

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:	4906
Author:	Claire Labdon-West
Department:	People
Contact:	Claire Labdon-West (Job Title: Commissioning Manager, Email: claire.labdon-west@nottinghamcity.gov.uk , Phone: 01158764804)
Subject:	Use of interim Commissioning staff
Total Value:	£211,460 (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	<p>1) To approve funding and spending of up to up to a maximum value of £211,460 on the procurement of four specialist consultant commissioning officers from various staffing/recruitment agencies, on short term contracts, to carry out work to secure best value in Nottingham City's services for children and adults.2) To delegate authority to the Director of Commissioning and Partnerships to (i) Directly award a contract to Vivid Public Sector of up to £149,999 for specialist consultant commissioning advisors x 2, following the signed Exemption from Procurement Procedure dated 19/10/22 (attached) , and (ii) Award contracts to Consultancy+ of up to £46,461 (for specialist consultant commissioning advisor x 1), and Self Directed Futures - of up to £15,000 (for specialist consultant commissioning advisor x 1) from existing Council Corporate Contracts</p>

Reasons for the Decision(s)

Nottingham City Council's Commissioning Team has been severely depleted over several years. Urgent work now is needed in both Adults and Children's commissioning, to support achievement of savings targets. This work cannot be carried out by existing Nottingham City Council staff, as there is no-one with the capacity and the relevant knowledge and skillset to deliver this work. Therefore this report is seeking approval to employ 4 skilled interim staff to carry out the work over up to 26 weeks, plus an agency fee (£211,460 in total). The staff will have appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to work at pace from an early stage. The interim staff will be subject to a robust interview process to identify suitable skills before recruitment. Commencing the work as soon as possible is vital in order to achieve positive impacts in this financial year. However, this work is expected be cost-saving - savings will be released by, for example, ensuring young people are in the best placements for them, ensuring best value for money as well as best outcomes for the young people. Example of potential savings - . Supported accommodation 16+ (not at capacity) - costs £750 per week compared to average for the same cohort £1,459 from Nottingham City Council's accredited providers list = approx. £36,868 saving per placement per year. . Barnardos Supported Lodging scheme (not at capacity) - costs £200 per week (Barnardos pay for the scheme management, we pay placement costs) = £65,468 saving per placement per year.. Step-down from external residential placements to Independent Foster Carers - creating a supportive family home for each child, with individualised wraparound support where needed. Average external residential placement costs £4,509 per week, average external foster care placement costs £878 per week plus wraparound care. Based on these examples it would appear that sufficient savings could be released in this way to more than pay for the use of the interim staff, and that significant savings can be made in-year if this work can be commenced promptly. Funding arrangements Funding for this post is to be initially via the Commissioning Team budget. There has been agreement from Finance that this can be paid back from the corporate Financial Resilience reserve - this was agreed by Debbie Middleton, Interim Director of Finance, on 20/10/2022. Because this decision involves use of the Financial Resilience Reserves it requires Portfolio Holder sign-off. The Breakdown of funding is as follows - Vivid Public Sector - £149,999 (exemption form attached) - 2x interim staff for 26 weeks each WTE. Consultancy+ - £46,461 - (Compliant call off from the Consultancy Plus Framework) 1x interim staff 3 days/week for 26 weeks Self Directed Futures - £15,000 - (Compliant call off from the Consultancy Plus Framework) fixed fee. Of the staff employed through Vivid Public Sector, one will work on looked after children's placements and processes, particularly functions around decision-making panels and ensuring the best placements are available for our local looked after children/young people, as per the example given. The other will work on urgent commissioning of services and support for children/young people with special educational needs/disabilities (SEND), including completing the commissioning of over-night short breaks for disabled children with complex health needs, and a system-wide Inclusion review. The member of staff from Consultancy+ will work on commissioning placements for looked after children across the D2N2 footprint (our large looked after children framework contracts are held jointly across D2N2). The member of staff from Self Directed Futures will be exploring the opportunities for self-directed support within Nottingham City, in Adult Social Care (ASC). Work will include understanding how citizens who are eligible for support under that Care Act move through the system, and supporting development of a new brokerage model for ASC, resulting in a report of recommendation to be submitted in February 2023.

Briefing notes documents:

2022.10.19 Vivid Exemption from Procurement Regulations Form - signed by C Heaphy.pdf

Other Options Considered:

1) To do nothing: this option was rejected as there are challenges across the whole Children's placements market, and without addressing these then we cannot avoid escalating costs and increasing overspend in the Children's placements budget year on year. 2) To employ officers through Nottingham City Council's regular recruitment process: this option is our longer-term intention. However this option was rejected as an urgent response, as it is likely to take at least several months to identify and employ appropriately skilled staff via standard recruitment procedures. Placements are paid for on a weekly basis, so commencing the work to identify young people who would benefit from moving to more suitable placements as soon as possible is important if we are to maximise in-year savings. Delaying appointment by even a month could significantly reduce savings in this financial year.

Background Papers:

Published Works:

Affected Wards:

Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests:

Consultations:

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications:

N/A

Equality:

EIA not required. Reasons: This decision pertains to use of staff. Equality will be considered on a case by case basis where there is likely to be an impact on an individual citizen.

Relates to staffing:

Yes

Decision Type:

Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In:

Yes

Call In Expiry date:

12/04/2023

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources

Legal Advice:

The decision seeks Portfolio Holder budgetary and spending approval for the procurement of four specialist consultant commissioning advisors from various staffing/recruitment agencies, on short term 6 month contracts, up to a maximum value of £211,460 (broken down between different agencies as follows: Vivid Public Sector - £149,999 (2 consultants), Consultancy+ - £46,461 (1 consultant)

Self Directed Futures - £15,000 (1 consultant)).

The total contracts value is below the threshold at which the Part 2 Public Contract Regulations 2015 procedures applies. Nevertheless under regulations 106, 108, 110 and 112 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015, below threshold procured contracts with an estimated value of £25,000 and above will need to be published on the government website Contacts Finder.

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules will also need to be complied with. It is understood existing corporate contacts have previously been procured with Consultancy + and Self Directed Futures, so these awards (without the need obtain at least 3 quotes in writing) would comply with the expectations in article 18.34 and 18.55 of the Contract Procedure Rules. In so far as the award to Vivid Public Sector is concerned, following application to the section 151 Officer, exemption from the expectation to obtain three written tenders has been given on the basis special circumstances make it appropriate and beneficial to negotiate with a single firm or that a single tender be invited and that best value for the Council can be achieved by not tendering. Advice provided by Richard Bines (Legal Services Solicitor) Contracts and Commercial Team on 12/12/2022.

Finance Advice:

This DDM seeks approval for funding of specialist staff for Commissioning up to a value of £211,460, which will be funded through the Resilience reserve. The officers recruited should contribute to the delivery of savings through more effective commissioning across Adult and Children's services.

Advice provided by Paul Stevenson, Interim Strategic Finance Business Partner, 20/12/22 Advice provided by Paul Stevenson (Interim Strategic Finance Business Partner) on 20/12/2022.

Procurement Advice:

This DDM seeks approval to spend funds on specialist staff for C&A which will be provided via staffing Agencies. This DDM covers three requirements:

Vivid Public Sector - £149,999 (exemption form attached)

Consultancy+ - £46,461

Self Directed Futures - £15,000

The exemption form seeks exemption from the CPR's but is still in keeping with the PC Regulations and therefore, Procurement has no concerns. Advice provided by Louise Dobson (Business Support) on 15/11/2022.

HR Advice:

This DDM seeks approval to recruit 4 interim consultants into the Commissioning team. From discussions with Lisa Lopez I am aware the consultants will be aligned to their own hourly rates and work briefings rather than NCC grades and job descriptions. The Council's policy and procedures on sourcing consultants through approved frameworks should be reviewed if not already done so.

Due to the level of expertise required, the proposal to engage Consultants is supported by HR, subject to budget/ Finance approval.

Advice provided by Louise Hobbs, HR Consultant, on 17/11/2022

Signatures

Adele Williams (Portfolio Holder for Finance)
SIGNED and Dated: 31/03/2023
Catherine Underwood (Corporate Director for People)
SIGNED and Dated: 24/03/2023