

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## CABINET

21 JUNE 2012

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>EXTENSION OF CHILDREN'S PREVENTATIVE SERVICE CONTRACTS</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR TONY SMITH</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>YES</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of an extension to the following specialised contracts in Children's Services for nine months to 31<sup>st</sup> march 2013 after which they will be aligned with other commissioned services. These contracts have previously been reported to Cabinet and are extended to June 2012.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

The table below summarises the contracts and identifies the areas of the Statutory duty of the Local Authority.

Table:

Contract Area	Organisation	Cost (Part Year 9 months)	Statutory Duty
Engagement, Inclusion and Advocacy	WIRED	£237,745	Yes for SEN Parent Partnership and Choice Advisor
Young Runaways, children at risk of sexual exploitation	Barnardo's	£126,750	Yes
Independent Visitors	WIRED	£31,500	Yes
Advocacy of Looked after children	SCS Kinder (Safeguarding Children's Services)	£46,467	Yes
Contract Carers	Action for Children	£100,460	No

## 2.1 Engagement, Involvement and Advocacy includes:

- Parent Partnership
- Choice Advisor
- Advocacy for Disabled Children
- Pupil Advocate
- Children/Parent/Carer Involvement

WIRED who are the current provider have established relationships and build confidence with parents and children with a disability/learning difficulty and are helping to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. Currently this organisation is working with 682 children, young people and Parent/carers. Of the evaluations completed 100% of the participants rated the work by this service as successful. Below are a number of quotes from children, young people and their parents who had been supported by WIRED.

*“I just wanted to thank you for all your help. During my initial search it looked like our options were slim, however after you searched for me, things didn’t look too bleak! You were extremely helpful and found a brilliant school for us, great big thank you for all your help.”*

*“As a parent it was good to see that I am not on my own”*

*“.....has helped me a lot and is a very great person and I wish I could have her forever”*

*“Thank you so so so so much .....you are a life changer and you have helped me so much”*

2.2 Children who are at risk of Exploitation, Committing Sexual Offences and Runaways from Home or Care are receiving support through Barnardo’s who were successful in an open tender process. This year they have met their targets and have successfully supported 30 young people who are at risk of Sexual Exploitation as well as 50 young people who have runaway from home or care. This service will be aligned with the Relationship Abuse Service for 16-18 year olds which is also being run by Barnardo’s as this reduces any duplication and reduce the overall cost.

2.3 Independent Visitors (IV) is currently being delivered by WIRED and this service is specifically targeted at looked after children as specified in The Children Act 1989 Schedule 2 sections 17(1) to 17(7) and is part of the Council’s Statutory Duty.

This service is specifically targeted at Looked After Children placed out of borough and on Wirral who are aged between 6-21 years, who have not been visited by either a parent or person with parental responsibility for them during the previous six months. The contract is performing well and they have trained 10 new Independent Visitors this year as well as matching 17 young people to independent visitors to visit and help support them. They have also visited and supported 2 young people who are in secure units.

2.4 The Looked after Children Advocacy Service is currently being delivered by SCS Kinder and this service is to provide an Advocate for looked after children who are

currently in a care home or foster placement in Wirral and outside of the Council's geographical boundaries. This contract is part of the Council's Statutory Duty.

The advocacy service ensures that these young people's voices and opinions are being heard, that there is effective inter agency working and an increase in awareness by staff in both statutory and voluntary agencies of the issues raised with regard to this group of children.

- 2.5 The Contract Carer Scheme is part of the Aiming High for Disabled Children and was awarded to Action for Children. Two Contract Carers have been recruited and are now delivering part of this service. The service was then aiming to recruit four short break carers rather than another 2 Contract Carers as part of the contract. It was expected these would be easier to recruit as it is less commitment for each carer and would allow more flexibility. However, this has not been the case; there is currently one Short Break Carer due to be approved in May 2012.

Through the appointed two contract carers in post an excellent service has been delivered offering a much needed service to an identified group of children to meet their needs. Feedback from families has been extremely positive. To maintain this expectation of the current delivery the proposal is to extend the contract with Action for Children until 31<sup>st</sup> march 2013 but this is based on the following outputs:

- Two Contract Carers supporting six children for 218 nights per year
- Two Short break carer supporting one child for 24 nights per year

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 3.1 These are specialised services and when previously commissioned there were very few organisations that had the expertise or capacity to deliver. There would be a risk if contracts were not extended as the most vulnerable children and young people would not receive a much needed and timely service causing further disadvantage.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The option of creating a new tender process was considered but rejected in line with the above risks.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 As part of the original Tenders a consultation process took place with both children, young people and Parents/carers which contributed to 20% of the final score decision. Also each organisation has signed up to Wirral Charter of Participation and it is part of their quarterly monitoring arrangements.

### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 6.1 Each of the Contracts has been part of an open commissioning process and the contracts are presently being delivered by the voluntary, community and faith sector. This is Compact compliant as it continues to support capacity within this sector.

## **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

7.1 Financial provision for these contracts which has an annual cost of £722,900 has been made within the revenue budget for 2012-13.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The extension of the contracts are in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules on exception to Procurement Procedure Rule 21.1.1 (ii)

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review will be published on the web site, hyperlink below.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/children-young-people>

## **10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None.

## **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 These contracts will have a significant impact on community safety implications specifically in relation to young runaways and children at risk of sexual exploitation and will continue work closely with the Police and the Community Safety Team.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

12.1 That the 5 specialist contracts set out in 1.2 are extended until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 to ensure continuity of service for those vulnerable groups of children and young people and to allow for time for these contracts to be part of the next commissioning process.

## **13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

13.1 By bringing together these contracts with the other commissioning commitments of the Children and Young People's Department will help gain efficiencies by reducing duplication and Providers of services will only apply once for a number of different funding streams.

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**APPENDICES****REFERENCE MATERIAL****SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Cabinet Decision</b>	<b>13<sup>th</sup> December 2010</b>
<b>Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> March 2011</b>
<b>Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny - Areas for Development 0-19 Commissioning</b>	<b>16th March 2012</b>
<b>Cabinet Decision – Extension of Children's Preventative Service Contracts</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> April 2011</b>