

**Report of Safer Leeds Programme Officer**

**Report to Chief Officer, Safer Leeds**

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Subject: Award of contract to University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited to undertake the independent review of the Managed Approach (MA) to street-based sex working in Leeds**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Beeston and Holbeck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- On 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2018, Council voted in favour of an independent review of the Managed Approach (MA) to street-based sex working.
- The Chief Officer Safer Leeds gave permission to procure an independent reviewer at a 70:30 quality to price ratio. The tender specification was developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders as appropriate. The invitation to tender was published on YorTender on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019.
- Four (4) tenders were received and consultees from West Yorkshire Police, Voice of Holbeck and street-based sex workers from the MA cohort have worked with the evaluation panel to identify strengths and weaknesses of each submission on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019.
- The evaluation panel have now scored the submissions in line with the evaluation guidelines and the highest scoring tenderer has been identified, namely the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited, with the review to be undertaken by academics in their Applied Criminology and Policing Centre.

**2. Best Council Plan Implications** (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The contracting of the independent reviewer, and the review they undertake, will support understanding of how well Safer Leeds are meeting the priority to keep people safe from harm and protect the most vulnerable. It will also measure performance against the Safer Leeds strategy.

### **3. Resource Implications**

- A budget of between £40,000 and £50,000 was previously identified for this review. The University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited (UoH) have provided a quote within this range and will be contracted to deliver the review for their stated price.
- Staffing resource implications have been considered. Key staff who will support the UoH to undertake the review independently e.g. contract managing, providing raw data etc. have been identified.

### **Recommendations**

The Chief Officer Safer Leeds is requested to:

- a) approve the award of the contract for the independent review of the Managed Approach to street based sex working to the highest scoring tenderer, namely the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited; and
- b) note the feedback received from consultees and ensure this is addressed in post-tender discussions.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 For the Chief Officer Safer Leeds to approve the evaluation panel's recommendation to award the contract to the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited to undertake the independent review of the Managed Approach (MA) to street-based sex working in Leeds.

## **2. Background information**

- 2.1 On 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2018, Council voted in favour of an independent review of the Managed Approach (MA) to street-based sex working in Leeds. Council agreed that the newly initiated activity which aimed to make improvements to the MA should be given sufficient time to take effect.
- 2.2 On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019, organisations were invited to tender for the independent review via the YorTender commissioning portal. The deadline for submissions was Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019, following which consultees and the evaluation panel met to identify strengths and weaknesses of the four (4) tenders received.
- 2.3 On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019, following interviews with the two (2) tenderers who met the quality thresholds outlined in the tender instruction, the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Ltd was identified as the highest scoring tenderer.

## **3. Main issues**

### **Independence of reviewing organisation**

- 3.1 It is crucial to this review that the organisation contracted is truly independent. Suitability Assessment Questions were set out in the tender instruction to assess whether or not tendering organisations were independent, whilst being sufficiently experienced in this type of review to effectively fulfil the contract. The panel and consultees were satisfied that the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited (UoH) passed each Suitability Assessment Question, specifically that:
  - all key personnel engaged in the review are able to sign a declaration confirming their independence of any conflict of interest;
  - they have a satisfactory ethical code of practice/statement that will be complied with during the review;
  - they have sufficient, relevant experience of carrying out this type of review (with regards to methodology, not subject matter) in the past;
  - they have not published any material publicly in relation to prostitution or street-based sex work; and
  - none of the key personnel engaged in the review reside in the Holbeck area, have friends or family residing in the Holbeck area, work in or have a business in the Holbeck area, or have any other personal or professional association directly or indirectly to the area.

### **Quality evaluation**

- 3.2 All bidders submitted method statements as requested, which outlined:

- their plan, approach and methods for: engaging and consulting with stakeholders (including residents, sex workers, businesses, voluntary and public sector organisations); capturing views at public events; analysing data; comparing with other approaches; and providing a final report;
- their strategy for communicating appropriately, effectively and in a way that is capable of reaching all sections of the community;
- their complaints procedure and their approach to managing conflict;
- how they will select the key personnel to be involved in the review, in accordance to their particular skills and experience; and
- what information they will include in their monthly report and in what format it will be provided to Safer Leeds.

3.3 The UoH were awarded the highest overall score for quality criteria. The panel are confident that the UoH have demonstrated capability to undertake a high quality independent review.

### **Price evaluation**

3.4 The UoH quoted within the stated price range for the delivery of the review.

3.5 Of those tenderers who reached the price evaluation stage, the UoH ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>. However, they still earned the overall highest number of points when their scores for quality and price were combined.

### **Decision making**

3.6 The approval to award the contract to the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited is a Significant Operational Decision to be taken by the Chief Officer Safer Leeds as per his responsibilities delegated by the Director of Communities and Environment. Whilst this is therefore not considered to be a key decision in itself, it is important to note that the reviewers have been asked to make recommendations to Safer Leeds on their approach to street-based sex working going forwards.

3.7 Once the final report is received (expected March 2020) decisions made as a result of the independent review will be made in accordance with the Council's constitution and decision making process. This may include key decisions.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

4.1.1 As per the tender evaluation guidelines, the panel was formed by three Leeds City Council employees, and consultees were invited to review the tender submissions and identify strengths and weaknesses of each. The evaluation panel took this feedback into consideration when scoring the tender submissions in line with the approved methodology.

4.1.2 Three consultee groups were invited to review the written tender submissions on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and provided the evaluation panel with feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of each. These consultees were also invited to the presentations and interviews of the tenderers on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and again, were able to identify strengths and weaknesses of each organisation being interviewed.

4.1.3 The consultees groups were:

- Street-based sex workers who currently work, or have recently worked, within the Managed Approach: 3 women engaged throughout the process
- The Voice of Holbeck community reference group: represented by their selected member
- West Yorkshire Police: represented by the Neighbourhood Inspector with responsibility for the Managed Approach

4.1.4 Consultees were supportive of the decision to pass the UoH on the Suitability Assessment Questions i.e. were satisfied that they had sufficiently demonstrated independence. They noted the experience the UoH had in consulting with communities and a range of different groups on sensitive issues and felt that this was a particular strength. Consultee feedback will be shared with the UoH in post-tender discussions.

4.1.5 Safer Leeds would like to recognise the significant contributions of all consultees and thank them for their time. Safer Leeds also recognise that this is potentially the first time that a local authority in the UK has engaged with street based sex workers in this way and for this reason. Those involved will be reflecting on the feedback from women, including what went well and where improvements can be made, with a view to continuing to engage and improving how we do this in future.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

4.2.1 The award of contract to University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited (UoH) has the potential to impact on community cohesion if the community do not trust that the local authority have acted fairly in appointing an independent reviewer, and that the reviewer is truly independent.

4.2.2 Through the involvement of consultees in the evaluation process, Safer Leeds hope to have mitigated the risk of the community feeling distrust in the process, and to reassure residents in the Beeston and Holbeck ward that the process was carried out fairly and honestly.

4.2.3 The consultees and evaluation panel members were also impressed by the UoH's plans to demonstrate its independence from Safer Leeds and Leeds City Council, through its branding of the review and strategy for communicating with those who it seeks to engage.

4.2.4 It's also recognised that within the community there are likely to be a range of views on the Managed Approach, and the panel are confident that the key personnel have the skills and experience to manage any situations of conflict in a way which minimises the impact on relationships between members of the community.

## **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The award of contract the independent reviewer, and the review they undertake, will support understanding of how well Safer Leeds are meeting the Best Council Plan priority to keep people safe from harm and protect the most vulnerable through the Managed Approach to street-based sex working in Leeds. This includes sex workers, the local community and staff of businesses operating in the Holbeck area.

4.3.2 Similarly, the award of contract and the review undertaken will also help to measure progress against the shared priorities of the Safer Leeds strategy (2018-21): (1)

keeping people safe from harm; (2) preventing and reducing offending; and (3) creating safer, stronger communities.

#### Climate Emergency

4.3.3 The contractors will be travelling into Beeston and Holbeck from other areas across Leeds and West Yorkshire. They will be encouraged by the contract manager to use sustainable travel options. Unnecessary travel for meetings between the contract manager and the contractors will be avoided as far as possible, with Skype and telephone being used where appropriate.

#### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

4.4.1 Funding to undertake the proposed review exists within the approved Safer Leeds budget. A budget of between £40,000 and £50,000 was identified and the UoH have quoted within this price range.

4.4.2 The contract is being awarded to UoH following a robust procurement procedure in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure rules. The evaluation panel has assessed the bids against selection, quality and price criteria and the contract is being awarded to the bidder that represents best value for money taking into consideration both quality and price.

#### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

4.5.1 The contract forming the subject of this report constitutes a Significant Operational Decision being made by the Chief Officer Safer Leeds and is therefore not subject to call in.

4.5.2 This report is not considered exempt/confidential under Access to Information Procedure Rules 10.4 (1) and 10.4 (3) and it is considered in the public interest to disclose the information contained in this report in the public domain.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 There are no significant risks to this procurement as the procurement process was conducted in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in order to ensure that a fair, open and transparent process was undertaken.

4.6.2 The contract will be managed and monitored regularly and frequently to ensure the outcomes of the project are achieved. The UoH's performance will be measured over the life of the contract and risk will be assessed periodically.

#### **5. Conclusions**

5.1 The University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited have been identified as the highest scoring tenderers following a procurement process to appoint an organisation to undertake an independent review of the Managed Approach to street-based sex working in Leeds.

5.2 The evaluation panel having fully considered all tender submissions is satisfied that the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited fully meets the requirements of the specification to undertake a high quality, independent review and represents the best value in order to recommend an award of contract.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 The Chief Officer Safer Leeds is recommended to:

a) approve the award of the contract for the independent review of the Managed Approach to street based sex working to the highest scoring tenderer, namely the University of Huddersfield Enterprises Limited; and

b) note the feedback received from consultees and ensure this is addressed in post-tender discussions.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.