



Havering

LONDON BOROUGH

Subject Heading:	Havering Virtual School Recording and Reporting System
Decision Maker:	Trevor Cook, Assistant Director Childrens Service on behalf of Robert South, Director, Children's Services.
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Oscar Ford
SLT Lead:	Robert South, Director of Children's Services
Report Author and contact details:	Trina Dawkins, Assistant Head, Havering Virtual School. Trina.dawkins@havering.gov.uk 01708433114
Policy context:	This relates to the Virtual School Policy and the requirements under Department for Education Statutory Guidance for Virtual Schools (2018).
Financial summary:	Havering Virtual School currently has in place 3 different contracts to monitor the attendance of our Children in care through daily monitoring of all 4-18 year olds in education and the delivery of Personal Education Plans. In addition we have extended duties to all children with a Social Worker and will be monitoring their attendance and attainment every half term. All contracts expire August 2022 and we plan to bring in a single provider at a lower than collective price to manage all aspects of the Virtual School monitoring and PEPs. This should be a saving over the lifetime of the project (currently 3 years).
Relevant OSC:	Not applicable

Non-key Executive Decision

Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non key Decision
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Non-key Executive Decision

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	x
Places making Havering	x
Opportunities making Havering	x
Connections making Havering	[]

Non-key Executive Decision

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

To agree to tender for a contract for an online reporting and recording system for Havering Virtual School for a term of 3 years at a maximum value of £172,800.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

3.4 Powers of Second Tier Managers

Contract powers (a) To approve commencement of a tendering process for, and to award all contracts below a total contract value of £500,000 but above the EU Threshold for Supplies and Services.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Havering Virtual School is seeking to procure a single provider of an online reporting and recording system for Havering Virtual School. These reporting and recording duties are a statutory requirement under the Section 31 of the Education Act 2002.

The provider will need to provide an online platform for the completion of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) which can be adapted to the needs of the children we work with from Reception to Year 13. It must be able to record where every Havering Child in Care (CiC) is educated, the Ofsted grading of that school, their weekly attendance data and their SAT scores, predicted and actual grades; as well as their readiness for school. We will need access to run reports for our Governing Body that provide detail on exclusions for all CiC; the Ofsted grading of the schools our children attend, the attendance for all children with a social worker; PEP completion rates, prompts to complete PEPs and facility to quality assure them, progression data for post 16' and post 18's, children without a school place, and the length of time, delays to PEP completions, by whom, feedback from children, caregivers and professionals, attainment data for all children and a summary of Pupil Premium costs and purpose.

The new extension requirements for all Virtual Schools means we also have a responsibility to ensure that all children with a Social Worker have improved educational attainment and attendance. There has also been an increase in the number of children in our care in Havering. Therefore the new contract is for the delivery of 264 ePEPs; attendance monitoring for 892 children (264 daily monitoring + 628 half-termly monitoring). The numbers for our children in care, with a CIN or CP Plan have increased since the end of the pandemic but current work in the Children's Social Care services is working towards maintaining and reducing this number. Demand remains stable.

We currently procure 3 different providers to deliver differ aspects of the above. All current contracts expire in August 2022 and we are therefore looking to procure a single provider to provide a more cost-effective solution to our requirements.

There are nationally only 4 providers of this type of support to Virtual Schools and the process will a Quick Quote process that is sent out to all 4 providers to ensure competitiveness. The

Non-key Executive Decision

current contract unit cost for 320 children is £70.83 per child. The new contract will cover 892 children. The maximum contract value has been set at £172,800 to ensure competitiveness, but with the ambition to drive down overall unit costs and provide best value and efficiency.

This is fully funded using the Pupil Premium LAC grant (A38395) and the Section 31 funding for the Extension of Virtual School duties grant (A33230) which outline our statutory requirements to all children with a social worker. The current and new duties have been agreed between the Department for Education and the Director of Children's Service, Havering.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Contract extension: We considered if it would be possible to extend the current arrangements for delivery of the work which is currently across 3 providers. This was rejected as an extension last year had already been granted on one contract on the condition there was a retendering process, and drawing all contracts into a single place makes economic and practical sense.

Do Nothing: This is not an option as the software is required to support discharge of the Council's statutory duties to looked after children.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Trina Dawkins

Designation: Assistant Head of the Virtual School

Signature:



Date: 1.7.22

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has power to procure the contract under the general power of competence contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which allows the Council to do anything that an individual may do subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. None of the constraints on the Council's s.1 power are engaged by this decision.

The Council also has power to procure the contract under s111 Local Government Act 1972 which allows the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

The estimated value of the contract is £172,800 which falls below the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) threshold for services contracts. The contract is not caught by the full regime of the PCR 2015 but the procurement must comply with the general principles of equality of treatment, non-discrimination, transparency and proportionality. The RFQ process to be used complies with these principles.

For the reasons set out above, the Council may commence the tender process as set out in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The paper is seeking to agree to tender for a contract for an online reporting and recording system for Havering Virtual School for a term of 3 years at a maximum value of £172,800, yearly £57,600.

The current contract is covered by three different providers, for 320 children at a unit cost of £70.83 per child, c£23k yearly. It is anticipated the new contract will be delivered by one provider, covering 892 children at a maximum yearly value of £57,600 or £64.57 per child. Therefore, it is hoped that the transfer from three to one provider will generate reduced unit costs. This is a statutory service and the Extension of Virtual School duties has increased the demand for the service. Hence, it is estimated that 892 children will require the service, an increase of c179% from the current level.

The increased demand will cause a budget pressure of c£35k which will be higher if the reduction in unit price it is not achieved. The pressure will have to be absorbed within the existing budget envelope by reducing other spend items, leaving a net nil financial impact.

Apart of unit price reduction the value for money should be addressed by splitting the scoring into Quality and Value.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

None. There are no TUPE issues relating to the change in contracts.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS.

Non-key Executive Decision

An Equalities Assessment has been completed as a background paper.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Equalities Assessment

APPENDICIES

None

Non-key Executive Decision

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: Trevor Cook

Date: 19.8.22

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____