Wandsworth Borough Council

Education and Social Services Department

**PROVISION OF LEAVING CARE SERVICES**

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**Guidance on the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire and the pre-qualifying process \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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# **Section 1 – Instructions**

1. **General Information**
   1. This Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (‘PQQ’) has been prepared by Wandsworth Borough Council (‘the Council’) for the purpose of providing an application procedure for individuals or organisations interested in tendering for the provision of Substance Misuse Services.
   2. This procurement is being conducted using the Restricted procedure as defined by the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. The selection criteria in this PQQ, including those for eligibility, financial standing and technical and professional ability are consistent with these Regulations. The Regulations can be read in full using the below link:
   3. Each organisation that expresses an interest in the services and completes a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) (whether it is a single organisation or a consortium) is referred to as an “Applicant”.
   4. The purpose of this PQQ is to determine which organisations will be invited to tender for the contract. The Council intends to invite eight (8) Applicants to tender. Responses to this PQQ will be scored, and it is envisaged that the top scoring eight (8) scoring Applicants will be invited to tender. The criteria and methodology for the scoring are set out in Section 2 of this PQQ.
2. The Contract
   1. The Council intends to enter into a contract with the preferred bidders.
   2. The Contract period will be for thirty-six (36) months with an option to extend for a further twenty-four (24) months.
3. Indicative Timetable
   1. The current programme for the procurement is as follows. Dates are for indicative purposes only and subject to change:

| **Action** | **Indicative date** |
| --- | --- |
| **Pre-Qualification Stage** |  |
| Deadline for receipt of queries | August 2014 |
| Deadline for PQQ Returns | 14th August 2014 |
| Complete Evaluation and Shortlist | Complete by 29th August 2014 |
| **Tender** |  |
| Issue Invitation to Tender | 15th September 2014 |
| Deadline for Receipt of Questions | 6th October 2014 |
| Deadline for receipt of Tenders | 29th October 2014 |
| Award of Contract | Late Feb 2015 |
| Implementation period | Mar-June 2015 |
| Service to commence | 1st July 2015 |

1. This PQQ
   1. Please complete all parts of this questionnaire fully, providing all the necessary supplementary information, before submitting it no later than 12:00 Noon on **14th August 2014.** Responses received after the closing time and date may not be considered.
   2. Applicants should answer all questions as accurately as possible and should not include generic marketing material. A maximum word count may be included in a number of the questions and these should not be exceeded and any additional wording may be disregarded. All additional pages and all supporting information must be submitted and referenced to the relevant question. The Council may not evaluate information that is not clearly referenced.
   3. Any information and/or documents submitted in response to this PQQ must relate to the Applicant only and be in English.
2. Consortia
   1. Where organisations intend to act jointly in seeking to be awarded a contract (such as in a consortium bid), the participating organisations must identify one lead applicant (the “Lead Applicant”). The Lead Applicant will be responsible for the overall preparation and submission of the PQQ on behalf of all members of the consortium, and for addressing questions about the organisation of the joint Application (an administrative lead for the purpose of the PQQ and the process beyond).
   2. If two or more companies acting together as a consortium wish to express an interest in tendering for the Contract but have not yet formed themselves into a legal entity each member of the consortium must complete the Consortium Questionnaire. If the consortium is a legal entity, the consortium itself should complete the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire.
   3. Where an Applicant is a sole organisation, references in this document to “Relevant Organisation” shall mean that sole organisation and where the Applicant is a consortium, references to “Relevant Organisation” shall mean the Lead Applicant and each consortium member.
3. **Communications**
   1. Any questions about this PQQ or the procurement procedure must be submitted in writing using the message facility on the SupplyingLondon portal.
   2. If the Council considers any question or request for clarification to be of material significance, both the query and response will be communicated in an anonymised form to all Applicants who have requested the PQQ.
4. **Clarification, cancellation and amendment of terms and conditions**
   1. The Council reserves the right to –
      1. cancel the project, the procurement, the selection and/or the evaluation process at any stage;
      2. require an Applicant and any Relevant Organisations to clarify its response in writing and/or provide additional information; and/or
      3. amend the terms, conditions and/or requirements of the tender process including the PQQ/pre-selection process.
      4. re-visit the selection decision at any point if the information provided by an Applicant materially changes. Applicants must notify the Council if at any point during the procurement process there are any changes to the information supplied.
   2. The Council’s approach to clarification will be consistent to ensure that one Applicant does not receive an unfair advantage over the rest. Applicants should be aware that the Council is under no obligation to seek clarification and it is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that their responses are unambiguous and complete, and to seek clarification from the Council if there is any uncertainty around what is required.
5. Freedom of Information
   1. The Council is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and any subordinate legislation and guidance. Applicants and Relevant Organisations are required to:-
      1. specify (with reasons) those aspects (if any) of their PQQ responses which they regard as falling within any of the exemptions from disclosure specified under the Act/Regulations including (without limitation) information provided in confidence; and
      2. state which provisions of the Act/Regulations apply to the information identified in accordance with the bullet point above.
   2. The Council, however, shall be responsible for determining, at its absolute discretion, whether such exemption(s) should apply.
6. Quality of information
   1. Please be aware that the Council can only make its evaluation from the information you supply. A common reason for Applicants failing to progress through the PQQ process is due to incomplete information, unsubstantiated statements or information presented in a manner not reasonably obvious to those evaluating. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to provide all the answers and information requested in a clear, concise and logical manner and at the appropriate points within the document. Cross-referencing and reliance on attachments (other than where specifically requested) should be avoided.
7. Accuracy of the information supplied
   1. The information contained within and supplied with this PQQ has been prepared by the Council in good faith but does not purport to be accurate, complete and exhaustive or to have been independently verified nor to contain all of the information that a prospective contractor may require. Nothing in the PQQ is warranted by the Council or its advisors nor shall be deemed a promise or representation as to the future.

# Section 2 - Selection Methodology

1. Selection Approach
   1. Applicants will be assessed in three stages:
      1. Stage 1 will look at compliance and eligibility (Questions 1 - 9 and the declaration at Question 14);
      2. Stage 2 will look at economic and financial standing (Questions 10 - 12);
      3. Stage 3 will look at technical and professional capacity and ability (Question 13).
   2. If Stage 1 is passed, Applicants will be assessed in accordance with Stage 2. Only those applicants passing Stage 2 will be assessed in Stage 3.
   3. Provided Applicants pass Stages 1 and 2, the subsequent assessment (Stage 3 described below) will result in each Applicant being “scored” out of 100 for technical and professional ability and capacity.
   4. To be selected to be invited to tender, Applicants must pass Stage 1 and Stage 2, **and** be among the highest scoring Applicants under the assessment of technical and professional ability and capacity at Stage 3.
2. Stage 1 – Compliance and Eligibility
   1. The information supplied by Applicants will first be checked for completeness and compliance with eligibility requirements before responses are evaluated. The Council reserves the right to reject/disqualify any Application that is incomplete or non-compliant.
   2. The Council will assess the response from the Applicants and / or other Relevant Organisations confirming that there are no circumstances in which it could be considered to be ineligible to tender. The Council will reject any Applicant which is ineligible to tender.
   3. The Council reserves the right at its sole discretion to disqualify or reject an Applicant where:
      1. the PQQ response is completed incorrectly, is incomplete, is submitted late or fails to meet the Council’s submission requirements and conditions as set out in these guidance notes and/or the declaration at Question 14 is not completed and returned;
      2. the Applicant or any Relevant Organisation is guilty of a serious misrepresentation in relation to its Application and/or the procurement process;
      3. there is canvassing;
      4. there is a change in identity, control, financial standing or other factor impacting on the selection and/or evaluation process affecting the Applicant and/or any Relevant Organisation; and
      5. there is a significant, unresolved or unmanageable conflict of interest arising between the Council and the Applicant and/or any Relevant Organisation.
   4. Where a conflict of interest has been identified as per Question 5, applicants should confirm what measures they will put in place to address such conflicts. These measures should include, for example:

* Disclosure of the conflict of interest to the Council;
* Ensuring an appropriate separation of duties for any staff involved in the tendering process;
* Arrangements to restrict the flow of confidential or non-public price sensitive information within the organisation including, where applicable, physical separation and system access restrictions;
* Implementation of an appropriate policy for employees;

1. Stage 2 – Economic and Financial Standing
   1. Applicants must pass Stage 1 before being assessed in accordance with this Stage 2.
   2. Applicants must be in a sound financial position to participate in the procurement.
   3. Applicants must complete Questions 10 - 12 and return all supporting information with their Applications. If Applicants have been trading for less than a year and/or do not have audited/approved accounts then the responses in section 3 may be based on the Applicant’s parent company.
   4. The Council will obtain a credit report from Dun & Bradstreet (“D&B”)[[1]](#footnote-2) – a third party credit agency – in order to evaluate the Applicant’s viability to perform the contract.
   5. The Council will apply its financial tests in terms of stability, capability and capacity against the criteria below. If the Applicant intends to offer a parent company guarantee, the parent company’s accounts may also be assessed against the same criteria.
   6. The Director of Finance may revise the criteria if it becomes clear from responses that the Council’s requirements are not suitable for the market for this type of work. Any change in criteria will be applied to all applicants equally and applicants notified of the change.
   7. This methodology is in line with the Cabinet Office’s guide to Supplier Financial Appraisals and the Council shall treat all applicants equally in evaluating economic and financial standing.
   8. Applicants whose financial position is unacceptable in terms of stability, capability and capacity will be excluded. Applicants are therefore advised to ensure that copies of their latest audited / approved accounts have been submitted to Companies House (if applicable).
   9. Subject to any changes in accordance with paragraph 13.6 above, the financial appraisal shall comprise the following:
      1. Turnover must be two times than the annual contract value.
      2. D&B Risk Indicator must be 3 or less.
      3. D & B Failure Score must be 50 or higher
      4. Current Ration must be 1 or greater

As part of the above process the Council may perform the above assessments on the Applicant’s immediate and/or ultimate parent entity. In these instances the immediate and/or ultimate parent entity will be subject to the same financial appraisal process and will be required to meet the same requirements before the Applicant will meet the Council’s financial requirements.

* 1. The Council will reject any Applicant which has confirmed it will not be able to obtain the insurance at the levels stated in Question 12;

1. Stage 3 – Technical and professional capacity and ability
   1. Applicants must pass Stage 1 and Stage 2 before being assessed in accordance with this Stage 3.
   2. Applicants must be able to demonstrate a successful track record of providing similar goods, works or services to those envisaged;
   3. For this stage in the selection process the Council will assess Applicant’s responses to the questions at Question 13.
   4. Set out in the table below are the weightings attributed to each of these questions. Once scored the weighted scores for each Applicant will be added together and this total shall constitute the score for the PQQ.
   5. Notwithstanding the above, the Council reserves the right not to select an Applicant who has been assessed as scoring 0 or 1 in one particular area, notwithstanding acceptable or even strong responses in all other areas as this shows grave weaknesses.
   6. The following weightings shall apply:

| **Question** | **Question Title** | **Max Score** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 13.1 | Previous Experience statement | 5 | 60% |
| 13.2 | Key personnel | 5 | 10% |
| 13.3 | Apprentices, Work Experience Placements and Trainees | 5 | 10% |
| 13.4 | Managing relationships | 5 | 10% |
| 13.5 | Contract terminations | 5 | 10% |

* 1. The Council will use the following scoring methodology to score the Applications unless stated otherwise in the relevant question.

| Score | **Criteria for Awarding Score** |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | The Applicant has not answered the Council’s questions, has omitted information or has provided information that is not relevant and the Council are unable to determine whether the Applicant possess sufficient Technical and Professional capacity and ability |
| 1 | The Applicant has provided wholly insufficient responses or the responses given demonstrate very limited experience and insufficient Technical and Professional capacity and ability |
| 2 | The responses are superficial and generic. The Applicant has provided insufficient responses or the responses given demonstrate limited experience and limited Technical and Professional capacity and ability |
| 3 | The responses are compliant and the Applicant has provided responses that demonstrate through suitable and relevant evidence that they have experience and have Technical and Professional capacity and ability which meet the Council’s requirements. |
| 4 | The Applicant has provided responses that are robust and supported by suitable and relevant evidence of experience and Technical and Professional capacity and ability which exceeds the Council’s requirements. |
| 5 | The Applicant has provided responses that are robust and supported by suitable and relevant evidence of experience and Technical and Professional capacity and ability which significantly exceeds the Council’s’ expectations |

**References**

* 1. Provided the Applicant has passed stage 1 and stage 2 of the evaluation, the Council will contact each Applicant’s nominated referees to obtain references. References will form a key part in verifying the responses given to this PQQ scoring process for question 13. Applicants must therefore ensure that their referees provide a written reference in the required timescale.
  2. References received by the Council will be considered confidential. The Council will not disclose the details of individual references to Applicants save as required by law.
  3. For the relevant criteria in question 13, the Council will score the Applicant’s experience statement(s) based on the above scoring methodology. Once the deadline for receipt of references has expired, the Council will re-visit the scoring of the experience statement to include consideration of references. This will result in your score being moderated according to the below criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score after consideration of references** | **Criteria for awarding the score** |
| 0 | * The Council has received reference(s) that give it no confidence in the Applicant’s experience statement or * the Council has not received references or * the references received confirm that the criteria in paragraph 14.7 for the award of a score of 0 apply or that the score should be adjusted to 0. |
| 1 | * The Council has received reference(s) that give it a very low confidence in the Applicant’s experience statement or * the Council has not received sufficient references to verify the information provided by the Applicant with anything more than a very low degree of confidence or * the references received confirm that the criteria in paragraph 14.7 for the award of a score of 1 apply or that the score should be adjusted to 1 |
| 2 | * The Council has received reference(s) that give it a low confidence in the Applicant’s experience statement or * the Council has not received sufficient references to verify the information provided by the Applicant with anything more than a low degree of confidence * or the references received confirm that the criteria in paragraph 14.7 for the award of a score of 2 apply or that the score should be adjusted to 2. |
| 3 | * The Council has received references to give it confidence in the Applicant’s experience statement, and * the Council has received sufficient references to verify that the information provided by the Applicant is correct, and * the references received confirm that the criteria in paragraph 14.7 for the award of a score of 3 apply or that the score should be adjusted to 3. |
| 4 | * The Council has received references to give it confidence in the Applicant’s experience statement, and * the Council has received sufficient references to verify that the information provided by the Applicant is correct, and * the references received confirm that the criteria in paragraph 14.7 for the award of a score of 4 apply or that the score should be adjusted to 4. |
| 5 | * The Council has received references to give it confidence in the Applicant’s experience statement, and * the Council has received sufficient references to verify that the information provided by the Applicant is correct, * and the references received confirm that the criteria in paragraph 14.7 for the award of a score of 5 apply or that the score should be adjusted to 5. |

1. For details of the Dun & Bradstreet database please see http://www.dnb.co.uk/dnb-database.asp [↑](#footnote-ref-2)