

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for People)	Executive Cabinet	21 March 2013

CONTRACT FOR PROVISION OF GENERALIST DEBT ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICES IN CHORLEY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report proposes that the quote of £75,000 from Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux for provision of generalist debt advice and support services in Chorley be accepted and the contract awarded to Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux (previously known as Chorley and South Ribble Districts Citizens Advice Bureaux) to commence on 01 April 2013, in line with specified performance monitoring requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the contract for provision of generalist debt advice and support services be awarded to Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. A procurement exercise has been completed for the provision of generalist debt advice and support services in Chorley. Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) were approached (in line with the approved procurement waiver) and have submitted a quote of £75,000 which successfully meets the criteria specified in the Invitation to Quote. This report proposes that this quote be accepted and the CAB awarded this contract to commence on 01 April 2013.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

(If the recommendations are accepted)

4. Awarding the contract for generalist debt advice and support services to the CAB will ensure that this service is maintained for the residents of Chorley and delivered by an organisation with evidence of providing good value for money.
5. Last year, the Lancashire West Citizens Advice Bureaux demonstrated excellent performance in contract monitoring and to date have delivered 918 advice appointments, well exceeding their year to date target of 702. They provided generalist advice to 3952 clients, also exceeding their year to date target of 3750 (this was through a number of contact types including telephone or walk in). They have achieved over £8,000,000 of financial benefits for clients through benefit take up and debts rescheduled.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- The alternative option would be not to allocate this contract to the CAB however this would mean a lengthy tendering process to identify a suitable alternative provider. This would be counter-productive given that Chorley Council have developed a good working relationship with the CAB who have been delivering this crucial service successfully Chorley for a number of years and shown to be providing good value for money.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	x
Clean, safe and healthy communities	x	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	x

BACKGROUND

- Previously, the core funding budget has allocated funding for generalist debt advice and support services in Chorley, comprising a large part of the allocation at £75,000 which is approximately 40% of the overall core funding budget.
- An Executive Member Decision was taken in January 2012 to allocate core funding currently spent on generalist debt advice and support services through a separate procurement exercise to enable more effective monitoring and contract management. The ability to prepare a clear and separate specification for this provision also prevents the potential for duplication of activity with existing advice services.
- A value for money review undertaken in November 2011 demonstrated that the CAB were providing a value for money service, therefore a procurement waiver was approved to enable officers to approach the CAB alone for the provision of this service.
- A procurement exercise was completed and the contract awarded to CAB for 2012/13. The CAB has delivered this service successfully over the last year as evidenced in paragraph 5.
- Following the successful delivery of the service in 2012/13, and the additional performance monitoring that it provided, an Executive Member Decision was taken in January 2013 to allocate the funding through another procurement exercise.

PROVISION OF SERVICES

- A maximum budget of £75,000 was approved for the provision of generalist debt advice and support services in Chorley along with a set of specific outputs and outcomes as detailed in the Invitation to Quote (available from Policy and Communications).
- Lancashire West CAB submitted a quote of £75,000 (copies available from Policy and Communications) to deliver the required services and outputs in accordance with the specified criteria. The proposal document has been evaluated and is considered to provide 'comprehensive and strong information indicating the proposal is capable of delivering outcomes to the required standard'. This has been verified by the Head of Policy and Communications.

15. If this recommendation is approved, a formal contract will be prepared to be agreed and signed by the CAB in line with timescales proposed for the distribution of Core Funding contracts.
16. The contract will include detailed performance measures (outputs and outcomes), and expected client numbers, which the provider will be required to provide information on a quarterly basis. The contract will commence from 1st April 2013 and run for one year, to be renewed annually with funding paid in two instalments as per 2012/13.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

17. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	x	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	x	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

18. The value of the commission of £75,000 is within the budget the Council has allocated for grants to the VCFS sector, and should be considered alongside the sums allocated through the core funding process shown elsewhere on this agenda.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

19. To clarify, whilst the contract specification was prepared, no tender (or procurement) exercise was undertaken. The granting of a waiver was appropriate in this matter and Best Value is demonstrated by the Value For Money review.

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Sarah James	5348	01/03/2013	Contract for provision of advice services