

**Cheshire East Council – Volunteer Infrastructure Support**

**Soft Market Testing Questionnaire**

Cheshire East Council is conducting a soft market testing exercise to understand interest from providers in the delivery of a Volunteer Infrastructure Support Model.

The overarching aim is to create a more coordinated and joint Volunteer Infrastructure Support Service, to offer support to families in need. This service could be delivered by one organisation, a network or consortium led by a lead provider. The services will be procured in the 3 localities listed below:

**LOT 1 North Area** - Macclesfield, Knutsford, Wilmslow and Poynton

**LOT 2 Central Area** - Sandbach, Middlewich, Alsager, Congleton and Holmes Chapel

**LOT 3 South Area** - Crewe and Nantwich

The key outcomes of the service(s) are to:

* Increase the support offered to isolated and vulnerable families, over the 3 localities listed above
* Increase people’s levels of confidence through knowing how to get the right support and being actively involved in decisions which affect them
* Improve the relationship between parents and their children
* Improve people’s mental health and wellbeing
* Increase knowledge and understanding through having access to relevant information and services
* Increase the connection families have with others in their community
* Improve the quality of effective parenting, family structure and routine

**Potential Direction**

Our Vision is to have a family support volunteering service, to offer early help to local families with children who need practical and emotional support, to better manage their families post lockdown, to promote safety, stability and independence.

To do this we will create teams of experienced volunteers who will support those parents/carers that would benefit from addition help, practical support and a step-down service, from more formal casework, offered by the Council at Early Help level.

This service will aim to work with and empower families to remain independent, to build resilience and have better life outcomes, through and post lockdown. It is the ambition of Commissioners to ensure that people who use these services have a voice and are at the heart of service design, delivery and evaluation through a co-commissioning approach.

**Guidance**

This document contains a series of questions that we would like you to answer. If you could kindly return your completed questionnaire to: [CECC&FCommissioning@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:CECC&FCommissioning@cheshireeast.gov.uk) no later than 11th December 2020.

The purpose of the market engagement is to capture your comments, and to help inform the future commissioning direction of the Volunteer Infrastructure Support Model for Cheshire East Council residents. Your responses will be used by commissioners in commercial confidence.

Please note: you are not obliged to answer all or any of the questions asked within the questionnaire. Your responses will not be scored in any way. This is an information gathering exercise and is not a pre-qualification process. This soft market testing exercise does not form any part of any subsequent formal procurement process. Completion of this questionnaire does not create any formal relationship between the responder and commissioners.

You must carefully consider the use of phrases such as ‘in confidence’ or ‘commercially sensitive’ when responding since they will not necessarily protect your organisations information from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In respect of any information submitted by your organisation which is considered commercially sensitive, you should clearly identify such information as ‘commercially sensitive’.

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| **Organisational Details** | |
| Organisation |  |
| Organisation Address |  |
| Contact details (including name, email address and telephone number) |  |
| **Questions** | |
| **Question 1** | |
| Do you have experience of delivering a volunteer support service? If so, what model was used? | |
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| **Question 2** | |
| Given your experiences and expertise within this field, what new and innovative ways of working can your organisation bring to this service? | |
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| **Question 3** | |
| What do you understand to be the main challenges to the delivery of a volunteer support service? How would you ensure that commissioned services work towards achieving the desired outcomes detailed above? | |
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| **Question 4** | |
| Would your organisation be interested in tendering for this service? If so, how long would you require mobilising a service from contract award? This should include mobilising a staff team, obtaining any appropriate certificates etc. | |
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| **Question 5** | |
| Which LOT would you consider applying for? Would your organisation consider applying for more than one Lot? Please give reasons for your answer. | |
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| **Question 6** | |
| Please give any suggestions for how service delivery could be improved for children, young people and families of Cheshire East. | |
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Thank you for completing this questionnaire