**Day Opportunity, Employment and Volunteering Services for People with Lifelong Disabilities and Autistic People**

**Early Engagement & Soft Market Testing**

**Background:**

This document is intended for information purposes only and will be used by West Sussex County Council’s (WSCC) contracts and commissioning service to understand Provider interest. This document does not form a legally binding contract and is not a statement of intent to enter into a contract with any Provider.

Please note that this is not the commencement of a procurement process and Service Providers are expressing an interest to receive further information on this service and take part in soft market testing. Should any procurement arise from this, a separate notice and information will be provided.

WSCC are inviting views from specialist organisations as part of a soft market testing exercise in relation to **Day Opportunity, Employment and Volunteering Services** in West Sussex. Providers are asked to provide feedback on the points below and to confirm whether this would be of commercial interest to them.

WSCC is anticipating that a procurement process will be undertaken at the end of the calendar year 2023, with a view to new arrangements commencing on 1st July 2024. The services provided will be co-designed community based interventions that raise aspiration, encourage independence and healthy active lives. They will also identify and recognise carers, include them when appropriate and signpost for support if required.

The offer is to include, but not be limited to:

* A Single Point of Access (In person, telephone, email, website, social media) for Day Opportunities in each District /Borough area.
* Information on what is available in the local area with guidance and short-term support when needed to connect with mainstream community-based activities.
* Specialist , community-based services for people with higher support needs
* Skills development and progression to greater independence e.g. travel training
* Assertiveness training
* Evening and weekend interventions.
* Personalisation
* An inclusive approach
* A culturally sensitive approach
* Developing peer support networks to reduce reliance on formal support
* A county-wide service (Telephone, email, website, social media) for Supported Employment/Volunteering delivered in community hubs
* On-line support sessions. Development of IT skills. On-line tools etc.
* Increasing employability (Job seeking, work placements, voluntary work, CV Writing/Planning for interviews)
* Tracking people’s outcomes, progress towards more independence and KPI’s
* Engagement with local businesses and employers
* Job/volunteering retention

This piece of market testing aims to get Provider’s views on the potential for other models of delivery to compliment the above range of interventions in order to best meet the following outcomes:

People are:

* Stimulated and challenged
* Safe and confident (supported and safeguarded
* Learning new skills and increasing independence
* Connected to their community (less isolated)

Please can you respond to the questions listed below by latest, **12pm on Thursday 24th August 2023.** Please submit your completed document via email to [mark.greening@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:mark.greening@westsussex.gov.uk).

1. **Supporting good outcomes:**

Please can you give your comments and thoughts on the service offer outlined above and any other possible solutions to meeting the four key outcomes above.

1. **Maintaining contact with peers, expanding social networks and enabling people to support each other but wanting to meet more people and make new friends**

Please can you give your thoughts and comments on the best ways to enable and support new experiences whilst maintaining contact with long time peers. Any barriers you might envisage?

1. **Transport :**

West Sussex is a large rural county. Locally based opportunities are to be built on but nevertheless transport will be an issue in terms of availability and affordability. We are currently looking at cost efficient and innovative ways of supporting travel. Please can you give your ideas and an indicator of the potential annual cost of your suggested approach.

*Please note that this is for soft market testing only and no figures given will be used for any other purpose other than to help inform WSCC of the potential service cost. This will not be used to evaluate any future bid.*

1. **Meeting Demand**

In West Sussex demand for services is increasing . We are looking for ideas and innovations, including digital solutions, in respect of managing increasing volumes within limited resources. Please can you give your ideas and an indicator of the potential annual cost of your suggested approach.

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