

Finance and Resource Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 26 January 2023

Award of Contracts for the Provision of Services for Women, Children and Young People who have experienced Domestic Abuse

Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	All
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Finance and Resource Committee approve the appointment of three Service Providers to provide Domestic Abuse Support Services with maximum estimated contract value of £11,068,675. Should Committee agree this report, contracts will commence on 1 April 2023 for an initial period of five years, with the option to extend for a further period of up to 36 months plus an additional 24 months.

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2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council funds established Domestic Abuse Support Services for women, children and young people recovering from trauma including domestic abuse, forced marriage, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and other forms of gender-based abuse in Edinburgh.
- 2.2 Eleven bids were received across eight lots and, following evaluation, 10 bids are recommended to be awarded contracts. Contracts will commence on 1 April 2023 for an initial period of five years, with the option to extend for a further period of up to 36 months and a further 24 months. The maximum value of the contract (including extensions) is estimated to be £11,068,675.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory requirement to accommodate and support people who are homeless, or to prevent homelessness where possible.
- 3.2 Domestic abuse remains one of the top reasons for homelessness for women and their children.
- 3.3 In [January 2016](#) the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee agreed the Domestic Abuse Re-design Project – to develop a coordinated community response to domestic abuse in Edinburgh including a city-wide review of all statutory agencies and commissioned services.
- 3.4 Co-production from this project resulted in Edinburgh's Domestic Abuse Strategy and Improvement Plan, which was noted by the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee in [February 2017](#). This also led to the formation of the City of Edinburgh Council's Domestic Abuse Collaborative Partnership made up of all commissioned services working in partnership to meet the needs of Edinburgh's Service Users.
- 3.5 On [28 September 2017](#), Finance and Resource Committee agreed to contract with four main Service Providers from November 2017 onwards: Edinburgh Women's Aid; Shakti Women's Aid; Four Square; and Comas to provide various refuges,

support and advocacy services for women, children and young people, and community-based support services.

- 3.6 Comas went into liquidation in 2018 and Four Square took over the Womanzone contract by mutual agreement within the Collaborative Partnership to ensure continuity of service for women with complex needs.
- 3.7 The COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent imposing and easing of lock down restrictions from the Scottish Government led to two subsequent contract extensions being granted.
- 3.8 These contracts, which will end on 31 March 2023, have provided these services to approximately 1,500 women and children annually over the past five years.
- 3.9 The COVID-19 pandemic affected many women's abusive situations and mental health and therefore the need for these services is expected to continue or, more likely, increase.

4. Main report

- 4.1 There was extensive co-production in 2017 as part of the re-development of Domestic Abuse services. The aim was for the services involved in the Domestic Abuse Collaborative Partnership to work together to align where possible and share best practice. There has been a significant increase in the requirement for Domestic Abuse services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.2 A Prior Information Notice (PIN) was published on 6 May 2022 to begin engagement with interested Domestic Abuse Service Providers. Service Providers were advised to register for webinars on the supplier development programme portal, to help with the tender process.
- 4.3 A briefing and training session took place in June 2022 via Microsoft teams to help Service Providers understand the open procurement process, which included handy hints for tendering and an estimated timeline. All power point presentations were shared with the Service Providers who attended the session.
- 4.4 Further co production has taken place by utilising stakeholder and service user questionnaires as in-person events were still not available, or preferred, due to Scottish Government COVID-19 restrictions. Additional information taken from the following also helped to shape and develop the services:
 - 4.4.1 Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee, which incorporates viewpoints from multiple agencies;
 - 4.4.2 Monitoring data - up to four years of contractual data which evidences the demand for these services within the city; and
 - 4.4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) – which was completed with current Service Providers.
- 4.5 Key outcomes were determined and included with the service specifications. Both the service specifications and the pricing schedules were streamlined where

possible, taking into consideration learnings from providing the service during COVID-19.

- 4.6 Further consultation was carried out regarding the service specifications as they were sent out to all interested parties for comment before publication of the open tender.
- 4.7 Following the co-production exercise, the Council undertook a Competitive Procedure with Negotiation in accordance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) 2015 Regulations with the Light Touch Regime applied.
- 4.8 A cost:quality ratio of 20:80 was applied as quality was considered to be of higher importance.
- 4.9 Pricing Schedules stipulated the maximum budget available per annum and requested that bidders confirm what they could supply (refuge and service) within the commercial envelope.
- 4.10 The tender process allowed for negotiations with Service Providers should their quality or commercial bid require it. Further due diligence was undertaken but this did not impact the scoring.
- 4.11 Eleven bids were received across the eight lots and following evaluation 10 bids are recommended to be awarded contracts.
- 4.12 It is anticipated that contracts will commence on 1 April 2023 for an initial period of five years, with the option to extend for a further period of up to 36 months and a further 24 months.
- 4.13 A summary of the tendering and the tender evaluation process is attached at Appendix 1.

4.14 All Service Providers recommended for award are detailed below:

Refuge Accommodation with Support.	
Lot 1	Final score
Edinburgh Women's Aid	88.2
Four Square	67.6

Refuge Accommodation for Women from BAME Communities.	
Lot 2	Final score
Shakti	81.4

Refuge Accommodation for Women with 24 hour support on site.	
Lot 3	Final score
Edinburgh Women's Aid	88.2
Four Square	80.6

Support & Advocacy for Women.	
Lot 4	Final score
Edinburgh Women's Aid	84.6

Support & Advocacy for Women with Complex Needs.	
Lot 5	Final score
Edinburgh Women's Aid	83.6

Support & Advocacy for Women from BAME Communities.	
Lot 6	Final score
Shakti	79.6

Support & Advocacy for Children and Young People.	
Lot 7	Final score
Edinburgh Women's Aid	90.6

Support & Advocacy for Children & Young People from BAME Communities.	
Lot 8	Final score
Shakti	79.6

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Should Committee agree this report contracts will be awarded to the named Service Providers and will be monitored and managed by Council officers.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The proposed annual service costs are within the existing 2022/23 contract values.
- 6.2 The annual budget requirement of £1,106,867.50 has been reflected in the financial planning framework for 2023/24 financial year.

- 6.3 This equates to the following maximum contract values for each organisation as:
- 6.3.1 Edinburgh Women's Aid at a maximum value of £582,173.50 per annum;
 - 6.3.2 Four Square at a maximum value of £245,592 per annum; and
 - 6.3.3 Shakti Women's Aid at a maximum value of £279,102 per annum.
- 6.4 The maximum cost of the contract is expected to be £11,068,675.
- 6.5 The annual contract values are fixed for the duration of the contract period, subject to any nationally agreed changes to social care hourly rates funded by the Scottish Government.
- 6.4 All Service Providers have passed financial assessments and agreed to Terms and Conditions which minimises the risk to the Council.
- 6.5 The Service Providers are all committed to continuing with the Domestic Abuse Collaborative Partnership Agreement which means that they can share resources where appropriate.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 All Service Providers pay the Scottish Real Living Wage (or above) and confirmed that they are committed to becoming members of the Scottish Business Pledge.
- 7.2 These contracts will support Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) as all three proposed Service Providers are classed as such.
- 7.3 The recommended contracts will also include Community Benefits such as the combined creation of a minimum of 18 placements for students in social work, counselling and business marketing. The creation of two volunteering placements for peer mentoring, three support worker apprenticeships, community engagement and education workshops, community impact projects and pledges to spend funding within local supply chains.
- 7.4 There were also commitments to Net Zero by 2030 initiatives to invest funds to ensure that buildings are insulated, double glazed and have efficient boilers. This also comprises schemes such as re-using all furniture; parking for bicycles; use of environmentally friendly cleaning products and recycling of waste. In addition, one Service Provider is an early adopter of the "Shifting Gears" programme which provides free upcycled bikes to women and children.
- 7.5 An Integrated Impact Assessment was completed in conjunction with the current Service Providers and the Equally Safe Edinburgh Committee Lead Officer. The results were as follows:
- 7.5.1 Awarding these contracts will provide women and children who have experienced domestic abuse with refuge accommodation and trauma recovery support to lead lives independent of abuse;
 - 7.5.2 The Council does not currently commission any services for male victims however other services are available within the city; and

7.5.3 Lack of accommodation may have a negative impact however additional resources have been utilised such as Private Sector Leasing and Home Share.

7.6 A Data Sharing Agreement will be in place with all Service Providers.

8. Background Reading / External References

- 8.1 Domestic Abuse Service Redesign: Developing a Coordinated Community Response - Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, [January 2016](#)
- 8.2 Domestic Abuse Service Redesign Update: Developing a Coordinated Community Response - Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, [February 2017](#)
- 8.3 Award of Contracts for the Provision of Domestic Abuse Services – Finance and Resources Committee, [September 2017](#)
- 8.4 Contract Extensions for Domestic Abuse Contracts – Finance and Resources Committee, [August 2020](#)
- 8.5 Waiver to Extend Contracts for Domestic Abuse – Finance and Resources Committee, [August 2021](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Summary of Tendering and Tender Evaluation Process.

Appendix 1

Summary of Tendering and Tender Evaluation Process

Contract	CT1059 Services for Women, Children and Young People who have Experienced Domestic Abuse	
Contract Period	60 months with the option to extend for a further 36 months and then a further 24 months	
Maximum Total Contract Value (including extensions)	£11,068,675	
Procurement Route Chosen	Competitive Procedure with Negotiation	
Contracts to be Awarded	Three Service Providers across eight Lots	
Price / Quality Split	Quality 80	Price 20
	Criteria	Weighting (%)
Information Only	Q1. Individual / Organisation	None
	Q2. Name	None
	Q3. Years of Operation	None
	Q4. Service Users	None
	Q5. Service Delivery Stream	None
Evaluation Criterion and Weightings – ALL Lots Common Questions	Q6. Health and Safety	5%
	Q7. Business Continuity	5%
	Q8. Fair Work Practices	5%
	Q9. Community Benefits	5%
	Q10. Added Value	5%
	Q11. Zero Hours Contracts & the Living Wage	n/a
Question Weightings – ALL LOTS but answered in Lot Specific	Q12. Service Delivery	30%
	Q13. Multi-Agency Partnership Working and Communication	15%
	Q14. Service User Support	15%
	Q15. Local and National Context	10%
	Q16. Service Delivery Team	5%