

**SOFT MARKET TESTING QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Leicester City Council,**

**Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council, Leicester City CCG, West Leicestershire CCG, East Leicestershire & Rutland CCG.**

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| **PROJECT** |
| **ASC0260 Integrated Community Equipment Loan Service recommissioning proposal** |

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| **This document should be completed and returned in accordance with the Guidance for Providers** |
| **This completed questionnaire must be returned electronically by email**  **before or no later than 12:00 hours on 31st July 2020 to**  [**procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk**](mailto:procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk)  **with the subject heading: ‘Completed SMT Q – ICELS’** |
| Officer involved  **Ashok Chotalia, Procurement Manager, ASC&PH Procurement**  **Leicester City Council** |

**9th July 2020**

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**THIS IS NOT A CALL FOR COMPETITION**

**Integrated Community Equipment Loan Service recommissioning proposal**

**Introduction**

An integrated community equipment loan service has been operating in Leicester since around 2007. The service is commissioned under a Section 75 Partnership Arrangement with Leicester City Council hosting the service on behalf of all the Commissioners (listed at the top of this document). The current arrangement is due to end on 31st March 2022 and the service will be retendered in early 2021. In a time of increasing demand and challenging resources the service is respected as an essential part of provision that supports people to remain as independent as possible in the home of their choice whilst also helping to prevent, avoid and delay the point at which people might need costly care and support. The service is also integral to supporting patients discharge pathways out of acute settings and in avoiding hospital and care admissions.

Commissioners would like to undertake a soft market test. This engagement is specifically aimed at providers of community equipment services and by that we primarily mean organisations concerned with the logistical elements of manifesting deliveries/collections, recycling, storage and maintenance of a wide range of health and social care equipment. At this stage we are not looking to engage with providers who are not able to undertake the key logistical elements above, such as organisations who are solely equipment manufacturers and suppliers.

The information below is taken from data for the period 2019/2020 and is provided to give an idea of the current size of the service. However, there is an expectation that demand will continue to increase and that budgets will continue to be challenging across health and social care services and, as outlined below, this data does not reflect current demands which have changed as a consequence of COVID 19.

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| Description | Circa prices/values/quantities |
| Value of contract stock deliveries | £7.5m |
| Value of non-contract deliveries | £670K |
| Collection credits | £4.7m |
| Number of unique clients | 30K |
| Number of items of equipment delivered | 128K (56k orders) |
| Number of items of equipment collected | 94K (28k orders) |
| Planned maintenance activities | 24K (31K orders) |
| Same day emergency delivery speeds | 1% of total |
| Next day delivery speeds | 11% of total |
| 3D delivery speeds | 16% |
| 5D delivery speeds | 50% |

The Commissioners for this service have invested in their own clinical support staff to support their demand management plans following a significant year on year increase in demand and budgets up to and including 2014/15 when the budget for the service reached over £8m. Since that time the budget has seen a year on year decrease until 2018/19 with a slight increase in 2019/20 with final budget for the service being £5.36m.

The demand management plans included outcomes around:

* Improved prescribing practice
* Equipment issued in line with eligibility criteria and people receive an equitable service
* Scope of the service
* Policy for provision of equipment into care settings
* Increased number of items collected and recycled for use

For the above outcomes a number of individual actions were agreed, and this included recruiting clinical staff to the team and introducing a range of operational procedures, policy and practice. The service has a:

* Review Team whose role is to carry out proactive reviews of equipment in community and care settings and to retrieve equipment when no longer used/needed
* Triage role that ensures that requests for key items of equipment such as profiling beds and mattresses are issued in line with local criteria.
* Occupational Therapist who supports the special equipment panel and practitioners and oversees the management of specials and recycled specials, contract stock evaluations; and
* The service is going to recruit to the position of a paediatric therapist who will support the ever-increasing demand for children’s equipment both contract and specials

There has been a significant impact as a result of the interventions of the team, last year the net savings from the work of the team were £400K.

The ICELS support team also have a Partnership Manager who is the Lead Commissioner for this recommissioning exercise, a Contracts & Operations Manager, Contracts Officer and administrative support.

The Partnership Board have investing heavily in the clinical/support roles and the Provider will be expected to work closely with the team to deliver the high quality, cost effective service that Commissioners are seeking and to deliver in line with objectives of this service.

The Provider will be expected to have a clinical team within the service procured who will be expected to support the demand management plans and work closely with the ICELS Clinical Team.

LLR ICELS operates as a credit model and there are no plans to change this.

**Commissioning intentions:**

There will be a greater focus on more integrated pathways across health and social care, providing interventions that avoid people having to go into hospital and to provide treatment and rehabilitation at the person’s home and to ensure that people can remain as independent as possible in the home of their choice. People will be discharged from hospital earlier, as soon as they no longer need complex medical interventions, but this may mean they go home with a greater need for equipment in the shorter term.

The service will continue to be an integrated service offer across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and will continue to provide a range of standard contract health and social care equipment and provision of special equipment to people living in their own homes, in care settings and in educational settings. The service provides equipment for adults and children and young people.

The intention of the Commissioners is to commission a service that offers innovative practice in key areas of delivery of a community equipment service and that can deliver quality and efficiencies for all stakeholders.

We would encourage you to respond if you feel this is something your organisation may have an interest in.

# Guidance for providers

**This process does not constitute a formal tender or other competitive bidding process and will not result in the letting of a Contract**. The commissioners are using this process solely to test the market to gather information and ascertain the level of interest in this service. There are therefore no formal criteria which we will use to judge your responses and it is not our intention to provide any feedback.

Keep a copy of your completed questionnaire. You will need this if we need to clarify or discuss your answers with you.

This completed questionnaire must be returned electronically by email before or no later than **12:00 hours on 31st July 2020** to [procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:procurement-asc@leicester.gov.uk) with the subject heading: ‘**Completed SMT Q – ICELS’**.

# Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

Please be aware that we are subject to the disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and that potentially any information we hold is liable to disclosure under that Act. For this reason, we would strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such.

The Councils are committed to open government and to meeting its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted to a public authority may need to be disclosed by the public authority in response to a request under the Act. The Councils may also decide to include certain information in the publication scheme which the Councils maintain under the Act. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA"), members of the public or any interested party may make a request for information to the Council.

The Councils will consider the disclosure of any information, including prices, contained in the SMT document, subject to the exemptions the FOIA.

# Soft Market Testing Questionnaire

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| **GENERAL INFORMATION** | | |
| **4.1 Full name, address and website** | | |
| Trading name of the organisation |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Town/ City |  | |
| Postcode |  | |
| Country |  | |
| Website URL |  | |
| **4.2 Main contact for correspondence about this questionnaire** | | |
| Name |  | |
| Position |  | |
| Telephone number |  | |
| Mobile phone number |  | |
| Email address |  | |
| **4.3 Trading Status** | | |
| Trading status of organisation:  ☐ a limited company  ☐ a public limited company  ☐ a limited liability partnership  ☐ other partnership  ☐ a sole trader  ☐ a third sector  ☐ other (please specify) | | |
| Date of registration in country of origin | |  |
| Company registration number (if applicable) | |  |
| Charity registration number (if applicable) | |  |
| **4.4 Organisation Classification** | | |
| Relevant classifications (state whether you fall within one of these, and if so which one)  ☐ Voluntary Community Social Enterprise (VCSE)  ☐ Sheltered Workshop  ☐ Public service mutual  ☐ Not applicable | | |
| **4.5 Size of Organisation** | | |
| Is your organisation a Large, Medium, Small or Micro Enterprise (SME)?  ☐ Micro (0-10 employees)  ☐ Small (11-50 employees)  ☐ Medium (51- 250 employees)  ☐ Large (over 250 employees) | | |

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| **Questions for the market**  Interested parties are asked to provide responses to the following questions  Please note that although there is no word limit, we do not expect huge amounts of detail in response to each question. |
| **Question 1** |
| In your view what length of contract period would be a more attractive option and if you could indicate why in your response:  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 2** |
| What added value/innovation could you bring to the demand management plans and requirement to deliver more efficiencies for this service?  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 3** |
| Commissioners place high importance on the quality and accuracy of information received about the service and the ability for the Provider to be responsive to requests for information. This means that there is an expectation that any provider will have IT systems, processes and procedures that can deliver this and that are transparent and easy to understand, to enable the service to be monitored for quality and performance measures, analysed for trends, usage etc and for financial transparency. Please tell us about real innovation you have in these areas and your general views about IT requirements for ICELS.  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 4** |
| Commissioners also place high importance on high quality responsive communications across all platforms. We are also exploring putting in place a telephone queue management system where people have calling options, are notified of their place in the queue and estimated wait times. Please tell us about your views on delivery of this requirement and about what innovation you are delivering in this area.  Provide your response here: |

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| **Question 5** |
| Previously we have asked that office space for ICELS staff to co-locate with the Equipment Provider and demonstration space for equipment training/evaluation/demo is made available at the Provider Depot. Please explain your views on this, in particular around whether you feel having commissioner staff on site is positive or not, whether you feel that there are additional costs involved in doing this that commissioners would need to cover and any other general feedback about this type of arrangement.  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 6** |
| We are interested to hear about innovation that delivers high quality logistic services that includes proactive stock control management (in particular to deliver a service with the minimum amount of out of stock products) and with high quality communications. Please explain how you would seek to deliver this in the service.  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 7** |
| The service puts great emphasis on accuracy of information and record keeping and we want to ensure that the information on client records is accurate and up to date at all times. We are therefore interested to hear your views on how this can be delivered and any innovative practice you have in this area.  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 8** |
| With large numbers of ageing specialist equipment in the community, this brings problems in terms of repair and/or replacement. We are interested to hear your views on what a process for managing this might look like and what the involvement of equipment providers should be in managing/supporting this.  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 9** |
| The provision of specialist equipment for children and young people has been a challenging area for equipment services for many years and the demand in this area is increasing. We are interested to hear about any innovative work you have been doing in supporting equipment services to manage this, improve use of recycled stock, limit the range of equipment, achieve efficiencies etc.  Provide your response here: |

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| **Question 10** |
| Please provide your views on the provision of a requirement to provide a facility for prescribers to book their own on-line delivery slots, in terms of whether this is something currently available in this market or whether there would need to be investment to provide this and any general comments in relation to a requirement like this.  Provide your response here |
| **Question 11** |
| We are interested in exploring whether incentives are attractive to the market and what this might look like for ICELS, for example around recycling rates. You may already be operating this type of approach in other areas so we are keen to understand from you if these work or not and what the market would be interested in.  Provider your response below |
| **Question 12** |
| In view of the COVID19 Pandemic we are also interested to understand the pressures and challenges equipment providers face now and for the foreseeable future as a result of this, in terms of workforce, supply of equipment/parts etc. and your general views on the impact this may have in you tendering for this service.  Provide your response here: |
| **Question 13** |
| What information do you need within the tender that would be helpful in preparing your tender offer or find helpful in order to bid for this service?  Provide you response here: |
| **Question 14** |
| Do you have any additional comments that you would like to make in terms of delivery of an ICELS?  *(250 words or less)*  Provide you response here: |

5. **UNDERTAKING BY THE PROVIDER**

I/We certify that the information supplied is accurate to be best of my/our knowledge and that I/We accept the conditions and undertakings requested in the questionnaire and also fully understand that this is not a call for competition.

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| Signed\* |  |
| Name (please print) |  |
| Position |  |
| On behalf of (name of organisation) |  |
| Date |  |

**\****Please note the term ‘Provider’ refers to sole proprietor, partnership, incorporated company, and cooperative as appropriate. The undertaking should be signed by a partner or authorised representative in her/his own name and on behalf of the Provider*