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**Children’s Commissioner’s Office**

**Invitation to Tender**

**Digital Hub Development**

November 2017

Invitation to tender – digital hub development

[1.0 About the Children’s Commissioner for England 3](#_Toc497748032)

[1.1 What the Children’s Commissioner does 3](#_Toc497748033)

[2.0 Ambitious for Children 3](#_Toc497748034)

[3.0 Project scope 4](#_Toc497748035)

[4.0 Aims and objectives the Digital Hub 5](#_Toc497748036)

[5.0 Audiences 7](#_Toc497748037)

[6.0 Budget 7](#_Toc497748038)

[7.0 Tendering arrangements 7](#_Toc497748039)

[7.1 Tender requirements 7](#_Toc497748040)

[7.2 Completion and return of tender 8](#_Toc497748041)

[7.3 Acceptance of a successful tender 9](#_Toc497748042)

[7.6 Collusion 10](#_Toc497748043)

[Annex 1 - Tender format 11](#_Toc497748044)

## 1.0 About the Children’s Commissioner for England

Anne Longfield started as Children’s Commissioner for England in March 2015. Her role was created by the Children Act 2004 and strengthened by the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Children’s Commissioner promotes and protects children’s rights. Her work includes listening to what children and young people say about things that affect them and encouraging adults making decisions to always take their views and interests into account.

She is responsible for working on behalf of all children in England and is expected to particularly focus on certain groups. These include those who are in or leaving care or living away from home, those receiving social care services and other groups who she considers are at particular risk of having their rights infringed.

The post of Children’s Commissioner was created following a recommendation in the Inquiry into Victoria Climbié’s death, and also requests from a number of children’s sector charities for there to be a Commissioner. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that countries should ideally have an individual such as a Children’s Commissioner or Ombudsman responsible for children’s rights.

### **1.1 What the Children’s Commissioner does**

The Children’s Commissioner improves the lives of England’s 11.5 million children and young people by encouraging those who make decisions that affect them to take account of their views, interests and rights. She can do this by:

* Providing advice and information about children’s views and interests
* Encouraging people, including the Government, to listen
* Considering how children will be affected by decisions
* Investigating issues that affect children and young people
* Running a helpline that provides advice and assistance to vulnerable children and young people (those in care, leaving care or working with social services).

## 2.0 Ambitious for Children

Published in July 2016, [*Ambitious for Children 2016-17*](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Ambitious%20for%20Children%202016.pdf) sets out the Children’s Commissioner’s strategic priorities for the next five years. These have been refined in the 2016/17 Business Plan as follows:

* Growing up with positive childhoods
* Being ambitious for every child in care
* Seeing a major reduction in children being harmed and neglected
* Reducing inequalities for children and breaking the cycle of disadvantage
* Placing children at the heart of everyday life

# 3.0 Project scope

We are tendering for a new Digital Hub for children in care and care leavers.

We wish to appoint a company to undertake the following:

Design building and hosting of a digital hub for children and young people with care experience.

The successful bidder will be required to deliver the following elements through their proposal:

**Design**

* + User journey map and process design
  + Wire framing of key pages
  + Logo design and hub branding
  + A signed-off ‘look and feel’ for the hub

**Functionality**

* + Information pages, blogs and news articles with downloadable documents, embedded video, audio and polls
  + Ability to embed RSS or similar feeds from other sites
  + Ability to link to social media platforms from the site
  + Visitors should be able to post comments and vote on polls anonymously
  + Ability to search for content on the site by key words

**Accessibility:**

* + Fully mobile responsive design and code
  + Consideration/tools to make content accessible for all users

**Administration:**

* + All pages and content must be editable through a secure content management system (CMS).
  + The ability to moderate, delete, make live comments
  + The ability to track visitor analytics and referrals

**Hosting and Maintenance:**

* + 12 months hosting
  + 12 months technical support during business hours.
  + Automated alerts of any security or hosting issues
  + Regular secure Back-ups and disaster recovery, ISO9001:2015.
  + Monthly site performance reports.

**Technical:**

The CMS should be built on a secure, open source base allowing maintenance and hosting to be transferred to other providers if required.

# 4.0 Aims and objectives the Digital Hub

Children in care often lack the capacity to build the support networks and access the information that others take for granted.

Many children with care experience tell us that they miss out on opportunities and support, leaving them feeling left behind and ill-equipped to deal with the challenges they face. Leaving care without the guidance and support of families brings particular challenges and many say that they struggle to find information and support as they become more independent - from housing advice to jobs and training.

Digital platforms can provide children in care with easy access to relevant information, advice and support wherever they are and whenever they need it. Young people in care have also told us that they would like more access to training, discounts or events. However, there is currently no national place online for children in care that meets this need. Local authority Children in Care Councils do valuable engagement work and provide a key network but they are too localised, too small and lack the digital skills and capacity to meet this national challenge.

The new Digital Hub responds to what children in care tell us they want. It builds on and supports the work of local Children in Care Councils and others to combine the best information, unique opportunities and highly engaging content in one easily accessible digital space. Our consultation with children in care has highlighted that content made by young people is often the most effective way to engage them but the content must be good quality, relevant to their circumstances and safe.

**The Digital Hub**

The Hub is a mobile friendly digital platform featuring news, opportunities and discounts for children in care or care leavers. A moderated platform to share their views, vote in polls and inspire and support their peers, the primary audience will be 13-25 year olds.

Content will be developed with young people. Young people with care experience will be encouraged to be Digital Leaders and, with the support of the Children’s Commissioner’s digital team, they will curate, create and promote content. Digital Leaders will ensure the Hub is always relevant and engaging for young people. Through this scheme, young people in care will be able to develop important employability skills and gain unique work experience in digital, communications and management.

**Young people involvement**

A youth advisory group will co-design the service and create new content. Through Children in Care Councils, there will be opportunities for young people to take on more in depth roles in helping to support the Hub. This will provide pre-employability training and high quality, real work experience.

In the long term, the Hub will be handed over to an independent organisation. Our ambition is that the organisation will be a social enterprise run by young people with care experience and we will explore the feasibility of this during the incubation period.

# 5.0 Audiences

The primary audience for the hub will be children and young people aged 13 to 25 who have experience of being in care.

The secondary audience will be adults working with and for children in care

**Children and young people** will be able to safely access relevant information and opportunities, share views and be inspired by their peers. They will have new opportunities to develop skills, receive incentives and access employment opportunities.

**Children in Care Council/ Participation Leads** will have new opportunities to engage young people and increased reach for content created by young people. The Hub will also enable greater knowledge sharing between Children in Care Council leads and staff that will improve quality, coordination and impact nationally.

**Policy makers** will have easier access to views and opinions of young people in and leaving care. Increased awareness of activity in different regions and have access to an effective channel for disseminating information and opportunities to young people in care.

## 6.0 Budget

The total value of this contract should not exceed **£24,000, including VAT.**

No additional expenses will be payable.

## 7.0 Tendering arrangements

We would like to hear from you if you can provide the service detailed in the above specifications. We reserve the right not to accept any tenders or award any contracts as a result of this tender exercise.

### **7.1 Tender requirements**

Bidders are requested to include in their tender submission the following information:

Details of the organisation:

* Background information on the organisation to include:
* the management structure
* the resource available locally, and in other offices
* any specialist knowledge available to the firm
* financial statement (annual report).
* Proposed terms and conditions for invoicing and payment of fees under the contract.
* A commitment to ensuring that staff and managers involved in the project will be DBS checked (where relevant).
* Copies of policies (or supporting statements) validating your organisation’s commitment to:
* child protection
* sustainable development
* equal opportunities and equalities
* risk management
* business ethics.

Delivery of services:

* Details of the proposed approach and methodology to be applied in the delivery of all parts of the specification
* An outline project plan
* An assessment of the principal risks associated with the project and a plan for dealing with them
* Details of the bidder’s relevant experience in relation to all parts of the specification
* A clear understanding of the requirements of the needs of the Children’s Commissioner’s Office and this specific project as discussed in this invitation document.

Value for money:

* Bidders are required to submit a breakdown of costs to explain the final price calculation
* Details of how long the tender is valid
* All tenders must be adhere to the Tender Format – see Annex 1.

### **7.2 Completion and return of tender**

Clarification on ITT to be received by: 22nd November 17

Deadline for responses: 5pm on Wednesday 29th November 17

Appointment date: w/c 11th December 17

Delivery deadline: 31st March 2018

**Contact: Cliff Manning**,

**Email:** cliff.manning@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

All responses should be directed to: [procurement.mailbox@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:procurement.mailbox@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

Any submission received after the deadline specified above will be disqualified. No exceptions will be made for any reason. However, the Children’s Commissioner’s Office may, at its own absolute discretion, extend the closing date and time for receipt of tenders specified above without request. Any such extension will apply to all tenders.

Every tender response received by the Children’s Commissioner’s Office shall be deemed to have been made subject to the conditions of tender as set out in this document, unless the Children’s Commissioner’s Office shall previously have expressly agreed in writing to the contrary. Any alternative terms and conditions offered on behalf of a bidder shall, if inconsistent with these conditions, be deemed to have been rejected by the Children’s Commissioner’s Office unless expressly accepted by them in writing.

The bidder must obtain for themselves, at their own responsibility and expense, all information necessary for the preparation of the tender.

Information supplied to the bidder by the Children’s Commissioner’s Office or its officers, agents or other staff is supplied only for general guidance in the preparation of the tender. Bidders must satisfy themselves by their own investigations, as to the accuracy of any such information and no responsibility is accepted by the Children’s Commissioner’s Office through any loss of damage of whatever kind arising from the use by the bidder of such information.

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### **7.3 Acceptance of a successful tender**

The Children’s Commissioner’s Office is not bound to accept the lowest tender. The selection criteria, and relative weighting, are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Evaluation Type | Evaluation criteria | Evaluation Weighting |
| EXPERTISE | Expertise in key areas addressed by the project brief | 30 |
| EXPERIENCE | Experience in undertaking this type of work | 20 |
| CAPACITY | Ability for the organisation to deliver the work on time and within budget. Assurances that risks will be managed appropriately | 25 |
| METHODOLOGY | Whether the proposed methodology for supporting the researchers will deliver a robust piece of work within time and budget | 15 |
| VALUE FOR MONEY | Whether the bid provides good value for money in relation to what will be delivered, comparable to ‘market rates’ for similar work | 10 |
| TOTAL | | 100 |

The successful bidder will be notified in writing and will be required to enter into a formal agreement with the Children’s Commissioner’s Office in the form of a contract.

The Contractor shall not give, bargain, sell, assign, sub-let (except as it is customary in the normal course of business), or otherwise dispose of the Contract or any part thereof or the benefit or advantage of the Contract or any part thereof without the consent in writing of the Children’s Commissioner’s Office. All unsuccessful tenders will be notified at contract award.

**7.4 Canvassing**

Any bidder who directly or indirectly canvases any other member, official or agent of the Children’s Commissioner’s Office concerning the award of the Contract for the provision of the services, or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any other member, official or agent of the Children’s Commissioner’s Office concerning any other tender or proposed tender for the services described herein, shall be disqualified.

**7.5 Confidentiality of tender information and documentation**

All information supplied by the Children’s Commissioner’s Office in connection with this tender shall be regarded as confidential.

The Invitation to tender and accompanying documentation and publications are and shall remain the property of the Children’s Commissioner’s Office and must be returned upon demand to the Children’s Commissioner’s Office.

### **7.6 Collusion**

Any bidder who:

Fixes or adjusts the amount of his tender by or in accordance with any agreement with any party,

OR

Communicates to any other party (other than the Children’s Commissioner’s Office) the approximate amount of the proposed tender, (except where disclosure is made confidentially and is deemed necessary to obtain quotations for insurance and contract guarantee bond valuation),

OR

Enters into an agreement or arrangement with any other party that they will refrain from tendering or as to the amount of any tender submitted,

OR

Offers or agrees to pay, give, or does pay any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done, causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other tender or proposed Tender for the Service any act or omission, SHALL (without prejudice to any civil remedies available to the Children’s Commissioner’s Office and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a bidder may attract) be disqualified.

## **Annex 1 - Tender format**

Bidders should present their proposals in the following format:

Section 1 Table of Contents

Section 2 Executive Summary

Section 3 Meeting the Specification

* Proposed methodology
* Project management
* Risk assessment

Section 4 Cost and Charging Arrangements

Section 5 Experience and References

* Bidding organisation
* Individual project manager

Section 6 Declarations, Undertakings and Attachments