



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Occupational Health and Employee Counselling Contracts
Date:	8 November 2013
Reporting Officers:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, Ext: 6217
Contact Officers:	Karen Russell, HR/OD Manager, Ext: 4702

1.0	Purpose
	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the sates of the current Occupational Health and Employee Counselling contacts and seek approval for the issuing of new tenders.

2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Members will be aware that both the Occupational Health and Employee Counselling contracts provide essential services to the council for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has a statutory duty to ensure the health and safety of its employees and the health and wellbeing of our workforce is an important element of that. • Both Occupational Health and Employee Counselling are vital to effective management of the council's attendance levels
2.2	<p><u>Occupational Health Contract</u> Following a public tendering exercise the contract for the provision of an Occupational Health Physician Services was awarded to Independent Occupational Health Ltd. (IOH) This contract was awarded for a period of two years with the option of renewal for a further period of one year subject to satisfactory performance. The additional one year has been exercised and this contract is now due for renewal by end of January 2014.</p>
2.3	<p><u>Employee Counselling Services</u> Following a public tendering exercise the contract for the provision of an Employee Counselling Service was awarded to Apheideo Associates. This contract was awarded for a period of two years with the option of renewal for a further period of one year subject to satisfactory performance. The additional one year has been exercised and this contract is now due for renewal by end of December 2013.</p>
2.4	The Committee's approval is needed to commence a procurement exercise for both of these contracts.

3.0	Key Issues
3.1	The council implemented a new attendance policy in January 2010. In line with best practice this policy is currently under review. It is therefore essential that a full review of both contract specifications is undertaken and that the user departments have the opportunity to contribute. This will ensure that the best possible value for money services is contracted. In order to enable this work to be undertaken Committee is therefore requested to grant an extension of no longer than six months (under the current terms and condition) to complete the reviews of the contract specifications and the related procurement exercises.
3.2	Tenders will be evaluated using pre determined criteria including both cost and quality in liaison with the Corporate Procurement Services. It will be proposed that the contracts would be for two years, with the option of extension of a further year, depending on performance/requirements.

4	Resource Implications
4.1	The current contracts are valued annually at £ 101k for Occupational Health and £137k for Employee Counselling. Provision for this expenditure is included in revenue budgets however this is expected to increase in line with current usage.
4.2	Regularly testing the market via competitive tendering ensures that we obtain the best possible value for money and standards of service from our external suppliers.

5	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
5.1	There is no direct equality or good relations implications in respect of this report.

6	Recommendations
6.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to extend the current Occupational Health and Employee Counselling contracts for a maximum of six months 2. Approve the commencement of tendering exercises for the Occupational Health and Employee Counselling service contracts and delegate the authority under the Scheme of Delegation to the Director of Finance and Resources to approve the tenders.

7	Decision Tracking
The Director of Finance and Resources is responsible for approval of the recommended tender.	

8	Key to Abbreviations
None	

9	Documents Attached
No documents appended	