

Communities Committee	
Meeting Date	6 September 2023
Report Title	Procurement of Community Development – building a sustainable voluntary and community sector in Swale
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing & Communities
Lead Officer	Sarah-Jane Radley, Community & Partnerships Manager
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That the Committee approves the appointment of Company B as Contractor, Community Development – building a sustainable voluntary and community sector in Swale from 01 October 2023 for an initial period of 6 Months at a value of £50,000, with option to extend by 12 months from 01 April 2024 at a value of £75,000

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Community Services Team carried out a one stage tender process based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) which was evaluated on 40% price and 60% quality. The Contract is to enable and empower the existing voluntary and community sector in Swale to develop, strengthen, grow, and improve sustainability for the future.
- 1.2 This report summarises the procurement process and its results and seeks Committee approval of the recommended contractor.

2 Background

- 2.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF or the Fund) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than a competition. It will help places right across the country deliver enhanced outcomes and recognises that even the most affluent parts of the UK contain pockets of deprivation and need support.

The Fund is split into three components:

- Community and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

Within the Community and Place component, Swale Borough Council has committed to the delivery of a project which will look to build capacity of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Swale by working with local civil society

organisations to improve capacity and efficiency through improved collaboration and learning.

Funding

The Fund allocation for Community Development is split over a 3-year period:

Year	Amount	Details
2022/23	£5,000	Consultation SDS
2023/24	£50,000	Contract budget
2024/25	£75,000	Contract budget

Initial contract is for funding period 2023/24, with an extension for 2024/25 to ensure that government continue to provide the allocated funding in second year.

- 2.2 The opportunity was advertised in accordance with current contract standing orders, with interested parties asked to complete an Invitation to Tender. 2 submissions were received, and scores were allocated according to the criteria explained in the tender document.

The two tenderers that submitted the most economically advantageous tenders, were assessed, and scored by the procurement panel. The panel consisted of the Head of Housing & Communities, Community & Partnerships Manager and Chief Executive of Kent Community Foundation. Each panel member discussed openly before collectively adjusting the scoring of the tender submissions.

The scores were as follows:

Company	Price Score	Quality Score	Total
A	40	38	78
B	37.72	52	89.72

Company B are proposing to recruit a Project Manager to lead the programme from within the local VCS. Within their delivery plan they are also looking to provide a number of activities against the specification objectives, which include the following:

- Identify and map Swale VCS organisations/groups.- connecting with the Social Prescribing platform through the Health & Care Partnership.
- Programme launch event.
- Develop an evaluation framework to inform the workplan.
- Networking & Alliance development workshops
- Funding and marketing workshops
- Training sessions
- Regular communications and news updates
- Volunteer recruitment support

- Interactive online Resource Hub
- Year 1 review/evaluation
- Year 2 workplan development

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to approve the proposal to enter into a contract with Company B for a 6 month Contract with the option to extend the contract for a further 1 year, totalling 1 year, 6 months.
- 3.2 Although their tender price was slightly higher than the lowest price, they scored highly in the quality evaluation due to the evidence they supplied of their track record, policies and procedures and approach to social value and therefore submitted the most economically advantageous tender.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Alternative options explored with the voluntary and community sector included Swale Borough Council employing a Project Manager to deliver the project on behalf of the sector. When looking at the options for this it was felt that this role should be imbedded within the sector, and it may feel that we are 'doing to' rather than the sector taking the lead, which is where this piece of work sits to garner the best outcomes. It is also more costly to for Swale BC to employ the role than the sector and so financially benefits the program for the sector to employ the role through a contract.
- 4.2 Another alternative option considered, would've been to grant fund one organisation from the sector, however the sector themselves felt that it would be a fairer and more transparent process for Swale to contract via our procurement process and so when a democratic vote was taken by representatives of the sector, they unanimously voted for a contract through Swale BC's procurement contract standing orders.
- 4.3 To 'do nothing' would mean that Swale's voluntary and community sector would continue as they are, which would be detrimental not only to the sector themselves but similarly to Swale's residents as well as impacting on Swale Borough Council services. The sector needs to be more engaged and have a stronger footing to be able to draw in funding as well as a stronger voice and connectivity, which they require to be able to continue to exist in the current climate and in the future.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Swale Borough Council asked Smarter Digital Services (SDS) to deliver two interactive workshops, as well as one to one interviews to determine the views of the voluntary and community sector in Swale and identify possible suggestions

for a program of delivery. The contract specification has therefore been shaped by the work carried out through the engagement and consultation process delivered by SDS.

- 5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, this resulted in the conclusion that the community development contract will not have unlawful discrimination pertaining to the delivery of the contract.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Appointing a contractor that meets a good quality standard and provides good value for money contributes towards all the corporate priorities as it ensures that we are building a sustainable community and voluntary sector in Swale.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>Anticipated annual spend on the Contract Community Development – building a sustainable voluntary sector in Swale is £50,000 2023-24, £75,000 2024-25. The total contract value for the 2 years is therefore, estimated as £125,000.</p> <p>The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 as amended (“TUPE”) do not apply to this contract and the implications of this have been addressed in the procurement process.</p> <p>Officer time has been allocated to support the mobilisation of the contract and ongoing monitoring for the length of the contract within the Community & Partnerships Team.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>The contract will be drawn up using [the Council’s current standard Terms and Conditions.</p> <p>Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012:</p> <p>Full listings detailed in Annex I</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None identified at this stage
Health and Wellbeing	The contract supports VCSE organisations who are tackling health inequalities within the borough and allows them to have access to the opportunities this contract will bring to enhance and build a sustainable future.
Safeguarding of	None identified at this stage

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Part of the procurement process ensures that contractors are fully competent, particularly in the area of health and safety.
Equality and Diversity	An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out resulting that the community development contract will not have unlawful discrimination pertaining to the delivery of the contract.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- 3.1 Appendix I: Social value
 - 3.1 Appendix II: Equality Impact Assessment

8 Background Documents

No background documents for this report.