

Notice of Non-key Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	The Student Voice – Contextual Safeguarding tool
Decision Maker:	Trevor Cook, Assistant Director of Educational Services
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Oscar Ford
SLT Lead:	Tara Geere, Director of Starting Well (Statutory Director for Children’s Services)
Report Author and contact details:	Trevor Cook, 01708 431250, trevor.cook@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	Best value - There is no equivalent product available on the market which is highly specialist. There are other safeguarding concerns reporting tools from other organisations, however only The Student Voice includes wider contextual safeguarding factors to be considered and enable reporting at a Local Authority level. Furthermore, the Local Authority have been offered an opportunity to have a small number of Havering schools included in a pilot.
Financial summary:	<p>The total cost of the contract with The Student Voice is £21,732 excluding VAT.</p> <p>It will be funded from the HSIS Schools Supporting School grant, which is part of the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). There is no impact on the Council’s General Fund budget.</p> <p>A waiver to the usual Contract Procedure Rules has been agreed due to the specialist nature of the service.</p>

Non-key Executive Decision

Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee:	People OSC
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non Key Decision

Non-key Executive Decision

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

People - Things that matter for residents X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place.

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

This report seeks approval from the Assistant Director of Educational Services to directly award a contract with an estimated value of £21,732 to The Student Voice (Student Safeguarding Limited (“SSL”) t/a The Student Voice), for the participation of 20 local schools in a pilot contextual safeguarding programme. The contract is expected to commence on 1st April 2024 and be completed by 31st August 2025.

A waiver from competition has been agreed by the Lead Cabinet Member, Cllr Ford for this purchase.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Havering Council Constitution

Part 3

3.4 Powers of Second Tier Managers

General powers

- (a) To take any steps necessary for proper management and administration for their allocated portfolios.

Contract powers

- (a) To approve commencement of a tendering process for, and to award all contracts below a total contract value of £500,000.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Building on the outstanding safeguarding work that is happening in Havering, it is proposed to develop a pilot contextual safeguarding programme which will facilitate support services to effectively target and combat harm, to accurately track their targeted interventions, and provide opportunities for young people to engage with their communities.

Currently, most electronic safeguarding tools focus on listening to adults, but research (Carlene Firmin (2017)) shows that students may not readily share such information with adults.

Designed to remove the fear and stigma attached to reporting issues, The Student Voice is an interactive and child-friendly contextual safeguarding reporting tool for young people that encompasses all aspects of their wellbeing.

Non-key Executive Decision

It aims to identify, assess, and intervene with the social conditions in which harm is taking place. Whether a young person travels on the bus with peers, sees issues happening in the local park, or has a quiet and safe space they prefer in school, they can use The Student Voice contextual safeguarding tool to rank how safe they feel in the spaces they spend time in and report their experiences in these contexts.

The Student Voice enables schools and the Local Authority to review contextual safeguarding data to develop hotspot mapping. It also collects contextual data that encompasses the whole student experience to inform interventions. By combining anonymous with confidential reporting, this will lead to better outcomes and reduce barriers to reporting.

The tool is flexible as the Dedicated Safeguarding Lead decides monitoring times, and receives a live data feed of proactive information. There is also a built in feedback tool which enhances school culture and cycle of trust with Students.

Through the pilot, The Student Voice will be responsible for contextual safeguarding tools that will provide:

- children and the young people of Havering Borough with the opportunity to share information about their life experiences in school, in their community, at home and online
- functionality that will allow service providers in the areas of health, social care, police and education to access and analyse the information shared
- functionality for service providers to be able to assess and understand the effectiveness of services provided to young people and children in the London Borough of Havering
- functionality for service providers to be able to assess, understand and respond to issues that may be impacting the safeguarding, health and wellbeing of young people and children in the London Borough of Havering

Through listening to authentic student voices and seeking to understand the everyday life experiences of young people, the pilot aims to:

- know our communities are safe
- know the safeguarding issues our young people really face
- know our safeguarding interventions are effective
- provide authentic opportunities for our young people to engage and be positive and active members of their communities

Following the pilot programme, an evaluation will be conducted to determine the success of the tool. If successful, schools will be able to continue to subscribe to The Student Voice contextual safeguarding tool at the discounted price, ensuring best value for the schools in Havering.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

There is no equivalent product available on the market as the 3rd party provider is highly specialist and offered an opportunity for the Council to participate in a pilot.

Other safeguarding tools offer one dimensional reporting, centred around bullying or one aspect of the student experience.

Other safeguarding tools also offer limited information, with little or no contextual information to improve spaces and places young people spend time in.

Non-key Executive Decision

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

No formal consultation is required for this activity. Engagement occurred with a number of local schools to confirm interest and participation in the pilot.

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

Name: Trevor Cook

Designation: Assistant Director for Education

Signature:



Date: 13/03/24

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has the power to procure and award a contract for these services under Section 111 of the 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 Council also has a general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. None of the constraints on the Council's Section 1 power are engaged by this decision.

The overall contract value is of £21,732 which is below the applicable public procurement threshold for services contracts of £214,904 for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015). Therefore, the contract is not caught by the full PCR regime .. Whilst the procurement and award do not fall under the full PCR regime, when considering whether to approve the procurement and award of this contract, the Council must comply with the procurement and awarding requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules ("CPR").

Officer confirmed the funds for this safeguarding programme originate from the Department of Education. The Council must comply with CPR 25.1, 25.3 and 25.4.

For the reasons set out above, the Council may award the contract to The Student Voice.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The total cost of the contract with The Student Voice is £21,732 excluding VAT.

This is a time-limited purchase with no commitment to renew, although this will be considered following evaluation of the product's impact in terms of outcomes and cost.

The cost of this subscription allowing the schools to participate in the review is met through the HSIS Schools Supporting School grant (Cost Centre A31330), which is part of the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). There is no impact on the Council's General Fund budget.

A waiver to the usual Contract Procedure Rules has been agreed due to the specialist nature of the service.

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

There are no further human resources implications or risks from this decision.

Non-key Executive Decision

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- I. the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- II. the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- III. Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'protected characteristics' are: age, gender, race and disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council demonstrates its commitment to the Equality Act in its decision-making processes, the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and employment practices concerning its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing of all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no further environmental and climate change inclusion implications or risks from this decision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

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

~~Proposal NOT agreed because~~

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: Trevor Cook

~~Cabinet Portfolio held:~~

~~CMT Member title:~~

Head of Service title AD Education Services

~~Other manager title:~~

Date: 13th March 2024

Lodging this notice

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

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____