

Report of: Head of Employment Access and Growth

Report to: Chief Officer Employment and Skills

Date: 10th March 2017

Subject: Waiver of CPR7 and award of a contract for the promotion of apprenticeships in STEM disciplines to young women, parents/carers and employers

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:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. As set out in the Best Council Plan, the Council has an ambition for Leeds to have a strong economy and to be a compassionate city, tackling poverty and inequalities. In 2015/16, activities contributing to these aims included helping more than 4,600 people make the transition from benefits into work.
2. The Leeds Apprenticeship Hub works to raise awareness of apprenticeships and their benefits among young people and their parents/carers and businesses, and to support both parties in creating and filling apprenticeship opportunities, especially where they respond to growth opportunities in the city and the city region.
3. This report sets out a proposal to award a contract for the delivery of a service to promote apprenticeships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to young women, their parents/carers, and employers.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer Employment and Skills is recommended to:-

- waive Contracts Procedure Rule 7 to authorise the award of a contract to Women in Science and Engineering Services to promote apprenticeships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to young women, their parents/carers, and employers.
- authorise expenditure up to a maximum of £9,995 from the Leeds Apprenticeship Hub budget for the delivery of the contract, to conclude by July 2017;
- note that the Head of Employment Access and Growth is responsible for the implementation of this decision.

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek authorisation to waive a low value procurement exercise (under Contracts Procedure Rule 7) and to authorise the award of a contract valued at £9,995 (to be drawn from the Apprenticeship Hub budget) to Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) to promote apprenticeships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to young women, their parents/carers, and employers.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Leeds Apprenticeship Hub works to raise awareness of apprenticeships and their benefits among young people and businesses, and to support both parties in creating and filling apprenticeship opportunities.
- 2.2 In November 2016, following changes to the funding of apprenticeship promotion activity at the Leeds City Region level, Executive Board approved a report setting out a range of activities to be delivered by the Council and the Hub in support of residents, particularly young people, starting apprenticeships. This included activity to promote apprenticeships to underserved and underrepresented groups, and promoting higher and degree level apprenticeships.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 In the UK today, the STEM worker shortfall is estimated to be approximately 69,000 per year. Women, who currently make up only 21% of the STEM workforce in the UK, are an obvious pool of talent which could help to plug skills shortages.
- 3.2 Whilst the number of women taking key STEM apprenticeships has increased over the past four years, the proportion of female apprenticeships remains small: currently women represent only 5% of all technical apprentices. In 2014/15, Females represented 11% (1,660) of apprenticeships started in ICT, 7.6% (2,610) of starts in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and just 2.1% (520) of starts in Construction, Planning & the Built Environment.
- 3.3 As well as demonstrating a chronic lack of diversity in the STEM workforce and STEM related apprenticeships specifically, these figures are a real challenge for the city and the city region. Recent growth in the digital and technology industry has created severe skills shortages and gaps which are constraining growth. The growth of infrastructure and construction projects in the city/city region, including major projects such as High Speed 2 rail, cannot be met by the current capacity of the construction workforce, a challenge which is likely to be exacerbated by the impact of the UK's exit from the European Union and the loss of skilled labour. The engineering sector locally, as nationally, faces a crisis as generations of experienced employees retire from the sector with insufficient replacement supply.
- 3.4 Increasing the volume of young women more aware of and entering STEM professions will significantly contribute to alleviating these critical skills shortages and gaps, improving productivity and economic performance. The advent of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017 offers a further opportunity to tackle some of these skills shortages and gaps, as employers liable for the levy expand their apprentice workforce. Capitalising on this by promoting the potential of young women to play a productive part in the STEM labour market through apprenticeships is therefore timely.

- 3.5 The Apprenticeship Hub intends to procure services to promote apprenticeships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to young women, their parents/carers, and employers, with the proposed outcomes:
- Increasing the number of girls and women starting an apprenticeship in Leeds on a STEM standard;
 - Increasing the number of girls and women starting a traineeship as a stepping stone to a STEM apprenticeship;
 - Raising awareness amongst parents and carers about the benefits of a STEM apprenticeship for young women via three 'People Like Me' workshops; and
 - Disseminating good practice and practical advice to Leeds employers and training providers aiming to recruit more women into STEM apprenticeships.
- 3.6 Women in Science and Engineering is a national campaign which inspires girls and women to study and build careers using science, technology, engineering and maths, and advises employers on how to create environments where those women can do their best work and thrive. Members include Airbus, BAE Systems, BAM, Hitachi Rail, HS2 Ltd, Jaguar Land Rover, Network Rail, Nissan, Rolls Royce, and Siemens, amongst others.
- 3.7 WISE have recently launched an Apprenticeships Toolkit, endorsed by key industry bodies such as the Institute of Civil Engineers and SEMTA, and by significant employers including HS2 Ltd, Transport for London, Babcock International, Aveva, Rolls-Royce and EDF energy. The toolkit targets four key areas to enable employers to Attract, Engage, Support and Retain women into their technical roles through a series of practical steps.
- 3.8 Following dialogue with WISE, a programme of activity to deliver the outcomes specified at 3.5 has been developed. This includes:
- Awareness raising session for employers: drawing on the WISE apprenticeship toolkit, and featuring WISE ambassadors drawn from local employers, including apprentices, an event targeting HR and apprenticeship managers, focusing on:
 - The business case for recruiting more females and legal issues
 - Staging girls-only open days and site visits
 - Designing and advertising apprenticeship vacancies so that they reach and attract female applicants; and
 - Recruitment practices – how to avoid stereotyped assumptions so that you get the best person for the job.
 - Delivery of three 'People Like Me' discovery workshops: 'People Like Me' is a set of ground breaking-resources that enables teachers, STEM ambassadors and girls to learn that, by identifying their personal aptitudes and personalities, girls can find jobs in STEM where they will be happy and successful. A new section of the resource, for girls aged 15+ is being launched on March 8th focused at raising awareness of apprenticeships for girls and women. This apprenticeship specific version will be used for the workshops.
- Local organisations will be offered the opportunity to provide female apprentices as role models for the session. This will allow girls and parents to interact with women who are either undertaking a STEM apprenticeship/

traineeship and those who are already working in STEM and have come through this route to work in STEM. This has proven to be a very successful method in allowing girls to meet and identify with 'people like them'. We are exploring the potential for including this event into existing school/careers based activities, and will stage an event in each of the three wedges of the city to maximise the potential audience and ensure an inclusive approach. We are working with Allied London and the organisers of the Leeds Digital Festival to explore if this event might be a suitable opportunity for the staging of the South and South East event. There is also the possibility of staging one of the workshops on National Take Your Daughters To Work Day (April 27) to maximise promotional opportunities;

- A programme of employer visits, facilitated by WISE members, giving young women the opportunity to visit local companies and see first-hand the work done by apprentices and those on traineeships, and hear more from women in STEM careers about their experiences. These will be promoted through the 'People Like Me' workshops, building momentum and securing good turnout.

- 3.9 Running throughout all of the proposed activities will be a focus on promoting higher and degree level apprenticeships within STEM subjects.
- 3.10 To enable timely delivery and maximise the Hub's use of external funding to the benefit of the city, it is proposed to waive CPR7 and award a contract to Women in Science and Engineering Services to deliver these services. WISE has a national and local track record in successful delivering such activities, can demonstrate it has the necessary expertise and networks to fulfil the requirements of the project, and market testing indicates there are no alternative providers capable of the same depth of provision.
- 3.11 On completion of the contract, a review will be undertaken to quantify the overall performance and impact and identify good practice and learning to inform future work.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The Executive Member for Employment, Skills and Opportunity has been consulted on the proposal to waive CPR 7 and award a contract to Women in Science and Engineering.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An equality impact screening was completed on 3rd March 2017. This assessment confirmed that due consideration has been given to all equality groups, and that the project would have a particularly beneficial impact on young women, who are currently significantly under-represented in apprenticeship starts and achievements in STEM subjects.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The proposals set out in this report contribute to the Best Council Plan outcome for everyone in Leeds to earn enough to support themselves and their families and specific Best Council Plan 2016/17 priorities around supporting economic growth and access to economic opportunities, supporting communities and raising

aspirations, providing skills programmes and employment support and helping people adjust to welfare changes. The proposals will also contribute to the Council's ambition to be a NEET-free city and support the ambitions set out in the Council's 'More Jobs, Better Jobs' breakthrough project. The activity will complement ongoing activity by the Employment and Skills service to promote apprenticeships to employers, particularly those eligible for the Apprenticeship Levy from April 2017, as well as other work to enable vulnerable and hard to reach groups, such as young people from BME communities, care leavers, and those affected by autism, to access apprenticeships.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The cost of this activity will be drawn from the Apprenticeship Hub budget, which is externally funded and ringfenced to apprenticeship-focused activity. This is time-limited funding with expenditure to be committed no later than March 2017. The value of the contract is £9,995.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 Contract Procedure Rule 7 (low value procurements) states that where the relevant Chief Officer believes that it represents Best Value for the Council to make a direct appointment without the need for competition, they may do so providing that a written record of the decision, along with reasons, is kept.
- 4.5.2 This proposal seeks a waiver of CPR 7 by the Chief Officer to award a contract to Women in Science and Engineering. The provider has a national and local track record in successful delivering such activities, can demonstrate it has the necessary expertise and networks to fulfil the requirements of the project, and market testing indicates there are no alternative providers capable of the same depth of provision.
- 4.5.3 There are no further legal implications or access to information matters arising from this decision. As this decision involves a waiver of CPRs this is a significant operational decision but is not subject to call-in.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 Project performance reports will be required on a monthly basis, and will form the basis for a contract management meeting between the Council and WISE. A risk management plan will be developed and monitored as part of contract management arrangements.
- 4.6.2 WISE will be required to provide suitably qualified and experienced personnel to deliver the contract, and have current DBS registrations in place for all staff involved in activity with young people.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The award of this contract to WISE will support the Council's ambitions to promote apprenticeships to young people, their parents/carers, and employers in the city. It will also support the objective of the Employment and Skills service to improve the supply of skilled labour to the city's economy, especially in shortage areas such as ICT, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and Construction, Planning & the Built Environment.
- 5.2 The officer responsible for implementing the decision and reviewing performance and impact of this intervention is the Head of Employment Access and Growth.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Employment and Skills is asked to:
- waive Contracts Procedure Rule 7 to authorise the award of a contract to Women in Science and Engineering Services to promote apprenticeships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to young women, their parents/carers, and employers;
 - authorise expenditure up to a maximum of £9,995 from the Leeds Apprenticeship Hub budget for the delivery of the contract, to conclude by July 2017; and
 - note that the Head of Employment Access and Growth is responsible for the implementation of this decision.

7 Background documents

- 7.1 There are no background documents.