

Report of Complex Needs Best Practice Development Officer

Report to Deputy Director of Children's Services

Date: 18 March 2014

Subject: Approval to waive Contract Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 and enter into a contract with lookinglocal for the provision of a search engine for the Leeds Local Offer website.

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The council must publish their Leeds Local Offer in one place, on a website by the 1 September 2014.
2. The website must support families, children and young people with SEND to access information and services that are available both locally and city wide, from both statutory and voluntary sector agencies.
3. The landing page(s) for the Leeds Local Offer for an Inclusive Child Friendly City will be held on the LCC website. However, the LCC website does not currently provide a search engine facility sophisticated enough to meet the requirement specification of the local offer .

Recommendations

4. The Deputy Director of Children's Services is recommended to approve the waiver of Contract Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 and enter into a license agreement with lookinglocal for the provision of a search engine for the Leeds Local Offer website.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval from the Deputy Director Children's Services to waive Contract Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 and enter a license agreement with lookinglocal for the provision of a search engine for the Leeds Local Offer website.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Under the new Children and Families Act 2014 the authority is required to publish and keep under review information about services we expect to be available for children and young people with special educational needs and those who are disabled (SEND) aged 0 – 25. The local offer must be in one place and be on a website.
- 2.2 Traditional directories work in a linear way and have pre-defined structures, a bit like following a flowchart or a pathway. The Leeds Local Offer needs to work more laterally, enabling users to find relevant information without knowing exactly what they are looking for. The website will need a search facility that is dynamic, drawing information from multiple sources providing far more intelligent, capable, relevant and responsive interaction with the information. This facility is not currently available within the LCC website solution.

3 Main issues

Reason for Contracts Procedure Rules Waiver

- 3.1 Should a license agreement not be awarded, the Council would be unable to fulfill its obligations under the Children and Families Act 2014 to provide a local offer that is in one place, on a website and widely accessible.
- 3.2 It is not possible to get competitive quotes as the lookinglocal product is unique and nothing similar is being offered on the market at the present time.
- 3.3 A piece of exploratory work has been successfully completed that confirms compatibility between the lookinglocal search engine and the LCC web site. The LCC website will host the Leeds Local Offer landing page.
- 3.3 The cost of developing our own LCC solution would be in excess of £400K whereas the cost of the lookinglocal license is £40K.
- 3.4 It is highly unlikely that a comparable product could be built in time to meet the launch date of 1 September 2014. Purchasing the lookinglocal product in the short term provides the authority with some 'breathing space' to decide whether to build an in-house solution further down the line.
- 3.5 Lookinglocal is owned and run by Kirklees Council and this provides for 'Government to Government procurement'. On this basis it can be considered feasible to make an exception to standard procurement guidelines.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The project has taken advice from senior ITC Consultancy that the lookinglocal search engine is the most suitable product on the market at this time to use for the Leeds Local Offer website.
- 4.1.2 The project undertook consultation activities in December 2013 with families and young people to ask them their views on how information is made available and accessible on the internet.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The lookinglocal search engine has been built by Kirklees council specifically to meet the requirements of a local offer website as set out in the SEN (Local Offer) Regulations 2014 and the new SEN Code of Practice 2013.
- 4.2.2 The project has completed an Equality Impact Assessment.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The lookinglocal search engine will help families, children and young people with SEND in the following ways:
- Find play, leisure, culture and sporting opportunities in their local communities
 - Facilitate their voice and influence
 - Improve and support access to services where there are additional health, education and social needs

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 The lookinglocal search engine is value for money at an initial purchase of £40K. The cost of subsequent yearly licences is likely to reduce as more Local Authorities invest in the product.
- 4.4.2 The authority received a payment at the end of last year from the DfE to help implement the new SEND reforms. This budget has been allocated to fund the lookinglocal licence but must be spent before 31 March 2014.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 The value of the product does not fall within the scope of the Public Contract Regulations.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 To delay or not purchase the lookinglocal search engine will impact adversely on the authority's ability to deliver the Leeds Local Offer on time and to brief as outlined in DfE statutory guidance. A small amount of development work with the Complex Needs service and the LCC web team will need to be completed so that the search engine can be adapted to specifically suit the requirements of Leeds Local Offer.
- 4.6.2 The LCC web team will be required to build the Leeds Local Offer landing page(s) that will accommodate the lookinglocal search engine. This work must take place within the next five months for the project to be fully completed and ready for launch on the 1 September 2014.

4.6.3 Any risks and issues arising from the work to be undertaken in 4.6.1 and 4.6.2 will be managed in line with the councils DSC project methodology and reported to the SEND Reforms Steering Group and the Complex Needs Partnership Board.

5 Conclusions

5.1 To ensure compliance with the statutory requirement of Children and Families Act 2014 to publish and maintain a Local Offer to families, children and young people in Leeds by 1 September 2014, the lookinglocal search engine should be purchased.

6 Recommendations

The Deputy Director of Children's Services is recommended to approve the waiver of the following Contracts Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 and enter into a licence agreement with lookinglocal for the provision of a search engine for the Leeds Local Offer website.

7 Background documents

7.1 None.