

Subject:	Procurement of Occupational Health & Employee Assistance Services Contracts		
Date of Meeting:	13 October 2016		
Report of:	Executive Director for Finance & Resources		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 In 2012, Brighton & Hove City Council (the "Council") entered into a contract with Team Prevent UK Limited to provide occupational health and staff counselling services to Council employees. This 5 year contract is due to expire on the 31st March 2017.
- 1.2 This report recommends calling off two contracts from the Surrey County Council SCC RN Employee Health and Well Being Framework (the "Surrey Framework Agreement") for the continuation of the occupational health and staff counselling services when the existing contract comes to an end. The Surrey Framework Agreement commenced on 1st January 2016 and expires on the 31st January 2020. The proposed call off contracts would each be 4 years in duration and would run from April 2017 to March 2021.
- 1.3 The Council is entitled to call off the contracts from the Surrey Framework Agreement under two 'lots', as follows:
- Lot 1 – Occupational Health and Wellbeing
 - Lot 2 – Employee Assistance Services
- 1.4 Access to the Surrey Framework Agreement facilitates collaborative working with our Orbis partners. A value for money exercise concludes it would be advantageous for the Council to access the Surrey Framework Agreement and benefit from the savings generated from economies of scale.
- 1.5 The contracts should ensure that effective and efficient occupational health service and staff counselling services are provided, which will:
- Create organisational savings by helping to reduce staff absence
 - Improve service delivery for the residents of Brighton & Hove by promoting an early return to work following sickness absence or injury thereby achieving best value through effective use of resources.
 - Improve the health and wellbeing of employees, which is essential to organisational success.

- 1.6 The Council would benefit from the transfer of the current occupational health contract to the same provider under the Surrey Framework Agreement, therefore increasing the likelihood of a smooth transition to the new contract and incurring no additional implementation costs for this service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Policy Resources & Growth Committee authorises the Assistant Director – Human Resources and Organisational Development to procure and award two contracts under the Surrey Framework Agreement for: (i) an occupational health and wellbeing service and; (ii) an employee assistance service, each with a duration of four (4) years.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 The existing contract for occupational health services also includes a sub contractual arrangement for staff counselling services with the staff counselling provider, Care First. The service provided consists of a number of different elements which include;
- Pre-employment health screening
 - Occupational Health appointments (for staff whose health, fitness and/or capability may affect their ability to fulfil their contract of employment)
 - Ill-health retirement advice
 - Professional return to work advice / guidance for staff and managers
 - Hepatitis B vaccinations
 - Case conferences
 - Specific health advice for formal hearings
 - Confidential staff counselling, information and advice service
 - Trauma / post traumatic stress counselling such as debriefs following a disturbing or distressing incident of violence / sudden bereavement
 - Group counselling
 - Service administration
 - Management information to identify trends where change can be implemented, assess usage of the OH service and assist planning
- 3.2 The current provider has conducted themselves in a professional and responsive manner throughout the duration of the contract. This includes;
- Demonstrating strong collaborative working with the Council to ensure the provision of a professional, robust, impartial OH service.
 - Ensured the OH practitioners provide a balanced, evidenced based view, in a calm & assured manner.
 - A commitment in communicating the importance of reputation to the OH practitioners working on the contract, ensuring they conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. The account

managers assigned to the contract have provided continuous, expert, specialist advice.

- The provision of innovative ideas to the contract in line with best practice to help make processes smoother, quicker and add value.
- Rigorous in responding to concerns, addressing issues to ensure a positive outcome, moving matters forward as efficiently and effectively as possible.

3.3 New contracts

The specifications for the new contracts will cover all of the elements in the existing contract.

3.4 Cashable savings

The pricing model set out in the Surrey Framework Agreement enables the Council to ensure Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Services is budgeted for throughout the year. A one off, annual fee per employee would be charged to the Council which would reduce administrative costs associated with the existing contract. The Framework pricing sets out a volume discount model. This means that the price per head will reduce as more authorities call off from the framework.

4. **ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The Council could call off a contract from another framework –however analysis of other frameworks has found prices are not as competitive as those on the framework agreement.
- 4.2 The existing contract could be extended but the terms of this would have to be agreed with the current provider and would also require a waiver of contract standing orders. Depending upon the terms of the existing contract and the length of the extension, there may also be adverse legal implications to this approach.

5. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 User engagement in relation to the services provided by the Surrey Framework agreement will be undertaken with Council wide representatives, schools and unions to ensure the services being procured meet organisational needs.

6. **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 To seek agreement from Policy Resources & Growth Committee for the delegation of authority for the procurement and award of contracts to deliver occupational health and employee assistance services to officers. This recommendation to be made so that the Council can secure value for money and achieve collaborative working with our Orbis partners.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 For the base contract of Occupational Health and Counselling services, the current contract with Team Prevent cost £0.196m in 2015/16. The comparable cost under the proposal to join the current Surrey framework arrangement is expected to cost £0.152m per annum, a saving to the council of £0.044m. As Team Prevent will be the contractor for Occupational Health Services under the proposal, there are not expected to be any material implementation costs.

Finance Officer Consulted: Peter Francis Date: 30/08/2016

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The authority of Policy & Resources Committee is required for matters with corporate budgetary implications, such as the award of the contracts for by the Council for Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Services for which the costs are going to exceed £500,000. Accordingly the committee is entitled to agree the recommendations at section 2 above.
- 7.3 Further, the Council's contract standing orders require that authority to enter into a contract valued at £500,000 or more be obtained from the relevant committee.
- 7.4 The procurement of contracts through framework agreements must comply with all relevant European and UK public procurement legislation as well as the Council's contract standing orders. The Council is entitled to access the framework agreement set up by Surrey County Council, and may use this to award the contracts for occupational health and employee assistance services in accordance with its call off arrangements.

Lawyer Consulted: Isabella Sidoli Date: 08.09.16

Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 The council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 are specifically identified within the contract as a duty of the provider. Feedback from service users, council workers' forums and best practice guidelines are all used to continually improve the service and to ensure that it meets diverse needs. This includes ensuring equality monitoring to inform evaluation and planning of the service, appropriate awareness of legally protected characteristics, and appropriate support in relation to reasonable adjustments.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.6 None

Crime & Disorder Implications:

7.8 None

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

7.9 None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

7.10 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents in Members' Rooms:

None

Background Documents:

None