

Cabinet

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	15 October 2018 – Shadow Executive Committee 17 October 2018 - Cabinet
<p><u>Cabinet Member(s)</u> Steve Butler – Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Safeguarding; Andrew Parry – Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Education, Learning and Skills.</p> <p><u>Lead Director</u> Nick Jarman – Director for Children’s Services</p>	
Independent Special School Provision – Framework Tender and Award	
1. Subject of Report	<p>1.1 To approve the participation of Dorset County Council in a sub-regional framework tender led by Bristol City Council with a consortium of local authorities in South West and potentially Southern England for Independent Special School and Specialist Post 16 Institutions Placements.</p> <p>1.2 To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer and Director of Children’s Services, as appropriate, to sign any framework agreement or call-off contract awarded under the framework.</p>
2. Executive Summary	<p>2.1 Independent special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements are a vital part of the overall provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They provide good quality educational placements where often complex needs cannot be met from local maintained schools.</p> <p>2.2 In accordance with the contract procedure rules for contracts with an estimated value of over £500,000 Cabinet approval is sought for children’s services to seek competitive tenders for a framework providing Independent Special School and Specialist Post 16 Institutions Placements.</p> <p>2.3 The aim of this tender is to support the implementation of the SEND Strategy 2018-2021 through providing a better range of independent special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements that can deliver better outcomes for children and young people and their families.</p> <p>2.3 This tender will also achieve compliance with procurement regulations by being able to maximise our ability to source placements from a tender framework instead of spot-purchasing all placements. We will also work with the other local authorities on the framework when contract monitoring and working with service providers once the framework has been awarded. Importantly there is also the option of block-purchasing off this</p>

	<p>framework through mini competition to secure specific provision where required.</p> <p>2.4 This tender offers economies of scale to providers and greater bargaining power to the participating local authorities, so we expect to be able to make placements at more competitive rates than through current spot purchasing arrangements.</p> <p>2.5 Bristol City Council are leading this project and to date have invited all the local authorities participating in the existing South West residential framework to participate in this project. The other local authorities comprise: Wiltshire, Swindon, Gloucestershire, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset. This tender will also be open for other local authorities in the South West and South Central areas to participate including Bournemouth and Poole.</p>
<p>3. Impact Assessment:</p> <p><i>Please refer to the protocol for writing reports.</i></p>	<p>3.1 Equalities Impact Assessment: This tender will not require a separate equalities impact assessment but will instead support the action plan for the existing equalities impact assessment for the SEND Strategy 2018-2021. The tender project will be aligned to the SEND Participation Plan for ensuring co-production and engagement with children and young people with SEND and their families. The project will also be linked to the SEND Strategy and will be visible to the SEND delivery group.</p> <p>3.2 Use of Evidence: The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2018-2021, provides the evidence of the needs of Dorset’s children and young people with SEND and trends to support the requirement for this tender. To inform the approach to market and the structure of the service specification and contract, consultation will be undertaken with the independent special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions provider market and the National Association of Special Schools (NASS) in the form of a questionnaire and a market engagement event. Parents and carers will also be consulted about this tender and their views will be taken account of when drafting the contract, specification and tender documents. The consortium of local authorities participating in this tender will also take account of the learning from other frameworks for independent special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements.</p> <p>3.3 Budget:</p> <p>(a) Expenditure will only be incurred when we make placements with providers on the framework. Current annual expenditure on independent special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements is approximately £10,100,000. This tender will not result in net additional expenditure but instead will provide the means to secure better value for money and unit costs when we require independently provided special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements.</p> <p>(b) Where appropriate, we will seek advanced payment discounts and where offered shared volume expenditure threshold rebates from providers we use on this framework.</p>

	<p>(c) The option of securing block contracts via mini-competition from providers on this framework will also help secure discounted fees.</p> <p>3.4 Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council’s approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: MEDIUM Residual Risk LOW</p> <p>3.5 Outcomes:</p> <p>(Note: Explain how the content of the report and any decision incorporates Outcomes Based Accountability.)</p> <p>3.6 Other Implications:</p> <p>(a) The participating authorities will use this tender to scrutinise providers safeguarding policies, procedures and track record, thereby providing further assurance of the suitability of independently provided special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements and promoting best practice safeguarding.</p>
<p>4. Recommendations</p>	<p>4.1 The Cabinet is asked to approve the participation of Dorset County Council in a competitive sub-regional framework tender for the provision of independent special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements; and,</p> <p>4.2 To delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer and Director of Children’s Services, as appropriate, to sign any framework agreement or call-off contract awarded under the framework.</p>
<p>5. Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>5.1 This tendered framework will improve the sufficiency and choice of independently provided special school and Specialist Post 16 Institutions placements to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), through supporting as more efficient and equitable way of accessing high quality value for money placements and ultimately better outcomes for young people and their families. The framework will also seek to stimulate the market to provide more placements in Dorset and close to Dorset.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>Appendix 1 - The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2018-2021.</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment – Dorset Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy.</p>
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2018-2021</p>

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