

**ITEM 21. TENDER - EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**FILE NO: X006479.001**

**TENDER NO: 1674**

**SUMMARY**

This report provides details of the tenders received for the provision of an employee assistance program.

The City has provided an employee assistance program since 1998. An employee assistance program is a confidential work-based intervention program designed to enhance the emotional, mental and general wellbeing of all employees, including services for immediate family members.

The City employs a diverse range of staff, including outdoor workers, community services staff and professional staff. The work of some staff, such as compliance and customer service officers and social/youth workers, can be personally and emotionally challenging. The provision of a counselling service to assist any personal or work-related issues and assist with debriefing of incidents (inclusive of critical response to emergencies) is considered to be fundamental for the wellbeing of City's staff.

This report recommends that Council accept the tender offer of Tenderer 'A' for the provision of an employee assistance program.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council accept the tender offer of Tenderer 'A' for the provision of an employee assistance program for a period of three years, with the option of an extension of two years, if appropriate;
- (B) authority be delegated do the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer the contracts relating to the tender; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to exercise the option referred to in clause (A), if appropriate, and negotiate the price to extend the contract accordingly.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Tender Evaluation Summary (Confidential)

**(As Attachment A is confidential, it will be circulated separately from the agenda paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only.)**

**BACKGROUND**

1. The provision of an employee assistance program has been in place at the City for many years.
2. The aim of the program is to provide preventative and proactive interventions for the early detection, identification and/or resolution of both work and personal problems that may adversely affect the performance and wellbeing of staff members and their immediate families. These problems and issues may include, but are not limited to, managing conflict, relationships, trauma, substance abuse, gambling and other addictions, financial problems, depression, anxiety disorders, communication problems and coping with change.
3. The program also includes debriefing of staff following critical incidents, professional group supervision, advice to managers on specific wellbeing or workplace issues and information sessions relating to staff mental wellbeing and resilience.

**INVITATION TO TENDER**

4. The tender was advertised in The Daily Telegraph, The Sydney Morning Herald and Council's E-Tender website on 8 November 2016, with submissions closing on 29 November 2016.

**TENDER SUBMISSIONS**

5. Eight submissions were received from the following organisations (listed alphabetically):
  - Access Programs Australia Ltd (Trading as AccessEAP)
  - Actevate Pty Ltd
  - Converge International Incorporating Resolutions RTK Pty Ltd
  - Davidson Trahaire Corpsych Pty Ltd
  - Ingeus Australia Pty Ltd (Trading as Assure Programs)
  - Insight Elite Performance Psychology Pty Ltd
  - SMG Health Pty Ltd
  - The ORS Group Pty Ltd
6. No late submissions were received.

**TENDER EVALUATION**

7. All members of the Tender Evaluation Panel have signed Pecuniary Interest Declarations. No pecuniary interests were noted.
8. The relative ranking of tenders as determined from the total weighted score is provided in the confidential Tender Evaluation Summary – Attachment A.

9. All submissions were assessed in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria being:
- (a) the lump sum price and schedule of prices;
  - (b) demonstrated capacity and technical ability to carry out the work under the contract;
  - (c) demonstrated managerial capability, qualifications, experience and number of personnel;
  - (d) capacity to achieve the required program objectives;
  - (e) quality plan and operational plan;
  - (f) Work Health and Safety; and
  - (g) financial and commercial trading integrity including insurances.

#### **PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

10. The City will ensure that performance indicators as outlined within the tender are monitored during this service by way of:
- (a) monitoring key performance indicators to measure the performance of the successful tenderer over the term of the contract. Performance results will assist Council in determining whether the additional two year extension is endorsed;
  - (b) reviewing and monitoring the service provider's program and assessing milestone progress;
  - (c) reviewing progress reporting, presentational and other deliverables; and
  - (d) ensuring the employee assistance program is delivered in accordance with the specification, including positive client feedback, through diligent and robust project management.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. There are sufficient funds allocated for this program within the current year's operating budget and future years' forward estimates.

#### **RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

12. The tender has been conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and the City's Contracts Policy.
13. Attachment A contains confidential commercial information of the tenderers and details of Council's tender evaluation and contingencies which, if disclosed, would:
- (a) confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; and
  - (b) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

14. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

15. There are no critical dates.
16. The City is currently engaging an employee assistance program provider on a monthly fee for service. Upon approval from Council, the commencement of the tender could begin after completion of contractual arrangements.

**OPTIONS**

17. The City has two options in regard to its employee assistance program:
- (a) Continue with the existing arrangement:
    - (i) This option would require the City to continue using the existing arrangement on a month by month basis.
    - (ii) The City will need to request from Council approval for a further exemption from tender and an extension to the term of the existing contract.
  - (b) Seek Council's approval of the offer of Tenderer 'A' as recommended:
    - (i) This will ensure that employees have continued access to the services of an employee assistance program.

**SUSAN PETTIFER**

Director Workforce and Information Services

Paulette Sutherland, WHS Manager