



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 29 March 2016	Matter for Information and Decision
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Title: Provision of Advice and Information Services in the Borough

Author: Stephen Glazebrook - Interim Community Services Manager

1. Introduction

The Council currently has an interim arrangement with the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and Helping Hands for the provision of advice services within the Borough. The arrangement which started on 4 January 2016 runs until the end of May 2016 and the purpose of this report is to establish a more long term solution which will provide a free advice and information service for residents within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that CAB and Helping Hands be appointed to provide advice and information services to the residents of Oadby and Wigston for a period of 3 years at a total cost of £55,000 per year commencing on 1 June 2016.

3. Information

- 3.1. The joint proposal from CAB and Helping Hands is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.2. A breakdown of the range of issues jointly dealt with by both organisations combined during the period 4 January until 11 March 2016 is attached at Appendix B. Members will note that a total of 1427 issues were dealt with involving 631 clients.
- 3.3. Due to the specialist nature of the services involved it is unlikely that there other organisations that can provide the range and breadth of services required locally and members should note that an exemption approval has been obtained to depart from the Contract Procedure Rules.
- 3.4. The proposal from CAB and Helping Hands is seeking a 3 year contract with a further one year extension but this cannot be granted as it is above the OJEU threshold for the provision of services which currently stands at £172,514.

Email: stephen.glazebrook@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Tel: (0116) 257 2674

Implications	
Financial (CR)	CR1 - The costs can be accommodated within existing budgets.
Legal (AC)	CR6 - An exemption approval has been obtained to depart from the contract procedure rules.
Risk (SG)	CR4 - Providing a free comprehensive advice service will contribute to the well being of residents in the Borough

Equalities (AC)

It will provide equal access to advice services for all residents and translation services are available when necessary.