

Key Decision Report of the interim Corporate Director of Children’s Services

Officer Key Decision	Date: 19 November 2021	Ward(s): All
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THE APPENDIX TO THIS REPORT IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION



SUBJECT: Contract award for elements of the future offer of universal youth work in Islington - Lot 1

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report outlines the procurement process used to secure a provider for Lot 1 of the Young Islington universal youth work offer, which was agreed by the council’s Executive on 29 April 2021. The contract will start on 1 December 2021.
- 1.2 The council has undertaken a transparent procurement process in accordance with the council’s Procurement Rules to secure an appropriate provider from 1 December 2021. The contract award will be for up to seven years (five years with up to two extensions of one year each). The advertised estimated total value of the contract is £1,050,000 over the maximum 84 months’ term of the contract. This is based on £150,000 per annum.
- 1.3 The specification requires the appointed provider to support and stimulate high quality youth work delivery across the new Young Islington model, for example through training for youth workers, providing quality assurance processes, further developing theories of change, linking into regional and national support and submitting joint bids for cross-borough youth work programmes.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To award the contract for Lot 1 to the Federation of London Youth Clubs (known as 'London Youth') which would sub-contract elements to St Mary Community Partnership (known as 'Marys') and Leap Confronting Conflict.

3. Date the decision is to be taken:

3.1 It is proposed that this decision will be made on 19 November 2021. The decision will be taken under delegated authority to the Corporate Director of People as agreed by the Executive on 29 April 2021.

4. Background

4.1 Since February 2020, the council has been shaping, with young people and key stakeholders, a new youth offer for young people in Islington in line with Fairer Together and the Youth Safety Strategies. Through extensive discovery and design work comprising of conversations, focus groups and larger consultation events carried out in partnership with two independent expert organisations, stakeholders have identified that they want to see a new model that:

- reaches further into Somali, Turkish and Bangladeshi communities,
- engages young people who have previously not used universal youth services,
- more directly addresses inequalities, e.g. accessibility for young people with disabilities, and from
- Engages young people from LGBTQ+ communities,
- attracts those that are vulnerable to poorer outcomes,
- attracts those who are living in more deprived wards or households,
- effectively draws in the collective capacity of the Islington community, and
- better utilises spaces available to engage young people, including establishing a new youth space on the Andover estate.

4.2 The specification for the delivery of Lot 1 is designed to support the delivery of a connected offer of youth work that is effectively led, delivering high quality engagement (youth work) for young people across the borough. The appointed provider will be required to:

- Act as a champion of high-quality youth work across the borough, be the 'voice' of the sector and of young people.
- Develop cross-borough programmes of youth work, working closely with the providers of the other Lots, the locality networks, professionals in targeted and specialist services and other relevant stakeholders to identify gaps, address inequalities and reach into the communities that may not be engaged currently.
- Provide a local focus of excellence for youth work, championing Islington at regional and national youth sector events and keying into regional and national support.
- Lead on the workforce development agenda; identifying an appropriate cross-borough approach to ensuring high quality youth work which is relationally-based and trauma-informed, working with the established

services so that the approach is consistent, with an emphasis on 'earliest' help where needed

- Lead on capacity building for youth work in the borough, working with all partners in the new offer to develop cross-borough programmes and submit funding bids
- Ensure consistency in the quality of services and support (e.g. through mentoring, buddying and reflective practice) and support adherence to shared quality standards across the partnership
- Promote the voice of young people and the organisations that work with them. Advocate for young people's right to be visible and play a full role in the local community across a range of forums and to stakeholders including parents/carers, schools, funders and decision makers.
- Signpost young people and families to the whole of the youth offer and into other services that could help to meet their needs (health, education, family support services, etc.), as well as wider relevant universal services.
- Articulate and communicate the impact of quality youth work, amplify the stories and evidence of what has worked well as a result of the development of networks of organisations and communities working together.

4.3 This is a new contract and there is no current provider.

Details of the tendering process for the contract for Lot 1 are set out in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.9.

4.4 The procurement was conducted as an Open Procedure. This one-stage process consists of Suitability Assessment questions followed by Method Statement questions. The latter relate to quality and financial criteria against which all bidders (which have passed the suitability assessment) are assessed. The entirety of the procurement process was conducted using the e-procurement system via the London Tenders Portal.

4.5 The contract was advertised on Find a Tender Service and Contracts Finder. It was also advertised on Islington's website and distributed widely amongst existing networks and channels.

4.6 The tender evaluation panel consisted of the Corporate Director of Fairer Together, the Director of Young Islington, the Head of Play and Youth Commissioning Services, the Service Development Manager - Play and Youth, the Head of Youth Progression Learning and Culture and a Finance Manager. Young people joined the panel to assess at the presentation stage and contributed to the scoring of the presentations.

4.7 The panel recommended a contract award of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) on the basis of 70% quality and 30% cost. The following criteria addressed the quality and cost elements of the submissions, which were evaluated on tender submission and presentation and clarified at interview.

4.8 Four tenders were received. Following evaluation of the suitability question responses, one provider's tender met the minimum requirements. Following assessment of the written tender responses of the suitable tenderer, a presentation and a separate clarification meeting, the tender evaluation panel concluded that the tender submitted by London Youth was the most economically advantageous tender. The results of the evaluation are set out in the exempt appendix to this report.

The criteria that were scored against are as follows:

Cost 30%

1. Financial forecast in line with the length of the service contract including consideration of the COVID and post-COVID context	15%
2. Business model plan including income generation / fundraising details including consideration of the COVID and post-COVID context	15%

Quality 70%

3. Proposed approach to delivering social value, e.g., employment opportunities for young people, including apprenticeships; engagement with the council's commitment to 100 hours of experience of the world of work for all Islington young people; leadership opportunities within the organisation and how young people will lead the development of youth work programmes and other elements of Young Islington	20%
4. Proposed approach to delivery of outcomes for young people in the COVID and post COVID context, including: delivery and evidence of outcomes and outputs as described in the service specification; approach to delivering a co-produced youth work programme; tools and methodologies for measuring the outputs and outcomes achieved; effective delivery of earliest help through high quality youth work relationships	10%
5. Proposed approach to working as part of Young Islington including: working together to develop an engaging borough wide offer of provision for all Islington young people, as well young people who are vulnerable; multiagency working with the locality networks as well as professionals in targeted and specialist services; collaborating with local, regional and national partners to engage in strategic developments for young people	10%
6. Proposed approach to contract mobilisation including: COVID related considerations, marketing, promotion and communication, TUPE, staff recruitment and training; community engagement; working with the council, including commissioners and other key professionals; business continuity planning and consistency in service delivery for young people	10%
7. Proposed approach to safeguarding, early intervention and earliest help in the COVID and post-COVID context, including:	10%

<p>policies and procedures; staff training and development; holistic approaches to working with young people in need of additional support; safeguarding issues specifically focussed on supporting young volunteers and employees</p>	
<p>8. Proposed approach to facilities management including COVID security</p>	<p>10%</p>

Total 100%

London Youth is the regional umbrella organisation for London’s youth sector, with over 600 member organisations based across all 32 boroughs. Its mission is to ensure that youth services in every borough of London are as robust and high-quality as possible. Alongside this pan-London role, London Youth recognises the need for strong local knowledge and relationships, and that local youth services need to be led and guided by local stakeholders.

St Mary Community Partnership (‘Mary’s’) is an Islington organisation which delivers a full time universal youth offer from a purpose-built community facility on Upper Street. It provides a comprehensive service for young people including both universal and enhanced programmes for 10-19-year-olds, where young people, staff, volunteers and the wider community work together to share experiences, create opportunities and develop. Mary’s main focus is for young people to be better connected and better equipped with the skills and confidence to form and engage with supportive networks of friends and family, health and social services, businesses and organisations. This is supported by four complementary aims: develop social competence, grow belonging, try new things, and build agency.

The delivery of Lot 1 will be led by London Youth for the first three years and leadership will then pass to Mary’s from year four onwards. Using its experience and expertise, London Youth will work to deliver key activities in years one to three whilst concurrently capacity building Mary’s and others to ensure that local organisations can support and enhance the quality of delivery of local youth activities in the future.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial implications:

The bid price of £150k per annum is in line with the budget for this contract.

5.2 Legal Implications:

This report seeks approval to award contract to the Federation of London Youth Clubs which would sub-contract some of the services to St Mary Islington Community Partnership (known as ‘Marys’) and Leap Confronting Conflict.

The contract start date is 1st December 2021. The contract award will be for up to seven years (five years with up to two extensions of one year each). The advertised estimated total value of the contract is £1,050,000 over the maximum 84 months’ term of the contract. This is based on £150,000 per annum.

The Council has power to provide the offer of youth work under its general power

of competence (section 1 Localism Act 2011). Accordingly, the Council has power to enter into a contract for the provision of such services (section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997).

The services procured are subject to the light touch regime set out in Regulations 74 to 77 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). The threshold for application of this light touch regime is currently £615,278.00. The value of the proposed contract is above this threshold.

The council's Procurement Rules require light touch contracts over the value of £500,000.00 to be subject to competitive tender. In compliance with the requirements of the light touch regime in the Regulations and the council's procurement, a competitive tendering exercise has been undertaken with the contract being advertised in Find a Tender Service using the open procedure.

The Federation of London Youth Clubs may be awarded the contract if the contract represents value for money for the council. In reaching their decision, the decision maker should take into account the information contained in the exempt appendix.

5.3 Environmental Implications

The main environmental impact of the youth offer is the use of energy and water and waste generation where services are provided within buildings. Lot 1 does not require the provider to operate or manage a building. Any work that is carried out in a youth building will be co-led with an existing youth provider which, if they are contracted by the council, will already be planning delivery in order to mitigate negative environmental impacts. Lot 1 delivery will also predominantly use virtual methods such as via a website, email and on line meetings which will limit environmental impact.

5.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The award of this Lot is likely to have positive impacts on residents of all ages as young people are supported through high quality youth work relationships to make the most of their teenage years and contribute positively to their communities. The positive relationships that this Lot is intended to ensure, both between youth workers and young people and amongst different groups of young people themselves, are intended to support the personal, social and emotional development of recipients and their understanding of the world around them. This development, in turn, is likely to ensure that young people are more able to sustain positive personal friendships, make well informed decisions and manage their emotions effectively. Confident, positive and emotionally-regulated young

people are less likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into crime, anti-social behaviour or other less positive outcomes and be able to contribute positively at home, school and in the wider community. The service specification requires the provider to have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure that their services eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity.

5.5 Social Impact:

The service specification includes a number of explicit requirements in relation to social value, which have been identified in the proposal submitted by London Youth. These include supporting the co-leadership of young people in the following ways:

- a steering group, including young people, to guide the direction of the programme and provide insights into local realities and emerging concerns and opportunities
- an evaluation framework which will include ample opportunities for youth feedback and its cyclical integration into planning and delivery
- engaging young people across the offer, including assessing youth organisations' youth involvement capabilities as part the quality assurance framework, supporting local organisations to develop and maintain youth boards, and providing opportunities for young people to train youth workers on practice development
- a Young Leaders Programme engaging 30 young Islington residents per year
- coordinating borough-wide social action initiatives in partnership with community organisations
- supporting young people into youth work careers, prioritising those from underserved groups through a trainee youth support worker programme. This will provide a pathway for young people to access youth work careers – building a cohort of local youth professionals with lived experience who can provide great services to young people in the future

6. Reasons for the decision

6.1 Approval of the recommendation to award a contract to London Youth for Lot 1 will:

- Effectively support the quality of the youth work delivered across the new Young Islington model
- Support effective communication of the impacts of Islington's youth offer
- Ensure long term sustainability for the support offer through the handover of the contract to Mary's from year four onwards
- Significant added social value

7. Record of the decision: (to be completed after 5 days on the website and re-sent to Democratic Services)

7.1 I have today decided to take the decision set out in section 2 of this report for the reasons set out above.

Signed by:

Corporate Director

Date

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Appendix 1 (exempt): Result of the evaluation of shortlisted tenders

THIS APPENDIX IS EXEMPT AND IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION

This Appendix is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).