

Report of Head of Service, Social Care

Report to the Deputy Director of Children & Families

Date: 29/01/2019

Subject: To invoke Contract Procedure Rule 21.3 to enact the 2 x 6 month extensions available to award a 12 month contract to Scope in Leeds for Inclusion Support.



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. This report seeks approval to invoke Contract Procedure Rule 21.3 to enact the 2 x 6 month extensions available to award a 12 month contract to Scope in Leeds for Inclusion Support from 1st April 2019.
2. The value of the current contract with Scope is £234,890 per annum. The proposal, which has been accepted by Scope, is to maintain the provision currently being delivered as part of the agreed contract which started on 1st May 2018.
3. This decision is over £100k. It is therefore a high value procurement but is not subject to call in, being under the threshold of £250k. There are no grounds for keeping the content of this report confidential under the Access to Information Rules.
4. 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

5. The Deputy Director of Children & Families is recommended to approve the request to invoke Contract Procedure Rule 21.3 to enact the 2 x 6 month extensions available to award a 12 month contract to Scope in Leeds for Inclusion Support from 1st April 2019.

1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to request to invoke Contract Procedure Rule 21.3 to enact the 2 x 6 month extensions available to award a 12 month contract to Scope in Leeds for Inclusion Support from 1st April 2019.

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 – both of which were taken in order to negotiate a saving.
- 2.3** Following the approval to vary the contract at the point of extension, the focus of the service shifted 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 included the provision of time-limited grants where appropriate, which the service monitors and reviews regularly to ensure they are used effectively. This was seen as 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, however, only a small number of grants were distributed.
- 2.4** As part of the latest contract, established 1st May 2018, the monies associated with the giving of grants to universal provision were reduced from approximately £145k to £30k as it wasn't been utilised to the extent intended.
- 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 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. Recent researched has highlighted that as many as 10% have some form of disability.

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 Reasons for invocation

3.1.1 The proposed invocation of contract procedure rules will afford extra time to complete the ongoing short breaks review, providing added focus on the arrangement of services in universal settings. This supports the approach by Children's Services to provide early help and prevention at a local level.

3.1.2 The value of the current contract with Scope is £234,890 per annum. The proposal, which has been accepted by Scope, is to maintain the provision currently being delivered as part of the agreed contract which started on 1st May 2018.

3.1.3 The Children's Services Commissioning Team have recently identified a piece of work that once completed will better understand the relationship between Scope In Leeds and SENDIASS, with a view to ensuring better distribution of support for families. The 12 month contract extension is required to afford time to do this.

3.2 Consequences if the proposed action is not approved

3.2.1 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.

3.2.2 If this decision is not approved, the ability of the local authority to deliver an extremely valued service will be greatly compromised. Furthermore, without the necessary amount of time to make alternative arrangements, families of children and young people with additional needs would not receive the information and advice that they need.

3.3 Advertising

3.3.1 The existing provider will be informed of this decision as soon as possible and Children & Families will work with them to maintain a quality Inclusion Support service.

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 invoke contracts procedure rule no 21.3 to enact the 2 x 6 month extensions available to award a 12 month contract to Scope in Leeds, the maximum value for this financial year is £234,890.

4.4.2 It has been confirmed by Finance colleagues that there are sufficient funds in the budget to continue to fund this provision.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This decision is over £100k. It is therefore a high value procurement but is not subject to call in, being under the threshold of £250k. There are no grounds for keeping the content of this report confidential under the Access to Information Rules.

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 Deputy Director of Children & Families is recommended to approve the request to invoke Contract Procedure Rule 21.3 to enact the 2 x 6 month

extensions available to award a 12 month contract to Scope in Leeds for Inclusion Support from 1st April 2019.

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.