



To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 1st September 2021

Report by: Chief Executive and Head of Policy and Commissioning

Heading: Advice Services
(RC-CPU-21-185)

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board to award a negotiated contract to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau for Advice Services.
 - 1.2 This procurement exercise has been conducted in accordance with Section 12 (1) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 (as amended) and the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.
 - 1.3 A Request to Negotiate was approved by the Head of Policy and Commissioning on the 16th August 2021.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board authorise the Head of Corporate Governance:

- 2.1.1 To award the Negotiated Contract for Advice Services to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau;
 - 2.1.2 To award the Negotiated Contract for a Contract Period of eighteen (18) months from 1st October 2021 to 31st March 2023; and
 - 2.1.3 To award the Negotiated Contract for a value of £505,500 excluding VAT.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council requires proactive “Advice Services” for delivery to the residents of Renfrewshire Council. The General Advice service will include advice on money/debt, financial capability, welfare benefits, housing and employment. The Community Based Legal service will provide advice with regards to housing, homelessness, employment, debt, public law, community care and disability and welfare rights.
- 3.2 Across Renfrewshire many people are affected by debt and financial problems. It is recognised that advice plays a key role in supporting households through challenging financial circumstances. It is also recognised that people usually only seek support once a crisis point is reached and advice becomes vital to help them resolve their issues. Renfrewshire Council wishes to commission a service that will not only support those in crisis, but encourage clients to engage earlier and obtain advice before crisis point is reached
- 3.3 The Invitation to tender was issued to Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau via the Public Contract Scotland Tender portal on 20th August 2021 with a tender closing date of 5pm on 24th August 2021.
- 3.4 The tender document included a Single Procurement Document (SPD) as required by the Council’s Standing Orders relating to Contracts and the tender response submitted was evaluated by representatives from the following Council Services: Corporate Procurement Unit, Corporate Risk and Health and Safety – all requirements were met. The set budget for this Contract has been agreed by Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau.
- 3.5 Community Benefits were sought as part of the procurement process and Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Service has agreed to work in partnership with the Council to deliver a range of community benefits as part of the contract.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – Financial costs will be met by the Chief Executive's Services budget.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is well* –

The aim of the advice service being delivered by the contract is to improve quality of life for the citizens of Renfrewshire "the client", especially those in vulnerable groups and communities by ensuring timely advice is available around benefits advice, income maximisation, managing debt and other appropriate advice. The service delivered by the contract will not only equip clients with increased financial stability and resilience, but by working in partnership with other advice organisations, including Advice Works, the service will contribute to the holistic wellbeing of the client, building their confidence and positivity about the future, their sense of wellbeing and ability to have control over their own lives.
 - *Building strong, safe and resilient communities* –

By demonstrating knowledge, understanding and expertise in approaches to engaging difficult to reach clients, the advice service delivered through the contract will seek to specifically target priority client groups who do not currently access, or face barriers to accessing advice services. Furthermore, the service will be non-stigmatising, responsive in their approach and work with local communities to establish their need, empowering local people to become more involved in the service. The service will:

 - Build community capacity and resilience, empowering individuals and organisations to support themselves and others in a sustainable way through provision and access to robust and effective advice and information services.
 - Deliver advice which empowers communities, with an emphasis on early intervention and prevention (spreading expertise of different levels and complexity to intervene and reduce difficulties, with the longer term aim of reducing the demand on specialist advice services at an advanced level or when in crisis) and sustainability (an implementation strategy which builds individuals' and communities knowledge, capacity and resilience

to resolve their own issues with the appropriate tools, training and resources.

- *Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all –*
The advice delivered through the contract will tackle inequality by enhancing the current advice provision in Renfrewshire. The new advice contract will ensure the advice service treats clients in a holistic way, maximising their income and minimising outgoings through appropriate advice. Furthermore, the service will work in partnership with a wide variety of other relevant organisations to help solve clients issues. The new advice contract is intended to enhance client's financial and other wellbeing, and we will measure the benefits of the advice provided: specifically whether:
 - Clients are more positive about and able to deal with things in future
 - Clients have increased financial stability and resilience
 - Clients report increased health and wellbeing.
 - The service meets the needs of clients.

4. **Legal** – This procurement exercise has been conducted in accordance with Section 12 (1) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 (as amended) and the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – The Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau's Health and Safety submission has been evaluated by Corporate Health and Safety and meets the Council's 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 Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau insurances have been assessed and evaluated and meet the minimum requirements regarding insurable risk.
11. **Privacy Impact** – No Privacy Impact implications have been identified or are anticipated
12. **Cosla Policy Position** –Not Applicable.
13. **Climate Change** – No climate change implications were noted as part of this Contract.

List of Background Papers

none

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