

# REPORT FOR: **CABINET**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	19 May 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Concessionary Travel Mobility Assessments – Tender Evaluation & Appointment of Contractor Report
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Julie Alderson, Interim Director of Finance
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation
<b>Exempt:</b>	No, except for Appendix 1, which is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person.
<b>Decision subject to Call-in:</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Yes – Appendix 1

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

Following a review of the existing processes regarding concessionary travel mobility assessments, Harrow has committed to delivering a professional; and consistent service to both improve outcomes and speed up the process. Currently assessments are carried out by ad hoc staff and outcomes are very much dependant on the experience or otherwise of the particular staff member the customer may have seen on a particular day. In order to address the issue, Harrow procured a contractor to carry out all mobility assessments to ensure future consistency of assessments occurs and that additionally any assessments giving rise to eligibility, comply with National guidelines and audit requirements.

**Recommendations:**

As a result of the evaluation of this tendering exercise, it is recommended that the contract be awarded to Access Independent.

## **Section 2 – Report**

**Background:****Concessionary Travel Assessment Tender (Part B Service – Exempt From advertising on the OJEU)**

Harrow Council wishes to introduce a more consistent approach to assessing eligibility for the Disabled Person's Freedom Pass, Blue Badge and Taxicard schemes. By applying a more transparent, equitable and systematic methodology of assessment, the service will be able to be focused more on those who need it most. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to procure a contractor to carry out professional assessments as part of the revamped assessment process.

**Options Considered**

As part of the review of the area, Harrow considered "skilling up" its existing staff. However, the new Access and Decide model is currently moving this work into Access Harrow and appointing qualified staff to carry out the complex physical assessments does not fit into the work model where more generic staff will carry out the more straight forward "paper assessments" against national criteria but leaving the more complex and time consuming physical assessments, where the customer needs to be seen and put through tests, to a more professional back office.

As only around 20-30% of the work requires a professional assessment, it is more cost effective to outsource the complex mobility assessments than to set up a back office with the relevant professional staff. On this basis, a decision was taken to invite tenders for the work.

**Tender process**

With guidance from Procurement, Finance and Adult Services, the project team developed preliminary research and tender documents. The tender was conducted under the OPEN Procedure (Part B). This tender was conducted via the Bravo e-tendering portal and therefore organisations were invited to tender. This opportunity was advertised on the E-tendering portal, Supply2gov and on the Councils website. 14 organisations expressed an interest and 3 responded.

## ITT

4 organisations were invited to tender for the Concessionary Travel Tender, and in total 14 organisations expressed an interest due to the advertisement. 3 tenders were received and 11 declined to respond.

On receipt of the tender responses, a team of 3 officers evaluated all of the submissions. The evaluation awarded a maximum of 500 points (50%) for quality of service delivery, with 500 points (50%) allocated for pricing:

### Quality Evaluation Criteria

- **Method Statement 1 Assessment Model – Section Max 17.5%**
  - Question - Assessment Model – 6%
  - Question – Transitional Arrangements 6%
  - Question – Contract Management 5.5%
  
- **Method Statement 2 Support Resources and Procedures – Section Max 10%**
  - Question – Support Resources and Procedures 5%
  - Question – Sub-contracting 5%
  
- **Method Statement 3 Complaints Procedures – Section Max 3.5%**
  - Question – Proposals to handle complaints 2%
  - Question – Proposals for continuous improvement over the duration of the contract 1.5%
  
- **Method Statement 4 Demonstration of Expertise – Section Max 9%**
  - Question – Evidence of expertise in delivering similar projects 4.5%
  - Question – How will the contract team operate 4.5%
  
- **Method Statement 5 Suitability of Staff – Section Max 5%**
  - Question – How will you ensure continuity of staff 2.5%
  - Question – What training is provided to your staff in relation to the service provision 2.5%
  
- **Method Statement 6 Quality Assurance and Health and Safety – Section Max 5%**
  - Set your definition of quality in relation to the services, and how this will be managed 2%
  - How will you measure quality 1.5%
  - Company policies for environmental impact and energy efficiency 1.5%

Bidders were asked to provide a pricing schedule for Annual Activity, Stage 1 – Paper Assessments, Stage 2 -Further Information. Stage 3 – Clinical Assessments, Stage 4 – Appeal and Stage 5 – Transfer of data by postage/courier fortnightly and then for Schedule of Rates Stages 1 – 5.

In accordance with the documents provided to the bidders, the tender submissions were evaluated as follows:

The most Economically Advantageous Tender – MEAT  
Technical Envelope (Quality) – 500 points  
Commercial Envelope (Pricing) – 500 points

Stage 1 – The evaluation panel looked at all the results for the quality section and the ranking.

Stage 2 – The evaluation panel then took into consideration the pricing scores and ranking.

Stage 3 – To assist us in achieving the MEAT both scores were put together to get an overall score as per the table below.

<b>Company</b>	<b>Quality Total out of 500 points (50%)</b>	<b>Price Out of 500 points (50%)</b>	<b>Overall Score</b>
Dependability	442.91	223.78	666.69
<b>Access Independent</b>	<b>325.00</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>825.00</b>
Able 2	285.42	452.02	737.44

The above matrix displays the result of the evaluation for Quality and Price.

### **Award Recommendation**

*As a result of the evaluation of this tender, it is recommended that the contract be awarded to Access Independent.*

This award is subject to service area authorisation in line with the Council Scheme of Delegations and sealing of the contract by Legal.

### **Financial Implications**

The cost of the service is based on the following information that formed part of the tender documents:

3375 Paper Assessments (this is not guaranteed)

780 Clinical Assessments (this is not guaranteed)

170 cases requiring further information.

We have not committed to the above quantities.

So based on the above information the annual cost of the service is £89,855.

The contract is for 3 years with 1 plus 1 year option giving a maximum term of 5 years.

### **Performance Issues**

The solution speeds up processing times for concessionary travel mobility assessments, increases accuracy of decisions, will reduce customer complaints and improve overall service delivery. The formal assessment process will also ensure only legitimate claimants are awarded concessions which will reduce expenditure over time therefore reducing budget growth pressures.

From a contract monitoring position, there are performance standards regarding timely delivery of mobility assessments, appeals and complaints with performance below 95% resulting in cost reductions ranging from 5% to 25% depending on actual performance achieved. The contract will include a performance matrix setting out and clarifying the expected performance, and sanctions for non performance below 95% of the stipulated targets, as well as a warnings system which ensures Harrow can terminate contracts if 5 or more warnings are issued within a 12 month period.

### **Environmental Impact**

None

### **Risk Management Implications**

Risk Included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate Risk Register in Place? No

### **Equalities implications**

This is an area that the contract can deliver value added benefits as a positive impact is expected through the quicker processing of assessments which supports our most vulnerable residents.

### **Corporate Priorities**

This contracts allows us to deliver statutory and discretionary services more efficiently and at lower cost. It also increases consistency of decision making by the use of professional physiotherapists rather than using unqualified Harrow staff which will reduce appeals and improve residents' view of Harrow the brand ensuring we support Harrow's vision of becoming one of the best London Councils by 2012.

## **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Name: Julie Alderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chief Financial Officer
Date: 28/03/2011	
Name: Sarah Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer
Date: 18/04/2011	
on behalf of the	

## Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: Martin Randall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Divisional Director Partnership, Development and Performance
Date: 31/03/2011		

## Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: John Edwards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Divisional Director (Environmental Services)
Date: 30/03/2011		

## Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

### Contact:

Fern Silverio (Divisional Director – Collections & Housing Benefits)  
Tel: 020-8736-6818 / email: [fern.silverio@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:fern.silverio@harrow.gov.uk)

### Background Papers:

- Procurement & Tender Evaluation documents / report

<b>Call-In Waived by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>  <i>[Call-in applies]</i>
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