

REPORT TO:	CABINET 20 OCTOBER 2014
AGENDA ITEM:	Appendix 1 to Agenda Item 8
SUBJECT:	PROCUREMENT STRATEGY OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICES
LEAD OFFICER:	Sarah Ireland, Director of Strategy Commissioning Procurement And Performance
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Alisa Flemming, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Learning And Cllr Simon Hall, Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury And Cllr Louisa Woodley Cabinet Member for People & Communities
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>The provision of a quality passenger transport service as described in this report enables the Council to meet the key aspirations of the Community Strategy 2013-15 to be a better borough, to protect vulnerable people and to encourage people to take responsibility</p>	

FINANCIAL IMPACT

In the financial year 2014/15 the predicted spend on SEN transport (Coach, minibus, car and taxi) is £7.6m.

The procurement approach described in this report anticipates a saving in the region of 10%.

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: This is not a key executive decision.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to approve the strategy identified within the detail of this report to procure suppliers to be appointed under a framework agreement for a term of four years to deliver passenger transport services for children/young people with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities and vulnerable adults.

If the

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval of the procurement strategy for the tendering of passenger transport services for children/young people with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities and vulnerable adults (passenger transport services).
- 2.2 The existing contracts for the provision of minibus and coach services and a Framework Agreement for the provision of car and taxi services expire in 2015, and the re-procurement of these services needs to begin in October 2014 to ensure the continuity of provision from the Summer of 2015.
- 2.3 The procurement of a single new Framework Agreement for all passenger transport services, against a stringent and detailed Service Specification, will ensure the provision of safe, secure, reliable and suitable transport for service users.
- 2.4 The proposed Framework Agreement, supported by contractual terms and conditions intended to give greater control to the Council than the existing arrangements, will provide complete flexibility to enable the Council to move towards a new travel service delivery model for all or part of the existing provision of transport services at any stage in the future, if and when it wishes to do so.

- 2.5 There are no changes to the policy for eligibility for the provision of travel/transport support associated with the procurement.
- 2.6 The future cost of provision of passenger transport services arising from this procurement will be met from existing transport budgets in CFL and DASHH.

3. DETAIL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1 Croydon Council's provision of safe, suitable and reliable passenger transport services is vital to enable eligible children/young people with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities and vulnerable adults (the service users) to access the educational and care services that they need. Parents, carers and service users depend on these services and insist that they are of high quality and operate efficiently.
- 3.1.2 Most of these transport services are currently provided by commercial transport providers under contractual arrangements that expire in 2015, and the re-procurement of these services needs to be initiated in early October 2014 to ensure continuity of support for clients. The re-procurement of services must be flexible enough to meet future changing service needs and to be able to adapt to the new requirements of any alternative travel and transport service delivery model that the Council may wish to adopt in future.

3.2 BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 The Council provides home-to-school travel support for children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), and home-to-care provision travel support for vulnerable adults, in accordance with its statutory obligations and published eligibility policies. Travel support takes many forms, including the provision of independent travel training to enable clients to travel independently on public transport, and personal travel budgets and direct payments to enable clients to make their own travel arrangements. Nevertheless, the direct provision of passenger transport is still the most common provision for eligible clients.
- 3.2.2 Currently the Council provides passenger transport services using a mixture of fixed-term contracts for minibus and coach services and call-off contracts for car and taxis from a Framework Agreement which can be summarised as follows:

Vehicle Types	Contract Type	Providers	Destinations	Clients	Routes	Annual Cost
Minibus/Coach	Contract	4	16	501	70	£2.67M
Car/MPV/Taxi	Framework Agreement	17	123	561	306	£4.91M
Totals		21	123	1062	376	£7.58M

Additionally, adult social care clients attending Council day centres and reablement centres are transported by a small number of vehicles operated by DASHH and Croydon Care Solutions Ltd.

- 3.2.3 The current contracts and Framework Agreement, commenced in 2011 for a period of 4 years, following termination of the previous passenger transport contract arrangements. These contracted services have generally operated well. However earlier this year one of the coach/minibus providers was closed after going into liquidation, but careful contingency planning and the availability of other providers under contract to the Council ensured that impact of this was minimal, and continuity of service to clients was quickly restored.
- 3.2.4 Experience with the existing Framework Agreement and transport contracts has shown that these arrangements are not as flexible or as responsive to changing transport needs as they could be, and do not provide sufficient ongoing competition amongst the providers to ensure that the Council is achieving the best possible value for money over time. The intended approach to the proposed re-procurement will address these issues delivering more flexible and responsive services achieving better value for money.

3.3 FUTURE TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

- 3.3.1 Croydon Council's travel and transport services operate under a 'mixed-economy' model of in-house and contracted passenger transport services that are managed by officers in different departments of the Council and are not fully-integrated. However, as part of the 'Croydon Challenge' process, officers are considering whether an alternative service delivery model for the management and provision of travel and transport services should be adopted in future. There is a wide range of possible options that could be considered for this including the full integration of the existing 'mixed-economy' model, the full or partial insourcing of contracted services, the creation of a new social enterprise or local authority trading company or the transfer of services to an existing one, the creation of a mutual, or the adoption of a managed service approach.
- 3.3.2 In addition, the Council wish to review how clients access travel and what is the most effective and sustainable way to encourage independence and mobility including the use of travel training, personal budgets and how transport logistics are organised. This will hopefully increase the options for clients to travel throughout the borough.
- 3.3.3 However, the development of these options is at a very early stage and the comparative evaluation of the costs, benefits and risks of each will take some time and will be complex. This work cannot be completed, and recommendations presented to members about the adoption of any new service delivery model, before it is necessary to initiate the re-procurement of the existing passenger transport services in October. It is also vital that continuity of services for clients is maintained. The procurement approach proposed, detailed below, has been designed to offer the maximum possible flexibility to adapt to any of the future service delivery options that may be adopted by the Council in future including, if necessary, the ability to reduce,

restrict or terminate the provision of contracted passenger transport services as required. This will enable the Council with key stakeholders to consider how travel can best enable families and citizens to maximise their independence in the most efficient and effective way.

3.4 SCOPE

3.4.1 The proposed scope of the procurement is primarily for the provision of passenger transport services for children/young people with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities and vulnerable adults. However, it will also include the provision of transport for: ad hoc journeys by staff on Council business; School/college trips as requested and paid for by schools/colleges (possible future provision); Council clients requiring non-emergency ambulance and/or nursing escort services (other than where this is the responsibility of the NHS)(possible future provision); and direct call-off by clients with personal budgets/direct payments to meet educational or social care needs (possible future provision). It is envisaged that the framework of providers will be available for use by other public sector bodies including schools with minimum involvement from the Council.

3.4.2 The procurement provides for the contractual hire of a range of vehicles with drivers including cars, MPVs, minibuses, wheelchair accessible vehicles and coaches, and for the provision of passenger assistants and accompanying escorts ('travel buddies') where required.

3.5 SERVICE SPECIFICATION

3.5.1 Transport commissioners, after listening to the views of customer and reviewing current service provisions have identified a number of critical requirements for contracted passenger transport services; they must:

- Be safe, secure, timely, reliable and suitable for the transport of vulnerable clients;
- Be sensitive and empathetic to client needs and circumstances;
- Be conducted by staff who are trained to meet service users' needs when travelling;
- Be flexible to respond to changing policies and service needs;
- Be resilient and able to respond to failure of providers and maintain service continuity;
- Demonstrate continuous compliance with specified service requirements;
- Enable and encourage participation by local SMEs, Social Enterprises and Community Transport organisations; and
- Offer continuing value for money.

3.5.2 A detailed Service Specification has been developed to take account of these requirements, with stakeholder input as appropriate. The Service Specification also incorporates a large number of critical specific requirements including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) vetting of staff, staff training in

client needs and disability awareness, safeguarding arrangements, operator/ vehicle/staff licensing, and vehicle specification/roadworthiness.

3.6 MARKET ANALYSIS

3.6.1 The Passenger Transport Market. The general private hire market in London is well-developed, well-regulated (through the TfL Public Carriage Office) and highly competitive, with providers ranging in size from small local private hire providers (known colloquially as 'minicabs'), to large private hire and 'black cab' providers operating across all, or large parts, of London, and to providers that specialise in contracted work with generally larger wheelchair-accessible vehicles. Some of the providers can offer passenger assistants but others provide vehicle and driver only. Across this range of providers, many have acquired considerable experience in meeting local authority requirements for the carriage of vulnerable children and adults over many years, and pride themselves in delivering these services to London citizens to a high standard.

3.6.2 Market Pricing. The economics of private hire operations are such that costs are spread over a large number of journeys every day and this reduces the cost of individual journeys to the customer. Almost all Councils that require journeys using small vehicles use private hire providers as the most economic solution for this work. Providers operating large passenger transport vehicles find it more difficult to spread their costs over multiple journeys but strong competition in London, and very tight management of operating costs, mean that providers in this market can generally offer services in this sector that are more cost effective than Councils can provide for themselves. Therefore, many, if not most, Councils including Croydon have moved to fully-contracted provision of transport in recent years.

3.6.3 Local Participation. The local Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) private hire market in the London area is extensive and competitive and, as such, these providers can often offer very good value local transport services where their 'dead' mileage is minimised. It is important to enable local providers to participate in the procurement and this will be done by simplifying the tender requirements as far as possible and allowing providers to tender for some or all vehicle categories according to their strengths and capabilities.

3.6.4 Social Value The Council will seek through the procurement process to identify and deliver additional social value benefits from the new supplier relationship in relation to employment and support for local communities. The Council will implement the London Living Wage policy in line with the best practise set out by the London Living Wage foundation.

3.7 PROCUREMENT APPROACH

3.7.1 Passenger transport services can be procured in a number of different ways and the options considered for this procurement are summarised at Section 12 below. The preferred approach is to advertise for providers to tender to join a single new Framework Agreement that will provide all of the car/taxi and minibus/coach transport service requirements in scope.

- 3.7.2 Tenderers will be required to submit a minimum charge and a price-per-mile in 4 mileage bands for each category of vehicle (with or without the provision of passenger assistants) that they wish to tender for and, additionally, to provide a price for the full-day use of the vehicle. Tenderers would be recommended for appointment to the Framework on the basis of their ability to satisfy the Council that they can meet the requirements of the Service Specification and their pricing. Once the Framework is established, journeys will be awarded to the provider offering the lowest price for the journey and vehicle required, or through the use of 'mini-competitions' amongst the Framework providers on a 'best price' basis, if this method would offer better value for money.
- 3.7.3 A request to approve a particular governance process in respect to the timely award of call off contracts may be requested as part of any eventual award report in respect to the framework itself.
- 3.7.4 Under a Framework Agreement, there is no guarantee of the award of work. Contracts for work are awarded to providers on the framework following a call-off procedure and are subject to the terms and conditions under which appointments to the framework were made. These include notice provisions so that all or some of the services that are provided can be terminated easily if no longer required. Therefore, this approach offers complete flexibility if the Council wishes to adopt a new service delivery approach for all or some of its transport services during the life of the Framework.

3.8 PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

- 3.8.1 The annual value of work awarded under the current contractual arrangements is in the region of £7.6M per annum at current prices and levels of demand. Therefore the re-procurement process falls within the current EU procurement regime. It is intended to adopt the single-stage tender 'Open' procedure in order to simplify the tender process as far as possible thereby encouraging SME providers to tender and to maximise participation from the market.

3.9 PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

- 3.9.1 Assuming agreement of the procurement strategy, it is intended that the tender would be advertised on 28 October 2014, tenders returned by 16 January 2015, tender evaluation completed by 28 February 2015 and a request for approval to award submitted to Cabinet by April 2015. It would be the intention to complete the agreed appointments to the framework by the end of June 2015. This then ensures that the providers have sufficient time to mobilise their resources, including the completion of any TUPE transfers of staff from existing to new providers, and that the Council can start to call-off contracts with providers in good time for the start of the new Academic Year 2015/16. This is essential to enable a smooth transition for clients to any new providers under the Framework.

3.10 DURATION AND VALUE OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

- 3.10.1 It is intended that appointments to the Framework Agreement should be for a term of 4 years. This is the maximum period normally permissible under

procurement regulations but it does enable a close and continuing relationship to be established with providers over the period.

3.10.2 The estimated value of call-off contracts from the Framework over 4 years is up to £32M at current prices (£30M for the current service requirements and up to £2M for the additional services that may be required in future as described in the Scope at section 3.4).

3.11 TENDER CONSIDERATIONS

3.11.1 The following important considerations will be taken into account in preparing the tender documentation for this procurement.

3.11.2 **Price Variation.** The terms and conditions of the Framework Agreement and associated call-off contracts will allow for an annual opportunity (in early summer each year) for providers to submit proposals to vary prices up or down, with any proposals for price increases to be supported by reference to changes in the Consumer Price Index (specifically, the Transport Index) and other justification. Agreement to such changes would be entirely at the Council's discretion. This flexibility helps to ensure continuing competition amongst providers in the Framework.

3.11.3 **TUPE.** No transfers of staff that are currently employed by the Council to contractors will result from this procurement. However, the tender documents will note the potential for the application of TUPE obligations with regard to the transfer of staff from existing providers to new providers, including some employees who have retained their previous terms and conditions related to their previous employment with Croydon Council. Such transfers are legally a matter between the existing and future contractors. However, where appropriate to assist the transition of services the Council may facilitate liaison between the providers as far as possible particularly with regard to the communication of information between the parties. Provision will also need to be made within the pricing arrangements to allow for variations in pricing to accommodate the additional costs that will be implicit in a transfer of former Council employees from one provider to another if a route is transferred by the Council.

3.11.4 **London Living Wage.** The tender documents will reflect the Council's London Living Wage policy in line with the best practise set out by the London Living Wage foundation.

3.12 ADVERTISEMENT AND TRADE BRIEFING

3.12.1 It is intended that the invitation to tender will be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), the Croydon Council procurement portal and appropriate private hire and coach/bus contract hire trade press. The Council will also ensure the opportunity is communicated to local providers and SMEs.

3.12.2 It is also intended to hold a workshop for all prospective tenderers to brief them on the completion of tenders, as it is in the Council's interest to ensure that as many compliant tenders are received as possible.

3.13 TENDER EVALUATION

3.13.1 As required by EU procurement regulations, the invitation to tender will explain how tenders will be evaluated and scored. An Evaluation Panel will be appointed to carry out the tender evaluation.

3.13.2 **Qualitative Evaluation.** Under the single-stage 'Open' procurement process tenderers will be required to submit responses to the usual suite of questions relating to matters such as company and financial information, insurance, equalities, health and safety, safeguarding, environment and so on. These responses will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis to determine if the tenders should be given further consideration. Those tenders that pass the initial evaluation will then be subject to a further qualitative evaluation of their ability to meet the Council's service requirements, also on a 'pass-fail' basis, in one of two ways. For those tenderers with recent experience of providing similar passenger transport services for children/young people and vulnerable adults that are confirmed to be currently licensed by the Public Carriage Office, the references provided as part of their tender response will be taken up with referees by the Panel. This will be to confirm that the provider has met key requirements of that referees service specification with particular regard to training standards, safety, safeguarding etc. Potential new entrants to the market, who are unable to provide directly relevant references, will be invited in the tender to submit responses to a number of critical questions that will be used in conjunction with interviews as necessary to determine whether they can meet the Council's requirements for the provision of services. This approach reflects recent DfT guidance (Tendering Road Passenger Contracts - Best Practice Guidance - dated October 2013) on the qualitative assessment of tenders for passenger transport services.

3.13.3 **Price Evaluation.** Tenders that meet the Council's 'pass/fail' qualitative threshold will then be evaluated for price. In order that price can be evaluated fairly and consistently, it is intended that the prices submitted by tenderers for each category of vehicle (with and without provision of passenger assistants) will be applied to a standard profile of journeys of different distances using this category of vehicle that broadly reflects the recent historical profile of actual journeys required by Croydon. The resulting indicative and comparative cost 'score' for each tenderer offering that category of vehicle (with and without provision of passenger attendants) will then form a ranking order that will provide the basis for recommendation for appointment to the Framework.

3.13.4 **Number of Providers in the Framework.** It is important to ensure that the Framework provides sufficient capacity across all vehicle categories to meet the Council's needs, and to ensure sufficient contingency to cover withdrawals resulting from business failure or default, over the life of the Framework. The maximum number of providers required in each category will be specified in the tender to provide a transparent basis for limiting the number of awards, if necessary, according to the price score rankings.

3.14 CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.14.1 It is vital that transport providers operate in strict compliance with the Service Specification and the terms and conditions of the call-off contracts, given the nature of the transport service and the needs of its users.
- 3.14.2 Contract management and compliance arrangements will be specified in the Framework Agreement and call-off contracts and will include compliance audits at providers' premises, spot checks on providers' vehicles/crews, annual contract review meetings and intermediate ad hoc meetings as required, and service user satisfaction surveys.
- 3.14.3 The terms and conditions of the call-off contracts will specify the actions that will be taken by the Council and by the transport provider in the event of non-compliance by the provider with the terms and conditions of the call-off contract and the service specification. The terms and conditions will also specify in what circumstances a contractual default may be recorded against the provider and the sanctions available to the Council in the event of non-compliance including, ultimately, termination of call-off contracts or termination of participation in the Framework Agreement.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 There is no intended change in policy or entitlement associated with this procurement. The service specification has taken account of feedback received on the service from current service users. Informal discussions with current providers has taken place about the intended procurement approach, no negative issues have been identified. Further engagement with stakeholders will take place, via parent and schools partnership meetings.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 **The effect of the decision** – Will be to allow the procurement of a framework agreement with a number of service providers to deliver the Council's requirements for passenger transport.
- 5.2 **Risks** - There is a financial risk of an increase in eligibility and demand above and beyond what is currently budgeted for. In practice demand for services is expected to reduce over time, both through work to increase the number of young people who are able to travel to school independently and by implementing the SEN strategy which should increase the number of children who are able to be educated closer to home within Croydon.
- 5.3 **Options** – No other options are currently being considered, however the nature of a framework arrangement will allow the Council flexibility as to future service provision. See also para 3.1.2
- 5.4 **Future savings/efficiencies** – The procurement strategy detailed in this report which is to deliver a single framework for all services is targeting savings of approximately 10% based upon current spend.

(To be Approved by: *A N. Other*, Department Head(s) of Finance/nominated deputy(ies))

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

6.1 The Council Solicitor comments that there are no direct legal considerations arising from the procurement strategy recommended in this report but detailed legal advice will be given on the eventual terms and conditions applicable to the Framework and call-off contracts under it.

6.3 (Approved by: Gabriel Macgregor, Corporate Law, on behalf of the Council Solicitor & Monitoring Officer)

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

7.1 The consideration will be regarding TUPE in the event where Council staff originally transferred to contractors, are transferred from one provider to another. This is covered in the report at point 3.11.3, and it needs to be made clear to the contractors that there will be no liability on the part of the Council in the event that the activities provided by the contractors change fundamentally, giving rise to a TUPE situation.

7.2 Approved by: Hansa Bharadia, HR Business Partner, for and on behalf of Director of Human Resources, Chief Executive department.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 This report makes no recommendation to a change of entitlement to the provision of transportation or the type of transport being procured - only a potential change of providers of those transport services. An equalities analysis has been undertaken and a full equalities analysis is not required.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

9.1 All tenderers will be asked to describe the measures they have in place to minimise the impact of their business on the environment.

9.2 It is envisaged that a number of the larger providers who will tender will possess ISO 14001 "Environmental Management Standard". Those providers who do not have ISO and who are successfully awarded a place on the framework will be encouraged to pursue this standard.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

10.1 There are no particular crime and disorder reduction impact issues.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

11.1 The Council current contracted arrangements expire in 2015. There is a need to re-procure a number of services to ensure the Council is compliant with procurement legislation and to ensure the continuity of provision from

September 2015. Officers have considered a number of options, the procurement strategy detailed in this report is the option recommended for approval.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 Passenger transport services can be procured in a number of different ways and, although there are many variations and combinations of approaches that can be adopted, the main options are summarised below together with the reasons why have been rejected or are preferred.
- 12.2 **Commercial Managed Service.** A Commercial Managed Service approach can be beneficial where there is limited expertise with the Council in managing transport contractors to obtain best value, but this is offset by the need to pay a management fee to the provider which will include a profit element, and this approach interposes a third party (acting as a prime contractor) between the Council and transport providers (acting as sub-contractors) which can complicate the resolution of operating issues and has proved problematic elsewhere. In Croydon's case, the ITU staff have a track record in managing providers directly and effectively, and there is nothing that would suggest that a Commercial Managed Service provider could obtain better value than the Council is able to obtain for itself. Therefore, this approach is not preferred for Croydon.
- 12.3 **One/Two Contracted Providers.** Contracting all transport requirements to only one or two providers can simplify the management of services for the Council, and may be appropriate in areas where the market is very limited, but experience elsewhere suggest that it is unlikely to secure best value over time because of the 'tied' nature of the contract(s), and there is the potential for significant operational risk if one (or other) contractor should fail for any reason. Therefore, this method is not preferred for Croydon.
- 12.4 **Multiple Providers - Tendered Routes.** Tendering routes to multiple providers that have 'pre-qualified' to meet a Council's requirements is a method that is used by many Councils and, when combined with the use of e-auction platforms, can provide an apparent ideal 'best price' for each particular route at the outset when the auction is completed, thereby satisfying one of the key requirements of competitive tendering. However, this method can be cumbersome to use on a continuing basis as new requirements arise, and experience elsewhere shows that providers can see the inevitable variations in routes that arise as an opportunity to increase prices (and their margin) where there is no clear reference for pricing such changes and the Council is keen to maintain continuity of service. There is also some evidence that the use of this method encourages providers to bid at a price that can prove to be unsustainable, resulting in routes being 'handed back' to the Council and inevitable disruption until another provider can be secured. Croydon has experienced some of these difficulties with the way that the current coach/bus contracts were awarded, and these difficulties have been compounded further by the 'fixed' long-term nature of the contract awards. Therefore, tendering routes is not preferred for Croydon.

- 12.5 **Dynamic Purchasing System.** The use of a Dynamic Purchasing System for transport procurement has been adopted more recently by some Councils, particularly in large County Councils faced with managing a very large and dynamic supplier base. It is similar to the Tendered Routes method in many respects, and suffers from many of the same drawbacks, but it has the advantage that it is operated on an electronic platform (for which a fee is payable to the platform provider) and that suppliers can join the DPS at any time during its life, if they meet the 'pre-qualification' criteria. However, the use of DPS requires that all requirements - even those for ad hoc and short-notice services - are tendered to all providers which can create delay, and it also interposes a third party between the Council and the transport providers for the purposes of payment and this can be problematic in reconciling invoiced journeys with what actually takes place. Therefore, the use of a DPS approach is not preferred for Croydon.
- 12.6 **Multiple Providers - Framework Agreement.** The Framework Agreement approach, whereby providers are taken into the Framework on the basis of meeting quality standards and their pricing per mile for each category of vehicle, provides flexibility to respond to changing requirements quickly and a clear basis for pricing routes and variations, whilst enabling individual routes to be tendered through mini-competitions amongst the Framework providers on a 'best price' basis if appropriate. Moreover, it enables the Council to develop close working relationships with a fixed and manageable number of providers over the life of the Framework, whilst providing a flexible pool of resources that the Council can draw upon. Under a Framework Agreement, there is no guarantee of the allocation of work to any of the providers and, subject to the notice period stated in the terms and conditions of call-off contracts, routes can be terminated easily if no longer required. Taken together, the benefits of this approach and the flexibility that it offers if Croydon wishes to adopt a new service deliver approach during the life of the Framework, makes the Framework Agreement the preferred option for Croydon.

CONTACT OFFICER: Anesa Kritah, Head of SSCP D+E, Ext 62238

BACKGROUND PAPERS -

None