

**From:** Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services

**To:** Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

**Subject:** **Decision Number: 16/00073 - NEET Service Contract Award**

**Classification:** **Unrestricted**

Future Pathway of Paper:

Electoral Division: **All**

**Summary:**

This report documents the procurement process, evaluation methodology and the subsequent award decision for the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Support Services contract which is expected to commence on 1 December 2016, following an open and competitive tender process, we are now at a stage where a decision can be taken to award the contracts for commissioned (NEET) service.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is asked to agree that:

- (i) the contracts for the delivery of commissioned NEET services across Kent be awarded on the terms and for the duration set out below and in the exempt appendix; and
- (ii) the Head of Strategic Commissioning - Children's, will on behalf of the Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, take all such steps as are necessary to implement the decision.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Kent County Council (the Council) has a strategic commitment (the Education and Young People's Services NEET Strategy and Action Plan 2015-16) to reduce the number of NEETs within the County to less than 1% by 2017-18.
- 1.2 A young person who is not in education, employment or training has been defined in the NEET Strategy and Action Plan 2015 – 16 as 'NEET' if they of an academic aged of 16 to 18 years old or have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) aged 16-24 years old and are also not in education, employment or training.
- 1.3 Evidence shows that being NEET between and including the ages of 16 to 18 years old is a major predictor of later unemployment, lower job security and

rates of pay (under-employment); short periods of under-employment with periods of unemployment in cycles of 'churning' in and out of work.

- 1.4 There are many services, both delivered by the Council and VCS organisations that work with young people to assist them to participate in education, employment or training. There is currently a commissioned service specifically to deliver support to NEET young people including those that are SEND titled 'Promoting Participation'. This is delivered by CXK and will end on 30 November 2016.
- 1.5 Through consultation with internal staff and the current provider, a need has been identified for a targeted and intensive level of NEET Support Service which will engage with young people that have been NEET for 12 weeks or more, or who have not been able to sustain education, employment or training in the past. These young people need guidance and additional support to find opportunities and achieve their personal outcomes. This service will aim to reduce the number of NEETs in Kent and also provide additional capacity to Early Help and Preventative Services – in order to support attainment of Kent's strategic target of fewer than 1% of the population being NEET.
- 1.6 The service will assign a suitably trained Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance qualified professional (follows national guidance on Careers Information Advice and Guidance) NEET worker to each young person with whom the service is working and who will provide high quality impartial advice, guidance and support. Each NEET worker will hold a caseload of 30-40 young people and will aim to achieve their engagement in education, employment or training (EET) within 12 weeks.
- 1.7 The referral process is aligned to the new ways of working within Early Help. The EH District Managers will identify the young people that the new service should target. These include:
  - Those that are recorded on the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) system as being NEET for 12 weeks or more. IYSS is a case management database system which records the destination of each young person the Council is aware of and this will be used by the new provider to keep records up to date;
  - Long term NEETs that are within the caseload of other Early Help Services and require specific work to support them to sustain or return to EET;
  - Those that are not being supported by any other service; and
  - Those who are stepped down from other Tier 3 and 4 Services.
- 1.8 Many young people will already have a case worker or key worker from another organisation and it is not necessary for this service to provide additional support to address the issues of NEET. This work in most cases will be done by the allocated caseworker regardless of organisation.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 There is a budget of £500,000 per annum for the next three financial years. The contract will include the option of extending further for up to 24 months if there is available budget to do so.

*Projected Savings*

- 2.2 Based on the initial value of £1,500,000 (£500,000 per annum) for initial 3 years with the option of extending further for up to 2 years, this procurement exercise has reduced the original contract price from £1,500,000 to £1,495,231.20 which has saved the Council £4,768.80.

- 2.4 The contract is due to start by the 1 December 2016 for the duration of 3 years with the option of extending further for up to 2 years.

**3. Procurement Route**

- 3.1 The procurement plan and process for the new contract were approved at Strategic Commissioning Board on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

- 3.2 As this sector is relatively immature to competitive tendering, the Light Touch tendering procedure was used with the tender procedure advertised and managed using the Kent Business Portal.

- 3.3 Below is a timetable of the process completed:

<b>Process</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Advert and ITT Documentation issued on the Kent Business Portal	Friday 29 July 2016.
Provider Tender workshop	Monday 8 August 2016.
Deadline to submit requests for clarification via the ProContract Discussion facility	12:00 (noon) on Monday 15 August 2016.
Deadline for Tender Responses	12:00 (noon) on Friday 19 August 2016.
Commencement of Tender Evaluation Period (including Post-Tender Clarification) including	Friday 19 August 2016 to Tuesday 30 August 2016.
Pre-Award Clarification Meeting	Friday 2 September 2016
Publication of Decision to Award	Week commencing Monday 5 September 2016
Contract Award	Week commencing Monday 3 October 2016.
10 day Standstill period	Thursday 6 October 2016 – Monday 17 October 2016.
Issue Contract documentation for signature	31 October 2016.
Contract Commencement Date	1 December 2016

- 3.4 A total of 48 expressions of interest were received.

**4. Evaluation Process**

4.1 The tender submissions were evaluated using a 3 stage award criteria process

## **5. Member involvement**

5.1 A Member evaluated the tender responses to the award criteria question.

5.2 The Stage 2 moderation meeting took place on 30 August 2016 and the Member social value scores were added to the rest of the moderated award criteria scores on 1 September 2016.

## **6. Outcomes**

6.1 Once the award report is authorised and schedule agreement is signed then the successful and unsuccessful letters will be sent and the 10-day standstill period will commence. Following successful completion of the standstill period, the contract can be awarded.

## **7. Conclusions**

7.1 Education and Young People's Services Visions and Priorities and the NEET Strategy and Action Plan 2015 – 16 set out KCC's commitment to reducing the number of NEETS in the County. After following a comprehensive procurement process it has been established that the successful contractor will be able to provide a high level of provision to increase the prospects of these young people and reduce the number of NEETs in the County.

## **8. Recommendations**

Recommendations:

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- (ii) the Head of Strategic Commissioning - Children's, will on behalf of the Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, take all such steps as are necessary to implement the decision.

## **9. Background Documents:**

**Vision and Priorities for Improvement**

[http://www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/29074/EYPS-Vision-and-Priorities-for-Improvement.pdf](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/29074/EYPS-Vision-and-Priorities-for-Improvement.pdf)

NEET Strategy and Action Plan 2015 – 16

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s61246/Item%20C3%20NEET%20Strategy%202015-16%20-%20Final.pdf>

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