

**Report of the Commissioning & Market Management team**

**Report to the Director of Children & Families**

**Date: 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**Subject: Kinship Care Assessments, Supervision and Support – Award report**



Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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: 10.4(3) Appendix number: 2 & 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- This report seeks approval to award a contract to Carter Brown - The Expert Service Limited for the delivery of Kinship Care Assessments, Supervision and Support.
- This award follows a competitive tendering exercise. The permission to procure was published on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019.
- The contract will be for 3 years, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. There will be an extension period of up to 24 months available. The maximum contract value will be £90,000 per annum based on an estimated amount of work. The total value of the contract if all extension periods are utilised will be £450,000. This contract will be utilised as and when required by the service up to the maximum contract value, there is no guarantee of work for the provider.
- The award criteria was based on a 60% quality, 40% price split.
- Three bids were received. Carter Brown - The Expert Service Limited achieved the highest score against the evaluation criteria.

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

- This contract will support the best council plan priorities of keeping people safe from harm and reducing the number of children looked after.
- This contract will assist Children and Families Services commitment to;
  - Help children and parents to live in safe, supportive and loving families
  - Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected
  - Support families to give children the best start in life
  - Increase the number of children and young people participating and engaging in learning
  - Improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing

## **3. Resource Implications**

- The tender was evaluated on price and quality parameters. The tender was evaluated on a 60% quality, 40% price split.
- Robust contract monitoring has been written into the service specification and will be monitored by the Commissioning and Market Management team to ensure the contract delivers value for money.
- There is budget provision available for this contract.

## **Recommendations**

- The Director of Children and Families is recommended to approve the award of a contract to deliver Kinship Care Assessments, Supervision and Support to Carter Brown - The Expert Service Limited. The contract will be for 3 years, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. There will be an extension period of up to 24 months available. The maximum contract value will be £90,000 per annum based on an estimated amount of work. The total value of the contract if all extension periods are utilised will be up to £450,000. This contract will be utilised as and when required by the service up to the maximum contract value, there is no guarantee of work for the provider.

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

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to award a contract to Carter Brown – The Expert Service Limited for the delivery of Kinship Care Assessment Supervision and Support service.

### **2. Background information**

- 2.1 The Kinship Care Assessment, Supervision and Support service is necessary to meet the legal requirement to assess the suitability of Kinship Carers for children who are looked after by the local authority. These potential carers are located at various locations across the UK which makes the undertaking of the assessment task by council officers inefficient and costly. Research has shown that care for children by family members who are known to them produces better outcomes.

- 2.2 As part of the local authority's statutory duty the council must provide supervision and support for all Foster Carers including Kinship Carers, as good practice LCC carries out these visits at least once every three months. Similarly to the Kinship Care assessments carers are located at various locations across the UK which makes undertaking these supervision and support sessions by council officers inefficient and costly.
- 2.3 In May 2016, a full procurement exercise commenced to procure a service to complete assessments of the suitability of connected persons to provide Kinship Care placements. Following a competitive process the contract was awarded to Carter Brown and commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016. During the 3 year initial contract period there has been significant increases in the number of assessments requested from the service due to a rise in demand. A need has also been identified to complete supervision and support for carers who have had children placed with them. Given these new and additional areas of work the project group felt it would be appropriate to vary the contract to increase the number of assessments and to include the supervision and support element for an interim period of 10 months until 31/03/2020 to allow sufficient time for a full procurement to take place.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 A competitive procurement commenced October 2019. The tender evaluation comprised of;
- 6 written tender questions.
- 3.2 The tender evaluation panel comprised of;
- 1 member of the Commissioning team
  - 3 members of the Kinship Care Assessment team
  - 1 current Kinship Carer
- Also in attendance was a colleague from procurement to offer specific guidance and to record evaluation scores.
- 3.3 A total of three bids were received. The bids were assessed in one stage, consistent with the published tender instruction.
- Providers were required to meet a minimum of 50% threshold for the first 3 questions in order to ensure a minimum level service. One provider did not meet this requirement and therefore was discounted once the rest of the questions were assessed.
- 3.5 The tender documents were prepared using standard procurement documentation. The award criteria were based on a split of 60% for the quality of the submission and 40% for the price submitted. Carter Brown – The Expert Service Limited was not the lowest cost option in relation to price but scored the highest number of points overall and therefore, we are seeking to award to them.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### 4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 A steering group is in operation which includes representatives from:

- Children & Families Kinship Care Assessment team
- Children & Families Social work
- Children & Families Commissioning & Market Management.

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

4.2.1 An equality impact screening form has been completed and is attached as appendix 1.

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

4.3.1 This contract will support the best council plan priorities of keeping people safe from harm and reducing the number of children looked after.

4.3.2 This contract will support Children and Families Services commitment to:

- Help children and parents to live in safe, supportive and loving families
- Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected
- Support families to give children the best start in life
- Increase the number of children and young people participating and engaging in learning
- Improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing

#### 4.3.3 Climate Emergency

The service will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gasses as Leeds social workers are not required to travel long distances to carry out assessments or supervision and support visits and it is envisaged a new provider will have social workers based across the whole of the UK therefore reducing the distance needed to travel.

The service specification requires bidders to consider the environmental impact of their approach to service delivery. During mobilisation they will be asked to demonstrate how they will reduce their carbon footprint, including making best use of technology and sustainable transport in their day to day operations.

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

4.4.1 The tender was evaluated on price and quality; 60% quality and 40% price.

4.4.2 The maximum contract value including any extension periods is up to £450,000.

4.4.3 Robust contract monitoring has been written into the service specification and will be monitored by Children's Services Commissioning, Contracting & Market Management team to ensure the contract delivers value for money.

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

4.5.1 The total contract value is up to £450,000 and is therefore a Significant Operational decision and is not subject to call-in.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 A risk register is in place and managed by the project team.

4.6.2 The contract is required to ensure that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations within the area of provision

4.6.3 The contract to be issued will include a break clause requiring a 3 month notice period should financial and planning considerations require change in the conditions for this provision.

### **5 Conclusions**

5.4 The recommendations contained within this report will ensure that there is delivery of a Kinship Care Assessment, Supervision and Support service to assess the suitability, and provide supervision and support for Kinship Carers. The contract award follows a fair and transparent competitive tendering exercise which involved meaningful consultation with stakeholders.

### **6 Recommendations**

6.1.1 The Director of Children and Families is recommended to approve the award of a contract to deliver Kinship Care Assessments, Supervision and Support to Carter Brown - The Expert Service Limited. The contract will be for 3 years, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. There will be an extension period of up to 24 months available. The maximum contract value will be £90,000 per annum based on an estimated amount of work. The total value of the contract if all extension periods are utilised will be up to £450,000. This contract will be utilised as and when required by the service up to the maximum contract value, there is no guarantee of work for the provider.

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

7.1 N/A

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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.