****

**STOCKPORT Metropolitan borough COUNCIL**

**Soft Market testing**

**Provision of a Generic Carers Service across Stockport**

Contract Period:

**1 April 2021 – 31 March 2024**

**with the option to extend for a further two years**

1. **Background**

The Council is committed through its statutory obligations and policies to continually improve the offer and quality of services available for residents who are carers in line with the Care Act 2014.

Like many local authorities, Stockport Council faces financial pressures and we are actively working to ensure best value is achieved, making the most of all our resources to meet today’s needs and prevent tomorrow’s from increasing and ensure that people live well for longer. There are approximately 32,000 people in Stockport who are providing unpaid care for a person who could not cope without their support due to illness, disability, a mental health condition or an addiction.

This Council currently commission a carers service for carers who are caring for adults aged 18 and over with mental illness and distress. It provides interventions including information and advice, statutory assessments when required, setting up and reviewing care plans and support services. Currently, there are no formal services commissioned within Stockport for “general” carers with the exception of a one year pilot for carers assessments linked to the Front Door which is due to terminate early in 2021.

We would like to take the opportunity to do some `soft market testing’ as outlined below, to determine current interest levels in the market.

1. **Key Aims**

Through a competitive procurement process the Council wishes to explore options of the recommissioning of its carers service which will work with all carers and not just carers who have a caring responsibility for mental health clients as it does currently. Key aims that this could include are to (but not exhaustive)

* Developing and delivering carers information and advice
* Developing carers services that are right for carers in Stockport, where possible in co-design or co-production
* Enabling Respite for carers
* Developing and delivering Befriending, Peer support & Volunteering
* Influencing and shaping the system to reflect carers views and wishes
* Delivering effective training and carer awareness for carers and professionals
* Carers are identified at an early stage and have access to relevant information, advice and support.
* Carers experience increased levels of well-being through having access to relevant information and advice and signposting to other services that can support them in their caring role.
* Carers are able to better manage their own health and wellbeing to enable them to cope with stress, to recognise their own health needs and maintain a healthy lifestyle whilst caring.
* Carers are able to realise their potential.
* Carers are supported to maintain employment, education, training or volunteering.
* Carers are encouraged to consider and plan for their future needs and those of the person they cared for.
* Carer’s needs are reduced or prevented from escalating.
* Carers receive a service that meets their cultural and language needs.
* Carers are encouraged to access support groups and training to help them manage their caring role, in a range of settings through a variety of methods.
* Carers feel able and empowered in learning new practical ways of managing their caring role.
* Carers are supported to manage their caring role for as long as they wish to do so. This includes decisions to reduce or relinquish their caring responsibilities.
* Carers feel that there are opportunities to give as well as receive help and support and feel able to gain inspiration and support from other carers.
* Carers have opportunities to increase their social circle, feel more in control and less isolated and alone.
* contribute to the development of the on-line digital information platform for carers

**The contract value for the generic carers service will be £104,000 per annum for 3 years, with the option to extend for a further** **two years in annual increments.**

**Project Timescales**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stage of the project** | **Anticipated deadline** |
| Soft market testing | 23rd October 2020 – 6th November 2020 |
| Progress to applications and bidder’s day | 30th November 2020 |
| Closing date for suppliers to have submitted applications | 8th January 2021 |
| Result of Procurement Process  | 1st February 2021 |
| Contract Start Date | 1st April 2021 |

1. **Soft Market Testing**

**THIS IS NOT A CALL FOR COMPETITION**

The Soft Market Test is intended to allow interested organisations with relevant experience to outline their views and provide information with no commitment to themselves or Stockport Council.

**Stage 1 -** Interested suppliers are required to complete the following company information form and a short questionnaire (at appendix 1).

The questionnaire should be returned via The Chest - <https://www.the-chest.org.uk/> by noon 6th November 2020. **The questionnaire should be returned via the messaging portal to be considered.**

If Suppliers have any questions about this soft market test, such questions should be submitted to the Council using the ‘Question and Answer’ facility within the opportunity advertised on The Chest. A copy of the question and a copy of the written reply may be circulated to all Suppliers, with anonymity of the Supplier preserved. Suppliers must not raise questions through any other channels, including emails direct to the Council or to STAR Procurement. No questions will be responded to, other than those raised through The Chest as described above

**We encourage your participation in this soft market testing exercise, but must emphasise that your involvement in this exercise will not carry any commercial advantage in any ensuing procurement process.**

**No information provided in response to this soft market testing exercise will be used in any evaluation of any subsequent response to a procurement exercise.**

1. **General Information**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **3.1** | Full name of your organisation: |  |
| Contact Details Name: |  |
| Job Title: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Telephone no: |  |
| Fax No: |  |
| Mobile No: |  |
| Email Address: |  |
| Web Address (if any): |  |
|  | Company Type (e.g. Limited Company) |  |
|  | Company Size (e.g. Large, SME) |  |

1. **Undertaking from the supplier**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name:\* |  |
| Signed: | Duly authorised on behalf of the Supplier(Electronic signature required here) |
| Position: |  |
| Date: |  |

**Appendix 1 – Questionnaire**

**Please complete the following questionnaire fully, highlighting any information that you consider to be commercially sensitive\***

1. Would you be interested in bidding for the generic carers service? (500 words)

If Yes, why?

If No, why not?

1. Would you be interested in attending the Bidder’s Day? If so, please provide contact information.
2. Please detail the experience your organisation has in delivering this type of carer provision? (500 words)
3. Please detail your organisations ability & infrastructure to support carers across Stockport (500 words)
4. When/if SMBC progress with the recommissioning of the carers service following the soft market test, is there anything in addition to the information in this brief that suppliers would need to be advised of in order to aid in their response. (500 words)
5. Please can you detail a brief statement to demonstrate what added value your organisation can offer in the market? (500 words)
6. Do you foresee any challenges with the financial envelope provided in delivering the requirements?