

Report of Commissioning & Market Management Service

Report to Deputy Director of Children & Families (Social Care)

Date: 10/10/19

Subject: To approve the award of a contract to Aireborough Supported Activities Scheme for the provision of a residential targeted short breaks service from April 2020.



Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open 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: 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- This report seeks the approval of the Deputy Director of Children and Families to award a contract to Aireborough Supported Activities Scheme (ASAS) for the provision of a residential short breaks service for children and young people (C&YP) with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- This award follows a competitive tendering exercise and permission to procure was approved on 21st May 2019. The contract was split into two lots, this report refers to Lot 2 (residential service) only. No bids were received for Lot 1 weekend activities contract.
- The value of the contract is £59,975 p.a. The contract will be for three years so the maximum contract value over the life of the contract will be £179,925. There are two 12 month options to extend the contract.
- The award criteria for this contract were based on price and quality: price 30% and quality 70%. This model was agreed by the Chief Officer, Health & Partnerships prior to the issue of the tender documents.
- ASAS was the only bidder for the contract but met all minimum quality thresholds within the tender.

- Awarding this contract will support the Children & Young People's Plan 2018-2023 to:

- a) - Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.
- b) - Help children and parents to live in safe, supportive and loving families

This service will also help prevent family breakdown, in line with the obsession of safely reducing the number of children looked after.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- Leeds City Council has a vision for Leeds to be the best city in the UK, a vital component of which is becoming a child friendly city. A robust offer of short breaks for C&YP with SEND is key to achieving the vision to being a child friendly city and ensures compliance with the Children Act 1989, the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 and the Children and Families Act 2014. Leeds has a varied offer of short breaks that has developed and strengthened over a number of years.

3. Resource Implications

- There is a budget of £59,975 per annum in place to cover the value of this decision.
- This option represents best value for money because it secures vital services to enable disabled children and their families to access targeted short breaks with the aim of preventing family breakdown.

Recommendations

- c) The Deputy Director – Social Care is recommended to approve the award of a contract to Aireborough Supported Activities Scheme for the provision of a residential short breaks service for C&YP with SEND. The contract will be for 3 years, commencing on 1st April 2020, expiring on 31st March 2023. The value of the contract is £59,975 p.a. The contract will be for three years so the maximum contract value over the life of the contract will be £179,925. There are two 12 months options to extend the contract.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of the Deputy Director of Children and Families to award a contract to Aireborough Supported Activities Scheme for the provision of a residential short breaks service for C&YP with SEND from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023 plus two, twelve month extensions.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The Children and Families Commissioning Team has lead a review of short breaks from early 2017. Key findings from the review were drawn together and used to construct a number of commissioning options for targeted short breaks services. Following a detailed options appraisal the recommendation was to commission part of the short break offer via a competitive tender.
- 2.2 The contract was split into two lots, the first delivering weekend short breaks and the second delivering residential short breaks. Both lots would deliver services to children and young people with more significant/complex needs.

- 2.3 Unfortunately no bids were received for Lot 1 (weekend short breaks) so commissioning options are currently being considered in collaboration with the budget holder and the Procurement Category Manager.
- 2.4 Alongside Lot 2 of the contract, other targeted short breaks will be allocated via a competitive, grants allocation process, benefiting children and young people with moderate additional needs.
- 2.5 A competitive procurement exercise was advertised in August 2019. The tender assessment team was made up of representatives from Children's Social Work Service, Children & Families Commissioning Team, the Short Breaks Coordinator, parents & carers and young people. The wider project team included colleagues from HR, Legal and Finance and other stakeholders from universal and specialist short breaks services.
- 2.6 Bidders were required to answer seven tender questions, two of which carried a minimum quality threshold of 60% and the overall score had to meet a further quality threshold of 60%.
- 2.7 Bidders were then invited to attend a presentation which formed:
- A presentation to the full tender panel
 - Three interview questions
 - A presentation to young people
- 2.8 ASAS were the only bidder for the tender however, they met all of the minimum quality criteria.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Targeted services help ensure Leeds City Council meets a statutory duty to provide short breaks to children/young people with SEND. The award of Lot 2 of this contract will enable Leeds City Council to enter into a longer term arrangement for residential services offering short breaks for children and young people with significant additional needs.
- 3.2 Leeds City Council has an internal service provider currently delivering some targeted residential short breaks to children with moderate needs. A service level agreement has been put in place with Herd Farm starting in April 2020 enabling the internal provision to run alongside the new contract. ASAS and Herd Farm are required to work together to ensure C&YP access the appropriate residential service that will best meet their needs and not duplicate provision.
- 3.3 Lot 2 of the contract will provide one element of the Council's targeted short breaks offer. It will sit alongside the internal offer from Herd Farm and a biennial competitive grants process. The decision to retain an element of grants was made recognising the importance of the variety breaks delivered, including those delivered by small and community based organisations enabling young people to receive support in local communities wherever possible. The grants process will ensure the delivery of these services remains accessible for a range of organisations and support the continued development and innovation we have seen in the targeted short breaks market in recent years.
- 3.4 This tender has not resulted in a change of provider so there will be no staff members that will be subject to Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) implications. ASAS will be informed of the decision once it has received approval.
- 3.5 There are no specific implications or impact on a specific ward or wards as the provision is city-wide.

3.6 The Lead Member for Children & Families Services has been informed of the outcome of this tender exercise.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 Stakeholder consultation formed a significant part of the short breaks commissioning review. Children and young people, parents and carers, parents' participation groups and a wide range of professionals were consulted both face-to-face, online or during short breaks engagement sessions. This highlighted many areas of good practice as well some challenges faced, including an increasing population and increasing demand for services, a lack of services in some areas of the city and a demand for services during weekend and holiday periods.

4.1.2 The findings of the review and a commissioning recommendation that might have seen a move to area based contracts was shared with providers for feedback. Based on that feedback and an understanding of the provider market a further one year of grants were issued. During this time officers and providers worked to respond to the findings of the review and the views of parents and carers by increasing the amount of weekend and holiday provision available and increasing the geographical spread of services available.

4.1.3 As a result of this, the commissioning recommendations were revised, seeing one contract being commissioned for a core of weekend and holiday provision for young people with the highest level of need whilst retaining a significant grant allocation programme which has moved to two year grants rather than one year. This should offer greater stability in the services available for both families and providers of services.

4.1.4 Given that no bids were received for Lot one of the contract, further consultation will take place with the market, children and families, Council Officers and professionals prior to commencing a further tender exercise and separate arrangements considered to provide consistency of support to families

4.1.5 Parents/carers, children and young people were a key part of the tender evaluation. Parent/carer group EPIC sat on the tender and interview panel and children with significant additional needs were supported to undertake their own evaluation following a provider presentation/engagement session.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has assessed there are no adverse implications for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration resulting from this decision. These services benefit children and young people with SEN and disabilities and their families.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.3.1 This fits with the Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2023 priorities to;

- Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected
- Help children and parents to live in safe, supportive and loving families
- This service will also help prevent family breakdown, in line with the obsession of safely reducing the number of children looked after.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 The service specification requires bidders to consider the environmental impact of their approach to service delivery. During mobilisation they will be asked to demonstrate how they will reduce their carbon footprint, including making best use of technology and sustainable transport in their day to day operations.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 The tender was evaluated on price and quality: 70% quality and 30% price with a maximum cap of £60,000 per annum on Lot 2.
- 4.4.2 The value of the contract is £59,975 p.a. The contract will be for three years so the maximum contract value over the life of the contract will be £179,925. There are two 12 months options to extend the contract.
- 4.4.3 The price element of the evaluation was scored against a maximum contract value. This approach has contributed to ensuring value for money.
- 4.4.4 Robust contract monitoring has been written into the service specification and will be monitored by Children's Services Commissioning, Contracting & Market Management team to ensure the contract delivers value for money. Contract management meetings will be conducted throughout the life of the contract.

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 value of this contract is £59,975 p.a. and a consequence of a key decision therefore it is a significant operational decision. The decision is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 If this decision is not approved, there is a risk that disabled children, young people and their families will lose much valued services and that families may potentially be at increased risk of breaking down. Family breakdown and subsequent increase in number of children looked after would result in an increased pressure on statutory services.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The recommendations contained within this report will help ensure that there is consistent delivery and access to a residential short breaks service specifically for C&YP with significant additional needs, sometimes medical or behavioural needs requiring specialist training and or/personal care The contract award follows a fair and transparent competitive tendering exercise which involved meaningful consultation with stakeholders.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Deputy Director – Social Care is recommended to approve the award of a contract to Aireborough Supported Activities Scheme for the provision of a residential targeted short breaks service. The contract will be for 3 years; commencing on 1st April 2020, expiring on 31st March 2023. The value of the contract is £59,975 p.a. The contract will be for three

years so the maximum contract value over the life of the contract will be £179,925. There are two 12 months options to extend the contract.

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.