

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources Committee
DATE	04 December 2015
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Corporate Parenting – Employability Support to Care Experienced Young People
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/15/059
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes/No

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to waive the need for a competitive procurement for the above proposal which is detailed below.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- (i) note the information contained within this report.
 - (ii) approve the invoking of SO 1(6)(a) and thereby waive the need for a competitive procurement on the grounds that the exemption is justified by special circumstances as detailed in this report.
 - (iii) approve the Action for Children proposal for a period of 3 years.
 - (iv) approve the expenditure of £150k over 3 years as detailed within the attached memo.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 On submission of a proposal (copy attached) to the Directorate Leadership Team meeting of 17 March 2015 to develop a support service for care experienced young people in work experience placements and internships within the Council, Education and Children's Services agreed to a project being commissioned from Action for Children.
- 3.2 The total value of the subsequent proposed contract will be £450k over 3 years. Aberdeen City Council's contribution will be £150k (ie. £50k per annum) over three years with the remainder being sourced from Inspire

Scotland and the EU, as detailed below and in the attached proposal.

- 3.3 The contribution from the City Council has been earmarked from within existing budgets and is held in a unique cost centre.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The local authority is the corporate parent to all looked after children and young people. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 has recently extended the duties and responsibilities placed on local authorities towards care experienced young people, particularly in relation to its corporate parenting role and also with a duty to provide care for young people who request to remain in care up to the age of 21, as well as support for those who require it up to the age of 26.
- 4.2 One way that the Council seeks to fulfil its duties and responsibilities as a corporate parent to care experienced young people is to provide them with work experience under the Family Firm initiative.

5. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The purpose of this paper is to outline proposals for an employability support service provided by Action for Children. It will support young people who are, or who have been, looked after or accommodated by the City Council. In the first instance, this will support such young people who are involved in placements under the Family Firm initiative within the City Council and its corporate parenting partners. In due course this may be expanded, subject to demand and opportunity, to support care experienced young people in such placements with other employers.
- 5.2 The service will be delivered within the context of the Aberdeen Guarantees initiative, enabling young people to make the most of locally available opportunities, leading to sustainable employment and the achievement of career progression.
- 5.3 Under the Family Firm initiative care experienced young people are currently involved in either the 12 week work experience programme (ie. Keen4Work), or internship placements with the City Council. Experience has shown though that this group of young people often find the transition to the experience of work a difficult challenge and have required considerable time and support to sustain their placement.
- 5.4 A business case was previously prepared, though not submitted, seeking support for a full time officer to support care experienced young people in placements through the Family Firm initiative. Including both staff time and payments to young people, other than those in internships, this would have cost approx £80K per year.
- 5.5 Action for Children has experience in delivering similar projects in Glasgow and Edinburgh where they provide one-to-one support to care experienced young people who participate in a local authority or voluntary

sector work experience, apprenticeship or internship opportunities. Action for Children have demonstrated that the additional level of support provided by the programme enables a greater volume of young people to participate in the offer and resulted in a higher number going on to succeed, achieve and progress.

- 5.6 Action for Children approached Aberdeen City Council in late 2014 with a proposal to develop a similar service in the city supported with two thirds funding that they were able to acquire through match funding contributions provided by other stakeholders. These were from Inspire Scotland providing a 33% contribution towards overall costs and a proposal for European structural funds, through the voluntary sector challenge fund, providing a further 33%.
- 5.7 The programme aims to support the Aberdeen Guarantees, Family Firm policy and Aberdeen City Council's corporate parenting strategy by providing an additional layer of support for Care leavers and the most vulnerable young people within the authority.
- 5.8 The cost to the local authority of Action for Children's proposal will be £50k per annum for 3 years (ie. £150k in total). The service would provide four members of staff with a capability of supporting up to 40 young people. This compares to the earlier business case which sought to establish one internal post to support 10 young people at a cost of £80K per year.
- 5.9 Exemption from competitive procurement is being sought due to the fact that Action for Children have been able to provide two thirds funding for the service and also because it will be able to support up to four times as many young people, thus making a significant contribution to the Council's corporate parenting duties and responsibilities.

6. IMPACT

6.1 Improving Customer Experience –

- There will be a positive impact for care experienced young people who will receive the necessary support to sustain employment.

6.2 Improving Staff Experience –

Staff mentoring the care experienced young people will receive support to ensure that they are aware of issues which might be affecting the young people they are supervising.

6.3 Improving our use of Resources –

- Action for Children will be bringing 66% of the funding tot his project and they will be able to support 4 times the number of young people.

6.4 Corporate –

- This initiative makes a significant contribution to the Council's corporate parenting duties and responsibilities.

- 6.5 Equality and Human Rights impact assessment does not need to be completed as part of this report due to this initiative not having an adverse effect on people. The funding provided by Action for Children is enhancing the initiative by 66%.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- 7.1 The council has a range of duties and responsibilities it must discharge in relation to its support for care experienced young people. These have recently been extended to include support up to the age of 26 with a view to ensuring that such young people achieve sustainable futures and are not exposed to further risks arising from their previous vulnerabilities.
- 7.2 The recommendations in this report and the proposed service will contribute to the council discharging its duties and responsibilities effectively and thus in part at least mitigating the risks highlighted above.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- *Action for Children – Employability Support to Vulnerable Young People*
- *Memo – Corporate Parenting*

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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