

Report of Commissioning Programme Manager

Report to Deputy Director – Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted

Date: 10th August 2016

Subject: Waiver of contract procedure rules to award a contract for Job Coaches as part of Supported Internship model



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. In September 2015 the Complex Needs service began work with learning providers as a pilot to develop Supported Internships for young people with complex needs. Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at an employer. Supported Internships were offered to appropriate young people who would benefit from work placement as part of their post-16 learning programme. Participation in the pilot is expected to lead to sustainable employment at the end of the course.
2. Young people on a supported internship receive education input from the learning provider; they then spend the majority of their time in a work placement. In order to support the young person and the employer in a successful work placement a Job Coach is required.
3. A contract with approx. £50,000 value was required with an external organisation to deliver the Job Coach role; this support can be accessed by the different learning providers who offer Supported Internships as part of this pilot scheme. Children's Services undertook a competitive exercise for a medium value contract. The exercise

was conducted in line with the contract procedure rules requirements for medium value contracts. Following the procurement process a contract was awarded to The Pluss Organisation.

4. The Complex Needs Service wish to extend the Supported Internship pilot for a further year, whilst work is undertaken to plan and implement a longer term delivery model which is embedded into the learning offer from a number of learning providers. In order to extend the model for a further year a contract with a reduced value of £25,000 is required for the delivery of Job Coach support to young people.
5. A request to waive contract procedure rules is being made in order to ensure delivery of the pilot approach can continue while a longer term model is put in place. The current provider has been part of the development of the model in this year and will be able to ensure continuity whilst further development work takes place.

Recommendations

6. The Deputy Director – Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted, Children’s Services is recommended to approve the waiver of the following contracts procedure rule(s):

Contracts procedure rules no 8.1 and 8.2 – intermediate value procurements

and award a contract to The Pluss Organisation in the sum of £25,000. The contract shall commence on the 1st September 2016 and expire on the 31st August 2017.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To explain the reasons for a waiver of contract procedure rules in order to award a contract to The Pluss Organisation without subjecting the matter to competition.

2 Background information

- 2.1 In September 2015 the Complex Needs service began work with learning providers as a pilot to develop Supported Internships for young people with complex needs. Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at an employer. They enable young people aged 16-24 with an Education, Health and Care plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace. Supported internships are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months. Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. Alongside their time at the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant substantial qualifications, if appropriate, and English and maths.
- 2.2 Supported Internships were offered to appropriate young people who would benefit from work placement as part of their post-16 learning programme. Participation in the pilot is expected to lead to sustainable employment at the end of the course.
- 2.3 Young people on a supported internship receive education input from the learning provider; they then spend the majority of their time in a work placement. In order to support the young person and the employer in a successful work placement a Job Coach is required. This support is funded from element 3 of the High Needs Block of Dedicated Schools Grant for post 16 learners with complex SEND and with EHCPs.
- 2.4 A contract was required with an external organisation to deliver the Job Coach role; this support can be accessed by the different learning providers who offer Supported Internships as part of this pilot scheme.
- 2.5 Children's Services undertook a competitive exercise for a medium value contract. The exercise was conducted in line with the contract procedure rules requirements for medium value contracts. Following the procurement process a contract was awarded to The Pluss Organisation. The decision to award a contract was taken on the 30th October 2015 and the contract began on 2nd November 2015. The duration of the contract was for 10 months with no options to extend.
- 2.6 The Complex Needs Service wish to extend the Supported Internship pilot for a further year, whilst work is undertaken to plan and implement a longer term delivery model which is embedded into the learning offer from a number of learning providers. The SILCs, lighthouse and Swarthmore have agreed to participate in this work.
- 2.7 In order to extend the model for a further year a contract is required for the delivery of Job Coach support to young people.

3 Main issues

Reason for contracts procedure rules waiver

- 3.1 A request to waiver contract procedure rules is being made in order to ensure delivery of the pilot approach can continue while a longer term model is put in place. The current provider has been part of the development of the model in this year and will be able to ensure continuity whilst further development work takes place.
- 3.2 The Pluss Organisation were the highest scoring bid when the original contract was awarded. Their contract represented value for money in terms of the price they are able to deliver the Job Coach support at.
- 3.3 The resources and time required to undertake a further procurement exercise is not available for a new contract to start, the initial establishment of the pilot model, development of ways of working and review of the model was not able to be completed in the time required to undertake a competitive process for a new contract.

Consequences if the proposed action is not approved

- 3.4 If this contract is not awarded it will not be possible for the Supported Internship offer that has been developed during 2015/16 to continue in the next academic year. This will limit the learning offer to young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Advertising

- 3.5 This contract opportunity has not been advertised. The contract value is below current EU threshold so there is no requirement for the contract to be tendered in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations, but there is a requirement to comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

4 Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Consultation has taken place with The Pluss Organisation to confirm that they are able to deliver the contract required for the value identified.

4.2 Equality and diversity/cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Equality Impact screening is attached as Appendix 1

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The Supported Internship model contributes to the following priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan:

- Improve achievement and close achievement gaps
- Increase numbers participating and engaging
- Improve outcomes for CYP with special educational needs and/or disability

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The contract will be funded from the DfE funded high needs block. It is salient to acknowledge that the high needs block is predicting an over spend.
- 4.4.2 The contract value has been reduced by half from the previous contract following conversations with post 16 providers who have agreed to build capacity internally and develop their own job coaches whilst designing and rolling out their supported internship study programme. This contract will ensure a level of consistency and support for the interns whilst this work is being undertaken.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information and call-in

- 4.5.1 The decision is not subject to call in.
- 4.5.2 The decision to waive contract procedure rule 8 is a significant operational decision in line with contract procedure rule 27.
- 4.5.3 In making their final decision, the Deputy Director, should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents Best Value for the council given that this contract opportunity has not been exposed to competition.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The risk of challenge from another provider to award of this contract is low. The contract value is below the threshold for EU procurement regulations to apply.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 It is appropriate in the circumstances to waive contract procedure rules in order to award a contract to The Pluss Organisation.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Deputy Director – Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted, Children’s Services is recommended to approve the waiver of the following contracts procedure rule(s):

Contracts procedure rules no 8.1 and 8.2 – intermediate value procurements

and award a contract to The Pluss Organisation in the sum of £25,000. The contract shall commence on the 1st September 2016 and expire on the 31st August 2017.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ 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.