

Contract extension: DN428474 Young Carers Support

Date: 09/01/2024

Report of: Head of Service for Early Help

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 main purpose of the service is to provide specialist information, advice and support to Young Carers, their families and practitioners and to raise awareness about the needs of Young Carers so that they can be provided with effective support to enable them to fulfil their potential. The contract was initially awarded by way of a competitive tendering process. The provider commenced delivery on the 1st April 2020 for a 4 year term to March 31st 2024, with the option to extend 2 x 12 months. This report seeks to implement a contract extension of the full 24 months available for the above provision. The value of the extension will be £546,498 and will allow the provider to continue delivering high quality support to young carers in the city. There will be no further extensions available on the current terms. The new contract expiry date will be 31st March 2026.

Recommendations

- a) The Director of Children & Families is recommended to approve taking up in full the contract extension period permissible under the original contract terms for Young Carers Support, DN428474, with Family Action. This will run from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2026. The value of the extension is £546,498.

What is this report about?

- 1 Young Carers are a particularly vulnerable group of children and young people, whose wellbeing and life chances can be significant and detrimentally impacted by their caring responsibilities. Leeds has developed a new Young Carers Strategy and is committed to working together as a city to support Young Carers. An essential component of implementing the strategy is the continued commissioning of a Young Carers Support Service, jointly funded by Leeds City Council Children & Families, Adults & Health and NHS Leeds Integrated Care Board (ICB). Young Carers are a vulnerable group. CFSLT recognise this which is why the contract remains. The contract extension will ensure this vital work is continued.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 We want to ensure that Young Carers are supported to have equal life chances to their peers; are able to flourish and thrive; are protected from possible harm including inappropriate caring roles; and are able to attend, attain and achieve in whatever setting they are in.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

3

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 4 The contract is to be extended. Consultation took place at the inception and contract award.

What are the resource implications?

- 5 There is a budget identified to enable the provision to be extended as described above. All funders have indicated their approval to proceed. There will be no further resource implications as the service is already being delivered by a commissioned provider. This contract also sustained a contract cut in 22/23 by 10%. The current provision was considered as a service area for review, as part of meeting the commissioned services savings target. However, it was deemed to be an essential service offer that should continue at the current level by CFLT and the level of funding. The extension period will also be used to review and potentially re-design any future provision of this nature as a direct result of the ongoing financial challenges to the authority.

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

- 6 There are no risks currently identified with the provision. However, if the contract extension was not approved for any reason, the support of Young Carers in Leeds would be called into question and we would potentially fail in our statutory duty under the Children & Families Act 2014, aligned to the Care Act 2014, which enables Young Carers to get an assessment of their needs so that these can be recognised and adhered to.

What are the legal implications?

- 7 Our statutory duty under the Children & Families Act 2014, aligned to the Care Act 2014, which enables Young Carers to get an assessment of their needs so that these can be recognised and adhered to.
- 8 Contract Procedure Rule 21.2 allows a contract to be extended before its expiry date where it is in accordance with its terms and proves to deliver value for money. The original tender made provision for the current contract to be extended beyond the initial term for a further period of 2 years. Due to its value the decision will be a Significant Operational Decision
- 9 Although there is no overriding legal obstacle preventing the extension of the current contract, the contents of this report should be noted.
- 10 In making a final decision, the Director of Children and Families should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for the Council and that it is in the Council's interest and the public interest that the current contract is extended.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 11 Considerations were given to further contract reductions and to potentially bring the provision 'in house'. However, given the contract provides an extension period, it would be the best use of resources to implement the extension, allowing the council to review and scope new provision for April 2026.

How will success be measured?

- 12 Contract Management meetings will cover issues relating to compliance with the service specification and value for money, which may impact on delivery of the outcomes to be met. The aim will be to identify any risks and agree actions to reduce or eliminate those risks. The focus will be on continuous improvement through a partnership approach.

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

- 13 The contract extension will be implemented as soon as approval is received, allowing the extension to follow concurrently from 1st April 2024.

Appendices

- N/A

Background papers

- N/A