

Committee/Meeting: Cabinet	Date: 13 March 2013	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 83/123
Report of: Corporate Director Isobel Cattermole Originating officer(s) Deborah Cohen Service Head Commissioning and Health		Title: Carers Hub Tendering Wards Affected: All	

Lead Member	Councillor Asad
Community Plan Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A healthy community • A prosperous community • A safe and supportive community
Strategic Priority	Early Intervention and Prevention

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the tendering process for the Carers Hub Service, which is the first of the carer contracts to be tendered as part of the recommendations outlined in the Carers Three Year Plan 2012-15.
- 1.2 The Carers Hub will play a crucial role in improving outcomes for carers and successfully meeting some of the key priorities in the Carers Three Year Plan, in particular ensuring that carers have access to a range of specialist preventative support services, as well directly provided services. These services will often be the first services accessed by carers and thus the Service Provider will lead on the delivery of key services for carers
- 1.3 Although the procurement process began before the adoption of the Procurement Policy Imperatives it does address many of the issues set out in that document approved by Cabinet on 9 January 2013 in particular the London Living Wage and consultation with the Third Sector regarding the procurement process.

2. **DECISIONS REQUIRED**

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to –

- 2.1 Approve the outcome of the tendering of the Carers Hub Services and award the contract to the Carers Centre, as the highest ranking bidder following the evaluation process.

- 2.2 Authorise the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) to enter into all necessary documents to implement the decision at 2.1 once the standstill period has expired and any objections dealt with .

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 3.1 Members agreed the Carers Three Year Plan (2012-2015) at Cabinet on 20th June 2012. One of the key actions of the Plan is the tendering of all the current carer contracts and this tender for the Carers Hub Service is a central tenet to the provision of services for carers.

- 3.2 The new Carers Hub Service will maximise carers' independence and help to prevent reliance and dependency on more intensive care and support .It was developed in response to the Transforming Adult Social Care agenda with a shift away from the high end of social care to an emphasis on universal and preventative services.

- 3.3 It will support:

- The Tower Hamlets Promoting Independence Strategy
- The Tower Hamlets Carers Three Year Plan (2012-2015) by:
- Promoting choice and control
- Maximising independence
- Effective use of resources by commissioning services that provide value for money, are joined up and seamless and avoid duplication

- 3.4 It will also support themes of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan:

- A healthy community
- A prosperous community
- A safe and supportive community.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The present block contracts are out of date and do not provide enough choice for carers nor do they give carers the option of having a personal budget. The development of a new Carers Hub Service will address these shortcomings, by reaching out to more carers and also ensuring that carers can access individually tailored service that fit around their busy lives.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Tower Hamlets has 21,000 adult carers and has the greatest number of carers in London spending over 50 hours a week looking after someone .

- 5.2. The Carers Hub will provide a dedicated range of services for carers, which aims to support carers to continue in their caring role by:

- improving the quality of life for carers in Tower Hamlets, enhancing their capacity to maintain their independence through the provision of a range

of person centred, co-ordinated and outcome-focused information services.

5.3 The objectives of the service are:

- To help carers maintain health and wellbeing
- To reach out to carers from hard to reach groups, such as carers of people who are substance misusers, carers from BME communities and LGBT Carers
- To provide carers with information about services, ways to access support and, when necessary, to advocate for carers when they encounter difficulties in accessing services or receiving services that do not meet their needs.
- To work with carers to improve or maintain their physical and emotional Health by signposting or referring to services that provide among others leisure, relaxation and social activities
- To work with carers in supporting them to access regular health checks
- To advise and support carers on eligibility criteria and how to access eligible services such as; a carers assessment, carers break and carers personal budget
- To provide support to carers in locations convenient to carers
- To ensure that carers are aware of their rights and entitlements
- To increase social capital for carers through sharing opportunities with other services/providers

5.4 The key services to be provided are:

- Specialist information, advice and advocacy for carers, carry out simple Carer Assessments and Assessments on behalf of the Council in order to access One Off Direct Payments and Leisure Cards
- Income maximisation for carers
- Support for carers on hospital admission /discharge, being a carer of a service user supported by the Community Virtual Ward and forming links with primary care to support carers of those with long term conditions such as carers of people with mental health difficulties and of end of life care needs
- Services and activities to alleviate and manage stress and provide a break from caring
- Representing carers views in the participation in Local Authority and NHS planning , acting as the voice of carers and building partnerships with other organisations

- Outreach and support for hidden carers
- Development and delivery of a range of carers training and awareness programmes and production of a quarterly newsletter

5.5 Although the current provider is based in Stepney, services will be provided for carers across the whole borough and for carers, who are looking after adults with a variety of conditions such as learning, age related and physical disabilities, mental health and substance misuse issues and people at the end of their lives. As would be anticipated, the majority of carers receiving support from the current provider are female. From a total of 1,397 carers: 43.7% are Asian, 39.8% are White, 8.5% are Black Caribbean/African and 2.6% Somali.

5.6 The new services will enhance, maximise and develop the currently provided specialist carers services.

6. Tendering of the Carers Hub Service

6.1 Members agreed the Carers Three Year Plan (2012-2015) at Cabinet on 20th June 2012. Commissioning of the specialist carer contracts has begun with the largest contract for a new Carers Hub Service, which is key to the provision of services for our carers.

6.2. The Carers Hub will play a crucial role in improving outcomes for carers and successfully meet some of the key priorities in the Carers Three Year Plan in particular ensuring that carers have access to a range of specialist information, advice, and signposting to support services. These services will often be the first services accessed by carers and thus the Service Provider will lead on the delivery of a range of key services for carers.

6.3 Consultation of the Voluntary Sector took place with current providers at the Carers Plan Implementation Group at the quarterly meetings in April, July and September 2012 to get feedback on the delivery model, how to reach more carers particularly those in the BME communities, LGBT carers and carers of people who have substance misuse issues. Consultation also took place with Senior Management Team on 28th September 2012.

6.4 The advert for the tendering went out on 28th August 2012 in East End Life with a closing date of 28th September 2012. The tender advertisement asked for bids in the range £320,000 and £360,000 per annum for a period of three years. This is a slight reduction on the present contract of £374,442 but with a broader range of services being requested. Although carers services are no longer funded by a ring fenced Carers Grant, the carers' budget has been protected from savings due to it coming within the prevention and early intervention agenda.

6.5 Officers recommended three providers to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage of the tendering process.

6.6 The closing date for the ITT was 21st January 2013, with plans for services to

commence on 1st May 2013, subject to any transition and TUPE arrangements.

6.7 Updated procurement timetable:

Issue Tender Documentation	5/12/2012
Deadline for Tender Clarification Questions	20/12/2012
Final Tender Returns	21/01/2013
Complete Tender Evaluation	31/01/2013
Interviews, Presentations	06 & 11/02/2013
Submit Tollgate 2	March 2013
Competition Planning Forum	March 2013
Competition Board	March 2013
Cabinet	13 March 2013
Standstill Period	April 13 2013
Contract Award	May 2013

6.8 The recommended tender with the highest score is the Carers Centre, a local carer provider and one of the incumbent organisations. It has a long history of providing carer services in the borough. The Carers Centre will be able to provide geographical cover across the borough and cover all the specialist requirements of the service specification across the required client groups. It will provide added value as carers will be supported to access information, advice and services, including support required when the Welfare Reforms are introduced in April 2013. Value for money will also be achieved by the provision of outreach sessions around the borough.

Summary of Service Requirements

The Services will consist of a range of services which will support carers to get:

- Specialist Information, Advice, and Advocacy
- Specialist Income maximisation
- Signposting into services
- Support to get a health check and stress relieving activities
- Peer support
- Training for carers
- A voice within health and social care.

6.9 The following specialist services for carers will be delivered through the Hub:

- Benefits and welfare information and advice
- Carers Assessments for One Off Direct Payments and Leisure Cards
- Signposting to services for carers, such as accessing a break
- Support to improve health and wellbeing
- Access training ,volunteering and employment
- Crisis support

- 6.10 Knowledge of local infrastructure and services available to signpost and refer to other services as required including:
- Range accessed through Adult Health and Wellbeing
 - Recreation and leisure activities
 - Employment including supported employment
 - Voluntary organisations
- 6.11 The service specification states that suitable and accessible premises within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets will be provided which will function as a base and a point of contact. Drop-ins and outreach will complement the accessibility of services delivered from these premises
- 6.12 One of the main challenges was to ensure that bids came from a variety of providers, in particular local providers who have detailed knowledge about the issues facing carers in the borough.

7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 7.1 This report requires cabinet to approve the outcome of the tendering of the carers hub service (section 2.1).
- 7.2 The financial implications of this procurement are detailed in section 6.3 of the report.
- 7.3 The council currently spends approximately £1.1m on services for carers and the services that will be provided through this new contract will be met from these existing resources. It is also anticipated that the procurement will deliver savings in the region of £15k to £54k, which will contribute towards the directorate's efficiency programme.

8. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 8.1 The Council is required to carry out carer's assessments in circumstances specified under the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 and, separately, under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 ("the Carers Acts"). The circumstances giving rise to the duty are complicated but, broadly speaking, the obligation to assess arises in circumstances where a carer is providing a substantial amount of care to an adult in respect of whom the Council may provide community care services or to a relevant disabled child and where the carer requests an assessment. The duty may arise and be discharged either on a stand-alone basis or in the context of needs assessments carried out by the Council of the person cared-for, under section 47 of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 or section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's Act 1970.

- 8.2 The services the Council may provide to a carer depend on the avenue by which the carer's assessment is carried out. The range of services includes: community care services within the meaning of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990; services that it may provide under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 or section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's Act 1970; or services under section 2 of the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, being services that the Council considers will help the carer to care for the person cared for.
- 8.3 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires best value authorities, including the Council, to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The Public Services (Social Values) Act 2013, which came into force on 31st January 2013, requires the Council to consider how the services it commissions and procures might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. The procurement procedure described above complies with these statutory duties and the Council's procurement procedures and it should be open for Cabinet to conclude that the proposed contracts will result in best value having regard to the duty outlined above.
- 8.4 The contracts are for Part B Services and so the full provisions of the Public Contract Regulations 2006 do not apply. However they are still expressly subject to the equality and transparency obligations under the Regulations and there is a requirement to have a fair and transparent process. This report explains how that has been achieved. When awarding the contract, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. Information relevant to these considerations is set out in the report.
- 8.5 Once the decision to award is taken the Council will issue the Standstill (also known as Alcatel) letters under Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. These letters inform bidders of their score against the award criteria, the winning score and name of the successful bidder
- 8.6 The 2007/66 EU Directive contains a requirement for a mandatory standstill period between notification of the contract award and conclusion of the contract, to allow for an effective challenge to the award decision before the contract is concluded. The basic standstill obligation is set out in Article 2a of the 2007/66 Directive.
- 8.7 This provides that following a decision to award a contract the contract may not actually be concluded until a certain period of time has elapsed after the contract award decision is notified to those concerned. In the timetable at paragraph 6.7 the anticipated contract date allows this period to expire. If a challenge is made the contract date may be delayed pending the outcome of the court proceedings

9. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The service specification attached in Appendix 1 supports three of the four themes of the Community Plan:

- A healthy community
- A prosperous community
- A safe and supportive community.

9.2 It is sought to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics through promotion of services in different formats and languages, outreach and drop-ins to reach underrepresented groups and monitoring of equality and diversity.

9.3 Due regards is given to taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people. The Service ensures that it offers a range of services to meet the needs of a wide range of clients. Special focus is given to providing services to the diverse faith and ethnic communities in Tower Hamlets through culturally appropriate best practice, a diverse workforce reflecting the community they service and a range of language skills.

9.4 Due regard is given to encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low through volunteering, and engagement in shaping services and decision that affect their own lives, such as involvement in user groups and steering groups.

10. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

10.1 The proposals are neutral in terms of contribution to a sustainable environment.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There is a risk that the tendering of all the carers contracts will be delayed if agreement is not given for this tender to be accepted.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no crime and disorder reduction implications.

13. EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

13.1 The value of the contract is a slight reduction on the present contract of £374,442 but with a wider range of services provided. Although carer services are no longer funded by a ring fenced Carers Grant, the carers budget has been protected from savings due to it coming within the prevention and early intervention agenda.

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Carers Hub Service Specification



Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Brief description of “background papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
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None	N/A
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