

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	26 June 2019
<b>Executive Member/Reporting Officer:</b>	Councillor Bill Fairfoull – Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families) Jayne Traverse, Director, Growth
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF A CAREER GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>Authorisation is required to conduct an open and competitive tender process, testing the market to secure an appropriate supplier to deliver a Career Guidance and Support Service for Tameside. The service currently performs well compared to statistical neighbours due to a focus on early intervention and maximising other funding sources to align provision.</p> <p>The current budget is £450,000 per annum and it is proposed the service should run for a further 5 years subject to satisfactory performance. Annual contract discussions with a report of the previous 4 quarters will be required to substantiate the review and ongoing contract period. A 3-6 month notice or change of direction period will also be applied.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	It is recommended that approval is given to conduct a tender for the provision of a Career Guidance and Support Service for Tameside with the support of STAR procurement ensuring compliance with Procurement standing orders.
<b>Links to Community Strategy:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive Tameside</li> <li>• Learning Tameside</li> <li>• Safe Tameside</li> <li>• Healthy Tameside</li> <li>• Prosperous Tameside</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	Career Advice and Guidance Support Services for Children and Young People.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)</b>	Annual Budget provision of £450,000 is held within the Growth Directorate for this contract. This will remain for the length of the contract. We need to ensure that the correct procurement and evaluation takes place to ensure the Council is getting value for money.
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	<p>Members need to decide if this is an appropriate use of Council budget, to meet its priorities and statutory duties given the total amount £2,250,000. If it is agreed that the service should be retendered the Service must seek guidance from the Council's partner, STAR Procurement in doing so. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be required to ensure the Council is complying with its section 149 Equality Act 2010 duty.</p> <p>The quotations from young persons in the report should not be capable of being attributed to/ traced back to an individual, unless they have given informed consent for their remarks to be set out in an open report.</p>

It would be useful to see some form of qualitative data going forward, as this would help to inform an understanding of the process and how value for money is being evaluated – there is a competing statutory duty to ensure all services including statutory are delivered efficiently and effectively.

**Risk Management:**

The commissioners will work closely with the provider to manage and minimise any risk of provider failure consistent with the providers contingency plan

**Access to Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report author David Berry, Head of Employment and Skills



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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report sets out a summary of the successful Careers Support commissioned service. The service has delivered strong performance with low numbers of young people not in education employment and training and high numbers participating at 16 and 17 years old. Tameside has taken a preventative early intervention approach by providing targeted career guidance from year 9. This has enabled us to perform well on a comparably smaller budget to our neighbours across the conurbation. The report requests approval to tender for the service from December 2019. The service is provided by Positive Steps and has been well managed since December 2014 due to an employment commissioned focus with an improvement in outcomes and effective transition from a failing provision pre-Positive Steps. The Council has a statutory duty to provide services to young people that enable, encourage and assist them to participate in education and training. This includes a commitment to ensure support is provided for the most vulnerable groups and to support them into education, employment or training.
- 1.2 Young people should have access to a high quality Career Guidance and Support Service (CGSS) that caters for a broad range of needs and which contributes to improving the outcomes and progression for young people. The service will also be required to track outcomes and destinations of young people leaving school and report on these quarterly to commissioners.
- 1.3 The service must enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations in accordance with legislation:
- Encourage, enable and assist participation in education and training by young people in accordance with Section 68 of ESA 2008 and EA 2011;
  - Secure independent and impartial careers guidance to targeted/vulnerable young people in schools including at risk of NEET;
  - Complete Careers Guidance Information Reports (CGIs) for young people with LDD in transition year (Year 11+) and share with Local Authority and future education/training provider;
  - Deliver targeted support to vulnerable young people, ensuring services are aligned with the policy for Raising the Participation Age (RPA);
  - Track and record destinations of 16 to 18 year olds and up to 25 for those with a learning difficulty or disability, including updating the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS);
  - Effective partnership working with schools, Early Help and other post-16 agencies.
- 1.4 Since April 2012 Local Authorities no longer have a responsibility to secure a universal careers service for young people. Since September 2012 schools have responsibility for the provision of impartial careers guidance to every pupil in Years 9 to 11– the universal element.
- 1.5 The Council retains the general duty to “*encourage, enable or assist young people to participate in education or training*” – the targeted element. These responsibilities are important in the context of the requirement, from 2015, for young people to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18.
- 1.6 This service must be: presented in an impartial manner; comprehensive, covering all the options available in respect of 16-18 education and training, including apprenticeships; and promote the best interests of the young people accessing the advice.

## **2.0 TARGETED ELEMENTS**

- 2.1 The service will provide vulnerable young people, from the age of fourteen, with Careers Information and Education Advice so as to “encourage and assist young people’s participation in education or training” (Section 68, Education & Skills Act 2008). This will include elements of careers education.
- 2.2 Specifically, the Council will continue to have the following duties:
- Securing independent and impartial information, advice and guidance for the most vulnerable young people;
  - To track and record offers made to young people and their participation in education and training by maintaining a Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) that meets the National CCIS Management Information requirements.
  - Completion of Career Guidance information reports for young people with special educational needs in transition year (Year 11+);
  - The special educational needs and disability (SEND) green paper ‘Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability’ set out the government’s proposals to replace the current LDAs and the special educational needs (SEN) statement with a single assessment process and ‘Education, Health and Care Plan’ (EHCP), which will follow the young person from birth up until they are aged 25.
- 2.3 This service will encompass all Tameside young people who are educated within the alternative provision, including the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), alternative providers, attending educational placements outside of the borough and young people educated at home.
- 2.4 The service will provide careers education in addition to Information Advice and Guidance to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), aged 14 – 25, as part of the Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) and Action Planning for young people with LDD.
- 2.5 In terms of tracking the service should:
- co-ordinate the Offer (previously the September Guarantee) returns from all schools within the borough (including non-participating schools), and deliver the Offer for all Year 11 pupils in scope of the targeted element;
  - accurate and timely input of these data onto the CCIS database;
  - manage and administer the annual Year 11 Learner Destination Survey (November) in all schools in the borough;
  - track the participation, progression and retention of residents aged 16-18 who were known to be in education, training or employment, to ensure the currency status of these young people does not lapse.

## **3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES – DETAILED INDICATIVE SERVICE SPECIFICATION**

- 3.1 The new specification will be subject to consultation with interested Council services, young people and suppliers. In addition, flexibility will be required to ensure the contractor can respond to the changing needs and priorities of the borough and its young people over the duration of the contract. The annual contract discussion will provide an opportunity to revise targeted groups and ensure commissioned activities are maximised by all affected service areas.

- 3.2 Based on the current service, an indicative specification is detailed from 3.3. The final specification must include the statutory responsibilities of the authority; however the targeted service including work with vulnerable young people with a learning difficulty and or disability, young people within alternative education settings such as Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), Looked after Children (LAC), recent care leavers and teenage parents attending educational placements outside of the borough and young people who are educated at home are subject to the results of engagement and proposed flexibility as proposed at 3.1.
- 3.3 For young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability the service will be available to up to the age of 25 years.
- 3.4 The targeted service will work with young people resident in Tameside who have dropped-out from post 16 provision and support their re-engagement in education, training, and employment (with training).
- 3.5 To ensure local outreach support is offered to all Year 11 leavers without an offer post-16 and/or at risk of becoming NEET, the targeted service will be available to young people resident in Tameside but previously attending statutory education outside the borough.
- 3.6 For learners with a learning difficulty and/or disability the service will prepare Action Plans/Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDA) for learners in Years 11 and 12/13 where these are required.
- 3.7 The service will support the placement of learners aged 19 to 24 into Independent Specialist Providers (ISP), monitor progress by attending annual reviews and inform the transitions process.
- 3.8 The targeted service will provide Careers Information and Education Advice to support the most vulnerable young people, including young people aged 14 – 25 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), into post-16 education, training or employment (with training).
- 3.9 Provide Careers Information and Education Advice to support any young resident of Tameside:
- who is in statutory education outside the borough and at risk of not securing a post-16 offer;
  - who has dropped out of post-16 provision (NEET) to support their re-engagement in education employment or training.
- 3.10 The contractor will identify vulnerable young people in Years 9 to 11 (and Years 12 to 13 where relevant) who are most at risk of disengaging and identify appropriate (or alternative) opportunities to participate in education, training and employment (with training) which closely meet their needs.
- 3.11 The service will engage with relevant partners to ensure integrated and targeted support, based on individual holistic need, is provided to assist the young person overcome the barriers limiting their ability participate. This will include:
- referring young people who have become NEET to other appropriate services as part of a Team Around the Child Approach;
  - ensuring young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, receive a Plan that supports their progression;
  - supporting teenage parents to access childcare to enable them to continue training or employment;
  - develop integrated working practices for looked after young people and recent care leavers.

- Young people known to the Youth Offending team

3.12 The priority groups for Tameside are currently:

- Increase the number of 16-19 year old teenage parents known to the service and in Education Employment and Training
- Increase the number of 16-25 year olds with a learning difficulty or disability in Employment and Training
- Increase the percent of 16-19 year old care leavers in Education Employment and Training
- Increase the number of 16/17 year old young offenders known to the YOT who are in 16 or more hours ETE at the end of their orders
- Monitor the position of BME groups who are NEET relative to that of the white cohort

#### 4.0 CURRENT POSITION AND PERFORMANCE

4.1 The original contract commenced on the 1 October 2015 for a two year period with provision to extend for up to an additional two year period. The extension ends on 9 December 2019.

4.2 The service has been subject to three monthly performance management meetings (and monthly performance reports), which includes a review of performance data and case studies. It is also subject to an annual validation.

4.3 Evidence from young people (service users) shows they clearly value the service and feedback from young people is extremely positive regarding outcomes and quality of support. **Appendix 1** provides 2 case studies from young people who have accessed the current services.

4.4 The service has been performing as required under the contract and there are no contractual compliance issues, and overall the service has developed well with joint working across stakeholders. The service has supported organisations such as Whitebridge Pupil Referral Unit and Works4U to enhance their careers provision to the boroughs most vulnerable young people.

4.5 The Moving on Report published by Positive Steps and showing our position as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018 records Tameside NEET performance at 2.4% which has reduced from 2.5% the previous year. Participation was recorded at 96.7%, which again is an improvement on the previous year of 96.6%. This means of 2,602 young people at this time only 63 were recorded as NEET.

4.6 The table at **4.7** shows the Moving on Report performance data from 2014 and the consistently strong performance of our current contractor, despite a slight dip in performance in 2016 further to the loss of two popular post-16 providers in the borough.

4.7

<b>Moving on Report 31 October</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
NEET	2.7%	2.6%	3.3%	2.5%	2.4%
Participation	96.6%	96.7%	95.3%	96.6%	96.7%
This data is a 'snapshot' of data as at 31 <sup>st</sup> October of each year					

4.8 The National NEET Scorecard which compares the previous year's performance with that of the year before continues show improvement and has recorded faster improvement than England. The table at 4.9 sets out Tameside's continually improving performance compared to that of England for both NEET and Unknown. This is reflected by our local data published in December 2018 showing NEET 2.9% (141) and Unknown at 2.0% (95) of

a total cohort of 4,791 young people. We anticipate further improvement which can be attributed to the quality of the service provided and the additional benefits of a quality provider capable of securing both national and GM funding to deliver more intensive support for our young people.

4.9

Period	NEET Known		Unknown		Total NEET and Unknown	
	Tameside	England	Tameside	England	Tameside	England
2016 (16-17 age)	3.0	2.7	4.1	4.4	7.1	7.1
2017 (16-17 age)	4.2	2.8	3.7	3.2	7.9	6.0
2018 (16-17 age)	3.5	2.7	1.6	3.3	5.2	6.0

4.10 The NEET Scorecard also highlights the Participation performance compared to England and we again have outperformed by improving from 90.8% to 92.4%, whilst England achieved 92.0%. This is a great improvement and shows our recovery following the establishment of Juniper Training (OFSTED GOOD) in the borough delivering post-16 provision and the equitable and mutually beneficial relationship developed by Positive Steps to ensure the young people that may benefit from Traineeships and Study Programmes have the opportunity to review the new in-borough provision. Current local Participation data (December 2018) is at 95.3%.

4.11

% 16-17 year olds participating	Tameside	England
2016	92.0	91.5
2017	90.8	92.1
2018	92.4	92.0

4.12 The targeted work carried out by our current contractor also highlights some excellent performance data in December 2018. Our SEND young people in EET aged 16-19 years are at 92.0% and 16-25 years 89.1%. Teenage Parents in EET are at 17.8%, Care Leavers 84.5% and Youth Offenders at 76.9%. Whilst we are performing well, we will continue to seek improvement in these areas, develop new partnerships, referral and tracking methods to ensure the right support is provided at the right time for identified young people.

4.13 Given the early commencement of the governance process this will give Commissioners the opportunity to review the current Service Specification, consult with Young People and stakeholders and make any adjustments to the specification and associated tender documents prior to commencing the procurement process.

## 5.0 CONTRACT OPTIONS

5.1 The total cost for a further period of up to five years will be £2,250,000.

5.2 The service is essential to ensure there is support for vulnerable groups of Young People that will assist them to participate in education and training.

5.3 The following options have been considered and discounted for the reasons stated below:-

- **End contract and amalgamate the service with other services/contracts.** Due to the specific nature of this service, it would be extremely difficult to undertake any form of amalgamation with other services/contracts as it was felt that the elements of the service

could easily be consumed and the success of the service suffer as a result. It would be difficult to purchase the individual elements of the service for the financial commitment that is already provided, as outlined above.

- **End contract and re-tender;** this is the preferred option given that the contract will end on the 9 December 2019.
- **Extend contract on renegotiated terms;** the current contract price in terms of the significance of this work reflects value for money. To reduce the current contract price would seriously jeopardise the service as the supplier would find it difficult to deliver the same levels of support.
- **Extend contract on current terms;** this is not an option under PSO's given that the contract ends on the 9 December 2019.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 As set out on the front of the report.





## POSITIVE STEPS - Case Study 1

<b>Client's forename</b>	Lewis (alias name)
<b>Client's background</b>	<p>Lewis was NEET and had been accessing careers advice about how to get into Primary Teaching. He wanted to go to University but does not have the appropriate qualifications for the degree programme so was struggling to know what to do next. He wanted to explore his options and get support in applying for appropriate courses. He also needed some work experience to help support his applications. Lewis had limited knowledge about what qualifications he would need to get onto a Primary Teaching degree programme so was disillusioned with the route he would need to take and the length of time it would involve. He does not have GCSE Maths which is a major barrier for him to access a teaching programme and Lewis was not aware of how this would hold him back.</p> <p>Lewis has suffered with low confidence and some mental health in the past and this has held him back. His confidence has affected him being able to gain work experience and led him to drop out of a level 3 course he had been doing in the past.</p>
<b>How they have moved forward</b>	<p>Lewis signed up to our ESF NEET project and so received intensive support and IAG around his career choices, options and breaking down his barriers. He attended appointments on a weekly basis and engaged fully with the support offered. He accessed full guidance around his career choice of being a teacher and was able to create a plan that was realistic and achievable. He was also supported to find various options for work experience opportunities.</p> <p>We focused on a big barrier for Lewis which was his confidence and anxiety and he accessed some sessions to help with this and gain some tips that he can use in everyday life. Due to Lewis's engagement and co-operation he was able to use the advice and techniques and implement them into his life.</p> <p>Once he had begun to develop his confidence and tackle his anxiety, we were able to explore options for how he could achieve his goal of becoming a Primary School teacher. Lewis was empowered enough to do his own research and decision making around this and applied for a foundation degree at University, which would also allow him to achieve his Maths GCSE. This was a brave decision and one that I challenged to ensure he was fully prepared for the academic jump he would be taking to do a degree programme when he has been disengaged from education for so long. Lewis felt confident with his plans and felt it was an opportunity he had to take.</p> <p>Lewis is now happy on his Foundation degree in Early Years studies and after completing this and his Maths GCSE he will be able to apply for a Primary teaching programme.</p>
<b>Comments from</b>	Lewis has always been very grateful for the support he has received and feels that working with us has really helped him some way to achieving his

<b>client</b>	goals. He provided excellent feedback from all the sessions he attended. Direct quote from a thank you card Lewis sent to the Tameside team: <i>"Thank you for everything that you've helped me with and the best career adviser I could have asked for! All the best for the future. Thanks to Positive Steps Team for an excellent service you do for the young people – will miss it a lot!"</i>
<b>Date completed</b>	12/11/18

## POSITIVE STEPS - Case Study 2

<b>Client's forename</b>	Shannon (Alias name)
<b>Client's background</b>	Shannon was a SEND student, leaving school in June 2018. She was a very weak learner with dyspraxia and dyslexic tendencies. Shannon had no confidence in herself and her ability to achieve her aims and seemed very anxious about the prospect of leaving school. She had wanted to work with young children since Yr. 9 when she took part in the Teens and Tots project but didn't feel this was possible due to her academic ability.
<b>How they have moved forward</b>	<p>I met with Shannon several times throughout Yr. 10 and 11 when we discussed her ideas and the possible options open to her which focused on related college courses. We looked at local colleges and appropriate courses. As a result, Shannon visited 3 colleges with her mother. After the Open Events we met and together we completed application forms for L1 Child Care courses, noting her support needs. I reassured her that by discussing her needs with the college they would be better able to support her. Prior to her college interviews we met again to discuss what to expect and practiced the information she could talk about focusing on her child care related skills and experiences. We also identified questions she could ask relating to her support needs, as a result Shannon felt more confident about speaking to people at college.</p> <p>By the end of January She had been to 3 college interviews and had received 3 offers. She felt that the L1 Diploma in Caring for Children at Tameside College was the best course for her as she felt that they would offer her the most appropriate support. Shannon spent the rest of Yr. 11 happy and relaxed about her future plans.</p> <p>She is currently enjoying her L1 course at Tameside College and hopes to progress onto L2 next year.</p>
<b>Comments from client</b>	Shannon felt that this process helped her feel more positive about herself and the future. It also helped her cope with what she felt was a very frightening process. She felt that her successful interviews made a much more confident person.
<b>Date completed</b>	3/12/18