

Authority to undertake a procurement exercise for the supply of Telecare Equipment

Date: 29 March 2023

Report of: Deputy Director Social Work & Social Care Service

Report to: Interim Director of Adult and Health

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

In August 2021 approval was given to award a two year framework contract for the supply of telecare equipment with the option to extend for a further 24 months. The contract commenced on 1st September 2021.

The service has the option to extend the framework contract for a further 24 months, however due to the following, the service do not wish to take up this option:

- The service has almost completed the digital switchover.
- There are new technologies and supplies on the market which the service would like to invite onto the framework.
- There has been interest from other regional authorities who would like to join the Leeds framework.

Approval is therefore sought to undertake a procurement exercise to procure a new framework contract for the supply of telecare equipment.

Recommendations

The Interim Director of Adults and Health is requested to :-

- a) Approve the authority to undertake a procurement exercise to procure a two year framework contract for the supply of telecare equipment with the option to extend for a further period of up to 24 months in any combination.
- b) Approve the proposed timescale for implementation from 1st September 2023.
- c) Note that the Service Delivery Manager- Assisted Living Leeds will be the officer responsible for the implementation.

What is this report about?

- 1 The current framework contract has worked well for Leeds Tele Care Service. During the two year period of the contract the framework has been additionally utilised by both Middlesbrough Borough Council and Kirklees Council.

It is proposed that a 2 year framework is established with an option to extend for a period of up to 24 months in any combination if deemed necessary, otherwise the service will be re-tendered prior to the end of the first two year framework contract period, to allow for:

- New entrants into the market to offer their products.
- A product specification refresh, allowing for any upgrades to the technology or changes to the equipment required.
- New innovations – allowing the council to utilise new technologies that may have come to market.

Service user need is the key driver for the Leeds Tele Care Service and the allocation of equipment. Service Users are provided with a range of products purchased from a number of different suppliers. Some of these products will have very similar functionality, however by having access to a range of products the service user's individual needs and circumstances can be met.

For example; there are currently, three different suppliers appointed to the contract to supply fall detectors. Each of these products have very similar functionality, however a person's weight and height effects how well the fall detector works for that individual. If a person is less than five feet tall and weighs less than 6 stones, two of the current products on the market do not alert when that person falls.

Connectivity is also a key feature of the products purchased as there needs to be interoperability between the equipment purchased and the call monitoring system.

With the above in mind the proposed Framework will be set up in such a way that will enable the service to purchase an alternative framework item where the cheapest framework item may not be appropriate. Call offs can therefore be made based on an individual's needs and circumstance.

The Leeds Tele Care Service is often asked by suppliers to trial new products and give feedback before the products go out to the open market. Telecare is an area of assistive technology where there is a rapid development of products and systems. Testing the market through a competitive tender ensures that the Leeds Tele Care Service can keep in touch with the market in terms of new product developments, take advantage of testing new equipment and obtain fixed contractual prices.

A number of Telecare products will be specified in the framework.

The framework will have 2 lots;

Lot 1 will be for the frequently required telecare products (framework items) and

Lot 2 will be a discount from price list for less commonly required products.

The Evaluation methodology for this procurement will be based 100% on price and compliance to products specifications. Under Lot 1 goods initially tendered will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis against the specification and all items that meet the required essential standards will be ranked by price on a line by line basis and appointed to the framework agreement for the 24 month duration.

Items will be procured from Lot 1 as a direct call-off without competition, in order to obtain value for money by purchasing the cheapest goods available from the ranked list of framework items. However, end user need is the key driver for the Leeds Tele Care Service and as such there will be situations where other factors come into play in relation to purchasing equipment that best meets the needs of the end user. There are situations where it is not appropriate for the service user to be provided with the cheapest framework item due to their specific needs, therefore an alternative framework item will be purchased based on the essential needs of the service user.

Contractors who are awarded at least one item on Lot 1 will automatically be appointed to Lot 2. Suppliers cannot apply for Lot 2 in its own right. If the less commonly purchased item(s) become a frequent purchase via Lot 2 over the framework period, on the conclusion of the first 2 years of the framework contract the specification will be refreshed and include all frequently purchased items, if the option to invoke the extension is not exercised.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 A full Public Contracts Regulations 2015 compliant competitive procurement process will be undertaken in order to ensure that the Council obtains best value for money, in terms of procuring fit for purpose products at the best price.

Securing a contract will ensure items of telecare equipment are purchased at the lowest possible rates. The service will be able to purchase equipment in a timelier manner and plan the year's expenditure. Officer time will be saved by using the framework rather than obtaining competitive quotes for individual items.

Suppliers are appointed ranked by order of price on a line by line basis. The lowest priced item will be ranked in first place the next lowest priced item will be ranked in second place and so on. The Council will procure goods from Lot 1 as a direct call-off without competition and will endeavour to obtain value for money by procuring the cheapest goods available from the ranked list of framework goods.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 3 **Best Council Plan 2020 – 25** – securing this contract will contribute to the Age-Friendly Leeds KPI by enabling people to live independently in a place of their choice and by providing help and support for people who want to use digital technology to make their lives better.

Working with People

Providing telecare equipment gives service users independence, choice and control within their daily life. It allows service users to get the assistance they require when they need it.

Referrals for Tele Care Services are received from across the Health & Social care system, including housing and GP's.

Tele Care Service is provided to all age groups.

Providing Support - Leeds Tele Care Service is a 24 hr service, enabling Service Users to use their equipment at anytime. A high percentage of alerts are for reassurance.

Leeds Tele Care Service work in partnership with the Yorkshire Ambulance service (YAS) and the Enhanced Community Response service to provide a tier 1 falls response service for YAS patients who have a non-injury fall.

Tele Care offers a mobile response service for service users who have no close family to respond to an alert. This service will be offered to all service users from April 2023.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 4 An Equality Impact Assessment screening tool (Appendix 1) has been undertaken for the purposes of this recommendation and has indicated that an EIA does not need to be carried out. There will be no adverse effect on any particular groups of people within the city by the proposal.

The Leeds Tele Care Service provides a range of telecare equipment to disabled adults, older people and children within Leeds.

There will be no adverse effect on any particular groups of people within the city by the proposal.

The Procurement process will be conducted in collaboration with other authorities and include officers from Leeds Tele Care Service, Middlesbrough Borough Council and Kirklees Council, both of which will be collaborating with Leeds City Council on the establishment of the new framework. The process will be overseen by representatives from Procurement and Commercial Services.

Calderdale Council, Wakefield Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council have also expressed an interest in joining the framework. Their participation will be confirmed prior to the publication of the tender documents.

There is a Northern Tec Forum comprising of various local authorities from within the Yorkshire and The Humber region, who will be consulted on this framework and further expressions of interested in participating in the framework gathered. Involving more authorities in the establishment of the framework should achieve greater buying power and achieve better value for money.

What are the resource implications?

- 5 A full procurement process will be undertaken to ensure that the Council obtains best value for money, in terms of fit for purpose products at the best price.

Using a contract will ensure items of Telecare equipment are purchased at best value rates.

The service will be able to purchase equipment in a timelier manner and better plan the year's expenditure. Officer time will be saved by using the framework rather than obtaining competitive quotes for individual items.

Capital funding for telecare equipment has been approved, with a £600,000 annual budget available from 1st April 2023.

There is a second tranche of capital funding available for telecare equipment in respect of the digital switchover, with £427,000 remaining (scheme 33084) as of March 2023.

The total maximum budget available for the two-year contract is £1,627,000. This is in respect of the Leeds City Council budget, with additional funding being available in respect of the partner authorities who are collaborating with us on this procurement. The additional funding will be confirmed prior to the publication of the tender.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 The Service would have to purchase all equipment “off contract”. There would be no contracted prices, which would very likely result in higher costs for equipment in response to the volatility of the market.

The higher unit costs on the budget would have a direct impact on service user waiting times for equipment.

The aim of the Service, to provide the right equipment quickly to enable people to live independent and inclusive lives, would be compromised should no contract be formalised.

Following a Public Contracts Regulations 2015 compliant competitive procurement process, where subsequent to evaluation, successful bidders are not appointed to the framework agreement, the Local Authority must provide justifiable reasons for abandoning the process or risk challenge from successful bidders,

What are the legal implications?

- 7 Procurement and Commercial Services (PACS) will advertise the tender in the Find a Tender Service in compliance with the Procurement Contracts Regulations 2015 and subsequent regulations enacted into UK law following the United Kingdom’s departure from the European Union. The framework will also be advertised on the Council’s tendering website YORtender and Contracts Finder.

This is a key decision and is subject to call-in. Notification of the decision was placed on the List of Forthcoming Key Decisions on 17th February 2023. The report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 8 Using external frameworks which the service will need to pay to access and may not give the flexibility required.

How will success be measured?

- 9 The items will be awarded and equipment will not be ordered off contract.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 10 Approve the proposed timescale for implementation from 1st September 2023.

Note that the Service Delivery Manager- Assisted Living Leeds will be the officer responsible for the implementation.

Appendices

- Equality Impact Assessment screening tool.

Background papers

- None.