

# To approve the award of an Inclusion Support contract to Scope in Leeds from April 2022

Date: 11/02/22

Report of: Commissioning & Market Management Team

Report to: Director of Children & Families

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## What is this report about?

### Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report seeks the approval of the Director of Children & Families Directorate to award a contract to Scope for the provision of an inclusion support service for families of children and young people (cyp) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- This award follows a competitive tendering exercise (DN572010) and permission to procure was approved on 27/7/21. Two bids were received and only one bid passed the quality threshold on all method statement questions.
- The value of the contract is £249,000 per annum. The contract will be for 2 years starting 01/04/22 for a value of £498,000.00 with 2 options to extend for a period of twelve months per extension (overall value including extension will be £996,000.00).
- The inclusion support service will contribute to the Council's ambition of becoming an inclusive child friendly city by increasing access to mainstream activities for cyp with SEND.

## Recommendations

- a) Approve the decision to award an inclusion support contract to Scope following a competitive tender exercise.
- b) Approve the annual expenditure of £249,000 per annum for a two-year period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 (£498,000.00 for two years) with the option to extend for two further twelve month periods (overall value including extension will be £996,000.00).

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The decision to go out to tender for an inclusion support service was approved in July 2021 and the tender was published in September. Two bids were received and Scope was the only bid to pass the quality threshold on all method statement questions.

## What impact will this proposal have?

**Wards affected: City-wide**

Have ward members been consulted?  Yes  No

- 2 The inclusion service will increase the number of cyp with SEND able to access inclusive, mainstream activities across the city. Inclusive activities are a vital component in meeting the Council's duty to provide short breaks as per the Children Act 1989. The service offers advice, support and challenge to settings to ensure activities are fully inclusive and able to offer equality of access to all children. 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 targeted and specialist provision or Social Work intervention.
- 3 The service will deliver an inclusion 'quality mark' and monitor the increase in CY&P with SEND accessing activities. The service will provide information for parents/carers/CY&P and settings on short breaks and signpost to inclusive settings in Leeds.
- 4 The service will support the Local Authority to ensure services delivered either directly or commissioned externally are inclusive. For example, it will work with LCC Leisure Centres to ensure all CY&P are able to undertake swimming lessons whatever their additional need/s. They will work with LCC Officers to ensure inclusion is considered when undertaking a grants delivery programme.
- 5 The service will provide help for Lead Professionals in Leeds including training events, forums and one to one support. It will also provide a suitably trained Inclusion Support Worker to work with a C&YP in a setting for an appropriate time-period to ensure successful inclusive practice for future C&YP.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 6 The Commissioning Team led a review of the current inclusion support service resulting in the decision to undertake a competitive tender. The tender panel was made up of professionals from Commissioning and the Child Health and Disability Team as well as a representative from the EPIC Leeds parent/carer forum. A separate cyp panel scored a further method statement question.
- 7 Play and leisure activities were the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority identified by 229 parents/carers completing a survey about their priorities for change to SEND provision in Leeds, was around accessible places to go, things to do, and spaces to play for 0-25 year olds with SEND. A good quality inclusion support service is a key part of increasing inclusion across the city.
- 8 In March 2021 The Voice, Influence & Change Team worked in partnership with EPIC Leeds to host a virtual Leeds Local Offer Information and Consultation Month on the Leeds Local Offer website. During this month we wanted to raise awareness about the Short Break offer and also

consult with families and CY&P with regards to a review we were undertaking for our Inclusion Support Service. All comments received during this consultation fed into the development of the inclusion support service specification.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 9 The total cost of the inclusion support service is £249,000 per annum, with a total potential contract value of £996,000 including the two extensions to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 (overall value including extension will be £996,000.00).. . The price of the extension is fixed in line with the successful bidders contract award.
- 10 In the current financial year (21/22), the value of the contract is £257,000 so there will be a saving of £8,000 from April 2022 onwards. The budget was reduced by 10% in 21/22 to help with the LCC budget pressure and the value of the inclusion support contract before that was just short of £285,500.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 11 The contract was procured in line with Public Contract Regulation 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This is a significant operational decision taken as a consequence of the key-published on 27/07/21 to go out to tender for this service (D54362).

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 12 There are few significant risks of proceeding with this decision. The successful provider Scope is currently delivering this service and has done so for several years. There are therefore no TUPE implications or a significant mobilisation exercise to undertake.
- 13 Some personal data will be processed as part of this contract delivery and a privacy impact assessment will highlight how any risks will be mitigated.

### **Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth       Health and Wellbeing       Climate Emergency

- 14 The 'inclusion' remit is to break down barriers to inclusion and support disabled children and their families to live happy and fulfilling lives as equal members of their communities. Short breaks are viewed as a preventative early help strategy and ultimately can prevent family breakdown.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **What other options were considered?**

- 14 This contract has not been competitively tendered since the award in May 2013. A market sounding exercise found there was sufficient interest in tendering for this contract in order that a competitive exercise was necessary and would ensure compliance with Public Contracts Regulation 2015 and deliver value for money.

#### **How will success be measured?**

- 15 By increasing the number of cyp with SEND accessing accessible activities year on year.

### **What is the timetable for implementation?**

16 The contract will start on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 for a two-year period.

### **Appendices**

17 EDCI

### **Background papers**

18 None