

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board Sub Committee

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Adults & Community

**SUBJECT:** Request for the waiver of Standing Orders in order to enable the Authority to progress the development of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Bangor University

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To request approval from members to seek suspension of the tendering Standing Orders in order to collaborate with Bangor University in a bid for funding under the Knowledge Transfer Partnership Scheme.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**That members of Executive Board agree that:**

- i) The Strategic Director, Adults and Community be authorised to enter into an arrangement with Bangor University to bid for the funding of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) proposal;**
- ii) On this occasion, in the light of exceptional circumstances, due to the need to have an agreement in place with a specific provider in advance of the bidding process Standing Orders 3.1 relating to Tendering for Contracts be waived pursuant to Standing Order 1.8.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Halton Borough Council, in conjunction with NHS St Helens and Halton PCT and Knowsley Borough Council has established a specialist community service for children and adults with learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges services. The Positive Behaviour Support Service:

- supports mainstream services working with people with learning disabilities, whose behaviour is a significant challenge.
- works directly with people whose behaviours present the greatest level of challenge

- will become a model of excellence, at the forefront of evidence based practice, and is unique nationally

This service has been designed to deliver significant savings to the partner agencies as well as to radically improve the quality of life for some of the most vulnerable service users.

3.2 A KTP involves a partnership between an 'Organisation', an academic institution and an 'Associate'. The 'Organisation' in this case is St Helens and Halton PCT, HBC and Knowsley Borough Council, the institution is Bangor University, and the associate is an individual undergoing training at Bangor (yet to be selected). The purpose of the KTP is to enable the associate to work within the organisation to further its aims and expertise, drawing upon the best research available in the chosen field of activity. It creates a reciprocal relationship between academic expertise and front line practice. KTPs can last for up to three years.

3.3 The KTP with Bangor University will be in the context of the development of this service and will focus on applying academic knowledge and research to the development of this specialised service. It will engage in systematic evaluation of the service and related projects with the aim of improving outcomes for service users and developing a strong skills base within the new team and across local support services.

#### 4.0 **BUSINESS CASE**

##### 4.1 **Value for Money and Competition**

4.1.1 Where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract does not exceed £1,000,000 the Operational Director concerned may enter into such contract with such persons as the Operational Director considers competent for the purpose provided that at least five competitive tenders shall have been invited in writing before entering into such contract and the contract awarded to one of the persons who has tendered. However, Standing Order 1.8 allows the Procurement Standing Orders to be waived in exceptional circumstances

4.1.2 The School of Psychology in Bangor University is a leading international centre for the study and practice of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), and the recognised lead in the UK in this field. ABA researchers in Bangor are the only team in the UK who are a part of a UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) five star academic department now firmly ranked as in the top 10% of UK psychology departments for research (RAE 2008).

4.1.3 Bangor currently runs the largest masters programme in ABA in the UK (currently 60-70 students registered for study at any one time),

and only one of two active programmes in the UK fully approved by the Behaviour Analysts Certification Board (the only international accrediting body for ABA, based in the USA) to meet the taught components required for individuals to achieve certification as Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBA). The Bangor programme was the first BCBA approved masters course in Europe. Bangor University also has the largest concentration of BCBA's on staff (all qualified to the highest BCBA-doctoral level) in a UK University.

4.1.4 Bangor's School of Psychology has been the lead base for ABA in the UK for the past four decades. The ABA team of researchers and practitioners in Bangor also have the broadest range of expertise in the UK for use of ABA in multiple settings and with multiple client groups. The Bangor team are expert in the use of ABA with children and adults with autism and/or intellectual disability, and especially those with challenging behaviours.

4.1.5 Bangor staff have published articles and led training and developments in the application of ABA to: adult and adolescent mental health problems (especially, self-harm and parasuicidal behaviour), healthy eating in children, increasing physical activity in children, reducing stress in carers of people with disabilities, educational applications with children and adult learners (e.g., reading and number skills), and behavioural training for parents of children with conduct disorder.

4.1.6 A final practical point is that not only is Bangor the best ABA centre in Europe and one of the best in the world, but it is also the closest to Halton in the UK. The only other centres for ABA within the UK are at Cardiff, Swansea, Kent, and Ulster.

## 4.2 **Transparency**

4.2.1 This contract will be subject to issues of confidentiality and be open to scrutiny under the Freedom of Information Act, through the internal and external audit process and through the Policy & Performance Board scrutiny arrangements.

## 4.3 **Propriety and Security**

4.3.1 Usual integrity clauses will be built into the contract document and only staff with a need to know will have information about the contract.

## 4.4 **Accountability**

4.4.1 This would remain with the Operational Director awarding the contract and once again the internal and external audit process. Policy & Performance Board will be relevant.

#### 4.5 **Position of the Contract under the Public Contract Regulations 2006**

4.5.1 This contract is for a health and social service and as such is largely exempt from the 2006 regulations. The requirement for transparency and non-distortion of competition are met by the details set out in the earlier parts of the business case. In any event, the value of this contract is below the financial threshold of £156,442,00.

#### 5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None.

#### 6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract does not exceed £1,000,000 the Operational Director concerned may enter into such contract with such persons as the Operational Director considers competent for the purpose provided that at least five competitive tenders shall have been invited in writing before entering into such contract and the contract awarded to one of the persons who has tendered. However, Standing Order 1.8 allows the Procurement Standing Orders to be waived in exceptional circumstances.

6.2 The 'Organisation' contributes £30,000 a year. This amount is split between HBC, KBC, and the PCT. Halton's actual commitment is therefore £10,000 per annum. If the bid is successful this enables matched funding of £30,000 a year to be drawn down from Government. This funding will be used to pay the salary of a full time person (employed by the university) to work on projects (e.g. cost effectiveness) specified by the partners. In addition it will cover the travel and subsistence budget, equipment budget and skill development budget for this individual. It will also cover academic support and the administration costs of the project.

6.3 Should the bid be successful funding has been identified and secured from the PCT (£10,000), Knowsley Borough Council (£10,000) and contributions from HBC CYPD (£5,000) and Adults and Community (£5,000). Any commitment beyond one year would be subject to a thorough cost/benefit analysis.

#### 7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### 7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The Positive Behaviour Support Service works with some of the most vulnerable young people in the Borough, and has a planned programme of early intervention to improve outcomes.

7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The KTP will lead to enhanced skills and competencies in local services.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The Positive Behaviour Support Service will deliver significant improvements to the health and quality of life of service users.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 Any contract awarded and subsequent monitoring will comply with procurement standing orders.

8.2 A Service Level Agreement will be devised, giving a clear specification. Outcomes will be agreed and monitored on a yearly basis.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 Agencies awarded a contract would be expected to comply with the Council policies relating to Ethnicity and Cultural Diversity as well as promoting inclusion.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.