

CABINET - 16 FEBRUARY 2011

REQUEST FOR CABINET APPROVAL TO AWARD CONTRACT FOR CARERS' SUPPORT CPU 570

Report by John Jackson - Director for Social & Community Services

Introduction

1. The Carers' Revised Commissioning Intentions Plans, agreed in July 2010, outlined the need for Social and Community Services to increase the number of carers who were known to, and in contact with, support services. It is estimated that current services are in contact with approximately 15% of the 60,000 family carers.

This procurement of Community-Based Carers' Support Services is intended to assist the County in providing the support to many more carers. The County is also establishing a specialist service within the County Customer Services Centre to support carers. The county is working closely with the PCT to ensure respite breaks and direct payments are made available to carers to support them in the caring roles they undertake.

2. **The proposed provider: Age UK Oxfordshire**

Age UK, Oxfordshire is a provider of services to a range of client groups within Oxfordshire, including older people and their carers, younger clients through the befriending services, and the brokers' services.

They have a good track record of local consultation and involvement of service users. The central business plan reflects a commitment to engage and work with local carers on improving local provision. The County and the PCT have an established history of working in partnership with Age UK, Oxfordshire.

The implementation plan presented a clear process as to how they will ensure as seamless as possible a transfer of the contracts from the current Carers' Centres to this new service. They have undertakings from the incumbents to work closely with them as the new county wide service is established.

The bid underlined the commitment to providing a value for money service with undertakings to the use of new technologies to assist access and support to all carers.

3. **Procurement Process and outcome**

The Bid was submitted and evaluated along with the other bids in accordance with the County's Procurement guidance. The evaluation concluded that of the

six organisations bidding for the contract the successful bidder strongly demonstrated that comparatively it had the best overall capacity, capability and infrastructure in place to deliver the service. The qualitative assessment considered that Age UK's bid was stronger generally on approach to delivery offering a good track record of local partnerships and delivery within Oxfordshire.

4. **Transition planning and risk mitigation**

The current providers of the service are working closely with the council on developing transition arrangements to ensure that any risks over this time are mitigated. The new carer's service within the Customer Service Centre will open in April. This implementation is on schedule. The recommended providers have a strong implementation plan with clear undertakings to communicate and involve staff and carers in the transition arrangements.

5. **Contract Review**

In accordance with normal contract arrangements the Council will undertake regular reviews of the contract. In addition carers will be invited to undertake work with the contracting officer formally to review the contract.

The contract includes a number of mechanisms to enable feedback on the performance of the contract. The focus will be on both the targets to reach many more carers but also on the standards expected of the provider by carers.

6. **Financial and Staff Implications**

The budget allocated in providing this service over three years is £1,310,000.00 This contract is valued over three years at £1,187,825.00.

TUPE arrangements will be applicable to staff in the three carers centres . If and when the recommendation is agreed, the proposed provider has agreed to work to ensure, where possible, that we do not lose the skills and experience of current staff.

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

Award Age UK Oxfordshire the contract for this service for a period of 3 years, (with two annual options to extend) on the basis of having provided the most economically advantageous bid which meets our needs.

John Jackson
Director of Social and Community Services

Background papers: Carers' Revised Commissioning Intentions 20 JULY
2011 Service Specification
Introduction and supporting documentation

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February 2011