

North Lanarkshire Council

Report

Education and Families Committee

approval noting

Ref

Date 24/11/20

Notification of Befriending Support Interim Contracts

From Alison Gordon, Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work
Chief Social Work Officer

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to notify the committee regarding the award of interim contracts for Befriending Support Services, which are being used to provide a continuation of the service delivery of the current individual Service Users.

The awards have been made utilising the Council's Negotiated Tender Procedure (NTP). These negotiated contracts are being placed on an interim basis to be used while a new contract award procedure is undertaken to secure longer term arrangements for existing and new Service Users.

A competitive tender procedure is being progressed, resulting in this NTP being utilised as an interim measure to ensure continuity of service delivery until such time as the new contract is awarded.

The contract award procedure will be advertised in a separate Notice, and will be open to existing and new Service Providers to the Council, and be used for the longer term requirements of the Befriending service. The procurement procedure is due to progress for completed by the end of March 2021.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee notes the action taken to award the interim contracts for Befriending Support Services in the Council area.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities

Ambition statement (10) Engage with children, young people, parents, carers, and families to help all children and young people reach their full potential

1. Background

The Befriending services support children and young people across North Lanarkshire by offering supportive, reliable relationships through volunteer befrienders to people who may otherwise be socially isolated.

Volunteers act as positive adult role models to the young people. Through undertaking social, leisure and educational activities and outings with the young people, the volunteers encourage them to make positive changes in their lives which will benefit themselves and the local community.

Befriending can also reduce the burden on other services which people may use inappropriately as they seek social contact.

The Befriending service is based on the following main principles:

- Best interests, choices, ideas, preferences, needs
- Valuing and support
- Working together
- Rights based approach; listening, empowerment, prevention

In North Lanarkshire, a befriending service has always meant ensuring that children and young people have as much choice and control as possible in overcoming life difficulties that they may face. The approach is based on promoting independence and social inclusion.

2. Report

- 2.1 To provide ongoing support for vulnerable children and young people across North Lanarkshire.
- 2.2 The Befriending Support Service Agreements had come to an end.
- 2.3 To maintain relationships and provide continuity for existing Service Users, following completion of a successful 10 day standstill period, an award notice Contract No: 099NTP/2019, was published on 02/04/2020.
- 2.4 An interim contract was agreed with Volunteering Matters for a total value of up to (excluding VAT): £120 534.00. This is considered to be the best value available to ensure service delivery is not impacted. It will be for a period of twelve months.
- 2.5 The current Service Provider, has over several years built relationships with the existing group of individual Service Users.
- 2.6 Officers from Social Work Quality Assurance team will be responsible for managing the Contract which will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's agreed approach to Contract and Supplier Management.

3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Fairer Scotland Duty

This Contract will work towards improving the health and wellbeing of our communities by assisting the Council to ensure our Children and Young people are able to achieve, maintain, and recover their independence through appropriate supports at home and in their communities.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

The Council will continue to carry out equality impact assessments to determine if policies, practices, decisions, functions and strategies identify any negative impact on any particular group covered by the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Impact

To maintain relationships and provide continuity for existing Service Users, the total value of the Interim Contracts awarded is £120 534.00, exclusive of VAT. The costs associated with contract delivery will be contained within the Children and Families Revenue budget over financial year 2020/2021 or until noted otherwise.

4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

The original contract is being used as a basis for the NTP, it will be a requirement that each Service provider continues to deliver good quality support throughout its duration.

4.3 Environmental Impact

N/A

4.4 Risk Impact

Risk will be minimised and managed by a designated Contract Manager in accordance with the works specification and in line with the Council's agreed approach to Contract and Supplier Management

5. Measures of success

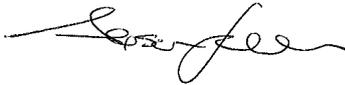
5.1 It is anticipated that the award of the Contract will deliver the following successful outcomes:

- The appointment of Service Providers who have the experience and capability to deliver, high quality and responsive services;
- The procurement procedure is compliant with the procurement legislation and internal procedures;
- That best value is both demonstrable and achieved

- The service continues to provide invaluable volunteering opportunities and operates to a very high standard.

6. Supporting documents

None

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Gordon', written in a cursive style.

Alison Gordon
Head of Children, Families and Justice Social Work
Chief Social Work Officer