
HOME EQUIPMENT LOANS SERVICE

Responsible Cabinet Member
Councillor Veronica Copeland, Adult Social Care and Housing Portfolio

Responsible Director
Murray Rose, Director of Commissioning

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Cabinet of the intention to award the contract for the provision of a Home Equipment Loans Service.

Summary

2. The Council meeting of 17 April 2014 agreed the strategic procurement of a Home Equipment Loans Service.
3. Council also approved that the service be commissioned under a joint commissioning arrangement between Darlington Borough Council, Durham County Council, and Darlington, Durham Dales Easington and Sedgefield and North Durham Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). The decision to award the contract has been made by the lead CCG, with support from North of England Commissioning Support Service (NECS). The local authorities and the other CCGs are associates of this contract. The contract award is currently in its required standstill period.
4. In accordance with the procurement strategy for this tender, submissions were evaluated on a 30% price and 70% quality ratio.
5. The Evaluation Panel recommends the award of the contract to the bidder as set out in paragraph 15 of this report.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Cabinet note the Evaluation Panel's recommendation to award the contract as detailed in paragraph 15 of this report and subject to the standstill period

Reasons

7. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:-
- (a) In accordance with the agreed selection criteria, the tender process identified this organisation as the most suitable contractor to achieve the outcomes identified within the service specification.
 - (b) Appointing this contractor will ensure ongoing provision of a Home Equipment Loans Service within the approved budget.

Murray Rose
Director of Commissioning

Background Papers

Council Report - 17 July 2014 - Home Equipment Loans Contract

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S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no direct impact on S17 Crime and Disorder.
Health and Well Being	The continued provision of a Home Equipment Loans Service ensures that social care needs are met in a way that supports an individual's health and wellbeing, promotes their independence and is cost effective.
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impacts in this report.
Diversity	Home Equipment Loans should be available to ensure that people's cultural and spiritual needs are met and support an individual's Human Rights.
Wards Affected	People from all wards will be able to access the service.
Groups Affected	This will impact on older and/or disabled people who require items of equipment to support independent living.
Budget and Policy Framework	This falls within the Council's budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a Key Decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an Urgent Decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The provision of an appropriate Home Equipment Loans Service contributes to ensuring that people are healthy and supported.
Efficiency	The recommendations in the report are the most cost effective that will continue to meet the assessed needs of individuals.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. The strategic procurement of a Home Equipment Loans Service was agreed at the Council meeting of 17 April 2014. In line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules the outcome of this strategic procurement is brought to Cabinet to note.
9. At the meeting, Cabinet also approved that the procurement exercise be led by a CCG, with support from North of England Commissioning Support Service (NECS), the CCG's commissioned procurement team.
10. The function of the Home Equipment Loans Service is to:-
 - (a) Purchase deliver and collect equipment;
 - (b) Repair and Maintain equipment;
 - (c) De-contaminate and recycle equipment;
 - (d) Provide information regarding finance, quality and performance of the service to all commissioners.
11. The provision of a Home Loans Equipment Service is a cost effective way of supporting individuals with assessed eligible social care needs to live independently and safely in their own homes. Additionally, the provision of items of equipment as a "loan" ensures that equipment is returned and (where possible) recycled to support other individuals, when no longer required.
12. The service was tendered via the NECS e Sourcing Portal, In-tend, with the closing date for bids being 11 December 2014.

Evaluation of Tenders

13. An open tender exercise was undertaken. The two stages of the process involved evaluating the bids to ensure that they met the criteria set out in the Financial Model Template (FMT) in respect of completeness of the model, i.e. had all elements of the service been costed, and also for affordability, i.e. was the price submitted, within the published cost envelope for the service. Providers who met these criteria would be able to move onto the third stage of the evaluation.
14. The third stage evaluated the detailed bidder responses against the quality element of tender specification, set out in 14 technical questions, and required all potential bidders to achieve a minimum score of 50% on all key (red flag) questions. Bidders who passed this stage would then go on to the final stage of a presentation to the Evaluation Panel.
15. The Evaluation Panel determined that Bidder 1 should be awarded the contract for the Home Equipment Loan Service. Whilst the lead commissioner will formally award this contract, the four associate parties, including Darlington Borough Council, were a part of the Evaluation Panel and supported the awarding of the contract to Bidder 1.

Financial Implications

16. There is budgetary provision for the delivery of a Home Equipment Loans Service within all partner organisations.

Legal Implications

17. HELS is a 'Part B' service under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 which recognises that a fully cost based approach is not always appropriate for services such as Social Care services. This has enabled an open, fair and transparent process for the selection of contractors and ensures value for money and quality services for the Council and the people of Darlington.

HR Implications

18. There are no Human Resource implications of this decision.

Procurement Advice

19. The Council's procurement team are aware of the procurement exercise being led by the CCG, and have provided advice to commissioners as required.

Equalities Considerations

20. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the service review and following the identification of the service model. This assessment showed no significant individual impacts.

Consultation

21. Consultation with key stakeholders, including service users and carers has taken place and comments have been included within the service model and specification.