8 Tenders were evaluated by Council Officers from Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.

## **5. Next Steps**

---

5.1 Subject to approval, the four contracts will be awarded with a start date of 1 April 2021 for Lots 1 and 2 (sight loss services) and 1 October 2020 for Lots 3 and 4 (deaf services).

5.2 Subject to approval, an agreement will be signed with RNIB to extend sight loss services between 1 October 2020 and 31 March 2021.

5.3 It is recognised that some aspects of these services may require adjustment due to the prevailing COVID-19 requirements in place at the time of contract

commencement, however these will be covered by amendments to Key Performance Indicators in the first instance, and contract variations if required.

## 6. Financial impact

6.1 The current annual spend on the existing contracted service is £519,071. In December 2019 the EIJB issued directions to procure new service contracts within a financial envelope of £471,000 (full year cost).

6.1.1 The annual values of each lot are as follows;

- 6.1.1.1 Lot 1- £206,984;
- 6.1.1.2 Lot 2- £50,326;
- 6.1.1.3 Lot 3- £114,962; and
- 6.1.1.4 Lot 4- £90,981

6.2 The total annual value of this contract is £463,253, which is within the directed spend of £471,000.

6.3 Table 1 illustrates the financial impact of this procurement against the directed budget.

Table 1

Costs from October 2020/21		2020/21 £	2021/22 £
Estimated cost of Interim contract RNIB (Oct 20 to Mar 21)		132,189	0
Contract values new contracts	Lot 1	0	206,984
	Lot 2	0	50,326
	Lot 3	57,481	114,962
	Lot 4	45,491	90,981
<b>Totals</b>		<b>235,161</b>	<b>463,253</b>
Directed Budget		235,500	471,000
<b>Variance</b>		<b>-339</b>	<b>-7,747</b>
<b>Variance %</b>		<b>-0.14%</b>	<b>-1.645%</b>

6.4 The costs associated with the procurement of this contract are approximately £10,000.00.

## 7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

---

- 7.1 Engagement was carried out with both service users and professionals working in the sensory field. Six **focus groups** for service users and carers were held with a total of 32 citizens with a range of sensory impairments and carers. The information gathered from these groups were used to shape a service user questionnaire.
- 7.2 A short-life public and third sector **sensory impairment needs assessment group** was set up, with three workshops in 2019. Thirty professionals representing a wide range of organisations from adult and children's services participating in each workshop, including current providers RNIB and Deaf Action. The group aimed to first shape the adult service user questionnaire, then capture the views of providers on the shape of the new adult sensory support contract, also to shape questions for a similar needs assessment exercise on the development of children's services and ultimately to gather information to shape the overall implementation of the See Hear strategy in Edinburgh.
- 7.3 The online **adult needs assessment** had unique features to ensure that people with sensory impairments could fully participate and record their views.
- 7.3.1 The questionnaire was sited on the Council's Consultation Hub on the [www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk) website which is designed to comply with the AA level of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 issued by the World Wide Web Consortium WC3. These guidelines are designed to meet the needs of visually impaired people using websites.
- 7.3.2 A BSL video was made and embedded on to the Consultation Hub, which we understand to be a Scottish first, which outlined to BSL users how they could access an interpreter to record their views.
- 7.3.3 Deafblind Scotland enabled their members to answer the questions through guide communicators, who recorded answers manually.
- 7.4 The online consultation ran for the standard six weeks and yielded 62 responses, with a variety of people with all forms of sensory impairment and their carers.
- 7.5 Key findings of the engagement exercises were as follows: -
- 7.5.1 **Service users were satisfied with current services:** Over half the participants had used one or more of the contracted sensory services, and 74% were very satisfied or satisfied with these, with only 8% being dissatisfied. Therefore, a suite of contracts was designed which replicated the scope of current services.
- 7.5.2 **People wanted more modern and integrated equipment to be provided to them free of charge, but also wanted a service which would assist them to purchase more integrated and high-tech solutions if they wished:** Most comments were about equipment, with a third of respondents saying they would like information on equipment they could purchase, and a similar proportion requesting more up to date

integrated equipment than currently available to be provided free of charge. Modernisation of the equipment service, and self-purchasing advice provision was therefore built in to the contract specification.

**7.5.3 Professionals wanted improved partnership working and communication, closer working between services such as NHS Lothian Audiology, improved communication, information sharing and IT, and for services to be better publicised.** All service providers for the new contracts will be invited to regular meetings with statutory and health services to ensure improved partnership working and information sharing. Tenderers were required to develop communications plans to publicise their services, which will be implemented following contract commencement.

7.6 All three bidders are accredited Living Wage Employers and have committed to paying staff the real Living Wage.

7.7 The following Community Benefits will be delivered by this project;

7.7.1 Lot 1 "Visual impairment rehabilitation and mobility service, equipment provision and retention of statutory Certificate of Vision Impairment Register" - Royal Blind School have committed to cyber skills training, career days for Edinburgh schools, two work placements annually, a work placement reserved for an individual with a disability and to sponsor a school crossing guide.

7.7.2 Lot 2 "Eye Clinic Support Service" - Visibility Scotland have committed to support of grant applications for relevant organisations in the sight loss sector, third sector mentoring, seeking to employ individuals from the following groups, long term unemployed, ex-offenders/homelessness and young people leaving care.

7.7.3 For Lot 3 "Specialist social work service for deaf people, with British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation/translation duty service" and Lot 4 "Specialist deaf equipment service for deaf people: Deaf BSL users, hard of hearing people, deafened people and deafblind people" - Deaf Action have committed to community events, supporting funding applications, supporting employment for people with disabilities and sponsoring local sports teams."

## **8. Appendices**

---

8.1 Appendix 1 Summary of Tendering and Tender Evaluation Processes

8.2 Appendix 2 - Direction from The Edinburgh Integration Joint Board

## Appendix 1 Summary of Tendering and Tender Evaluation Processes

Contract	Adult Sensory Impairment Services																	
Contract Period	Three years with the option to extend for two periods of up to twelve months (3+ 1 + 1)																	
Estimated Contract Value (including extensions)	Lot 1- £1,034,920.00 Lot 2- £251,630.00 Lot 3- £574,810.00 Lot 4- £454,905.00																	
Procurement Route Chosen	Open Competition using Public Contracts Scotland																	
Tenders Returned	Lot 1 – 3 Tenders Lot 2 – 3 Tenders Lot 3 – 1 Tender Lot 4 – 1 Tender																	
Name of Recommended Provider	Lot 1 – Royal Blind School Lot 2 – Visibility Scotland Lot 3 – Deaf Action Lot 4 – Deaf Action																	
Price / Quality Split	<b>70 % Quality</b>	<b>30 % Cost</b>																
	<p>The emphasis on Quality was to reflect the need for a high level of service for end users.</p> <p>Quality was tested as below for each Lot;</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Service Delivery - Methodology</td> <td style="text-align: right;">30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service Delivery – Resources, management and staffing</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Promotion of Service</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Implementation Plan</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Continuity</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Data Protection</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community Benefits</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fair Work Practices</td> <td style="text-align: right;">5%</td> </tr> </table>		Service Delivery - Methodology	30%	Service Delivery – Resources, management and staffing	25%	Promotion of Service	10%	Implementation Plan	10%	Business Continuity	10%	Data Protection	5%	Community Benefits	5%	Fair Work Practices	5%
Service Delivery - Methodology	30%																	
Service Delivery – Resources, management and staffing	25%																	
Promotion of Service	10%																	
Implementation Plan	10%																	
Business Continuity	10%																	
Data Protection	5%																	
Community Benefits	5%																	
Fair Work Practices	5%																	
Evaluation Team	Tenders were evaluated by Council Officers from Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.																	

## Appendix 2 - Direction from The Edinburgh Integration Joint Board

DIRECTION FROM THE EDINBURGH INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD		
Reference number	EIJB-10/12/2019-3	
Does this direction supersede, vary or revoke an existing direction? If yes, please provide reference number of existing direction	No	
Approval date	10/12/2019	
Services / functions covered	Adult sensory support services	
Full text of direction	Commission and redistribute a revised suite of services for meeting the needs of adults with a sensory impairment on a three-year basis (from October 2020) with an option for 1+1 year extensions to take account of proposals for a pan-Lothian sensory impairment service	
Direction to	The City of Edinburgh Council	
Link to relevant EIJB report / reports	<a href="https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s11651/Item%207.4%20-%20Adult%20Sensory.pdf">https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s11651/Item%207.4%20-%20Adult%20Sensory.pdf</a>	
Budget / finances allocated to carry out the detail	<i>NHS Lothian</i>	<i>City of Edinburgh Council</i>
2019/20	£0.0m	£0.0m
2020/21	£0.0m	£0.235m
2021/22	£0.0m	£0.471m
Performance measures	Each commissioned service will have its own KPIs developed as part of the commissioning process. Outcomes for people using the service to be delivered within the locality teams (social work assessment and care management with people with a vision impairment) will be monitored.	