



CABINET

6TH JULY 2017

AGENDA ITEM (8)

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS TENDER

Accountable Member	Councillor SG Hirst Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure
Accountable Officer	Diana Shelton Head of Leisure and Communities 01285 623000 diana.shelton@cotswold.gov.uk

Purpose of Report	To consider whether the Council should accept the opportunity to deliver the Community Connectors service across the Cotswolds for five-seven years, if selected.
Recommendation(s)	<p>(a) That agreement in principle be given to the Council entering into a contractual arrangement for delivery of a Community Connectors service, such decision being dependent upon the Council being selected as the winning bid in a tender process and the agreement of acceptable contract terms;</p> <p>(b) That the Shared Strategic Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Leisure, the Group Manager GO Shared Services and the Group Manager Legal and Property Services, be authorised to enter into the contract.</p>
Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)	To meet the corporate objective of building capacity and developing partnerships with statutory and voluntary organisations to increase resilience and to enable communities to help themselves

Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision	No
Recommendation to Council	No

Financial Implications	The Council's submission covers all operational costs and has an allowance for a contribution towards management of the contract and back office support such as HR and Payroll. The contract submission includes a contribution in kind from the Council in terms of Officer time and desk space
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Legal and Human Rights Implications	There are no Human Rights Implications
Environmental and Sustainability Implications	No environmental or sustainability implications have been identified.
Human Resource Implications	If awarded the contract, the Council will have TUPE obligations to meet for transferring staff. These will include on-going responsibilities for staff transferring employment to the Council and any liabilities upon termination of the contract, including any potential redundancy costs and unfair dismissal claims
Key Risks	<p>If the Council is awarded the contract, then considerable work would be required to map out this project and to deliver it effectively. In mitigation, funding for Officer time has been included in the external funding received.</p> <p>If the Council is not successful in its bid for the contract, there is a risk that another organisation might deliver the programme to a lesser quality than the Council would, resulting in a poorer level of service to residents.</p> <p>The funding available from the Commissioners for the service is fixed. The tender submitted recognises the finite nature of the budget available and has been developed accordingly. Officers will ensure that the Council is not financially disadvantaged before entering into this contract.</p>
Equalities Analysis	No effect on protected groups identified.

Related Decisions	None
Background Documents	None
Appendices	None

Performance Management Follow Up	This project will establish appropriate performance indicators. Contract performance will be reported through the Council's existing performance monitoring systems
Options for Joint Working	Options for joint tendering have been investigated but were ruled out by the commissioning organisation

Background Information	
1.	<u>Overview</u>
1.1	The Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG) and Gloucestershire County Council have invited bids for a Community Connectors Tender.
1.2	The tender brings together three separate elements - Social Prescribing; Community/Village Agents; and the 'In Touch' grant programme. It describes the new joint arrangement as the 'Community Connector' service (CCS).

1.3 Contracts for Social Prescribing have been awarded by the GCCG and delivered by this Council in the south Cotswolds since 2014; and by Cotswold Friends in the north Cotswolds since 2015. Contracts for Community/Village Agents and the 'In Touch' grant programme have been awarded by Gloucestershire County Council and delivered by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC).

1.4 The contract is divided into five Lots and potential bidders were able to bid for any Lots. Only a maximum of two Lots would be awarded to any one provider.

1.5 The contract is due to commence on 1st October 2017. The Council submitted its bid in line with the deadline of 22nd May 2017.

2. Rationale

2.1 The GCCG and the County Council want to improve the wellbeing and resilience of local communities and reduce reliance on statutory services through the CCS, combining Social Prescribing and Community/Village Agents.

2.2 The CCS builds on the work of Social Prescribing and Community/Village Agents across the County and incorporates the 'In Touch' grant programme. The Commissioners hope to integrate these services and make use of the strengths in local communities through closer working with the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector. In addition, they hope to create capacity in communities and grow the volunteer workforce through:-

- brokering collaborative working;
- promoting innovation;
- developing local solutions to meet local needs.

2.3 The Commissioners are looking for providers who can deliver a high standard of quality and will work with them to provide:-

- outcome focussed work relevant to the specific needs of local communities and the individuals within them, improving individuals' quality of life and helping them to take control of their own wellbeing;
- collaboration with the CCG, the County Council, other providers and the voluntary and community sectors to ensure activity meets need and provides value for money;
- an asset-based approach which recognises and builds on strengths that exist in the local community.

2.4 In keeping with the local approach, the Commissioners want to appoint a number of providers who will each offer the service in up to two of the six localities across the County. County-wide bids are ineligible.

2.5 A strong local knowledge is needed to inform a tailored approach in each locality. The Commissioners are looking for providers who are enthusiastic and motivated to work with them and to help manage the challenges they are facing, with a business approach and culture that supports collaboration and quality.

2.6 The Commissioners want bidders to assure them of the quality of their service, demonstrate a proven track record, and build a picture of how services will be delivered in each locality, as well as looking to the future and describing how bidders will improve the service and make it more efficient.

2.7 Finally, the Commissioners want a service that can continually develop during a time of uncertainty and challenge. This will require a business team with a culture of flexibility and openness, and a provider that is willing to learn from its customers within a cycle of continuous improvement.

3. Value of the Contract

The available budget being offered for the delivery of this contract in the Cotswolds is £129,468. This is fixed, but has been increased since this process was first conducted in December 2016. There is no financial gain to the Council; the contract sum will cover operational costs and make a small contribution towards overheads.

4. Duration of the Contract

The contract is for a period of five years, with an option to extend for a further two years.

5. Why this Tender is of Interest

The Council has been delivering Social Prescribing since 2014. It had the highest number of referrals of all schemes in Gloucestershire in 2016. It has been independently evaluated, and was found to be effective in reducing the number of unnecessary GP visits. It has also been shown to have resulted in reduced attendances at A&E. The Council would be unable to continue to deliver Social Prescribing on its own if the bid is not successful. Officers work closely with the voluntary and community sectors already, and are not actively engaged in capacity building. Officers know our locality well, and are skilled in the delivery of tailor-made services.

6. Opportunities

The Council is recognised by GPs locally, and the GCCG itself, for its good work in the delivery of Social Prescribing services, and Officers were strongly encouraged to submit a tender for this contract. The nature of the service is such that it places personnel in the heart of communities, providing valuable intelligence to the Council about what communities need. This contract provides an opportunity to build on the positive relationships that have already been developed with statutory health colleagues. If the bid is successful, it will demonstrate the Council to be an effective partner for future collaboration or contracts. The service area has expertise, albeit limited, to deliver the service and, in fact, this contract will provide an opportunity to sustain that expertise and develop the reach of the Council.

7. Staff Implications

7.1 There are currently five members of staff delivering Social Prescribing across the Cotswolds, delivering 95 hours of service each week. Three of those members of staff are employed by the Council. In addition, managerial support is provided to those members of staff. The other two members of staff are employed by 'Cotswold Friends' in Moreton-in-Marsh.

7.2 Eight Community/Village Agents currently deliver 77 hours of service each week across the Cotswolds. The Agents are employed by GRCC and are dedicated to work in the Cotswold District.

7.3 In addition, GRCC employs staff on a County-wide basis to manage the Community/Village Agents and the 'In Touch' grant service.

7.4 Staff delivering services under this contract but not currently employed by the Council would transfer their employment to the Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). TUPE exists to protect the rights of employees who are affected by the transfer of a business or undertaking from one employer to another.

7.5 TUPE ensures that the transfer preserves the employment rights of employees so that they should not have any effect upon the employees' contracts of employment. All the rights, duties, powers and liabilities to these employees of the old employer will pass over to the new employer (i.e. the Council will need to take on these liabilities).

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