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| REPORT TO: | CABINET 10 DECEMBER 2018 |
| SUBJECT: | CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE ASSESSMENTS PROCUREMENT STRATEGY |
| LEAD OFFICER: | ROBERT HENDERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION PHILIP SEGUROLA (INTERIM DIRECTOR, EARLY HELP FAMILY INTERVENTION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE) |
| CABINET MEMBER: | COUNCILLOR ALISA FLEMMING CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING COUNCILLOR SIMON HALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES |
| WARDS: | All |
| CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/ AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON <p>The development of this procurement strategy supports the Council's ambition to protect its most vulnerable residents and enhance the life chances of children in need. It supports the achievement of the following corporate priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support individuals and families with complex needs; • To deliver better education and the opportunity for everyone to reach their full potential; • To secure a good start in life, improve health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy. | |

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| FINANCIAL IMPACT <p>At 2018/19 Q1, Assessments is overspending by £1.407m against a budget of £1.007m. This overspend and increased demand is predominately due to residential and reverse assessments.</p> <p>There has been a number of assumptions around future demand and past trends across all assessment types to establish an estimated total contract value of £10.049m over 4 years, £2.512m per annum.</p> <p>Based on the estimated yearly contract value of £2.512m and current budget of £1.007m, additional growth required in 2019/20, to meet estimated demand, is £1.505m. This additional growth has been agreed at Executive level as part of a wider package of growth for Childrens, Families & Education department.</p> |
| FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: N/A |

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to

- 1.1 To approve the procurement strategy for a 4 year (2+2) Approved Provider Panel for the delivery of Children's Social Care assessments during the period 1st August 2019 to 30th July 2023 (tentative), at a total estimated annual cost of £2.512m, making a total estimated cost of £10.049m for the 4 years.
- 1.2 To approve the deviation from the Council's Tender and Contract regulation 21 for the reasons set out in section 3.20, to depart from the standard evaluation split of 60:40 (cost: quality) to allow a weighting of 30:70 (cost: quality) for admittance on to the Approved Provider Panel.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval of the procurement strategy for the tendering of qualified assessors to be appointed to an Approved Provider Panel for a term of 2 years with a possible 2 year extension to deliver Children's Social Care Assessments.
- 2.2 The existing framework agreement for the provision of Supervised Contact and Assessment Services has recently been extended, providing assessment suppliers on the framework a 6 month extension with the possibility of two further 3 month extensions to expire no later than 31st October 2019.
- 2.3 The procurement of a new Approved Provider Panel, utilising the flexibilities of the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) Light Touch Regime will allow the Council to create a more flexible, responsive and better quality pool of assessors to carry out the required Children's Social Care assessments.
- 2.4 The content of this report has been endorsed by the Contracts and Commissioning Board.

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| CCB Approval Date | CCB ref. number |
| 15th November 2018 | CCB1430/18-19 |

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2014 a contract award for the provision of supervised contacts and assessments under a Framework Agreement was approved by CCB for a term of 2 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years at an estimated total contract value of £3.232m (supervised contacts total = £1.9m; assessments total = £1,332m) [CCB1170/16-17] and [CCB1286/17-18].
- 3.2 Following a competitive procurement for the supervised contact service in 2017/18, the contract could not be awarded to the preferred bidder for

unforeseen circumstances. Therefore the terms of the existing framework was extended until 31st October 2019 [Key decision reference: 3518CYPL]

- 3.3 Since 2015, increased demand for assessments (including a significant increase in the number of Section 31 court applications) has led to an increase in both on and off Framework spend for assessments. In 2017/18, the majority of assessments were commissioned outside of the existing Framework. Since 2015/16 the annual expenditure for assessments has exceeded the annual budget (see the table in section 5.1 for a breakdown of the annual expenditure).
- 3.4 In 2017, it was recommended that supervised contacts and assessments were re-procured as separate contractual arrangements due to the distinct nature of each service area. The separate outsourcing of residential parenting, psychiatric and psychological assessments was approved at CCB on 13 June 2017 (CCB1241/17-18). However, the procurement strategy did not clarify whether the other assessment elements (i.e. Special Guardianship Order (SGO), viability, Form F and connected person assessments) were also to be procured or brought in-house. Therefore it was deemed that further work was required in order to develop the service model for the future provision of SGO, viability, Form F and connected person assessments. In November 2017 CCB approved the one-year extension of the existing Framework to enable further scoping to determine whether an in-house or alternative delivery method could achieve better outcomes and value for money.
- 3.5 Following discussions with the Heads of Service and the Interim Director of Early Help, Family Intervention & Children's Social Care in April / May 2018, the commissioning intentions for all assessment elements were refreshed, and a tripartite service model was proposed in a Make or Buy report (RP1) and approved by CCB on 5 July 2018.
- 3.6 Therefore, to provide continuity of service it was recommended that an Approved Provider Panel is procured for all assessment elements as a fall-back position whilst the proposed in-house delivery models are being developed and implemented. This will provide a contractual arrangement with suitably qualified and quality-assured suppliers from which the Council can call-off assessments as required, much like the operation of a procurement framework.
- 3.7 This report sets out the proposed procurement strategy for the Approved Provider Panel.

AIMS OF THE APPROVED PROVIDER PANEL

- 3.8 This procurement strategy sets out the proposal to procure a new 4-year multi-supplier Approved Provider Panel with suitably qualified providers, consultants, contractors and independent social workers to deliver a comprehensive range of children's social care assessments during the period 1st August 2019 to 31st July 2023 (tentative) for the aggregate sum of £10.048m.
- 3.9 It is expected that the Approved Provider Panel will contribute to the following outcomes:

- To support the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to provide assessments when required under the Children Act 1989 in order to meet the needs of individual children, determine what services to provide and action to take.
- These assessments are carried out in order to:
 - To gather important information about a child and family;
 - To analyse their needs and / or the nature and level of any risk and harm being experienced by the child;
 - To decide whether the child is a Child in Need (under Section 17 of the Children Act (CA) 1989) and / or is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (Section 47, CA 1989); and
 - To provide support to address those needs, to improve the child's outcomes and to make them safe.

DEMAND FOR ASSESSMENTS

- 3.10 There has been a significant year on year increase in the number of proceedings and court ordered assessments both in Croydon and nationally, especially of Section 31 court applications. In the financial year 2016/17, there was a 48% increase in the number of proceedings compared to the previous year. A spike in child protection cases following the Ofsted Inspection, has also added to the demand for assessments, especially for (adult) parent and child cases, where a fostering placement cannot be found in house. The existing framework does not have a sufficient number of assessors nor the right breadth of expertise to meet current demand, hence the high level of off- contract spend.
- 3.11 It is envisaged that over the term of the contract, demand for externally commissioned assessment services will reduce as more of the assessments are conducted in-house by a Friends and Family Service to deliver SGO, viability, Form F, connected person and together and apart assessments. Furthermore as the Children's Social Care Improvement programme becomes embedded in practice, in particular: improvements around early permanence; earlier intervention through Early Help and pre-proceedings will all help reduce demand for assessments over time. At present the highest area of spend is on residential assessment unit placements for families but the Local Authority is seeking to recruit its own parent and child foster placements, which it is envisaged will enable fewer residential assessment placements to be sourced. The Local Authority is also part of a randomised control trial for children 5 and under in court proceedings . The trial compares the specialist attachment based assessment undertaken by the NSPCC (LIFT) versus services as usual. The LIFT service is free to the authority , and although those families who agree to participate, are randomised i.e. they have the chance of not being selected for the service, those that are selected for LIFT results in no cost to the authority. The families that are eligible either have to be placed in a parent and child foster placement or the baby has to be placed in foster care with their parents. At present the absence of parent and child placements often limits the number of children being put forward for the trial. It is anticipated that the developments in the fostering service will also increase the authority's ability to put forward eligible families which could in turn reduce the cost to the authority.
- 3.12 Since the inspection the increase of cases in PLO and in proceedings has meant that there has been little capacity to consider the allocated social

workers undertaking parenting assessments themselves. There is a desire, and this is supported by the Judiciary to develop the skills in the service for workers to undertake these assessments themselves. While this is a longer term aim, this too will reduce the spend on the assessment budget.

PRINCIPLES OF THE APPROVED PROVIDER PANEL

- 3.13 The aim of the Approved Provider Panel is to establish a flexible approach to commissioning assessments by implementing a more effective purchasing tool than the previous Framework, allowing the Council more control over providers, quality, costs and outcomes. Suppliers will be asked to outline their approach to quality control during the ITT method statements, and a robust performance management schedule will be included as part of the contract and will be monitored by the Children's Social Care Contract Management team within Commissioning and Procurement.
- 3.14 The full range of required assessments will be advertised in separate LOTS as follows:
- Psychological assessment
 - Psychiatric assessment
 - Parenting Assessment Manual Software (PAMS) assessment
 - Parenting assessment
 - Residential parenting assessment
 - Reverse residential assessment (RRA)
 - Viability assessment
 - Connected person assessment
 - Together & Apart assessment
 - Form F assessment
 - Risk assessment
 - Special Guardianship Order (SGO) assessments
- 3.15 The assessments will be undertaken under the Approved Provider Panel as follows:
- Parenting, PAMS, risk, psychological and psychiatric assessments for the full 2+ 2 year duration of the agreement.
 - All other assessment types until an in-house service delivery model is developed and implemented (timescales to be confirmed by the Heads of Service).
- 3.16 The procurement will make use of the significant flexibilities under the Public Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015 'Light Touch Regime' (LTR) to create a unique Approved Provider Panel which will operate similar to a traditional framework solution, however it will clearly state in the tender documentation that the Council reserve the right to open the panel to new entrants from the market at specific periods throughout the contract, most likely to be after the first initial 2 years. This will negate the current issue that the existing framework does not contain enough qualified assessors who can meet breadth of need and the growing demand for the service. New suppliers will need to meet the original quality and price evaluation criteria used to create the Approved Provider Panel.

PROPOSED TENDER PROCESS

- 3.17 Tenders will be returned electronically via the e-tendering portal. An evaluation panel consisting of social workers, business support officers and representatives from legal, will individually assess each qualitative submission and scores will be moderated by the panel. Finance will conduct a standard financial appraisal, while tender compliance will be conducted by the Commissioning and Procurement team, to ensure probity and that the most economically advantageous suppliers are admitted to the Approved Provider Panel.
- 3.18 The financial assessment of prospective suppliers will be conducted to determine their financial viability. However, so to not disproportionately impact on sole traders, or small to medium size enterprises, the discretion of the Director of Finance, Investment and Risk will be sought before dismissing any potential bidders purely on the grounds of financial assessment.
- 3.19 A specification is being developed and will form the basis of the competitive open tender. The standard SQ compliance questions will be asked, including
- Grounds for mandatory or discretionary exclusion
 - Economic and financial standing
 - Technical and professional past experience
 - Requirements under Modern Day Slavery Act 2015
 - Requirements under Public Sector Equality Duty and Equalities and Diversity monitoring
 - Insurance
 - London Living Wage
- 3.20 Price/quality evaluation ratio of 30/70% is recommended to ensure sufficiently high quality providers are submitted to the Approved Provider Panel. This will aim to alleviate previous criticism around the quality and timeliness of assessments. Our ability to drive down costs is limited due to the nature of the market being supplier led and with no national or pan-London approach to controlling costs. To try and influence this, the Approved Provider Panel will be open to other LAs to access, in an attempt to provide more leverage with the market. Setting an affordability cap across all LOTS will alienate some of the market, especially psychiatrist and psychologists, who can dictate their own market rates and therefore for those lots, securing the highest quality accessors on the Approved Provider Framework is paramount. By securing higher quality accessors, we will benefit from cost avoidance savings with fewer poor quality reports being dismissed by the Courts and having to be recommissioned. For social worker led assessments, once providers have passed the quality threshold, and are admitted onto the Approved Provider Panel, the subsequent call off process will have a greater weighting to price.
- 3.21 It is envisaged that method statements and a sample assessment report will constitute the 70% quality score. The exact weighting of each method statement and the full wording for each question is currently in development with the project team and will be finalised for the production of the tender documentation.

| Question ref | Question | Maximum Question Score | Question Weighting % |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Experience of delivery | 5 | TBC |
| 2 | Technical capability and experience of workforce | 5 | TBC |
| 3 | Approach to recruitment, training and supervision | 5 | TBC |
| 4 | Achievement of outcomes for families | 5 | TBC |
| 5 | Working with families with multiple risk factors | 5 | TBC |
| 6 | Safeguarding | 5 | TBC |
| 7 | Quality Assurance & Contract Management | 5 | TBC |
| 8 | Confidentiality/ GDPR | 5 | TBC |
| 9 | Social Value | 5 | 5% |
| 10 | Premier Supplier Programme | 5 | N/A |
| Evaluation of sample report | | 5 | TBC |
| Total | | | 70% |

- 3.22 Each method statement will be scored from 0 to 5. A minimum quality threshold will be set to ensure only sufficiently high quality assessors are admitted onto the Approved Provider Panel. Failure to meet this standard will result in rejection of the tenderers quality submission and the submitted tender will not be considered further. Marks will be awarded in line with the table below:

| Scoring Methodology | | |
|---------------------|--------------|---|
| Score | Rating | Criteria for awarding score |
| 5 | Excellent | The supplier has provided responses that are robust and supported by suitable and relevant evidence of experience and technical and professional ability which significantly exceeds the Council's expectations |
| 4 | Good | The supplier has provided responses that are robust and supported by suitable and relevant evidence of experience and technical and professional ability which exceeds the Council's requirement |
| 3 | Satisfactory | The responses are compliant and the supplier has provided responses that demonstrate through suitable and relevant evidence that they have experience and have technical and professional ability which meet the Council's requirements |
| 2 | Fair | The responses are superficial and generic. The supplier has provided insufficient responses or the responses given demonstrate limited experience and limited technical and professional ability |
| 1 | Poor | The supplier has provided wholly insufficient responses or the responses given demonstrate very limited experience and insufficient technical and professional ability |
| 0 | Unacceptable | The supplier has not answered the question, has omitted information or has provided information that is not relevant and the evaluator is unable to determine whether the supplier possess sufficient technical and professional ability. |

- 3.23 Suppliers will need to submit an assessment price and hourly rate for each LOT/type of assessment they wish to bid for. It is envisaged that the assessment fee has a 35% weighting and the hourly rate to attend meetings/court attendance will be 5%. It is proposed that the submitted tender prices are fully inclusive of travel expenses, travel time, report writing and management supervision. For assessments which can be conducted by a social worker, we will look to cap prices by stating an affordability threshold. As the market for psychiatric and psychological assessments is supplier led, the

service are of the view that capping cost for these types of assessment will deter suppliers from tendering, creating the need to spot purchase.

- 3.24 The tenderer's price score will be calculated using the following equation:

$$\text{Tenderer's Total Price Score} / \text{Lowest Scoring Price} \times 30\%$$

This weighted price score will be used to rank providers into two tiers in each LOT, with the expectation that the top 5 providers based on price, will form the top tier (assuming the response from the market is sufficiently large in any given LOT to make it worthwhile to create more than one tier). The creation of a tiering system will encourage the market to price competitively in order to receive more requests for assessments through the call off process.

- 3.25 The call off process will involve the business support team contacting all the approved providers in the relevant LOT, and asking for a response to the need for an assessment. This response will include their updated CV and availability to conduct the assessment in the specified timeframes. The CVs for the top tier of providers will then be sent to the relevant social worker, who will use their professional judgement to match the specifics of the individual case to the provider with the best level of specialism in the top tier. If no match can be made, the social worker will have the discretion to consider the next tier of providers.
- 3.26 As this will be an Approved Provider Panel, much like a framework agreement, the Council does not have to commit to any volumes of work to any provider. This will provide a mechanism to obtain assessment services as and when required, at a pre-agreed price and level of quality, thereby managing costs more effectively than the current off framework expenditure. The longer term strategy for achieving value for money, will be the in-sourcing of social work led assessments.
- 3.27 A Pre-procurement market engagement event was held on 24th September 2018, with a large number of providers in attendance with positive feedback. Further engagement with the market will continue to help strengthen Croydon's position as a strong buyer of assessment services. Feedback received will be used to influence the tender documentation and the specification and in particular incorporate achievable social value objectives.
- 3.28 Social value will be embedded in all stages of the process, from pre-procurement process through to service delivery.
- As part of the quality score, a method statement will be set asking providers to outline their approach to developing in-house capability during the life time of the contract as part of their Social Value offering.
 - Providers will be required to submit policies / statements in regards to environmental management, targeted recruitment, training opportunities and community engagement.
- 3.29 The proposed Approved Provider Panel will be contract managed by the Commissioning and Procurement division, alongside the other tier 1 Children's Social Care contracts. Contract management arrangements will be included in the Council's terms and conditions of service.

PROPOSED PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

| Activity | | Proposed Date |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| Current year | Medium Term Financial Strategy – 4 year forecast | |
| | | |
| Pre-tender market engagement | | 24 September 2018 |
| Ongoing engagement and feedback from the market | | October - December 2018 |
| RP2 report to Cabinet | | 10 December 2018 |
| Specification agreed & tender documentation approved | | December 2019 |
| OJEU Contract Notice dispatched (if applicable) | | January 2019 |
| Advertisement published (if applicable) | | January 2019 |
| Expressions of interest deadline | | N/A |
| Issue Invitation to Tender | | January 2019 |
| Tender return deadline | | Feb 2019 |
| Tender evaluation* | | March 2019 |
| Commissioning and Contract Board | | 9 th May 2019 |
| Cabinet meeting (if applicable) | | June |
| Contract award | | June/July |
| Contract commencement | | August 2019 |
| OJEU Contract Award Notice dispatch (if applicable) | | June/July |

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Following discussions with the Heads of Service and the interim Director of Early Help & Children's Social Care in April / May 2018, the commissioning intentions for all assessments elements were refreshed, and a tripartite service model was proposed in a Make of Buy report (RP1) and approved by CCB on 5 July 2018.
- 4.2 A Pre-procurement market engagement event was held 24 on September 2018. Further engagement with providers, the service department and feedback from the Courts will inform the specification and design of the Approved Provider Panel.
- 4.3 Discussions with external legal have confirmed that the flexibilities on offer under the PCR Light Touch Regime, allows for an Approved Provider Panel to be designed and new providers omitted at prescribed stages of the contract.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/2023 | 2023/24 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Revenue Budget available | | | | | |
| Expenditure | 1,007 | 2,507 | 2,507 | 2,507 | 1,007 |
| Income | | | | | |
| Estimated Growth | 1,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Effect of decision from report | | | | | |
| Contract Expenditure | 2,512 | 2,512 | 2,312 | 2,312 | 193 |
| In-house costs | | | 200 | 200 | 17 |
| Remaining budget | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | (797) |

5.2 The effect of the decision

The contract starts on 1 August 2019 and ends on 31st July 2023 (tentative), over 5 financial years. Total estimated contract value is £10.049m. The estimated growth required in Year 1 is approximately £1.5m. The estimated overspend of £5,149 from Year 1 to 5 will be managed in year to balance the budget. The underspend in Year 5 is estimated and will meet the costs of the new contract from 1 August 2023 onwards.

Overtime, SGO, viability, Form F and Connected Person Assessments will be conducted by the in house Friends and Family Service. This has been reflected in the budget being moved from third party spend to in-house expenditure from year 3 onwards. The true cost of delivering these assessments in-house and therefore the reduction in expenditure with the Approved Provider Panel will be calculated when the full business case is developed and costed.

5.3 Risks

Potential legal risks with undertaking a LTR Approved Provider Panel procurement approach are addressed as follows

| Potential risk | Mitigating actions |
|---|---|
| Care will need to be taken to ensure that [PCR 2015 LTR] mandatory requirements are adhered to (and/or risk mitigated) in procuring a "pseudo" type of framework, particularly in respect of providing for and implementing 'refresh' arrangements. It is | Under LTR, contracting authorities can design a flexible procurement process subject to the mandatory requirements of the PCR and ensuring compliance with EU principles, including transparency and non-discrimination. This interpretation of the LTR flexibilities was tested with Council's lawyers on the 2 nd October 2018, and these assumptions confirmed, subject to a need for care in drawing up procedures and documentation to mitigate against additional risk associated with a non- traditional 'framework' model. |

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| suggested that consideration be given at the outset to whether a framework arrangement could be sustainable over its proposed duration in the event it should transpire at any time that risk attached to implementing refresh arrangements was found to be unacceptably high. | The procurement documents will be reviewed by the Council's lawyers prior to publishing to ensure that the mandatory requirements have been adhered to and any attendant risks both during the initial procurement and in respect of a re-opening of competition are identified and mitigated. |
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5.4 Options

See section 12.

5.5 Future savings/efficiencies

There is work in place to recruit more mother and baby foster carers, reducing the demand for private residential placements, hence reducing high costs.

The savings potential within the Approved Provider Panel will be calculated after providers have submitted their tender prices. A robust pricing schedule will be put in place to manage increasing spend and where possible cap costs.

The Approved Provider Panel should be considered as part of a comprehensive children's social care strategy to address the issues identified above. Savings will also be achieved via other cost improvement interventions outside of the scope of the Panel – e.g.

- improved practice around early permanence
- demand management via Council investment in prevention
- earlier intervention (Early Help and pre-proceedings)
- implementation of the proposed in-house service models for assessments
- residential parenting assessments can be sourced more cost effectively via Placement Finder)
- the development of the in-house parent and child fostering service the costs of which at present range from £1,300 – £1,600 a week from independent fostering agencies (IFAs).
- At present the Teams are piloting the use of reverse residential assessments, the cost of which are approx. £25k each.

It is anticipated that these approaches will have an impact on the predicted spend on residential assessments which make up the largest part of the assessment budget although the fostering service is not expected to be fully operational for 18 months from the time of writing this report.

Josephine Lyseight, Head of Finance, on behalf of the Director of Finance, Investment and Risk

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that Legal considerations are addressed in the body of the report.

- 6.2 Approved by Sean Murphy, Head of Commercial and Property Law, on behalf of the Director of Law.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 Following consultation about any employment and TUPE implications, the following statement is provided by HR:
- 7.2 This report concerns the provision of services that will be provided by third party organisations. As such, the Council is not the employer of the staff working within the existing framework and there are no implications for Croydon employees. However, in the event that there are service provision changes, which may invoke the effects of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) 2006 Legislation (amended 2014). Where the activities of the new service are “fundamentally not the same”, TUPE may not apply, as provided for by the 2014 amendments to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) 2006 Legislation.
- 7.3 These service provision changes may impact non-Council staff (i.e. those employed by service providers that deliver services on behalf of the Council) who are directly employed to provide/support the services in scope for the Approved Provider Panel. Where the Council is not the employer the application of TUPE, or otherwise, would be determined between the service providers.
- 7.4 Nevertheless, this would remain a change of service provision for which the Council is the client; on that basis, the role of the Council would usually extend no further than facilitating the process.
- 7.5 Approved by: Nadine Maloney, Head of HR – Children, Families & Education Department, on behalf of the Director of Human Resources

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 An initial Equality Analysis was conducted in 2014 at the implementation of the existing Framework Agreement – this indicated that a detailed / full assessment was not required as no protected characteristics were impacted.
- 8.2 A full equality analysis will be undertaken prior to contract award.
- Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 There are no environmental sustainability Impacts of this report.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 There are no implications in the proposal for the reductions/prevention of crime and disorder.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

The current framework agreement for supervised contact and assessments service is due to expire in October 2019. The current providers for assessment services no longer meet the current service demand for assessment in terms of volume and breadth of specialism. Therefore procuring specialists from the market while in-sourcing certain assessments into the Council is the recommended approach.

The proposed strategy to procure an Approved Provider Panel for the delivery of Children's Social Care Assessments will support the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to provide assessments when required under the Children Act 1989 in order to meet the needs of individual children, determine what services to provide and action to take.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Do nothing

The Council has a statutory duty to provide assessments when required under the Children Act 1989 therefore this is not an option.

Procure a new framework agreement

A standard procurement framework does not allow for new providers to be admitted to the framework, or the structure of the framework to be changed in any way. Therefore it cannot be refreshed to ensure it continues to meet demand and attract the best expertise throughout the life span of the proposed contract. Therefore this option was rejected.

Procure a Dynamic Purchasing System

The Interim Director of Children's Social Care confirmed that the additional resources and costs required to implement and manage a DPS will not be a cost effective solution for the ongoing commissioning of Children's Social Care assessments. Therefore this option was rejected at this time.

CONTACT OFFICER:

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Commissioning & Procurement (Children's
Services) 020 8726 6000 Ext 63070 and
Vivienne Weeks, Senior Commissioning and
Procurement Officer (Children's Services).

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None