

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Executive Director (Adults and Communities)

To
Cabinet

On

2nd November 2021

Report prepared by
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Agenda
Item No.

Information Advice and Guidance Service Procurement

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To outline procurement options for an Information, Advice and Guidance service that was not on the procurement plan for 2022/23.
- 1.2. The need for the service has been identified since the procurement plan was agreed by Cabinet and due to its value, the procurement requires Cabinet approval.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **That Cabinet approves the procurement of an Information Advice and Guidance service for 1st April 2022 for £250,000 per annum, with a contract term of five years, with an option to extend the contract a further 5 years.**

3. Background

- 3.1. The local authority has a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to deliver Information, Advice and Guidance. We must maximise the opportunities for people to live independently in the community, as far as possible prevent their need to access formal care and support services and provide them with high quality, accessible information on the types of support that is available should they need it.
- 3.2. Information, advice and guidance (IAG) is a key objective in three adult social care strategies; Caring well, Living well and Ageing well, to improve outcomes for Southend residents and help to deliver on several of the Southend 2050 Safe and Well ambitions and outcomes.
- 3.3. The Citizens Advice Southend service offers Information, Advice and Guidance and is part funded by the Council for £235,000 per annum through the Community Grants programme, which has now come to an end. Grant funding previously available through the Community Grants programme has been rolled into the Community Investment Fund of £1.5 million since October 2021.
- 3.4. Following extension, the Citizens Advice Southend grant will end on 1st April 2022 and there is a need to establish a new contract from this date for an information, advice, and guidance service.

- 3.5. In order to ensure effective Information, Advice and Guidance remains available to the residents of Southend-on-Sea, the commissioning team recommend the Council go out to tender to procure a service to start from 1st April 2022.
- 3.6. A tender will allow all providers equal opportunity to bid for the contract to deliver an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service. Co-production work with stakeholders and consultation has been undertaken in order to prepare for the commissioning of a new IAG service.

4. Other Options

4.1. Do nothing

This is not a recommended option, as we would not be meeting our statutory obligations as a local authority without an effective Information, Advice and Guidance offer if we do not procure a new service from April 2022.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1. It is our statutory duty to ensure effective Information, Advice and Guidance is available to residents. The local authority must ensure that IAG services established cover more than just basic information about care and support and cover the wide range of care and support related areas including prevention of care and support needs, finances, health, housing, employment, what to do in cases of abuse or neglect of an adult and other areas where required.
- 5.2. Consultation has highlighted the need for the service and ideas for improvement. In August 2021, a Your Say Southend Information, Advice and Guidance and Livewell Southend website consultation survey was launched on 16th August 2021 and closed on 16th September 2021. 91 people responded to the survey. The views and information from the survey has been used to inform a service specification.
- 5.3. On 15th July 2021, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council in partnership with SAVS, organised an event which was attended by professionals, voluntary and third sector organisations. Over 25 people were in attendance who work in various organisations across Southend-on-Sea, delivering or supporting people with Information, Advice and Guidance. Some organisations highlighted how Information Advice and Guidance could be better, such as reducing duplication and supporting a more holistic model. This feedback allows us to improve our service offer when we procure a new service.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1. Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

This procurement will contribute towards the delivery of the Safe and Well outcome of Southend 2050 and the Joint Administration Commitment to “an integrated and efficient, caring, safe and collaborative social service, accessible to all”.

6.2. Financial Implications

£250,000 per annum, with a contract term of five years with an option to extend the contract a further 5 years, totalling a lifetime contract value of £2.5 million over 10 years.

6.3. Legal Implications

None

6.4. People Implications

None

6.5. Property Implications

None

6.6. Consultation

None

6.7. Equalities and Diversity Implications

None

6.8. Risk Assessment

Coproduction and consultation highlight the need for an Information, Advice and Guidance service – without an effective offer, residents may experience worse outcomes, for example those who are currently at risk of homelessness or in severe debt may lose their tenancies or fall into further debt. Those who need advice or guidance that supports their wellbeing may find their need for support grows, which in turn would put further strain on the local health and social care system.

6.9. Value for Money

The procurement has been designed to reflect good value for money, by ensuring the contract meets the needs of residents, including feedback highlighted in coproduction and consultation, as well as ensuring the successful provider awarded the contract will deliver additional social value to Southend-on-Sea.

6.10. Community Safety Implications

None

6.11. Environmental Impact

None.

7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices

None