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**To:** Supporting People Commissioning Body, 23 July 2012

**Subject:** Floating Support Tender Update

**Classification:** **Unrestricted**

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### **Summary**

The Commissioning Body agreed to the tendering of all floating support services in June 2011. A tendering process was commenced and reached the stage when it awarded contracts. This was followed by 2 separate formal challenges on the process during the standstill period. Following investigation and seeking legal advice it was considered appropriate to start the re-tendering process again. In the meantime current providers have continued providing floating support services until the end of September 2012.

A new more detailed and transparent specification has been developed and consulted upon with various stakeholders and service user groups. The Invitation to Tender (ITT) has now been published and providers have been asked to submit bids, which will be evaluated against set criteria.

### **1. Introduction**

- (1) The Commissioning Body agreed to retender floating support services on the 30 June 2011. The tendering process ran almost to the point of final award but was challenged during the 10 day stand still period by 2 individual providers. Following legal advice and a thorough investigation it was recognised that the challenges had some validity and in the interests of fairness and transparency it was appropriate to start the retender process again.
- (2) The procurement timeframe will enable these services to be in place from 1 October 2012. In the meantime existing providers have been asked to continue providing floating support services until 30 September. This has caused a budget pressure that will be met through the original monies set aside for the delivery of new services during late 2011/12.

### **2. Consultation and Communication**

- (1) The development of a detailed and transparent service specification has included the views of stakeholders and services users.

### **3. Tender Progress**

- (1) The Invitation to Tender (ITT) has been publicised on the South East Business Portal encouraging providers to submit respective bids. All submitted bids will be evaluated against set criteria.
- (2) An evaluation panel has been agreed, which comprises of internal and external evaluators to bring further transparency to the process.

### **4. Risk and Business Continuity Management**

- (1) Any risk initially identified has been minimised through close communication with providers and service users remain unaffected with existing providers agreeing to the continuation of services until the new services are retendered.

### **5. Financial Implications**

- (1) The challenge to the procurement process and the decision to start the retendering process again has caused an additional budget pressure. This will be met through the £556k set aside for the delivery of new services during late 2011/12.

### **6. Legal implications**

- (1) Supporting People is obligated to procure services in an open and transparent manner. Relevant legal advice has been sought and in the interests of fairness and transparency for all providers it has been recognised that there was a need to start the tender process again.

### **7. Conclusion**

- (1) Following the challenges to the initial retendering of Floating Support services the process to start the re-tender again is now underway. A revised specification has been developed and consulted upon and providers have been asked to submit bids following the publication of the ITT.
- (2) Floating Support services will continue in their current form until 30 September when the new services are expected to be in place. All providers who have been part of the retender process have been informed.

### **Recommendations**

The Commissioning Body is asked to note that;

- 1) Floating support is being re-tendered. New contracts will be awarded in time for October 2012.

### **Contact details -**

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