

Procurement of services to support the reduction in serious youth violence through improved attendance and engagement at school

Date: 4th July 2022

Report of: Commissioning Manager - Children & Families

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

Brief summary

The DfE has made available grant funding to establish SAFE Taskforces in 10 local authority areas across the country, as part of the cross-government Beating Crime Plan published in July 2021, which announced investment in specialist support in schools in serious violence hotspots to support young people at risk of involvement in violence to re-engage with education. Leeds will receive total grant funding of £3.7 million over three years (2022/23 – 2024/25). This will be in two phases, the set up phase and the delivery phase.

The Leeds SAFE Taskforce wants to invest some of the DfE grant in a contract to deliver pro social skills training for schools and young people; a bespoke package of training and support for Educational Inclusion Mentors; and some targeted after-school provision.

A competitive tender will be undertaken. The contract will commence in October/November 2022 until 31st March 2025 and will be for a maximum contract value of £620k.

Recommendations

The Director of Children & Families is recommended to approve permission to undertake a competitive tender process for services to support the reduction in serious youth violence through improved attendance and engagement at school. The contract will commence as soon as practicable (October/November 2022) and will expire on 31st March 2025. The maximum contract value will be £620,000.00

What is this report about?

- 1 The DfE has made available grant funding to establish SAFE Taskforces in 10 local authority areas across the country, as part of the cross-government Beating Crime Plan published in July 2021, which announced investment in specialist support in schools in serious violence hotspots to support young people at risk of involvement in violence to re-engage with education.
- 2 SAFE Taskforces will bring together mainstream schools to commission evidence-based interventions to **Support** young people with challenging behaviour, enabling them to **Attend** school regularly so they can **Fulfil** their potential and prevent costly poor life outcomes by inspiring them to **Exceed** their expectations.
- 3 The programme is designed to be schools-led because school leaders, teachers and staff have a distinct expertise and access to make a difference in young people's lives. As part of the Taskforce, the DfE are asking schools also to work alongside other local partners who can provide expertise and support. This programme will enable schools to support young people within their school and community, by bringing them together to collectively manage a pot of funding. Each SAFE Taskforce will need to commission and fund evidence-based interventions to support young people at risk of serious violence and re-engage them in education.
- 4 In Leeds, Leeds City Council has agreed to act as a central repository for the grant funds on behalf of schools, with the Taskforce to be established through the existing Area Inclusion Partnership (AIP) arrangements. AIPs bring schools together in a recognised & equitable partnership to deliver & coordinate services to keep children and young people in vulnerable circumstances and at risk of exclusion from education, included in high quality learning.
- 5 The Leeds SAFE Taskforce wants to invest some of the DfE grant in a contract to deliver:
 - a) Pro social skills training for schools and young people;
 - b) A bespoke package of training and support for Educational Inclusion Mentors;
 - c) Targeted after-school provision.
- 6 A competitive tender exercise will be undertaken utilising the corporate tender documentation.
- 7 A tender evaluation panel will be made up of representatives from the Committee of the SAFE Taskforce and will include representatives from schools, commissioning & Children and Families.
- 8 The maximum value of the contract will be £620,000.
- 9 The contract will commence as soon as practicable (October/November 2022) and will expire on 31st March 2025.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 10 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken. This identifies the decision will have a positive impact for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration because it will support young people at risk of involvement in violence to attend school and re-engage with education.
- 11 The taskforces will focus on pupils already known to be involved in serious violence or who are in close proximity to serious violence due to contextual factors such as peer groups, family, or neighbourhood; and pupils who are disengaged from education e.g. truancy, suspension or exclusion from school who are more likely to end up on the pathway into serious violence. This means the cohort is likely to include high proportions of pupils from recognised vulnerable

groups (e.g. Children in Need, Looked After Children and those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)).

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

- Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

12 This proposal supports the council's health & wellbeing pillar and the city & council ambitions of:

- Improving educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes
- Improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- Helping young people into adulthood, to develop life skills and be ready for work

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

13 The Leeds SAFE Taskforce has been established with all key stakeholders to be represented, including schools. Consultation has taken place and will continue throughout the programme with schools, including AIP Chairs.

14 The Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education has been briefed on the SAFE Taskforce programme.

What are the resource implications?

15 LCC have been awarded £3,377,550, which will be received over three financial years: 22/23; 23/24; and 24/25.

16 The maximum contract value is £620,000.00 and is fully funded through the DfE SAFE Taskforce grant therefore will not create additional financial pressure on Council budget.

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

17 The DfE funding must be spent as described in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). A project team has been established within Children and Families comprising of representatives from Learning Inclusion, Performance Management and Improvement, Learning Systems and Commissioning. The project team will ensure, and monitor use, of the funding to ensure compliance against the MoU.

18 A potential risk of not having a market of providers to bid for this tender was identified. In order to counter this risk a market sounding exercise was recently undertaken which showed evidence that there is a market for this area of work.

What are the legal implications?

19 This decision is classified as a key decision as the overall value is more than £500,000. It was published on the list of forthcoming key decisions on 4th July 2022 and will be subject to call-in.

20 This procurement falls under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Due to the nature of the service, this requirement is covered under Schedule 3 – Social and Other Specific Services, allowing the application of the Light Touch Regime (LTR). There is still a requirement to advertise this opportunity via the Council's YORtender portal and the Find a Tender Service to ensure an open competitive tendering exercise.

- 21 There are no grounds for keeping the contents of this report confidential under the Access to Information Rules.
- 22 Undertaking this tender is in line with contract procedure rules (CPR) 9.1 and 9.2 and in line with CPR 15.2; the tender will be evaluated on a price/quality separated approach.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 23 Consideration was taken to undertaking separate tenders for the three components of the contract (as described in point 6). However, it is considered best value to undertake a tender to award one contract and the market sounding exercise confirmed there are providers in the market with the capacity, interest and ability to undertake all elements of the tender. Consortium bids will be welcomed.

How will success be measured?

- 24 The DfE funding comes with targets and performance measures. The SAFE Taskforce project team will be responsible for monitoring the programme against targets and performance measures.
- 25 The specification for the tender will set out specific targets and performance measures that link to the overall SAFE Taskforce project targets and performance measures. The successful provider will be allocated a Contracts Officer from the Commissioning Team who will ensure regular contract monitoring is undertaken and submitted and ensure compliance against the contract specification. This will be fed through to the SAFE Taskforce project team.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 26 The aim is to publish the tender in early August and for the contract to be awarded in September. Following a mobilisation period; we anticipate the contract will commence in October/November 2022 but this will be finalised prior to contract award.

Appendices

- Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Inclusion (EDCI) screening form.

Background papers

- None