

LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICES – TENDER FOR ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT PARTNER

Report By: Head of Adult Social Care – Learning Disabilities

Wards Affected

All

Purpose

1. To update the Committee on the Learning Disability Accommodation and Support Tender.

Financial Implications

2. The Learning Disability Accommodation and Support Tender is part of the Learning Disability five-year financial plan.

Background

3. In February 2005, Herefordshire Council's Cabinet, agreed that Social Care could explore a partnership with an experienced independent sector care provider with a view to transferring the management and development of the Council's directly operated learning disability residential services, Ivy Close and Southbank Close.
4. Considerable work was then undertaken to identify the Accommodation and Support needs of people with a learning disability in Herefordshire, and also to find out through consultation the models of support people would choose.
5. This included a comprehensive needs analysis (lead by the Council's policy and research department) for the next fifteen years, which included benchmarking our services against those of other authorities. There has also been a thorough review of current commissioning and the development of a commissioning plan for the next 5 years.
6. All of this work is based on the vision that that every person with a learning disability should be supported within and as part of their local community, with a level of support which meets their needs and aspirations. The Joint Commissioning Plan emphasises the need to move away from a service led response to one more reflective of individual needs.
7. To achieve this vision, the scope of the Partnership was extended to include more than the original in-house services and to include 5 group homes and an intensive supported living service currently provided as part of block contracts within the independent sector.
8. The new extended tender encompassed 50 individuals currently living in registered care, 10 people in intensive supported living and 30 people who use short-break

services. It involves the bringing together of staff from four different organisations, with different terms and conditions of employment, and included Social Care, Health and Supporting People funding streams.

9. To manage the tender a Project Management Group was established. This included staff representatives from Learning Disability Services, Social Care Finance, Procurement, Contracts and Commissioning Support, Supporting people and the PCT.
10. The Tender process involved three stages:

Stage one - Initial advert and first submission (Long-list)

Stage two – second submission and short-list (Short-list)

Stage three – Competitive dialogue and final tender.
11. **Stage one** - The initial advert for expressions of interest was placed in December 2006 in the Guardian and Community Care and over 40 information packs were sent to interested organisations. From the nineteen submissions received a long-list of eight organisations who met the initial criteria was formed.
12. **Stage two** -The next stage involved the eight organisations submitting additional written information which explained in more detail the previous experience they had in this area and how they could use this to meet our vision for Herefordshire.
13. Representatives of the Project Management Group went to visit services provided by each organisation. These visits were used to gather additional evidence on how well change had been managed and talking to staff, service users and local managers to check out their experience of the change. It was also an opportunity to look at the service models the organisations were offering.
14. There were also three other groups who were involved in the process;
 - A group of people with learning disabilities with independent facilitation;
 - A group staff who worked in services which will transfer to the new partner.
 - A group of carers from the Carers Network.
15. **Stage Three** -The five organisations who had the highest scores from stage two were invited to take part in the third and final stage of the tender which was the 'Competitive Dialogue and Final Tender Stage'.
16. Four of the organisations submitted final tenders. These were evaluated against strict evaluation criteria.
17. The tender process has been subject to audit via the Council's Audit Services. Whilst there were some minor reservations over the relative weighting of the views of stakeholders, the conclusion of the audit was that the process overall was satisfactory and this did not distort the outcome of the final selection of the partner. Legal services have formally approved the process.

18. On the basis of legal advice, the Director of Adult and Community Services has agreed that the Tender Invitation Group could enter final negotiations with the highest scoring organisation – Focus Futures.
19. The terms of the contract will now be negotiated with Focus Futures. Once this is concluded a detailed report will be presented to Cabinet asking them to agree to award the contract.
20. The negotiations will be based on agreed principles which are:
 - To ensure young people with a learning disability are offered individualised services to enable them to be supported as part of their local community;
 - To ensure older people with a learning disability can remain in their local community, even when family members are no longer able to offer support;
 - To ensure that individuals who are currently in more institutionalised services (such as residential care) are offered the opportunity to become part of a chosen community;
 - To ensure current resources are reinvested to develop new opportunities which support the vision.
21. Within the above principles the contract will have a number of specific objectives and targets. These will include:
 - Reducing the number of people living in registered care;
 - Increasing the number of people who are living in their own home with support;
 - Reducing the overall unit cost of services across the accommodation and Support Spectrum.
22. The contract will be legally compliant and based on the following:
 - The contract will be for a five-year period to allow sufficient time to implement change;
 - The contract will be within the financial envelope available;
 - The contract will result in savings across the accommodation and Support provision over the length of the contract;
 - The contract will embrace individualised budgets and the provider will carry the financial risk for this.
23. It is hoped that the final contract will be awarded in January 2008, with Focus Futures commencing work in April 2008.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the progress of the Learning Disability Accommodation and Support Tender to date be noted, subject to any comments the Committee wishes to make.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Learning Disability needs analysis