

REPORT TO: Executive Board Sub Committee
DATE: 2 April 2009
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children and Young People
SUBJECT: Contract extension for the provision of Personal Advisor Service for Care Leavers
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To request the waiving of procurement standing orders 3.1 to 3.7 which places a requirement on the Council to tender for contracts with a value greater than £50,000 but not exceeding £1,000,000.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) In the exceptional circumstances set out below, for the purposes of standing order 1.6, procurement standing orders 3.1- 3.8 be waived in order for the existing contractual arrangements to be extended until 31st March 2010. During the period of extension, the Council will complete a competitive tendering exercise for the Personal Advisor Service for Care Leavers; and

(2) Delegated powers be approved to enable the Strategic Director Children and Young People, subject to an evaluation of value for money in an open tender process, to award a contract to an external provider inclusive of the provision of management and administration.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The current Personal Advisor for Care Leavers contract has been in operation for 5 years; and will terminate on 31st March 2009. The current cost of service delivery is £168,000.

3.2 The Service fulfils the requirements placed on the Local Authority by the Children (Leaving Care) Act, 2000, Regulations and Guidance Chapter 6 Regulation 12: "Personal Advisors". The Personal Advisor service supports young people in making the transition from being in care to living self sustaining and fulfilled lives as independent members of the community.

3.3 Following a competitive tendering process in March 2009, the Panel who considered the proposals from a number of organisations were unable to make a contract award to a single provider. This was

primarily on the basis of service continuity for existing users, with no new provider able to meet the terms of the contract due to the length of the contract lead-in period.

3.3 This report seeks approval to extend the existing contractual arrangements until 31st March 2010 and to recommence a competitive tendering exercise for this service in September 2009, with a view to awarding a new contract from April 2010.

3.4 The proposed tender process will enable the Council to update the service specification and to include improved outcomes nationally and locally for this vulnerable cohort. In addition, it is proposed that the revised specification will ensure that the service provider continually delivers a service that meets identified needs.

3.5 It is proposed that the new contract will last for a period of 3 years and will offer an option to extend beyond that for a further 2 years, subject to specified outcomes being delivered and specified targets being met.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None identified.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The provider will contribute significantly to improving outcomes for young people leaving care in Halton.

5.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

There will be an expectation that the service provider will be required to commit to the Councils NEET Strategy.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

The Personal Advisor service offers advice and guidance to young people on the wide range of health issues that may affect them and signposts them to appropriate services.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None Identified

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The Council has a duty to provide a Personal Advisor service for care leavers and, in the short term, this could not be adequately provided without extending the current contract.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 Care leavers are identified as one of the vulnerable groups in our community and are acknowledged as requiring dedicated support.

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

8.1 The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 - Christine Taylor
Grosvenor House