**Clarification questions Preferred Provider List Application**

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|  | Question | Response | Published Date |
| Q1 | Does a provider have to be CQC registered to be part of the framework? | Question 4.1 is a pass/fail question and we require proof of CQC registration if your organisation is providing Personal Care or direct support with medication. As the list is open every 6 months you will be able to apply once registration is achieved. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q2 | Can a provider be working towards CQC registration ? | See Q1 response. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q3 | Can a provider just deliver the support element of the contract and not the care element? | Providers must be able to deliver both support and care and be registered for domiciliary care with CQC | 13/12/2013 |
| Q4 | Would it be acceptable to complete just one application form for the group as apart from the company numbers and financial account aspects all information will be very much the same as we work to the same policies and procedures across the group. We will make it clear where information differs. | To enable The Council to procure services from each company within the group we will need separate applications for each company (with different company number) that we may commission care and support from via the list. But non care & support companies within the group do not need to apply to this list. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q5 | Do you accept a typed signature or do you require a handwritten one scanned in? | It is acceptable to handwrite the signature and then scan the document or to use an e-signature that replicates the authorised person’s actual signature.  It is not acceptable to simply type the authorised person’s name when a signature is required. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q6 | Required Certification 4.2 – Other – What other certification is required here , could you provide an example / further guidelines | We would like to see any professional certificates such as Investors in people or ISO. | 17/12/2013 **amended response** |
| Q7 | Is an electronic signature acceptable for the declaration at page 19? | See Q5 response | 13/12/2013 |
| Q8 | The scoring criteria on page 4 states that: For each Client Group 5 questions will be answered; 2 generic + 3 client specific. Do the two generic questions on page 12 have to be answered therefore for each client groups that we would like to be considered for, or do we answer those questions only once? | Please only answer the generic questions once | 13/12/2013 |
| Q9 | When providers on the framework will be able to apply to add additional service user categories, will this be in 6 months?  When will unsuccessful providers be able to reapply to be admitted to the framework, will this be in 6 months? | Providers will be able to apply to additional service user categories on the preferred provider list when the list is re-opened every 6 months  Unsuccessful Providers will be able to apply to service user categories on the preferred provider list when the list is re-opened every 6 months | 13/12/2013 |
| Q10 | Is each question in the application a stand- alone answer or will information given in 1 answer be considered when scoring other questions? | Each question is a stand-alone question | 13/12/2013 |
| Q11 | Accredited Quality System – you state providers are required to have an accredited quality system. Will bids from organisations that have robust but un accredited quality systems be considered? | Yes bids will be considered from organisations that do not have an accredited system but have a robust policy and un accredited system, If a clear explanation of the quality system is given | 13/12/2013 |
| Q12 | Deadline of 6/1/14 – will the councils extend the deadline as even though a 4 week window has been allowed for the tender Christmas and New year significantly erode the available time? For many the deadline date is the first day back after the Christmas break and this does make responding to this opportunity challenging. | Change to deadline please see portal for information | 17/12/2013 **amended response** |
| Q13 | Will there be a set number of providers on the list for each client group or does everyone that passes get put on the list? | Everyone who passes will get put on the list | 13/12/2013 |
| Q14 | If we are accepted onto the list do we have to tender for opportunities or can we decide based on the individual opportunity? | You can decide based on the individual opportunity | 13/12/2013 |
| Q15 | Will the opportunities for individual tenders be on a block gross contract basis? | Mini competitions will usually be on the basis of a contract for core hours (usually 105 per week background hours) plus a waking night or sleep in depending on the service specification. The personal 1:1 hours required by each individual will be specified where possible, where this is not possible then an indicative number of client hours will be described in the client profile. When clients ask The Council to procure services on their behalf we will commission these with the awarded provider. Clients will have the opportunity to take a direct payment and choose a provider of their choice for their 1:1 hours. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q16 | Will the price be stated for each individual tender? | We anticipate asking providers for their core hours hourly rate and their 1:1 hours hourly rate as well as their waking night hourly rate and their nightly sleep in cost. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q17 | Will there be a need for deliver Dom Care in all of the tenders, if this is not the case is this acceptable that we are not registered as a dom care provider? | There will be the need for care and support in all of the tenders as all services will be providing services to adults eligible for adult social care funding. | 13/12/2013 |
| Q18 | Can you please confirm that if we do NOT have a recognised quality management statement but we DO have a quality management system, that we will pass section 7 of the Preferred Supplier List application | Please see response to Q 11 | 17/12/2013 |
| Q19 | Please can you confirm the word limit for section 7.2, Quality management system description | There is no prescribed word limit for this section | 17/12/2013 |
| Q20 | Will individuals who have a learning disability with an associated condition such as mental health, physical disability or sensory impairment be covered on the Learning Disability provider list or do we have to be on all lists to be able to support such individuals? | If the primary support need is due to a learning disability then we will usually only open the mini competition to providers on the learning disability list. Where needs are complex and could be best met or met by providers on the list under other categories the mini competition will be open to providers on both lists. | 17/12/2013 |
| Q21 | There is considerable overlap between questions asked under each of the category specific questions e.g. question 9.4 and 9.19 are almost identical, but the first is under the LD heading and the second under the autism heading. I want to avoid repeating myself inappropriately but also avoid omitting key information where similar questions in different categories are being evaluated by different people. To what extent should we repeat information when it applies to more than one question? | Each category will be evaluated by different people so please ensure all information required is in each question, as such we would expect some repetition. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q22 | In terms of the 6 Lots will the individuals within these require a mixture of Low, Medium and High Level support or is it anticipated that the individuals will be predominantly in the higher needs category? E.g. Individuals with Mental Health needs will all have highly complex needs and require high levels of support all times? | All clients under each category will have substantial or critical levels of need to meet the FACS eligibility for funding from adult social care. Within those levels we would expect a mixture of levels of need. Consideration will be given to the client mix and an indicative level of need and expected 1:1 hours will be defined in each specific service specification as part of the mini competition information. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q23 | In terms of values for the packages, is the council able to provide a range of the existing values and charge rates for the packages? | We are unable to provide this information at this stage. The mini competitions will be to deliver a mixture of new services and re-tendered services. For the new services we will indicate as part of the mini competition the expected indicative client hours as defined by the Care Fund Calculator (CFC). This tool gives indicative price bands which may be useful for Providers to make themselves aware of. For services we are re-tendering we will give actual client hours according to a CFC review. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q24 | Are we able to tender just to provide the physical properties and housing management, rather than the full care and support services?  If so, how do we reflect this in the tender questionnaire? | No, this list is for the procurement of care and support only. This list will be used to issue mini competitions to care and support providers only.  Regarding housing provision, when we have a specific requirement for housing we will issue this over the portal separately.  Additionally when we have a requirement for both care and support and housing it is likely we will issue this to the providers on the care and support list and as a housing requirement over the portal. We will then evaluate bids from separate organisations and any bids from organisations which can provide both elements or organisations which have formed partnerships.  The Buckinghamshire County Council nominations agreement for housing will be published imminently on the South East Business Portal along with the expected future specialist accommodation needs and Housing Providers will be able to express their interest via the Portal. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q25 | I represent a fairly new agency and we do not have audited accounts in place due to the infancy of the business. Is it acceptable to present a business plan instead or other form of reassurance? | A business plan is not appropriate, we will require accounts for the period since the business commenced trading | 20/12/2013 |
| Q26 | Can you please tell me if there is an opportunity to include appendices with the application form for further information or clarification? | We expect answers to quality questions, including any attachments to be within the prescribed word limits. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q27 | In the notes at part C it states that financial appraisal will be established using audited accounts. However, in the financial information section it requests audited accounts from only those who are NOT registered companies.  Can you please confirm whether or not registered companies need provide audited accounts at this stage of procurement? | We request audited accounts from all where Providers have accounts audited, however if as a small business, who are not required to have their accounts audited, the latest accounts will suffice. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q28 | We wish to apply to support adults with autism.  Some of the people we support will be in the age range 18 – 25, some will have a learning disability. Should we complete the specific questions relating to all three client groups? | If a service is designed for young people with autism or people with autism and a learning disability we are likely to issue the mini competition to Providers under both categories.  If you do not wish to complete mini competitions for services for people with a learning disability or transitions clients without autism you will not need to complete these sections. There may be some clients with autism in these more general services where these services can meet their needs but they will not be designed as specialist autism services. This type of service will be issued as a mini competition to the providers under the learning disability category only. | 20/12/2013 |
| Q29 | There appears to be two deadlines published for this  programme  Last date for expressing interest 15th Jan 14  Planned start date 6th Feb 2014  end date 5th Feb 2017 | The Deadline for receipt of application and requested attachments is 15th Jan 14. The 6th Feb date is the date we will notify Providers whether they have been accepted on to the list and the start date of the preferred provider list. The 5th Feb 2017 is the date the preferred provider list closes. | 08/01/2014 |
| Q30 | Are there any plans during the life of this contract to de-register any services from residential care to supported living? If so, would providers need to have applied and been accepted onto the residential care list in order to be able to be considered for such mini-competitions? | There may be mini competitions which require providers to provide support in registered services, which will then be de-registered or re-provided in new buildings as supported living services where clients’ needs have been assessed as being better supported in supported living.  Where support is required initially in registered care then in supported living services the Provider will need to be able to demonstrate that they can provide both styles of service. However the preferred provider list is divided into client group categories only. It is not divided into residential care and supported living provision. Assessments regarding Providers ability to provide the specified services will be tested at the mini competition stage. The preferred provider application asks which service types Providers wish to provide for information purposes only. | 08/01/2014 |
| Q31 | Clause 4 of the contract terms provides for the usual contract period to be five years. Please will the Council confirm that this will apply on a scheme-by-scheme basis, so that a contract let in (say) 2014 will last until 2019, whereas one let in (say) 2016 will last until 2021? If that is not the case, please will the Council explain what is intended?  Clause 4 also allows for an extension (or extensions) of up to two years in all, making seven years maximum. Please will the Council confirm that such extensions can only take place by the agreement at the time of both parties? If that is not the case, please will the Council explain what is intended?  The contract terms appear to provide only very limited rights for either party to terminate a contract for a specific scheme before expiry of its normal full term of five years. This is very unusual, particularly for contracts of such a long duration.  Whilst it is obviously hoped and expected that all schemes will operate in a way that is satisfactory to both parties, unforeseen situations can arise to make the contract unreasonably burdensome to one party or the other through no fault of the party affected. (Examples include changes in the law, or in the market for staff.)  Please will the Council provide a right for the Provider (but we should be happy that it be either party) to terminate a contract for a specific scheme on reasonable notice (say three months) without alleging fault or citing specific cause?  If the Council is unable to agree, what remedies does it feel would be available to a party so affected?  The contract terms do not appear to provide for either party to be able to terminate an individual service user’s placement in a scheme. Whilst it would be most unusual for such a step even to be considered, a service user’s behaviour can sometimes present a danger to the Provider’s staff and/or to other service users in the scheme. Such behaviour might be in breach of the tenancy agreement, but there is no guarantee that the tenancy agreement will be adequately worded nor any guarantee that the landlord will enforce the tenancy even if it is well worded.  It is also possible that a service user’s care and support requirements will change so as to render the service no longer suitable to his or her needs.  Please will the Council provide a contractual mechanism for the Provider to terminate a contract in so far as it applies to a specific service user, following all reasonable endeavours to find an alternative satisfactory way forward. | Yes, this will be on a scheme by scheme basis  Yes, extensions will only take place with the agreement at the time of both parties  Should the provider have any reasons or thinking of withdrawing from a contract the Provider should seek discussion with the Councils representative. The Council will act as reasonably as possible in their response.  Neither party will be able to terminate a service users placement within a scheme without the consent of the service user or the person’s legal representative or other legal restrictions take effect (Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Act etc)  This is because the person would have rights as a tenant/licencee which the Council or support provider would be unable to overrule. Housing providers will have a nominations agreement with the Council and will be required to fulfil their obligations and as such it would be their responsibility to tackle behaviours via their tenancy/licence management processes. If the service user is posing a risk to themselves or others then the Council will discuss and support appropriate action plans put in place to alleviate risk.  If a service users care and support requirements change and make the service unsuitable the service user and representatives will be offered suitable alternatives. All parties, including the Council will meet and discuss appropriate solutions. | 08/01/2014 |
| Q 32 | With regard to the “Contract for the provision of Residential Care Services” please can you clarify if this contract only applies to new business awarded through Preferred Provider List mini tenders. | The contract(s) you are signing up to is intended for use with future services to be commissioned via the preferred provider list and by agreeing to the terms and conditions you are agreeing to sign up to this contract for future commissioned services procured by this preferred provider list.  Any changes to current contracts will be led by contract management in discussion with Providers as and when required. | 23/01/2014 |