

Report to: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Date: 22/01/2026

Subject: Contract Award for Advocacy Services for Adults

Report Author: Sarah Bright, Director of Commissioning and Transformation

Responsible Director: Jacqui McShannon, Executive Director of People's

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to award a contract for the provision of Advocacy Services for Adults for four years with an option to extend for a further two years to the Preferred Supplier. The proposed contract will commence on 1st April 2026. The Procurement Strategy for the recommission of this service was approved 1st September 2025.

This report provides an overview of the requirement procured, the pre-procurement considerations which informed the procurement strategy agreed, the approach adopted in achieving the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT), and the post-procurement activities, including the outcome of the procurement process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 as well as Annexes 3 and 4 are not for publication on the basis that they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
2. To approve a contract award to the Preferred Supplier, identified in Appendix 1 (the "Preferred Supplier") for the Contract Award Value included in Appendix 1 (the "Contract Award Value").

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Advocacy services employ local residents and will continue to prioritise social value through the new contract. This includes commitments to recruit from within the borough and offer training and

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the <u>H&F Corporate Plan</u> and the H&F Values
	development opportunities to local organisations as well as carers and residents.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	Advocates play a vital role in supporting vulnerable residents, including those with disabilities and mental health needs. The service ensures individuals are heard, respected, and empowered to make informed decisions about their care and support.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Advocacy services are independent of the council and act solely in the interests of the resident. This independence ensures that residents' voices are central to decision making processes.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The new contract consolidates advocacy services into a single, integrated model. This approach reduces duplication, streamlines management, and achieves economies of scale, delivering better value for money.
Taking pride in H&F	By investing in non-statutory advocacy, the council demonstrates pride in its diverse communities and its commitment to equity and inclusion.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Advocates work face to face as well as remotely via telephones and use public transport when in the borough.

Financial Impact

As detailed in the report, approval is recommended to award a contract for the provision of Advocacy Services for Adults for four years with an option to extend for a further two years to the Preferred Supplier. The proposed contract will commence on 1st April 2026.

The financial implications of this re- procurement strategy is included in the exempt appendix two of the report. There is budgetary provision to meet this contract from the Adult Social Care Commissioning Third Sector Revenue Budget in 2026/27 and for each subsequent year, subject to the appropriate annual budget sign off.

Comments by: Cheryl Anglin-Thompson
 Role: Principal Accountant ASC Commissioning & PH
 Date: 9 January 2026

Comments verified by: James Newman, AD Finance, 13 January 2026

Legal Implications

This procurement process was managed and undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 (UKPGA 2023/54), and the Procurement Regulations 2024 (UKDSI 2024/9780348259728), as well as the requirements of the Council's Contract Standing Orders (CSOs).

Joginder Singh Bola, Senior Solicitor (Contracts & Procurement), 7/01/2026

Procurement Comments

Based on the details provided in this report, CSO 16 at Section D High Value Contracts the Council's CSOs has been complied with.

The Procurement team has reviewed the moderated evaluation scores and assured the weighted scores are correct in line with the published procurement documents for this procurement.

The Procurement team has confirmed all Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Undertaking Declarations have been completed and these must be uploaded to the Council's capitalEsourcing eProcurement portal.

A Contract Detail Notice must be published to the FIND a Tender Service (FTS) to satisfy the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 (UKPGA 2023/54) for contracts equal to and over £30,000 (including VAT). This must be completed using the Council's capitalEsourcing eProcurement portal.

The contract must be added to the capitalEsourcing eProcurement portal, to ensure it is published on the Council's Contract Register in line with the legislated transparency obligations, and all applicable legal notices must be published within their legislated deadlines.

A named contract manager must be allocated to the contract on the Council's capitalEsourcing eProcurement portal.

Jacqueline Rutherford, Category Specialist, 7th January 2026.

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Executive Summary

1. The Council is awarding a consolidated contract for Advocacy Services in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. Previously delivered through separate contracts, these services will now be integrated into a single, person-centred model to simplify referral pathways, improve access, and ensure statutory duties are met. The lead provider will also deliver training and capacity-building through a borough advocacy network, strengthening workforce skills, community resilience, and service sustainability. This approach reduces fragmentation, improves efficiency, and supports the Council's priorities on co-production, inclusion, and prevention, empowering residents to self-advocate and participate in decisions about their care.

Procurement Approach

2. The procurement process has been undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Strategy included at Annex 1, agreed by the Deputy Leader on 01/09/2025, and CSO 16 of London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Council's (the "Council") Contract Standing Orders (CSOs), which defined the process to be followed.
3. The procurement opportunity was published on the Find a Tender Service (FTS) via the Councils procurement portal (capitalEsourcing), with the reference itt_19134. The reference number for the published notices is 2025/S 000-037486
4. The quality (including added value), and price weightings applicable to this procurement process are set out below, and were identified as being appropriate, to a model designed to drive a greater influence over the quality (including added value) of the contract, during the contract term.

Criteria	Weighting	
Quality, including Added Value (60%)	Quality	Added Value
	50%	10%
Price (40%)	40%	
Total (100%)	100%	

Conflicts of Interest

5. All officers and decision makers have been required to complete a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration form to record any actual, potential, and/or perceived conflicts, along with appropriate mitigations (as appropriate), on the Conflicts Assessment.
6. Approval of this Contract Award by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) member and elected member constitutes their declaration that they do not have any actual, potential, and/or perceived conflicts, relevant to this procurement,

except where a specific Conflict of Interest Declaration form has been completed and provided, advising differently.

7. All members of the Evaluation Panel were required to complete and sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Undertaking Declaration. A completed and signed copy of this form was returned by all members of the Evaluation Panel, ahead of them reviewing Potential Supplier responses.

Procurement Outcome

8. Procurement responses were received from 4 (four) Potential Supplier(s), of which 3 (three) were compliant.
9. The Procurement Responses were checked to determine they were compliant of the rules of the procurement process.
10. The Potential Suppliers demonstrated minimum capacity and capabilities, as set out in the Procurement Specific Questionnaire, and that their commercial offer was not abnormally low. Further details relevant to the procurement outcome are included in Appendix 3
11. The Preferred Supplier's procurement response has been objectively assessed as providing the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT) in providing this requirement.
12. Following assessment and moderation of all compliant Procurement Responses received, moderated weighted scores were confirmed. Details of these is included in the Moderation Matrix, included in Annex 3.

People Based Considerations

13. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulation 2006 (UKSI 2006/246) (TUPE) is applicable to this contract.

Risk Assessment and Proposed Mitigations

14. The table below includes the key risks and proposed mitigations identified as being relevant to the contract award.

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigations
No risks identified	

Mobilisation Timetable

15. The table below provides an estimated timetable of the competition process through to contact commencing.

Action	Date
1. Sign-Off (Award)	Thursday, 22 January 2026
2. Contract Engrossment	Tuesday, 10 February 2026
3. Contract Details Notice Published	Tuesday, 10 February 2026
4. Contract Signed	Friday, 13 March 2026
5. Contract Start Date	Wednesday, 1 April 2026
6. Contract Mobilisation and Implementation	Tuesday, 10 February 2026
7. Service Start Date	Wednesday, 1 April 2026
8. Contract End Date (initial term, excluding extension periods)	Sunday, 31 March 2030
9. Contract End Date (including all extension periods)	Wednesday, 31 March 2032

Contract Management

16. The following KPIs will be used to measure successful delivery in the first year of delivery:

Target	Measure	Frequency
Support residents who require advocacy services	Minimum 750 residents annually	Annual Quarterly
Maintain a Single Point of Access for referrals and a staffed telephone line (Mon–Fri, 8am–5pm)	Telephone line operational and monitored Single point of access maintained	Quarterly
Maintain a website compliant with WCAG with information and signposting	Website live, accessible, and updated	Quarterly
Ensure response time for referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Advocacy: Support within 24 hours • Safeguarding: As instructed by professional • Community Advocacy: Initial contact within 5 days, support within 28 days 	Quarterly

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Complaints Advocacy: Initial contact within 5 days, support within 28 days 	
Deliver quarterly advocacy training programmes for the wider network	Minimum 4 training sessions per year	Quarterly
Develop advocacy resources for partners	Resources published and distributed	Annual
Collect quarterly feedback from network organisations	100% of network partners submit feedback reports	Quarterly
Compile and present network impact summary to the council	Impact summary submitted	Quarterly
Develop and implement a Marketing Plan	Marketing plan approved and active	Annual
Publish an annual report	Report published and shared	Annual
Publish an annual newsletter	Newsletter published	Annual
Conduct annual satisfaction survey	Completed by ≥80% of residents accessing the service	Annual
Maintain complaints procedure	Procedure in place and reviewed	Annual
Evidence inclusivity, responsiveness, and co-production	Equality impact reviews completed	Quarterly Annually
Monitor service quality and safeguarding	Mystery shopping, safeguarding checks, QA reviews	Quarterly Annually

17. The relationship with the Preferred Supplier will be managed by the Commissioning and Transformation Lead and the Contract Monitoring Officer.

Monitoring frequency:

- Quarterly Service Review Meetings will include KPI review, case studies, financial reports, and service challenges.
- Annual formal contract review will be held with four weeks' notice to share good practice and agree areas for improvement.

Conclusion

18. Following conclusion of the procurement process, it is recommended that the contract is awarded to the Preferred Supplier, who achieved the highest score, following comprehensive and objective assessment and moderation of all compliant Procurement Responses received, by the Evaluation Panel.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

19. The recommissioned advocacy service has been designed to advance equity and inclusion in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Impact Assessment (Annex 4) identified predominantly positive impacts across all protected characteristics, with targeted actions to address potential barriers.

Key findings include:

- **Accessibility:** The new model introduces a single point of access and multiple contact routes (telephone, in-person, and digital) to reduce barriers for older adults and digitally excluded residents.
- **Disability:** Enhanced accessibility measures, including easy-read materials and British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation, will support residents with physical and mental health conditions.
- **Race and Language:** To address underrepresentation among Black, Asian, and Multi-Ethnic communities, the service will provide culturally competent advocacy and access to interpreters and translated materials.
- **LGBTQ+ Inclusion:** The service will adopt inclusive practices and visible allyship to build trust with LGBTQ+ communities, recognising intersectionality and compounded barriers for individuals with multiple protected characteristics.
- **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Advocacy will be available for pregnant individuals navigating health and social care systems, ensuring sensitivity to their circumstances.
- **Care-Experienced Adults:** While not a statutory requirement, the service will respond to advocacy needs of care-experienced adults with tailored support.

Consultation with service users and stakeholders highlighted long wait times, complex referral processes, and low awareness of advocacy services. These issues have been addressed through:

- A streamlined referral process via a single 'front door'
- Capacity-building within local organisations to expand community advocacy
- A targeted awareness campaign through GPs, community groups, and digital platforms

The specification includes requirements for equality monitoring, cultural competence, and co-production with residents and grassroots organisations. Ongoing contract management will monitor demographic data, service accessibility, and user satisfaction to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with equality duties.

20. The EIA assessment is contained in the Exempt Annex 4.

Verified by: Natalie Potter, Equity Diversity and Inclusion Officer, 05th January 2026

Risk Management Implications

21. There is an organisational risk that LBHF becomes overly dependent upon the any appointed advocate and that following any potential drop-in service by them it becomes problematic and expensive to disengage.
This risk must be reduced. It is recommended that alternative options should be investigated prior to the completion of this contract to safeguard the public and associated services.
22. There is a combined legal, reputational and people risk that the advocacy service provided is incomplete and challenged by any resident who may feel dissatisfied.
As noted above, this risk must be reduced and it is recommended that a process is devised to support residents who may feel dissatisfied with the service provided by a specific advocate and to engage with an alternate one.

Agreed: Jules Binney, Risk and Assurance Manager, 5t January 2026

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

23. The Council has committed to making the borough net zero carbon by 2030. It aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions throughout its supply chain by awarding contracts to suppliers with a track record of reducing carbon and commitments to doing so in the future, and by working with existing suppliers to reduce emissions. The successful provider will seek to reduce carbon emissions from their assets and operations, within the contract, in their back office and in their supply chain.
24. Council officers will work with the new provider during the mobilisation period to develop an action plan for the lifetime of the contract that will include reducing carbon emissions.
25. This is award will have neutral implications. Advocates work face to face as well as remotely via telephones and use public transport when in the borough.

Verified by: Charlotte Slaven, Head of Climate Strategy and Engagement, 6th January 2026.

Local Economy and Social Value Implications

26. It is a requirement that all contracts let by the council with a value above £100,000 propose and commit to social value contributions that are additional to the core services required under the contract.
27. The supplier has committed to a range of Social Value outcomes, including accredited training for new employees, the provision of employment taster days, spend with local companies in the supply chain, support for initiatives to tackle homelessness as well as reducing the use of plastic throughout the contract.
28. It is recommended that the commissioner and Social Value officer work with the chosen supplier at contract commencement to ensure that the contributions committed by the supplier are realistic and supported by a delivery plan.
29. It is recommended that the commissioner works closely with Legal Services to ensure appropriate social value clauses are included in the contract, so that the council can enforce its right to remedies if social value commitments are not delivered.

Harry Buck, Social Value Officer (Procurement), 7th January 2026

Digital Services and Information Management Implications

30. Digital Services understand a contract will be awarded to a Preferred Supplier for the provision of Advocacy Services for Adults for four years with an option to extend for a further two years, given the nature of the work and potentially the use of personal data, this may be stored and processed on a system provided by the preferred supplier. It is important that Digital Services are engaged where and when appropriate to ensure that any IT requirements are met, that all necessary safeguards, permissions and budgets are in place, and that any IT work undertaken is in alignment with the digital strategy.
 - Data Protection: The Preferred Supplier will be expected to have a Data Protection policy in place and staff will be expected to have received Data Protection training.
 - The contract with Preferred Supplier will need to include H&F's data protection and processing schedule. This is compliant with the UK Data Protection law.
 - SSQs: The service will need to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment and the Preferred Supplier will need to complete a (Cloud) Supplier Security Questionnaire via the Risk Ledger platform.
 - Cyber Security: H&Fs approved cyber security clauses must be incorporated into all new and renewed contracts regardless of value, or framework. Legal advice should be sought on how to incorporate the cyber security clauses into agreements which do not use our H&F contract templates.

- AI: The service should engage with DS prior to enabling any generative AI functionality, to ensure compliance with corporate AI strategy, governance, security, and privacy requirements. The AI Governance Framework form must be completed for any enhancements to existing solutions, as well all new projects and contracts deploying AI capabilities. If colleagues are unsure as to whether a new function falls within the AI framework, they should discuss with DS.
- Digital Accessibility: This is a legal requirement and must be considered from the start, covering the front- and back-end. Digital tools and services must be accessible to everyone – staff and the public. If a system has major accessibility issues, it should be treated as incomplete.

Umit Jani, Strategic Relationship Manager (People), Thursday 8th January 2026

Consultation

31. In July 2024 several activities took place to inform how future advocacy services should be delivered. Activities included:

- Open day with current and potential advocacy suppliers
- Questionnaire for current and potential advocacy suppliers
- Feedback survey for service-users of commissioned advocacy services

Feedback identified common themes and potential improvements including:

- Access and referral barriers
- Service clarity and navigation
- A single point of access and triage works best for residents and professionals and should also signpost and refer to other appropriate services where this is needed.
- A single integrated contract would strengthen collaboration, improve signposting, and enhance understanding of advocacy services, ensuring residents and professionals have a clear, holistic view of all available support across the borough.
- Opportunities to maximise advocacy capacity by better supporting, training and working with grassroots organisations, SMEs and other informal networks of support.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 (Exempt) – Contract Award Details

Appendix 2 (Exempt) – Further Financial Assurance

Appendix 3 (Exempt) – Procurement Outcome

Appendix 4 (Exempt) - Moderated Assessment Scores

Annex 1 – Procurement Strategy

Annex 2 – Procurement Timetable

Annex 3 (Exempt) – Social Value Portal (SVP) Assessment Summary (Added Value)

Annex 4 (Exempt)- Equality Impact Assessment