

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 3rd December 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children & Young People

SUBJECT: **Provision of Youth Work and Targeted Youth Support Services in Halton**

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

1.1 To appoint the preferred supplier for the provision of Youth Work and Targeted Youth Support Services in Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

Executive Board appoint an approved supplier following consideration of the tender evaluation.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Halton Borough Council Children and Young People Directorate have been contracting out the provision of its Youth Service since 2002/3. This service has been delivered by the Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership.

3.2 Since this contract was awarded in 2002/03 a number of new pieces of legislation and guidance has been produced namely Youth Matters: Next Steps, Halton's revised Children and Young People's Plan with revised priorities and the ongoing development of Integrated Youth Support locally.

3.3 In December 2008 Executive Board were presented with a report outlining the proposals for the future commissioning of the Youth Service. This allowed us to proceed with the commissioning of the Youth Service so young people are able to receive a seamless service as these arrangements are transferred.

3.4 The contract for the Youth Service is in excess of £1million per annum. It was therefore necessary to embark on a tendering process. This followed the stringent rules defined by the EU Procurement regulations.

3.5 This is also viewed as an important opportunity to test the market and to fully investigate future providers in terms of quality of service and value for money in relation to impact on outcomes.

3.6 Pre Qualifying Questionnaire stages carried out across the summer

months have resulted in comprehensive proposals being submitted. We are now proceeding to interview the three providers short listed. This will consist of a multi agency Children's Trust panel at which potential suppliers will make a presentation followed by a question and answer session. Following this a specific young people's panel will host a 'hot seat' question and answer session.

- 3.7 The contract award date is 27th November 2009, with the contract due to start on 1st February 2010. The contract will run until 31st March 2012.

4.0 DETAILS OF THE SPECIFICATION

- 4.1 In building the specification for our new Youth Service we have consulted with young people across the spectrum of need and background. We have asked what they would like to see from a future provider in terms of activity, venue and times and dates.

- 4.2 The specification is detailed, comprehensive and inclusive and makes it explicit that our Youth Service will be exemplified by the following aspects:

- Working with young people to help them learn about themselves, each other, their families, their communities and the society they live in.
- A development process which sees us providing opportunities to build up the skills of young people so they are able to influence decisions and be active members of their community.
- Young people are offered safe spaces to explore their own identity, to experience decision-making, increase their confidence, develop inter-personal skills
- Develop young people's personal effectiveness through building their ability to arrive at their own choices and solutions to problems and think through the consequences of their actions.
- The relationship between youth worker and young person is central to this process will be the key to making this work being the skills, knowledge and abilities of the youth worker and their ability to establish an effective working relationship with the young person.
- Working and growing with young people as they make the tricky transition into adulthood.
- Working hard to sustain young people's involvement over time and encourage them to work with us to create an integrated youth support service that meets their needs now and will have the capacity and flexibility to respond to their changing needs and wishes over time.

- 4.3 To do this effectively we will expect any future provider to also demonstrate their abilities in:

- Involving Children and Young People in decision making
- Encouraging young people to become involved in positive activities
- Ensuring all young people are able and supported to attend activities in order to secure Equality of Access
- Supporting young people to access additional support as and when needed.

4.4 **We also expect the future provider to be able to provide** specific support to vulnerable groups, for example:

- Care Leavers
- Teen Parents
- Substance misusers
- Young Carers
- Runaways
- Young Offenders
- BME groups
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Trans young people
- Provision for the co-ordination of Halton Youth Cabinet
- Provision of the co-ordination of Halton Youth Bank
- Specific provision for targeted street based activities (with a focus on Friday & Saturday evenings)
- Provision for the management of youth centres across Halton
- Specific provision for the delivery of youth work activities from youth centres across Halton

4.5 As noted in the report presented to the Executive Board in December 2008 The contract will accommodate an appropriate break clause in the event of poor performance or reduced financial capacity to commission the service to the level agreed.

4.6 The provider will also be subject to increased scrutiny and performance management to ensure it meets the needs of our young people and makes the required impact on the outcomes and ambitions we have for our young people.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 We are required to provide a youth service for our young people. How this is delivered is determined locally. In Halton we have made the decision to award this contract externally.

5.2 As described in both the National Indicator Set for Children's Services and Local Authorities PSA 14 (numbers of young people engaged in positive activities) and associated targets regarding the numbers of young people in education, employment and training, the numbers of under 18 conceptions, attainment levels, first time entrants into the youth justice system, a comprehensive and effective youth service will be an important aspect to ensure we can

make a real difference to young people across the range of indicators related to these particular indicators.

- 5.3 To achieve these goals in addition to making sure the provider is able to respond and make an impact against our key local ambitions and priorities as outlined in our Children and Young People Plan the process of awarding the contract has been devised to be thorough, inclusive and challenging.

We have made sure this process represents both the views and wishes of young people. We have also brought together a panel of young people who will question and challenge providers as part of the interview process.

In this respect the provider who is awarded the contract will be able to deliver the requirements of this contract comprehensively and will ensure, as the purchasing body, we can be confident of their skills, knowledge and commitment to our young people.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None noted

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children & Young People in Halton

An effective and efficient Youth Service which is both able to address the needs and wishes of young people in the borough will be essential in achieving our ambitions and improving the outcomes for children and young people in the borough.

The day to day work undertaken by frontline staff will be a significant resource to achieve these ambitions and in improving outcomes for children and young people. This will be based on making sure through the tendering process the staff team are skilled, qualified and able to address the many challenges our young people face.

Moreover the role of the organisation in shaping the strategic arrangements which place the active participation of children and young people in the design, delivery and review of services at the heart of everything we do will be important in maintaining and building on the progress made in recent years.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

One of the many benefits of an effective and efficient youth service will be the impact it has on building the self esteem and confidence of young people as they live their every day lives.

Building these attributes is important for young people as they make the tricky transition from adolescence to adulthood and all the challenging aspects which make this journey with them, such as

leaving school starting college, making the leap to finding work, going to university or leaving home.

Consequently the Youth Service will be an important partner in achieving our goals within this priority.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

One of the many benefits of an effective and efficient youth service will be the impact it has on the health and well being of our young people. They will be key players in providing information, advice and guidance for young people and will be able to work effectively with partners so they can signpost young people to specific services.

This will be particularly relevant for the health needs of young people because we know locally there are particular issues for young people in relation to substance use, sexual health, teenage pregnancy and smoking cessation.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

One of the many benefits of an effective and efficient youth service will be the impact it has on providing positive activities for young people and offering them safe places to go.

One of the many issues our communities tell us is that they feel intimidated by groups of young people and are concerned about the levels of anti social behaviour. Our Youth Service will address many of these concerns so will address some aspects within the broader framework of making our communities feel safer.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 *The key risks/opportunities associated with the proposed action and an outline of the key control measures proposed in relation to these risks should be included.*

*A statement must be made as to whether proposals are so significant as to require a full risk assessment. If a full risk assessment is required, please describe high risk areas and control measures. (NB **all** key decisions automatically fall into this category of requiring a full risk assessment.)*

Any assessment of risk will be carried out as part of the tendering process. Any highlighted risk will need to be addressed by the interviewed provider during the interview process.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 Equality Impact Assessments have been completed to date and each provider through the tendering interviews will be expected to demonstrate their commitment and abilities in engaging with young people across the spectrum of need, background, culture, identity, disability and sexuality.

Additionally the young people's panel will explore and challenge in detail the abilities, knowledge and skills of the frontline staff in addressing these aspects as a means of making sure the new provider is committed and able to achieve equality of access and opportunity.

10.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION:

To comply with recommendations as contained in Youth Matters and Youth Matters Next Steps.

To continue to address specific issues for young people in Halton such as to increase the numbers of our young people who are engaged in education, employment or training and to reduce the numbers of under 18 conceptions.

The service will also ensure young people in Halton receive services and support that encourage and promote their self esteem and self confidence and provide them with the skills, knowledge, choices and opportunities that will allow help them in making the tricky transition into adulthood and to become the future Halton needs as it moves further into the 21st century.

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

1st February 2010

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Invitation to Tender Pack	Grosvenor House	Lorraine Crane