

**Report of: Head of Service, Learning Inclusion**

**Report to: The Director of Children and Families**

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019**



**Subject: Authority to award a contract to deliver the post graduate certificate in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination for Leeds schools**

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

### Summary of main issues

1. Permission to procure a new provider to deliver the post graduate certificate in special educational needs by way of competitive tender was approved by the Director of Children's Services in February 2019.
2. The provider will offer the statutory qualification for SENCOs and will include an element of the course that is co-produced with the Learning Inclusion Team to outline the Leeds Approach.
3. An open procurement process was published in February 2019, with bidders required to submit a written method statement by 12pm on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
4. A total of three bids were received and evaluated by a panel. The successful tenderer is Leeds Trinity University.
5. The purpose of this report is to seek permission to award a contract to this provider, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019 for two years, with the option to extend by a further three 12 month periods. The value of the contract £2,000 per delegate, paid by the school. The Council has committed to a minimum of 12 places per academic year and will be liable for the cost of any unfilled places up to this minimum.

## **Recommendations**

1. The Director, Children and Families Services is recommended to note the tender evaluation process and approve the award a contract to the estimated value of £200,000 to Leeds Trinity University deliver the post graduate certificate in special educational needs for a period of two years with the option to extend for a further thirty six months to the successful bidder with a commitment to pay for any unfilled places up to the minimum of twelve in the academic year.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 The report outlines the tender evaluation process to appoint a provider of the post graduate certificate in special educational needs, and requests approval to enter into a contract with the successful bidder.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement that new to role SENCOs achieve the Post Graduate National Award in SEN Co-ordination within 3 years of taking up post.
- 2.2 There is a high turnover of SENCOs in Leeds. The Special Educational Needs Inclusion Team (SENIT) co-ordinates training for new SENCOs which has been delivered through an online course as there has been no local classroom based provider. In 2016 and 2017 there were 44 delegates, and to September 2018 51 delegates had registered.
- 2.3 The tender submissions were received via YORtender by the deadline of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and these were checked for compliance in accordance with the Tender Instructions by Procurement and Commercial Services. These were from:
- Best Practice
  - Leeds Trinity University
  - University of Northumbria
- 2.3 The method statement responses were issued to the evaluation panel comprised of  
Commissioning Manager, Children's Services  
SEN Support and Inclusion Team Leader, Children's Services  
SEN Co-ordinator, Beeston Primary School
- 2.4 A Procurement Officer from Procurement and Commercial Services supported the process.

## **3 Main considerations and reasons for contract award**

### Tender Evaluation.

- 3.1 The evaluation criteria used in the quality evaluation are presented in Appendix 1. A minimum score threshold was applied to all questions (50% pass rate per question)
- 3.2 The method statements were evaluated by the panel using the consensus approach at an evaluation meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
- 3.3 Due diligence checks of the SSQ and tender submissions have been undertaken by Procurement and Commercial Services and the project team. This process includes (but is not limited to) taking up technical references, checking appropriate insurance is in place and financial accounts meet the council's requirements. Policies for health and safety and safeguarding have also been checked by the Council's specialists.
- 3.4 A summary evaluation panel scores and submitted tender prices is attached as a confidential appendix.
- 3.5 The Executive Member, Children and Families was briefed on the commissioning of this service and will be informed of the outcome.

## **4.0 Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 No consultation has taken place with key stakeholders as to whether the contract should be awarded to the winning bidder or not as this is determined by the evaluation of the tender received.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity/cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 An equality impact screening form has been completed and is attached as appendix 1.

## **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

- 4.3.1 The service will contribute to the following strategic priorities:

Best Council Plan: “Improving educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes.”

Vision for Leeds – Best City For Children: “Children do well at learning and have skills for life”

Children and Young People Plan – Obsession 3: “Improve achievement, attainment and attendance at school”

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

- 4.4.1 The estimated value of the contract is £200,000 based on last year’s attendance. The value of a commitment to a minimum delegate number of 12 per year is £24,000.
- 4.2.2 It is expected that the procurement will result in zero cost to the Council as 100% of the course fees will be recouped from schools. There is a small risk that the Council will be required to pay for unfilled places up to the minimum commitment, and the Head of Service is satisfied that this risk has been mitigated by setting the minimum commitment to a figure less than half of the average course completion over the last three years, and having a break clause within the contract.
- 4.4.3 Tenders were evaluated on a 60% quality 40% cost basis.

## **4.5 Legal implications, access to information and call-in**

- 4.5.1 Appendix 2 to this report has been marked as confidential under Access to Information Procedure Rules 10.4 (3) on the basis that it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) which, if disclosed to the public, would, or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of that person or of the Council.
- 4.5.2 The estimated value of this contract is £200,000. and is a special operational decision and not subject to call in.

## **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 If this recommendation is not approved, school will choose their own course, and SENCOs will not benefit from a tailored learning experience and the opportunity to network with peers.
- 4.6.2 A risk register is in place and has been maintained throughout the project.
- 4.6.3 All contracts issued include break clauses of 3 months should financial and planning considerations require change in the conditions for this contract.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 A robust procurement process for the commissioning of this service has concluded and the contract is now ready for award.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Director, Children and Families Services is recommended to note the tender evaluation process and approve the award a contract to the estimated value of £200,000 to Leeds Trinity University deliver the post graduate certificate in special educational needs for a period of two years with the option to extend for a further thirty six months to the successful bidder with a commitment to pay for any unfilled places up to the minimum of twelve in the academic year

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

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.