

**Report of Head of Complex Needs**

**Report to Director of Children's Services**

**Date: 04/11/2015**



**Subject: Request to invoke the two 12 month period extensions presented to Scope - as part of the contract for the provision of the Leeds Inclusion Support Service from 1st April 2016 - and vary the contract, in order to realise savings.**

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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. This report seeks approval to invoke the two 12 month period extensions available in the Inclusion Support Service contract - from 1st April 2016 - and vary the contract, in order to realise savings.
2. The value of the current contract is £425,313.55 per annum. The proposal, which has been accepted by Scope, is to vary the contract to remove the single point of contact aspect on the basis that the available contract extensions can be invoked and Scope have the guarantee of two years extra business. If approved, this negotiation will realise total savings of £38,992 in 2015/16 and £151,004 over 2016-18.
3. The varied contract will also incorporate the Leeds Play Network Targeted Short Breaks provision, which is currently funded via LCC's Targeted Short Breaks Grant Allocation monies. This will represent a further in-year saving of £25,306.
4. The cost of this extension invocation is over £250k and is therefore a Key decision. The variation of this contract represents a change in value of over 10%, therefore should also be treated as a Key decision as identified in the original contract award document, dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 (signed 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012).

5. Awarding this contract extension will help enable Leeds Children's Services to continue to comply with the Children & Families Act 2014 by improving inclusion in universal services and access to short breaks for disabled children.

### **Recommendations**

6. The Director of Children's Services is recommended to approve the variation and contract extension - for a period of 2 years - with Scope for the provision of the Leeds Inclusion Support Service to realise total savings of £38,992 (plus £25,306 in grant monies) in 2015/16 and £151,004 over 2016-18.

## **1 Purpose of this Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request the approval of the variation and contract extension - for a period of 2 years - with Scope for the provision of the Leeds Inclusion Support Service to realise total savings of £38,992 (plus £25,306 in grant monies) in 2015/16 and £151,004 over 2016-18.

## **2 Background Information**

- 2.1 The Leeds Inclusion Support Service (LISS) was originally commissioned to promote and enable inclusion in childcare and early education. However, since 2009/10 the service has been enhanced with Aiming High for Disabled Children grant and subsequently short breaks funding, to deliver inclusion support for short breaks.
- 2.2 The LISS contract was awarded to Scope following a competitive procurement process in 2012. A total of five bids were received and evaluated based on a fair and transparent appraisal of quality and cost. The contract was awarded for 3 years, with a further two options to extend for 12 months.
- 2.3 Until recently, the core activity of this service was the provision of a one point of contact to provide information, advice, signposting and guidance to families with a child with a significant need/disability from the point of diagnosis or initial concern. The one point of contact, now provided by SENDIAS, assisted families to access inclusive locality based services and ensure coordination of all professionals involved with the family and child either through a key worker for families with higher level needs or by supporting the Lead Professional to be able to do this.
- 2.4 Following the approval to vary the existing contract, the focus of the service will shift to offering advice, support and challenge to settings to ensure they are fully inclusive and able to offer equality of access to all children. This may include the provision of time-limited grants where appropriate, which the service monitors and reviews regularly to ensure they are used effectively. This is a highly sustainable model, building capacity in universal settings to include disabled children, reducing the likelihood of crisis and family breakdown and thereby reducing the need for more expensive specialist provision or Social Work intervention.
- 2.5 There is evidence that the service is highly valued by parents/carers and other stakeholders. Feedback from parent carers demonstrates that they value the knowledge and expertise to signpost to relevant services and access funding and the ability to prevent crisis by getting best support available to families at the point it is needed. Parent carers stated that staff is professional, helpful and reliable.
- 2.6 An inclusion support service such as this is integral to the Complex Needs Service within Children's Services. The service contributes to the Children and Young People's Plan outcomes of doing well in learning and improving support where there are additional health needs. It contributes to the Child Friendly City priority that children and young people are treated fairly and feel respected, including disabled children and young people having better access and choice.

- 2.7 There are approximately 181,000 children and young people living in Leeds. Of these, we can estimate that about 7% will have some sort of disability (Office for National Statistics estimate based on the General Household Survey 2011).
- 2.8 Therefore, it is vital that universal services are supported to build capacity to include disabled children. Families have told us they want to access universal facilities just like their non-disabled peers but that their experience in accessing settings varies significantly. Scope is able to break down barriers to inclusion and plays a vital role in supporting disabled children and their families to live happy and fulfilling lives as equal members of their communities.
- 2.9 This provision is key in enabling Leeds to meet the Short Breaks Duty. From September 2014, Local Authorities are under a duty to:
- a. offer short breaks as a preventative early intervention
  - b. offer a range of services for parents
  - c. publish a statement of those services to parents

### **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 There are no specific implications for, or impact on, a ward or wards. The provision is city-wide and so benefits disabled children and families across Leeds.
- 3.2 The Executive Member for Children's Services has been briefed on the recommissioning of this service and has been updated on the outcome.
- 3.3 The value of the current contract with Scope is £425,313.55 per annum. The proposal, which has been accepted by Scope, is to vary the contract to remove the single point of contact aspect, now being delivered by SENDIAS, on the basis that the available contract extensions can be invoked and Scope have the guarantee of two years extra business. If approved, this negotiation will realise total savings of £38,992 in 2015/16 and £151,004 over 2016-18 and remove instances of duplicated work when considering the first point of contact.
- 3.4 The proposed variation to the contract is to provide targeted support to lead practitioners to provide Early Help Assessments for children with SEND in the Clusters, including the SILC Cluster. This supports the approach by Children's Services to provide early help and prevention at a local level and reflects the key questions that will be explored by the CQC OFSTED inspection: How do we identify need and how we meet that need? This is especially pertinent for children who do not have EHC plans.
- 3.5 The varied contract will also incorporate the Leeds Play Network Targeted Short Breaks provision, which is currently funded via LCC's Targeted Short Breaks Grant Allocation monies. This will represent a further in-year saving of £25,306.
- 3.6 The existing provider will be informed of this decision as soon as possible and Children's Services will work with them to maintain a quality Inclusion Support service.

- 3.7 Given timescales and the quality of provision currently being delivered, invoking the extensions would represent best value for money, especially considering the savings to be made. There is limited time, or need, to complete a competitive tender process and commissioning the service internally is not an option as Children's Services does not have staff to deliver the activity.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Extensive stakeholder consultation informed the commissioning of this service and will continue as part of ongoing development of the service.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 Please see the attached Equality Impact Assessment.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 An inclusion support service such as this is integral to the Complex Needs Service within Children's Services. The service contributes to the Children and Young People's Plan outcomes of doing well in learning and improving support where there are additional health needs. It contributes to the Child Friendly City priority that children and young people are treated fairly and feel respected, including disabled children and young people having better access and choice.

### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 Should the decision to vary and extend this contract be taken, the values for this financial year and the next two are as follows:

2015/16 - £386,322.00

2016/17 - £349,811.13

2017/18 - £349,812.08

- 4.4.2 This variation will realise total savings of £38,992 (plus £25,306 in grant monies) in 2015/16 and £151,004 over 2016-18. These savings have been negotiated on the grounds of Scope being awarded an extension of the 2 x 12 month extensions.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 The value of this contract extension is above £250k and is therefore a key decision.
- 4.5.2 The variation of this contract represents a change in value of over 10%, therefore should also be treated as a Key decision as identified in the original contract award document, dated 21st November 2012 (signed 11th December 2012).

4.5.3 The opportunity was advertised on Leeds City Council's YORtender system and the Official Journal of the European Union and was advertised on the basis of the contract commencing 1st April 2013 for a period of three with the option to extend for a further period of two years.

4.5.4 The decision to extend the contract is classified as a key decision and is on the forward plan of Key Decisions.

4.5.5 To comply with the obligations of the Public Contracts Regulations a Voluntary Standstill period will be adhered to prior to the contracts being extended.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 If this recommendation is not approved, an alternative solution would be required to ensure inclusion is promoted and families and professionals have access to advice and support.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 The recommendations contained in this report will help ensure disabled children, young people and their families continue to have access to childcare, early education and short breaks in the same way as their non-disabled peers.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 The Director of Children's Services is recommended to approve the variation and contract extension - for a period of 2 years - with Scope for the provision of the Leeds Inclusion Support Service to realise total savings of £38,992 (plus £25,306 in grant monies) in 2015/16 and £151,004 over 2016-18.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.