

Delegated Officer Report **(Contract Award £16,000.00)**

Decision Maker: Richard Lynch, Director – Education, Skills and Early Years

Date of Decision: 27 July 2022

Subject: Commissioning of Contractor to deliver Making it REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) 3-5 Project

Report Author: **Laura Williams, Challenge and Interventions Officer**
Paula Healey, Head of Early Years

Ward (s): N/A

Reason for the decision:

A decision is sought to request approval for an exemption from the Contract Procedure Rules to make a direct award.

Under this exemption, this report is seeking agreement for a contract to be awarded to Oasis Community Learning Limited through Oasis Academy Limeside (Oasis Innovation) to deliver the Making it REAL (Raising, Achievement in Early Literacy) Project from September 2022 until August 2023.

The Opportunity Area (OA) Partnership Board has provided investment in the delivery of the successful Making it REAL 3-5 project for the 5 years.

Oasis Academy Limeside have successfully delivered this evidence-based project over the past 5 years and a significant amount of work has taken place to develop this home learning programme. Successful partnerships have been created with Oasis Academy Limeside and commissioned organisation has specialist trained trainers to delivery this training and coaching programme.

Making it REAL programme aims to become a valuable element to Oldham's Family Hub home learning environment offer as its meets aspects of the minimum and go further elements of the criteria set out by the DfE and It also forms part of the Early Years strategy.

The project also supports the council priorities for early intervention and prevention. Failing to realise opportunities to increase Oldham parents' capacity for positive, effective parenting and increasing the likelihood that the needs of children and families will escalate and need support from a range of more costly specialist services.

The OA funding ends on the 31 August 2022. Twelve months continuation funding of £16k would be provided through the Work Force Development funds which has been identified on the learning need analysis through the development academy to continue with the delivery of the Making it REAL coaching and training project. This would then be reviewed for the following year and explore other options.

The delivery and coordination of the project will include:

- 32 days support of a Specialist Leader for Education and Making it REAL trained trainers to deliver training and coaching.
- 5 Days leadership and management of the programme.
- Recruitment and ongoing communication with of schools and settings
- Delivery and coordination of local networks
- Providing specialist ongoing advice and guidance to school and setting practitioners
- Monitoring and reporting of progress of the programme
- Productions of an evaluation and impact report.

Summary:

National and local evidence shows that COVID has had a significant impact on the young children and their families in Oldham and urgent intervention is needed, specifically in early language and literacy

The Making it REAL 3-5 Project aims to empower parents by enhancing their knowledge and awareness around their child's early learning and development. It provides help and advice for parents to consistently support learning and development in the home, which means they are more likely to be 'school-ready' when they start formal education and to give their children the best possible start in life.

Practitioners from schools and settings work alongside parents to promote speech and language development and early literacy skills. The project focuses on the quality of parent-child interaction and encouraging parents to reflect on their interactions with their child.

This report seeks approval to commission Oasis Community Learning Limited through Oasis Academy Limeside (Oasis Innovation) to deliver the Making it REAL Programme for a 1-year contract with an option to extend for a further year, for the value of £16K

What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):

Option A Approve an exemption under rule 21.3 (e) of the Contract Procedure Rules and directly award a contract to Oasis Community Learning Limited through Oasis Academy Limeside (Oasis Innovation) for the delivery of the Making it REAL project.

This option poses limited risk to the Council as the commissioned organisation has successfully delivered the MIR programme as part of the OA for the past 5 years and have specialist trained trainers to deliver the programme.

Option B Not award the contract to Oasis Academy and go obtain a minimum of 3 quotes

Changing the commissioned provider would have impact on the continuity of the successful Making it REAL project, previous investment from OA to develop this programme and trained trainers from this provider would be lost. Impact to relationships.

Consultation: including any conflict of interest declared by relevant Cabinet Member consulted.

Recommendation(s):

To approve Option 1 to award the 1-year contract to Oasis Community Learning Limited through Oasis Academy Limeside for the value of £16K

Implications:

What are the financial implications?

This report seeks to approve an exemption under rule 21.3 (j) of the Contract Procedure Rules and directly award a contract to Oasis Community Learning Limited – Oasis Academy Limeside (Oasis Innovation).

The total value of this contract will be **£16,000**.

This will be wholly funded through the Development Academy (Workforce development fund as agreed with Vikki Norris) which has been scoped on the current Learning Needs Analysis.

What are the **legal** implications?

Vicki Hayes/Jenny Howarth – Senior Accountants
Under Rule 4.3 of the Contract Procedure Rules, where the value of the proposed contract is between £10k and £24,999, a minimum of 3 quotes are required and the Service Area must “*contact the Commercial Procurement Unit who will conduct an appropriate procurement procedure and facilitate the process using the Council’s E-Procurement System (The Chest). Local Supply Chain including SMEs to be considered – at least 1 local Contractor (where practical) to be included.*”

However, Rule 21 allows an exemption to be applied to the aforementioned in exceptional circumstances.

Under Rule 21.3(j) the requirement to obtain 3 quotes can be exempted “*where continued provision of Supplies, Works or Services is required for an additional period and this can be justified, for example where a service review includes the intention to co-terminate relevant Contracts within a reasonable period.*”

As detailed above, OA funding for the services ends on the 31 August 2022 and only twelve months of continuation funding has been identified. The services have been successfully delivered by the current provider for a significant period so it’s unlikely that a change in provider at this stage would be particularly viable.

Sarah Orrell, Commercial and Procurement Solicitor

What are the **procurement** implications?

There is a provision for an exemption from the Council’s Contract Procedure in exceptional circumstances where services are proposed. On this basis Commercial Unit acknowledges the requirement of the services, there is provision in the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules 21.3 (j) where it allows the development of future commissioning to ensure any offer which justifies the use of an exemption in this instance for a particular period for example where a service review includes the intention to co-terminate relevant contracts within a reasonable period. (Mohammad Sharif) 10.08.2022

What are the **Human Resources** implications?

n/a

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment attached or not required because (please give reason)

The proposals will not have an adverse impact on any section of the population, and will help improve the wellbeing of children in need and their families

What are the **property** implications

n/a

Risks:

There are no corporate level risks associated with the proposal. The post will assist in the Demand Management Strategy to improve the delivery of earliest possible help to children and families, and reduce the pressures on Children's Services

Is Co-operative agenda

Delivering the project will build the capacity of parents to support the development and wellbeing of their children in line with the Council's co-operative agenda; in particular supporting the creation of Thriving Communities.

Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution? Yes

Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget? Yes

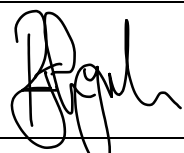
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? No

Reason(s) for exemption from publication:

List of Background Papers under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

There are no background papers to this report

Report Author Sign-off:	
Laura Williams Challenge and Interventions Officer Paula Healey Head of Early Years	
Date: 09.08.22	

In consultation with Richard Lynch Education Skills and Early Years			
Signed		Date:22/9/22	