SHEPWAY DISTRICT COUNCIL



**Appendix Aii – Specification (Lot 2)**

**Employee Assistance Programme**

INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 THE CONTRACT

The Council is seeking to award two contracts – one for Occupational Health services (Lot 1) and one for an Employee Assistance Programme (Lot 2). Both contracts are linked to effective absence management and enhancing the health and wellbeing of staff and it is noted that interested parties may be in a position to bid for both services. The Council may then offer one party to provide both services as one contract or two parties providing Occupational Health and Employee Assistance services independently. Quotes for each lot will be evaluated separately.

The Contracts are anticipated to commence upon 1st January 2017 and will continue for a period of 36 months with a possibility to extend for not more than an additional 24 months unless terminated in accordance with the Conditions of the Contract.

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Council, the successful Service Provider shall provide relevant services only to those employees of the Council which are referred on or after the Commencement Date of the Contract. Any employees referred to the incumbent supplier prior to the Commencement Date of the Contract shall remain with the said incumbent supplier.

## 1.2 THE COUNCIL

The Council is based at the Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2QY

The District of Shepway is situated on the channel coast about 75 miles from London. It occupies a key strategic position and a gateway to continental Europe.

The district has an area of 140 sq miles (35,700 hectares) and has a natural, high quality environment with a number of distinct landscapes, communities and places of interest. The district is complex; often contrasting in terms of relative affluence and deprivation, with dense urban environments and rural isolation, and it is always changing.

Shepway boasts a rich variety of attractive landscapes, from rolling chalk downland and wooded valleys to marshes. It is fringed by the sea and has a coastline of more than 20 miles. More than 33 per cent of the district falls within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and there are numerous wildlife sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There is a wealth of notable heritage spanning the whole of British history including Iron Age and Roman settlements; medieval churches; Tudor castles and Napoleonic fortifications.

Shepway is home to almost 100,000 people, 47% of the population live in Folkestone and 22% live in the towns of Hythe and New Romney. The number of households is approximately 48,000.

The Council employs approximately 385 staff in a range of occupations. Approximately 80% are based at the Council’s Civic Centre in Folkestone and undertake a range of managerial, administrative, customer service and community based activities. It should be noted that numerous roles, such as those involved in community safety or environmental protection, are not predominantly office based and work and travel throughout the district.

The Council encourages flexible working; the majority of these staff “hot desk” at the Council premises rather than having individual and permanent work stations and many work from home or in other locations regularly.

Approximately 15% of staff are manual workers, employed in grounds maintenance roles such as gardeners, and the remaining 5% are based at the swimming pool in Hythe. The Council employs about 20 people who work night shifts.

Given the nature of the services the Council provides, staff are often faced with challenging situations that may have an emotional effect. Staff may also have personal circumstances that effect health and wellbeing, engagement and performance. The required Services will therefore take an active role in supporting and promoting staff physical and mental health and wellbeing in order to enhance wellbeing and reduce sickness absence.

The Council’s current Absence Management Policy is included as Annex 1.

# LOT 2 – employee assistance programme

Employee assistance programme to include the following services:

## ESSENTIAL SERVICES

1. Counselling Services.
	* Telephone counselling support from initial point of contact
	* Face-to-face counselling. The Council requires a minimum of up to 6 face-to-face counselling sessions. Additional session(s) may also be required on demand.
	* Face-to-face counselling to be provided in a range of locations within the district of Shepway, or within East Kent and with easy access for our employees, to offer convenience to our employees.
	* Counselling to include a range of work and personal issues e.g. emotional, health, wellbeing and welfare, financial (inc. debt), bereavement, depression, stress, relationship, drugs and alcohol and employment issues (excluding contentious issues).
	* Some employees work in emotional demanding environments, working with vulnerable members of the district. Ability to provide counselling services to these employees is essential.
	* Referral into structured telephone counselling sessions may also be provided as part of the counselling service offer.
2. Employees must be able to access the service confidentially and through self-referral, although they may be referred by their line manager / HR services.
3. Information advertising the service must be included, e.g. cards that can be given to employees, leaflets, posters etc. Access for employees to online resources / portals is expected.
4. Management information giving usage reports, trends etc. This should be provided on an annual basis as minimum. It is expected that this will be at no extra charge

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| **KPIs – EAP** |
| **Service Level Description** | **Targets** | **Minimum Acceptable Performance** | **Measured by:** |
| Triage, referral into appropriate Counselling service, and employee notified of appointment details | Within 2 working days of initial contact | 100% | Annual Management Information |
| Appointment offered with appropriate Counsellor  | Within 5 working days of matching to an appropriate Counsellor | 95% | Annual Management Information |

## DESIRABLE SERVICES

1. Service available to dependants
2. Private legal guidance and information, excluding contentious work related issues.
3. Private financial guidance and information.
4. Online resource centre providing e.g. health and wellbeing, debt management information and advice.
5. 24 hour and accessed via free phone number.
6. Mediation service
7. Access to health and wellbeing courses / workshops. This may be at an additional cost. Please outline in the cost schedule.

Shepway District Council currently has circa 385 employees. Employee figures may fluctuate throughout the life of the contract. Please stipulate if annual costs are fixed at the beginning of the year / contract (i.e. fixed on employee numbers as at 1st January 2017) or if and when any fluctuation in employee numbers may effect a change.