

## **Report to CABINET**

# **Approval to delegate the decision to award CSC integrated commissioning services contract from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022**

### **Portfolio Holder:**

Cllr Eddie Moores Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

**Officer Contact:** Richard Lynch – Director of Education, Skills & Early Years

**Report Author:** Shirley Woods - Gallagher AD Commissioning  
Nick Whitbread AD Corporate Parenting

Date of decision 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021

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### **Reason for Decision**

To ensure statutory services continue to be delivered from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 following a full and robust procurement and commissioning process.

### **Recommendations**

Approval is given to authorise a delegated decision to be made by the Managing Director, Children and Young People, Gerard Jones to award the contract for CSC services to be operational from 1 April 2022. This would be subject to a robust evaluation process following on from an open, transparent commissioning and procurement exercise which commenced via The Chest on 18 October 2021 following 'meet the market' event.

This would enable Oldham to continue to provide high quality integrated statutory services from 1 April 2022 for an initial period of five years up until 31 March 2027 with an option to extend for a maximum of up to two years dependent on performance, achievement of Key Performance Indicators, continued funding and local need.

Accepting this recommendation would guarantee a significant level of service continuity and ensure statutory responsibilities continue to be met thus reducing risk to the Council.

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## **Approval to delegate the decision to award CSC integrated commissioning services contract from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022**

### **1 Background**

Oldham Council is seeking to commission a comprehensive, fully integrated children and young people's offer covering a range of CSC services to be awarded as one distinct contract. This will enable children, young people and families/carers to access high-quality information, advice and support across a range of services. It will also enable Oldham Council to continue to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

A range of SEND and CSC services are currently out to tender via The Chest as part of our integrated commissioning approach. This report is seeking approval from Cabinet to authorise a delegated decision to be made by the Managing Director Children and Young People, Gerard Jones, to award the contract for the delivery of CSC services within scope of this report to be operational from 1 April 2022.

Decision to award will be via a robust evaluation process following on from an open, transparent commissioning and procurement exercise which commenced via The Chest on 18 October 2021. This followed a Meet the Market event held in August 2021 and feedback from young people and parent/carers to further develop service specifications. A Project Board has been in place meeting fortnightly including service area experts, commissioning, legal, procurement and finance colleagues. The Project Board has ensured progress is maintained, provided due diligence and has overseen development of all procurement documents including service specifications. The Project Board will continue to support evaluations of tenders, award recommendations and implementation planning to ensure Oldham continues to provide statutory high-quality services for our most vulnerable children, young people and families/carers.

Contract award will be from 1 April 2022 for an initial period of five years up until 31 March 2027 with an option to extend for up to a maximum of two years based on performance, achievement of key performance indicators, continued funding and local need. The services within scope and the annual funding envelope is as follows:

CSC covering Advocacy/Independent Visitors, Regulation 44 Visits and Mental Health Support for Children Looked after and their support network with a funding envelope of £149,000 per annum.

These services all provide support for some of the most vulnerable and at-risk children, young people and families/carers in Oldham.

An update report will be provided to the Portfolio Holder following award of contract.

### **2 Current Position**

- 2.1 The CSC services in scope are currently published as a live tender on the Chest. This became live on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and will close on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Following this the project board, including children and young people, will form an evaluation and moderation panel. The panel will recommend award of contract to the successful bidder. Procurement corporate rules will be followed in terms of stand-still and subsequent move to award. Services outlined above are currently delivered entirely independently by a variety of providers whose contracts all end on 31 March 2022. There is no provision to

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further extend these contracts. The integrated approach seeks to bring services together with a more consistent and holistic approach to delivery therefore being better able to flexibly meet the current and emerging needs of our families/carers.

We are seeking one lead provider meaning management and other associated costs are not unnecessarily duplicated ensuring funding is maximised to support direct delivery.

A new service specification within the funding envelope outlined has been developed to enable delivery models to be in place which meet local, regional and national requirements and;

- meets the needs of service users
- has a flexible approach to meeting identified and emerging needs
- enables children and young people to fulfil their full potential and realise their aspirations
- reflects the lived experience of children, young people and families/carers in regard to their expectations
- considers learning arising from the Covid-19 pandemic in particular new models of delivery

In order to ensure enhanced integrated service delivery models are in place from 1 April 2022 a competitive commissioning and procurement exercise has been undertaken with a range of partners to co-produce a service specification. This has involved young people and parent/carers.

A Project Board has been formed to scrutinise and oversee the procurement exercise and support delivery of the work required to complete the procurement process. The Project Board is chaired by the AD Commissioning and Partnerships and consists of representation from the following partners; service area experts, commissioning, CCG, legal services, procurement and finance.

Prior to the commencement of the procurement exercise, existing service specifications were reviewed with service leads in line with changing priorities, legislation and local need, to ensure they reflected local, regional and national requirements.

Young people told us that they felt the range of services was appropriate but that they wanted easier access to services at times which suited them and their families/carers and through a stronger digital offer. Families and carers told us they wanted more choice and flexibility. This has been reflected in the revised service specifications.

Virtual Meet the Market engagement events were held during August 2022, both were attended by a range of organisations including the current providers of these services. Feedback from the event was positive and was also considered as part of the review of the services specifications.

An open tender exercise commenced on 18 October 2022 for both lots via The Chest.

Tender submissions will be evaluated by a panel consisting of the AD for Commissioning & Partnerships, Senior Commissioning and Partnerships Manager, Commissioning and Partnerships Manager, service area experts from CSC, young people trained as commissioners and parent/carers supported by Procurement.

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### 3 **Options**

#### **Option 1**

Approval is given to authorise a delegated decision to be made by the Managing Director, Children and Young People, Gerard Jones to award the contract to be operational from 1 April 2022. This would be subject to a robust evaluation process following on from an open, transparent commissioning and procurement exercise which commenced via The Chest on 18 October 2021 following 'meet the market' events.

This would enable Oldham to continue to provide high quality integrated statutory services from 1 April 2022 for an initial period of five years up until 31 March 2027 with an option to extend a maximum of up to two years dependent on performance, achievement of Key Performance Indicators, continued funding and local need.

Accepting this recommendation would guarantee a significant level of service continuity and ensure statutory responsibilities continue to be met thus reducing risk to the Council.

#### **Option 2**

The decision to award sits with Cabinet. Given timescales this would mean we will not be in a position to award and operationalise the implementation plan by 1 April 2022. There would be the risk of a gap in services for vulnerable young people within the District. There would also be a reputational risk to the Council

### 4 **Preferred Option**

#### **Option 1**

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### 5 **Consultation**

Consultation with children, young people and families and carers has been carried out prior to the publication of the tender to inform commissioning intentions. Young people will be involved in full commissioning and implementation process as part of the evaluation and award panel.

### 6 **Financial Implications**

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Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda

7 **Legal Services Comments**

Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

The recommended option aligns with the Council's co-operative agenda.

The activities included within the range of services are aimed at ensuring young people achieve and succeed, becoming productive Oldham citizens. They encourage young people to do more for themselves and promote independence for young people so that they can begin to take responsibility for their own future and 'do their bit' for themselves and their communities

9 **Human Resources Comments**

Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda

10 **Risk Assessments**

N/A

11 **IT Implications**

N/A

12 **Property Implications**

Non for the Council. The provider will have their own property arrangements from which to deliver services.

13 **Procurement Implications**

Comments are contained in the report in the restricted part of the agenda

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

There are no implications for these services. The successful provider will be expected to adhere to all Oldham's Terms and Conditions as outlined within the standard contract.

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

None

16 **Implications for Children and Young People**

Statutory services for children and young people will continue under a revised specification from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Children and young people will be involved in the evaluation, award and implementation of the contract.

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17 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

A stage one EIA has been completed. Further evaluation of the impact of these services will be carried out during the implementation process to ensure minimum impact on service users.

18 **Key Decision**

Yes

19 **Key Decision Reference**

CYP-02-21

20 **Background Papers**

None

21 **Appendices**

None