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Award

VEAT SC18 004 Direct Payment Support and Mgt Services (Childrens Care)

Kent County Council

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-003381

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-043666

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Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

Kent County Council

Sessions House

Maidstone

ME14 1XQ

Contact

Ms Orla Miller

Email

orla.miller@kent.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 3000412878

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKJ4 - Kent

Justification for not providing organisation identifier

Not on any register

Internet address(es)

Main address

<http://www.kent.gov.uk>

Buyer's address

<http://www.kent.gov.uk>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Regional or local authority

I.5) Main activity

General public services

Section II: Object**II.1) Scope of the procurement****II.1.1) Title**

VEAT SC18 004 Direct Payment Support and Mgt Services (Childrens Care)

Reference number

DN709375

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85321000 - Administrative social services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

Contract for delivery of Direct Payment Support and Management Service (Children Care)

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)

Value excluding VAT: £530,746

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKJ4 - Kent

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The Provider is required to provide a range of services that support the Council's business objective of empowering Service Users to be in control of the support that they receive. This includes:

- Following referral, the setting up and maintenance of direct payments for the purchase of social care and education services, in partnership with the Council.
- Working in partnership with Clinical Commissioning Groups to support a joined-up approach to social care, education, and health direct payments.
- Supporting the Kent Card process in partnership with the Council, including the monitoring of financial statements online (See flow chart Appendix B).

- Transfer of the direct payment support for service users to the Council's Adult Direct Payment Support Service where appropriate as decided by the Council's Care Manager.
- Entry of data on the Council's MOSAIC/LPS database following training provided by the Council.
- Working in partnership with service user third parties and nominated persons.
- Supporting Service Users to manage a direct payment and pay for services.
- Monitoring the use of direct payments, ensuring that monies are appropriately spent.
- Identifying unspent and unused or misused direct payments.
- Recommending the amount of unspent and unused or misused money to be reclaimed by the Council.
- Where appropriate, supporting Service Users to be a good employer and if required support at industrial tribunal hearings.
- Helping to keep service users safe by ensuring that all personal assistants have a current DBS check at the enhanced level.
- Setting up and maintaining a website, or access to web pages, that describes the service.
- Managing the transition of direct payments when Service Users go from childhood into adulthood.
- Maintain systems to ensure that all over payments and/or any potentially fraudulent use of Direct Payments are followed up by both the Provider and the Council and ensure that if there is an over payment all due checks are made with the Council that it is being dealt with.
- Ensuring that all Direct Payment agreements have a written and fully completed agreement prior to commencement of the service and when any changes are made.

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Award of a contract without prior publication of a call for competition in the cases listed below

- The procurement falls outside the scope of application of the regulations

Explanation:

The current contract with We are Beams was for an initial 3 year term with 2 x 12 month extensions options. All extensions were used and it was proposed to vary clause 2.2 of the contract to vary the end date, thereby extending for a further 12 months from 1 Apr 2024 to 31 March 2025 for the following reasons:

To explore the viability of aligning the aspects of the Disabled Support Service for Disabled Children and Young People with the Adults Direct Payment Service.

Consultation with Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) has also been ongoing to ensure we consider their position and plans for the Adult DP service. As part of Making a Difference every day programme, ASCH is redesigning their self directed support offer, and the opportunity to align the two DP services to create an integrated service for both ASCH and CYPE was suggested.

The development of the Whole Council approach to delivering DP services was supported in principle due to the potential advantages such as cost efficiencies and a smooth transition between CYPE and ASCH .

Some of the service elements being scoped by ASCH align with the Direct Payment Support Services for Children and Young People. A potential joint commissioning exercise has emerged, which could offer KCC better value for money and create greater cohesion across services.

There is currently insufficient information available about ASCH's future trajectory and therefore CYPE cannot make an informed recommendation about whether this option is viable. More time is required to sufficiently scope and engage the market to ascertain if aiming for an integrated service for Kent is feasible.

Legal advice has concluded that the Council has reasonable grounds to rely on Regulation

72(1)b PCR 2015 to justify the extension beyond the optional extension periods already expressed provided in the contracts. This is on the basis that a change of providers cannot be made for economic or technical reasons.

There are economic reasons why a change of provider cannot yet be made. There is an opportunity to create economies of scale when conducting the market engagement, competitive procurement and managing the contract should both CYPE and Adults Direct Payment Services be combined into one procurement.

This should create significant cost savings and value for money efficiencies. There would also be the opportunity to create efficiencies across both services by ensuring working practices are effective and reduce the duplication of management costs.

There are also technical reasons why a change of provider cannot be made sooner. The Council has a duty to offer a Direct Payment Support Service under the Care Act 2014, section 117 (2c) of the Mental Health Act 1983, the Care and Support (DP) Regulations 2014 and the Children's and Families Act 2014. The potential to combine both services offers the potential for a 'whole Council' approach to the way Direct Payments are delivered to ensure cohesion and equity across Children's and Adults services (for example in terms of levels of support that is offered and the consistency in costs) The Council's Adults Social Care team has ambitious plans to increase the Direct Payments activity across Adults Social Care significantly. This could create volatility within the Children's sector as both services seek resources from the same pool of carers at a time when there are already resource challenges being faced. It is important that both services work together to resolve these issues to ensure continuity of service and avoid any destabilizing effects. The Council requires more time to test the market. CYPE DMT and CYPE Cabinet Committee approvals are in place for the proposed additional 12 month extension. Negotiations with the provider for contract costs from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 have concluded and the capacity of the cases will be reduced providing £43k savings.

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

Section V. Award of contract/concession

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

V.2) Award of contract/concession

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract

29 January 2024

V.2.2) Information about tenders

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire

We are Beams

Hextable

Email

katrina.adams@wearebeams.org.uk

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UKJ4 - Kent

National registration number

03179785

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

Yes

V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £530,746

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Kent County Council

Maidstone

Country

United Kingdom