

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: 9 SEPTEMBER 2021

TITLE: AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR PILOT COMMUNITY HUB SERVICE

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR JOEL CHARLES, DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

LEAD OFFICER: JANE GREER, HEAD OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND REGENERATION (01279) 446406

CONTRIBUTING OFFICERS: CHRISTINE HOWARD, YOUTH AND CITIZENSHIP MANAGER (01279) 446192

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This is a Key Decision
It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I012848
Call-in Procedures may apply
This decision will affect no ward specifically.

RECOMMENDED that:

- A** Contractor A is awarded the contract for delivery of a Pilot Community Hub Service for a period of six months from 1 October 2021 at £90,000 subject to Paragraph 13 as set out in this report.

REASON FOR DECISION

- A** Proceeding on this basis will enable the Council to deliver its commitment to Harlow residents in terms of providing continued access to essential support to further help contain the spread of COVID-19 and build future community resilience by assisting vulnerable residents to self-isolate, access vaccinations and receive appropriate support in an emergency situation.

BACKGROUND

1. Since March 2020 the Council has led on the development and delivery of a Community Hub service to help contain the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the needs of the town's most vulnerable residents could be met when they did not have access to support from family, friends or neighbours.

2. The Council has received £90,000 of Government 'Contain Outbreak Management Funding' (COMF) via Essex County Council to deliver ongoing support to assist the further containment of COVID-19 from now until 31 March 2022.
3. Utilising the funds mentioned in Paragraph two above, an invitation went out to tender for the provision of a Pilot Community Hub Service to be delivered to residents in partnership with the Council.
4. The Service offered will comprise of the following support:
 - a) Face to face advice;
 - b) A signposting and referral service;
 - c) Access to a telephone helpline;
 - d) Direct support in an emergency situation; and
 - e) Outreach work in the community.
5. Core Services will comprise a telephone helpline; minimum of 4 hours face to face advice and signposting Monday to Friday and emergency helpline 10am to 2pm on Saturday; direct support in an emergency situation; targeted community outreach work through 'pop-up' advice sessions; opportunities for residents to access re-conditioning activities to support good health and wellbeing; promotion of public health messaging campaigns and promotion of the Pilot Community Hub Service via a range of media and in various formats i.e. language, braille etc.
6. In addition to the delivery of Core Services, the Council invited tenderers to undertake partnership working to alleviate the impact of poverty in Harlow and help residents to access the funds that may be available to them through the benefits system.
7. Six potential contractors were invited to bid. One bid submission (Contractor A) was received by the deadline and was evaluated on the basis of 100 percent quality against pre-determined criteria included in the invitation to tender document.
8. Contractor A submitted a bid that achieved a total quality score of 482.5 out of 500.
9. The bid demonstrates that Contractor A is capable of delivering the Core Services as described in the project specification (set out in paragraphs 4 and 5) as well as the additional services (summarised in paragraph 6).
10. The Council will operate a 'balanced score card' approach to performance management and will work with Contractor A to develop performance measurements and targets across the range of services.
11. Contractor A will be required to submit monitoring information on a monthly basis and to attend monthly monitoring meetings with the Council's nominated representative.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

12. It is proposed that Contractor A is awarded the contract for the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 with a budget of £90,000.
13. Whilst it is intended that the budget be spent in full for the maximum benefit of Harlow residents, there is a requirement set out in the contract that any unspent funds at 31 March 2022 must be repaid to the Council, and in turn Essex County Council under the terms of the grant received by them from central government. The Council has made Contractor A aware of this deadline and the preferred bidder has already considered this in terms of their draft delivery plan.

IMPLICATIONS

Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)

None specific.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning

Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)

As set out in the report – the funding for the service will be met from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) allocation.

Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive

Housing

As outlined in the report.

Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing

Community Wellbeing

As set out in the report.

Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Resilience and Regeneration

Governance (Includes HR)

The Council has complied with the procurement requirements throughout the procurement process.

Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance

Appendices

None.

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

COMF – Contain Outbreak Management Fund