

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 25 February 2021

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Education & Social Care

SUBJECT: Apetito (provision of meals to St Luke's and St Patrick's Care Homes) : Direct Award

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To seek a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3, for the granting of a Direct Award to Apetito for the supply of pre-prepared meals to St Luke's and St Patrick's Care Homes from 1st March 2021 to 28th February 2022.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board

- i) **Note the contents of the report and associated appendix; and**
- ii) **Approve a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 for the Direct Award to 'Apetito' for a period of one year.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Halton Borough Council (HBC) Care Homes Division consists of four care homes, including St Luke's and St Patrick's, both having transferred from Community Integrated Care (CIC) in October 2019.
- 3.2 St Luke's is a 56-bed nursing home providing dementia care across four areas. St Patrick's is a 40-bed nursing home providing dementia care across two areas.
- 3.3 All care homes have catering facilities and provide a full meal service and snacks to individuals residing within the homes. All homes provide specialist diets in line with individuals assessed needs and care plans.
- 3.4 CIC historically used Apetito to supply meals for residents across their homes and following transfer of St Luke's and St Patrick's to HBC, a temporary six-month contract was agreed (up to April 2020) to allow time for a review to be completed and long-term needs identified.
- 3.5 Given the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the contract was extended for a further six months up to the end of September 2020. Due to the ongoing challenges faced by care homes in responding to the pandemic, there have been further extensions to the contract to ensure continued meal provision within the homes.

3.6 In total there have been three waivers and extensions to the contract with Apetito and, as such, a more permanent interim arrangement now needs to be agreed until such a time as the service has capacity to complete a full review of catering in care homes. Therefore, a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 (v) of part 3 is sought to award Apetito a contract for a 12-month period from 1st March 2021 to 28th February 2022 with the option to extend for a further 12 months should the pandemic continue to place pressures.

3.7 Whilst current demands on the service have not allowed a full in-depth review of the meals service across all homes to be undertaken, a brief review has been conducted in relation to Apetito service provision within St Luke's and St Patrick's with the following benefits highlighted:

- Apetito have supplied fully fitted kitchen equipment in both care homes and they supply all serving dishes;
- Apetito provide full staff training;
- There is an online app which details the nutritional value of each portion of every item supplied;
- Individual meals are prepared in line with IDDSI which reduces risks associated with preparing specialist meals;
- Apetito provide photographs of each meal ordered to support decision making in EMI units;
- The meals look appetising and waste has been reduced.

3.8 In considering the current situation and the particular challenges faced by care homes and their residents as a result of the pandemic alongside the benefits associated with the service provided by Apetito, it is recommended that this service continue for at least another 12 months.

3.9 The case for continuing with Apetito is as follows:

- Continuity of service delivery and meal provision that is familiar to residents;
- Awareness of nutritional values of the meals that are also portion controlled;
- Service continuity not reliant on employed kitchen cooks (avoids potential staffing issues, e.g. sickness absence);
- Inability to undertake a consultation process with regards to alternative catering options at the current time.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None identified.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 Non-Emergency Procedures (exceeding a value threshold of £100,000) on the basis that compliance with Standing Orders is not practicable because the Council's requirements can only be delivered by a particular supplier (1.14.4 (v)).

5.2 Awarding a contract to the existing provider would support continuity of provision for the residents at St Luke's and St Patrick's Care Homes.

5.3 The waiver would be effective for the period 1st March 2021 to 28th February 2022.

5.4 The total financial cost to the authority is £268,000 per annum (for the two homes).

5.5 The cost of this contract can be met from within existing budget allocations.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Care homes make an important contribution to the health and social care system in Halton.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There is a risk that having not been able to complete a full review of catering and meal provision across all homes that the most cost-effective and high quality service has not been identified. However, it is felt that the need to ensure continuity of service provision in these uncertain times outweighs those risks and entering into a contract with Apetito is the best option at this time.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Apetito Review	Runcorn Town Hall	Jane.English@halton.gov.uk