

Report to: **Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health**

Date: **18th August 2022**

By: **Director of Adult Social Care & Health**

Title of report: **Tender process for Provision of a Community Equipment and Installation Service (ICES) for people living in East Sussex or registered with an East Sussex GP.**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval for the recommended Provider to be awarded the Contract to provide the service**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Lead Member is recommended to approve the award of the contract for the provision of the Community Equipment and Installation Service for people living in East Sussex or registered with an East Sussex GP to bidder 2 as set out in the exempt report at a later agenda item

1. Background Information

1.1 The Community Equipment and Installation Service (the “Service”) is part of the Integrated Community Equipment Service (“ICES”) and is a critical service commissioned by East Sussex Adult Social Care and the local NHS to deliver the whole systems objective to support more people to live in the community. The Service supports the delivery of a range of health and social care strategies and care pathways that aim to support people to remain in the community, or to return home following an acute episode of illness. The current service contract with Millbrook Healthcare Ltd ends 31 March 2023.

1.2 East Sussex Adult Social Care and the local NHS wish to commission an ICES which reflects the needs of East Sussex residents and supports a 7-day responsive health and social care system is essential. The supplier will be required to take full responsibility for the Service, having the appropriate staffing, infrastructure, premises and facilities to receive process and deliver all service demands and requirements. The proposed contract term is for 5 years, with an option to extend by up to a further 24 months.

2. Procurement Approach

Following agreement by the Lead Member, NHS Sussex and the ICES Commissioning Board, the new contract was sourced via a further competition under a Kent Commercial Services (KCS) framework. The KCS framework is a free to access, national framework for the provision of a full range of daily living health and social care equipment. There are five suppliers on this framework (AJM Healthcare, Medequip, Millbrook Healthcare Group, NRS Healthcare and Ross Care).

3. Financial Appraisal

3.1 The issue of general financial and economic standing of the suppliers has been addressed as part of the process establishing the Framework Agreement. However, as the guidance in the framework states, due diligence will be undertaken by the Contracting Authority, but

will not form any part of the selection process. ESCC have undertaken their standard financial appraisal of the preferred supplier and are satisfied with their financial status.

3.2 Details regarding the contract value and the equipment budget are set out in the exempt report.

3.3 The service will be funded via the established ICES pooled budget arrangements between East Sussex County Council and the local NHS.

4. Tender Process

4.1 As part of the mini-tender process, market engagement was conducted with the suppliers on the KCS Integrated Community Care Equipment Framework, to advise them of the forthcoming tender opportunity and to establish whether they would be interested in the opportunity or not. We also used the opportunity to gather some initial information regarding preferred pieces of equipment to ascertain whether the supplier would provide these, or a close technical equivalent, as this could have an impact on the time and resource required for evaluation.

4.2 Prior to the publication of the mini-tender, four of the five suppliers indicated an expression of interest. Once published on the portal, all five suppliers on the framework indicated an expression of interest.

4.3 The mini-tender was published on 21 April 2022. The deadline for the receipt of tenders was 31 May 2022. The evaluation question weightings were agreed in advance of this and communicated to all potential bidders in the tender documents.

4.4 Three bids were received, and these were evaluated in accordance with the framework process set out and as communicated to all potential bidders in the tender documents.

5. Evaluation

5.1 The aim of the evaluation was to identify the offer representing the best service delivery model and which provided value for money to ESCC and the NHS.

5.2 Details of the evaluation panel are set out in the exempt report.

5.3 The mini-tender process required bidders to respond to a questionnaire in which the individual sections and weightings were as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Quality – Service Delivery	45%
Quality – Customer Service	6%
Quality - Social Value	5%
Quality – Technical Requirements	10%
Price (Service Costs and Equipment Costs)	34%
Total	100%

5.4 In accordance with the framework agreement, a scoring system was used for the evaluation of the 'Quality' responses (excluding Technical Requirements) as detailed below:

Rating of Response	Score
Very good submission that exceeds the required standard, is clear, fully explained and delivers additional benefit on all aspects of the requirement.	10
Very good submission that exceeds the required standard, is clear, fully explained and delivers additional benefit on many aspects of the requirement.	8
Good submission that meets all the requirements, is fully explained demonstrates the business benefits to be gained.	6
Satisfactory submission that meets the essential requirements and is explained adequately.	4
Submission that meets only some of the requirements and will not deliver the value required of the opportunity	2
Weak submission that falls short of the requirements, is poorly explained and will not deliver the value required of the opportunity or no response received	0

5.5 The bidder proposing the highest monetary proxy value of Social Value commitment received the full 5 marks available, whilst others were scored according to how far from the highest commitment value they were.

5.6 The bidders had to meet all "Must" requirements of the Technical Requirements and received a score according to the percentage of all other requirements they met.

5.7 The bidder offering the lowest price for Equipment Costs received the full 20 marks, whilst all others scored according to how far away from the lowest price they were.

5.8 The Service Costs were scored as detailed below:

4 – Excellent Response is completely relevant and provides an excellent understanding of the requirement and proposed service model. The response is comprehensive and clearly matches all resources required to deliver the service model as outlined in the Bidder's written responses.

3 – Good Response is relevant and good. It demonstrates a good understanding of the requirement and of the proposed service model and matches the resources required to deliver the service model as outlined in the Bidder's written responses.

2 – Satisfactory Response is relevant and acceptable and demonstrates an understanding of the requirement. The response matches the key resources required to deliver the service model as outlined in the Bidder's written responses, with few omissions or areas for concern.

1 – Poor (Fail) Response is partially relevant but lacks sufficient understanding of the requirement. The response matches some of the resources required to deliver the service model as outlined in the Bidder's written responses, but fails to underpin the model effectively, leaving significant concerns. Does not demonstrate a sustainable financial offer through the life of the contract.

0 – Unacceptable (Fail) Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement. Does not demonstrate an understanding of the need or the required resource to deliver the proposed service model. Does not demonstrate a sustainable financial offer through the life of the contract.

6. Outcome

6.1 Once the tenders had been evaluated, moderated and final scores were calculated, a spreadsheet was completed showing the total scores for each Provider. The summary of the scores are below:

Bidder name	Quality of Service/Added Value					Price	
	Total Score	Social Value	Customer Service	Service Delivery	Technical Specification	Service Cost	Equipment Cost
Bidder 1	68.25	0.61	2.8	25.8	10	10.5	18.54
Bidder 2	85.20	5	4.8	31.4	10	14	20
Bidder 3	71.34	0.47	3.2	29.6	10	10.5	17.58

6.2 Bidder 1 ranked third for Customer Service and Service Delivery. There was a lack of detail in the response as to how communication of specific issues would be communicated, some of the responses indicated a lack of full understanding of client requirements. There was also a concern around the capacity of the premises being too small and therefore not fit for purpose.

Bidder 1 ranked second for Social Value, with some worthwhile commitments such as committing a proportion of equipment spend with local providers and a number of training and development opportunities to local people.

Bidder 1 were able to demonstrate that they met all the Technical and Business Requirements that were recorded as 'Must' have requirements.

With regards to their Service and Equipment Costs, Bidder 1 met the specified criteria, and they did not supply any cheaper close technical equivalents.

Bidder 1's utility costs seemed slightly understated in the current climate.

6.3 Bidder 2 met the requirements of the specification and all the scored criteria and ranked first for Customer Service and Service Delivery.

Their bid set out a clear proposed organisational structure and provided many additional benefits to the proposal which exceed the requirement (e.g., one hour delivery slots to support hospital discharge, click and collect and a client portal for online order tracking). They were also able to demonstrate a strong commitment to equality and diversity within the workforce and several well-being initiatives for staff which all support staff retention. Their Customer Service responses provided a clear intention of how they would operate and demonstrated a personable approach in communications with service users and their carers.

Bidder 2 also committed the highest value towards Social Value and have made a substantial commitment to offering professional development opportunities and NVQ Level 2 qualifications to local people and offering job opportunities to local people for example, who are long term unemployed, people with disabilities and to 18–24-year-olds not in employment, education, or training.

With regards to their Service Costs, Bidder 2 were within budget and for their Equipment Costs, some of their cheaper close technical equivalents were accepted.

6.4 Bidder 3 were the second ranked bidder; however they could not be awarded the contract as they also did not meet one of the 'Must' technical requirements, even after clarification. Bidders were advised that they must meet all the requirements prioritised as a 'Must' and if they do not do this, it would be considered a 'Fail' and the tender submission would not be eligible for contract award.

Bidder 3 ranked second for Customer Service and Service Delivery; they were able to provide a good level of detail as to how they would meet the requirements of the service, but the response lacked detail on some aspects, for example the peripheral stores and engagement with wider stakeholders. The responses for the Customer Service questions were good in parts and provided details of additional benefits such as a Service User portal but did not cover potential barriers to the delivery of equipment.

Bidder 3 ranked third for Social Value and the commitments offered included a number of training and development opportunities and job opportunities to local people.

With regards to their Service Costs, Bidder 3 were within budget and for their Equipment Costs, some of their cheaper close technical equivalents were accepted.

6.5 The Evaluation Panel, having considered all quality and affordability aspects of the submitted tender, decided that Bidder 2 should be recommended for award of the contract.

7 Recommendation for Contract Award

7.1 The recommendation of the Panel is to award the Contract to the Bidder listed below on the basis that their bid fulfilled the requirements for the new service model and is financially affordable.

- **Bidder 2**

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