

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 18TH MARCH 2010

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN - COMMISSIONING PHASE TWO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report makes recommendations to Cabinet for approval to procure short breaks services for 2010/11 as part of the delivery of Aiming High for Disabled Children Project. After a thorough and robust commissioning process there were three requested services that contracts were not awarded to: Sitting Service, Enablement Support Scheme and Emergency Support Scheme. Phase two of this process has involved researching the most effective and efficient method to deliver these services.

1. Background

- 1.1 In May 2009 a tender pack was put together outlining services to be commissioned to develop short breaks as part of the Aiming High for Disabled Children Project. The commissioning process then started with an advertisement on 24th June 2009 and interviews were held on week beginning 24th August 2009. Feedback from the voluntary sector representative was that the timescales for the process were good. Internal audit recently carried out a review of the process and stated 'This review has not resulted in any audit recommendations, and the audit opinion for the tendering procedures relating to this project is good.'
- 1.2 We received a total of 20 tenders from 13 organisations for community based provision. The only provider who gave any feedback was in relation to the Contract Carers Scheme, where one agency identified that they did not submit a tender as they felt the length of initial contract was shorter that they would have wished for. The length of contract is dictated by the period of funding. We received no other feedback in relation to timescales or the process as to why an organisation did not submit a tender and are therefore confident that the number of organisations tendering is considered to be a significant proportion of the known local market.
- 1.3 The recommendations from the tendering process were presented to Cabinet on 1st October 2009 and were approved. A contract negotiation meeting was then held with each successful organisation and service level agreements were confirmed with clear outcome and output measures. Within the Aiming High programme the Council is required to report 3 monthly on increased service up take, and therefore rigorous monitoring has been put in place. The commissioned services are all delivering and to a high standard having a lot of impact for young people with disabilities in Wirral and their families.
- 1.4 Together for Disabled Children wrote to each Director of Children Services in December 2009, to confirm the level of support required; they confirmed that Wirral is assessed as requiring low support at this time, which has seen a stepped improvement since our previous rating in July 2009. Feedback offered by the Programme Advisor was that this improved rating reflected the degree of commissioning rigour which had translated into increased support for families. The Council were also offered a further £10k to spend prior to April taken from other Local Authorities who had not to date spent their funding allocation.

1.5 However there were three services that were not able to be commissioned through this process due to no tenders being received or these outstanding elements being part of a larger tender but another provider was successful in relation to the other elements of it and following the procurement guidelines we can only award the tender as a whole. The remaining services are :

- The Sitting Service – to support parents of young people by someone ‘sitting’ for the child in their home so they can enjoy some leisure time e.g. night out, hair cut
- Enablement Support Scheme – to support young people to acquire greater independence and be able with support to be able to join youth groups, clubs and develop their confidence in going out
- Emergency Support Scheme – to support parents in emergency situations such as the hospitalisation of a family member

The programme has a requirement to demonstrate that the range, quality and choice of provision are enhanced in line with the Full Service Offer. All of these service areas were determined to be important to ensure they are developed within the period of the project in order to meet these reporting requirements. To identify the most appropriate way to deliver these services the Project Manager carried out further consultation with parent/carers and professionals to draft a more detailed specification for each of the services.

Below is a summary of these findings in relation to each service and a recommendation about how to proceed taking into account we have been to the market, the time limited nature of the funding and the expectancies on the local authority to deliver on the Full Service Offer.

These recommendations have been discussed at the operational group, executive group and will be taken to the Children’s Trust Executive on 11th March 2010.

1.6 **Sitting Services**

Consultation with parents was carried out to discuss this service. Parents identified that ‘trust’ in the provider’s ability to deliver for their child was essential to enable them to have the confidence to leave them in the providers care. The two key target groups for this service are young people with Autistic Spectrum Conditions and young people with Complex Health Needs.

For young people with Autism, Wirral Autistic Society was highlighted as being the most appropriate provider, due to known capability, capacity to deliver in timescales, proven quality and known to the target client group. They were awarded other contracts through phase one of the commissioning process and assessed to have the quality and knowledge to deliver short break services. So far they have proven to be a focused provider delivering to a very high standard, where the families needs are the priority.

After discussions with Wirral Autistic Society they provided a proposal setting out the service they could offer, this was reviewed by the Project Manager, Parenting/ Prevention Commissioning Manager (Wirral MBC) and the Business Manager - Strategic Partnerships (NHS Wirral) and was felt to be an appropriate response to the service we were looking to provide.

The key details of this service are:

- It will be a flexible service in the families' home of a disabled child caring for the child with the disability alone or possibly siblings depending on the families needs.
- It will be delivered by trained staff from within Wirral Autistic Society.
- It will be 2 hour blocks between the hours of 9am-10pm seven days a week for the duration of the contract.
- The service will operate on a booking system for families. Families will be registered to the service.
- The cost of the service for the period of 1st April 2010-31st March 2011 will be £174,510 to provide 4032 sessions to families.

1.7 Identified as an appropriate providers for providing the sitting service for young people with complex health needs were Claire House and Crossroads Care Cheshire and West Wirral. However through discussions with Claire House it was decided it was not in line with their core work and criteria. We had originally hoped that they may be willing to broaden their criteria to provide a service for young people who not meet the criteria for their current services. Discussion with the Continuing Care Coordinator from NHS Wirral has identified that we need this service to provide for young people with health needs that currently do not receive any short breaks as they do not meet the criteria for services from Continuing Care Team or Claire House.

'Crossroads Care Cheshire West and Wirral' currently deliver short breaks for young people with health needs and were commissioned to deliver four contracts through phase one of the commissioning process of this project and have proven quality and experience to deliver. Through discussions they have proposed to deliver a sitting service, they key details of this service are:

- A flexible sitting service for children with health needs and their siblings.
- Clear access systems will be devised in conjunction the Continuing Care Coordinator.
- Initially to provide 12 families with 3 hours of a short break every 4 weeks. This will be a total of 168 sessions during the period of the contract.
- The cost will be £8,868.00 up to March 2011.
- The provider will be able to provide more hours if the demand is high for this service. This will be negotiated throughout the contract period.

The young people the service Crossroads will target is a smaller population than the service to be provided by Wirral Autistic Society.

Alongside providing these services further consultation and support will be provided to develop systems for parents/carers of young people with disabilities to recruit their own 'sitters' to enable the service to be sustainable. It is proposed that by delivering this service for one year, we will have a clearer indication of the demand for such a service.

Recommendation: To award Crossroads Care Cheshire West and Wirral Autistic Society contracts for the services detailed above.

1.8 Emergency Support Scheme

Through Phase one of the process no tenders were received in relation to this service, and this remains a high priority in meeting the Full Service Offer.

Following consideration by the operational and executive group it is recommended that we devise an Emergency Support Scheme to be managed from within the Children with Disabilities Team. The project plan will be steered by a staff

member from within the Aiming High Team, with key managers across the service.

The first stage of the process will be to develop an emergency support plan with families of young people with disabilities, which will identify the steps to be taken if an emergency occurs. The support plans will be developed by social workers and family support staff. This should confirm how many families will require support, beyond their family networks and the range of situations they might need external support with. This will enable us to map support needs effectively, and then consider which service providers will offer support. The key reasons for this are to provide a service that is sustainable, since current funding is only available until March 2011; also, we do not know the level of demand for this service at present.

The initial costs of this model will be minimal and will only involve workforce training, as required, the purchase of specialist equipment for health needs and the occasional use of an external provider in extreme circumstances. These costs will be managed through the Operational group.

Recommendation: To devise a model for an emergency support scheme that is cost effective and sustainable post March 2011, utilising the Local Authority Children with Disability Services.

1.9 Enablement Support Scheme

Through consultation with the project team and with professionals, parents and information generated from young people's consultation, this service will be known as the 'Leisure Link programme'. This is more family friendly and defines the key aims of the service more clearly. This service is for young people, who along with their families, feel that with some time limited support they would be able to access mainstream services independently. Support will be provided to the young person, their family and the provider setting to enable the young person to access a leisure activity of their choice.

The project team are currently carrying out a high level of work developing a lot of services to become more inclusive. This is involving workforce development, support through capital and voluntary grants, advisory support including consultation with families and advertising of their services. It is providing a clear picture of what services are out there and how they can be developed to be inclusive.

Following consideration by the operational and executive group it is proposed to develop the Leisure Link Programme from within the current Aiming High for Disabled Children's Project team, this will ensure the development of services and young people accessing them work closely together.

The key details of this service are:

- It will be for young people who it is anticipated will be able to access the chosen service independently after the support is offered.
- The number of weeks of support will be flexible depending on the young person's needs and how progress is made.
- 4 members of staff will be recruited; this will comprise a coordinator to oversee and develop the programme and 3 link workers providing direct support to the young people.
- 3600 hours of support will be delivered.
- The cost of the members of staff to deliver this service will be £105,409.20.

Recommendation: To develop the Leisure Link programme by recruiting additional capacity within the project team.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 Sitting Service:** Total cost of £183,378. This is for service delivery of 1st April 2010-31st March 2011 as the programme is grant funded until this date.
- 2.2 Leisure Link programme:** Total cost of: £105,409.20. This is for service delivery from 1st April 2010 - 31st March 2011 as the programme is grant funded until this date.
- 2.3 Emergency Support Scheme:** Costs related to workforce development and purchasing of specialist equipment. As we do not know the need for this service a figure can not be stated, it will be managed in the most cost effective method through the operational group.
- 2.4** All financial implications will be covered by the Aiming High for Disabled Children funding grant.

3. Staffing Implications

- 3.1** 4 members of staff will be appointed as part of the Leisure Link Programme; these positions will be filled through secondments through the local authority or NHS Wirral until 31st March 2011, in line with the time period of the funding.

Staffing Implications for the Sitting Service will be the responsibility of the providers.

4. Equal Opportunities Implications/Health Impact Assessment

- 4.1** The changes are driven by the imperative that disabled youngsters should have personal and developmental opportunities and be supported to lead an ordinary life as valued members of their community.
- 4.2** The development of these routine short breaks will support the health and well being of the families as a whole as it has been evidenced that 'breaks' provide the time apart required to assist with the family functioning.
- 4.3** Developing these services will offer more short breaks to more groups of young people with varying needs; this will enable Wirral to meet the requirements of the Full Service Offer.

5. Community Safety, Local Agenda 21, Planning, anti-poverty Implications

- 5.1** No specific implications emerging from this report.

6. Social Inclusion Implications

- 6.1** The development of these services will enable young people with disabilities to access more short breaks. All three of the services detailed are working towards services being more inclusive and sustainable.

7. Local Member Support Implications

- 7.1** Disabled Children live in all wards.

8. Background Papers

8.1 Full Service Offer <http://www.togetherfdc.org/Topics/Fullserviceoffer.aspx>.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Cabinet considers the further discussions and negotiation which have taken place through stage two of the commissioning process for this project.
2. To approve the following recommendations:
 - To award Crossroads Care Cheshire West and Wirral Autistic Society contracts to deliver the Sitting Services.
 - To devise a model for an emergency support scheme that is cost effective and sustainable post March 2011, utilising the Local Authority Children with Disability Services.
 - To develop the Leisure Link programme by recruiting additional capacity within the project team.

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