

**To:** Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

**On:** 14 September 2023

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**Report by:** Report by the Director of Finance and Resources and the Chief Education Officer

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**Heading:** School Based Counselling (RC-CPU-22-340)

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board to enter into a contract for School Based Counselling.
  - 1.2 The recommendation to award this Contract follows a procurement exercise which was conducted as an Open Procedure for an above GPA threshold contract in accordance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, as amended, for Social and Other Specific Services.
  - 1.3 A Contract Strategy for this Contract was approved by the Head of Schools (Senior Phase & Inclusion), Children's Services on 03 April 2023 and the Strategic and Commercial Procurement Manager on 29 March 2023.
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**2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board authorise the Head of Corporate Governance to award the Contract:

- 2.1 For School Based Counselling, reference RC-CPU-22-340 to Place2Be (CRN 02876150).
  - 2.2 The Commencement Date of the contract is anticipated to be the 31 October 2023 for 32 months until 30 June 2026; the actual dates for this Contract will be confirmed in the Council's Letter of Acceptance.
  - 2.3 At a contract value of up to a maximum of £343,300 (£10,728 per month) excluding VAT for the 32 month contract period.
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### 3. **Background**

- 3.1 The recommendations and actions from Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy 2017-27 highlight the significant need to provide opportunities for early intervention and prevention to avoid the unnecessary escalation of emotional distress in children and young people. By promoting positive mental health in children and young people from an early age, the range of positive school outcomes such as: attitudes to learning, better attendance and lower exclusion rates will greatly increase.
- 3.2 The Scottish Government has demonstrated ongoing commitment to supporting positive mental health of children and young people in schools. This support includes continued funding to local authorities to ensure that schools have access to counselling services. However, the schools who have elected to use this model of counselling will also use their own Pupil Equity Fund budget to cover a large proportion of the costs for this service.
- 3.3 These counselling services are focused on prevention and early intervention and include supports for positive mental health and wellbeing as well as for emotional distress. The School Based Counselling services will operate within a small number of schools in Renfrewshire and will support delivery of one of Renfrewshire Council's strategic priorities "to reduce inequalities and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people".
- 3.4 This will be a targeted counselling services, providing therapeutic support to improve the mental health and wellbeing and emotional resilience of children and young people supported by services provided under this Contract.

The services will include appointment of a school-based project manager (SPM) to become part of the school team and deliver 1:1 therapeutic counselling, drop-in sessions, class lessons, staff consultation and work with parents and families. The SPM will also support the school community as and when required at whole-school events and during times of crisis.

- 3.5 This procurement process for this contract was conducted in accordance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, as amended, for a Social and Other Specific Services Contract using the Open Procedure and the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.
- 3.6 A contract notice was published on 05 May 2023 on the Find a Tender Service with the Invitation to Tender also published and available on this date. The Tender submission deadline was 12:00 on 16 June 2023.
- 3.7 During the tendering period, fifteen (15) economic operators viewed the tender opportunity; three (3) submitted tender responses and twelve (12) failed to respond. A list of economic operators who submitted a tender response (tenderers) is detailed in 3.10 of this report. Feedback was sought from those who did not submit; responses included that the requirement did not align to core business, lack of capacity, lack of resources or not a financially viable opportunity for them.
- 3.8 In accordance with Standing Order relating to Contracts 11.5, the three (3) tender submissions were each evaluated against a pre-determined set of criteria in the form of the Single Procurement Document (SPD) by representatives from Children's Services, Corporate Procurement Unit, Risk Management and Health and Safety.
- 3.9 All tenderers confirmed compliance with the minimum selection criteria set within the SPD. Each tender submission was then evaluated against the published award criteria of 80% Quality and 20% Price.
- 3.10 The scores relative to the Award Criteria for each of the three (3) Tenderers are noted below:

| <b>Tenderer</b>                          | <b>Quality (80%)</b> | <b>Price (20%)</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>  |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Place2Be                                 | 80.00%               | 19.87%             | <b>99.87%</b> |
| Therapeutic Counselling Services Limited | 63.25%               | 20.00%             | <b>83.25%</b> |
| The Glasgow Council on Alcohol           | 41.50%               | 19.98%             | <b>61.48%</b> |

3.11 The evaluation of the tender submissions received identified that the tender submitted by Place2Be was the most economically advantageous tender submission.

3.12 Community Benefits were requested as part of this procurement process. Place2Be has confirmed the following will be delivered as part of the Contract:

| <b>Community Benefit</b>                                     | <b>Number Offered</b> |
|--|-----------------------|
| Work Experience Placement for an individual 16+ years of age | 2                     |
| Industry Awareness Events                                    | 4                     |

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Will be met by Children’s Services, part-funded from Scottish Government funding for Counselling in Schools as well as from the individual schools' own Pupil Equity Fund.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
  - Our Renfrewshire is well: Supporting the wellness and resilience of our citizens and communities:
    - Promoting wellbeing and good mental health, particularly in our young people;
    - Developing strong community-based services that respond to local need.
  - Our Renfrewshire is fair: Addressing the inequalities which limit life chances:
    - Ensuring our children get the best possible start in life;
    - Addressing the poverty related attainment gap, and young people can achieve success after school;

- Tackling health inequalities and narrowing the gaps in healthy life expectancy.
  - Place – working together to enhance wellbeing across communities:
    - We want children to grow up excited, inspired and encouraged to fulfil their potential in Renfrewshire and want to continue to stay here.
  - Fair – nurturing bright, happy and healthy futures for all:
    - Protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities, including children and young people who are at risk;
    - Supporting and nurturing children and families, with particular focus on early intervention and mental health and wellbeing, to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people;
    - Enhancing supports around mental health and wellbeing, including school-based mental health and wellbeing programmes and the provision of early help services to those in need;
    - Raising educational attainment while ensuring equity for all our children and young people.
4. **Legal** – This procurement was carried out in accordance with the procedures for an above GPA Threshold contract under the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 as amended for a Social and Other Specific Services contract and the Council’s Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.
  5. **Property/Assets** – None.
  6. **Information** – None.
  7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report may be assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights by Children’s Services.
  8. **Health & Safety** - The Health and Safety submission has been assessed by Corporate Health and Safety Officers, Place2Be were deemed to meet the necessary requirements.
  9. **Procurement** - The procurement procedures outlined within this report shall ensure that the Council meets its statutory requirements in respect of procurement procedures, efficiency and modern Government.
  10. **Risk** - The insurances submitted by Place2Be were assessed by Renfrewshire Council’s Risk Officer and satisfied the Council’s requirements.

11. **Privacy Impact** - The contract contains Renfrewshire Council's General Conditions of Contract data protection provisions. Place2Be will be a Data Controller and, as such, have a legal responsibility to comply with Data Protection legislation when collecting, processing and storing personal data to those receiving a service under this contract.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** - None.
13. **Climate** – None.

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**List of Background Papers** - None.

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