

Report to:	Tameside Council
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Report for	Information
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Report Title
Options Appraisal Tameside Childrens SENDIASS service

Summary
<p>This options paper aims to outline the procurement routes available for the various requirements in order to deliver the councils SENDIASS service effectively and in a timely manner.</p> <p>This paper provides a recommendation from STAR.</p> <p>Further information can be found here:</p> <p>This service will need to provide information, advice and support to children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN), and those with Disabilities, and their parents/carers (who have children/young people aged 0-25 years).It will encourage and develop partnerships between children, young people, parents/carers, schools, the local authority and all other partners who are involved in working to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of children and young people. Services need to begin on 1st April 2022 and the service needs to begin and the service has an indicative contract value of £67,500 per annum.</p> <p>This document comprises of a variety of options for Tameside commissioning to determine most appropriate route to market.</p>

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1. Overview of procurement options

There are numerous procurement options for the various requirements. Each requirement / contract shall be taken in turn with the various options listed and associated known risks / issues with that option detailed.

- **A: Open Procurement**
- **B: Deliver In-House Service**
- **C: Modify Stockport Agreement with Together Trust**

- **D: Direct award following soft market test**

A: Open Procurement

i. Details of Option

Open Tender following Soft Market Testing. This will be undertaken below Threshold in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Please see timetable below:

Activity	Dates
PID signed	8 th December
Spec and tender docs ready by	10 th December
ITT published	15 th December
Tender deadline	17 th January 2022
Evaluation and moderation period	19 th -28 th January 2022
Tender award	First week in Feb 2022
Contract commencement	1 st April 2022

ii. Benefits of Option

- Allows for open competition and relevant value for money test.
- Compliant route to market with contract procedure rules and public contract regulations 2015.

iii. Dis-Benefits of Option

- Service have already undertaken soft-market testing with 1 submission. Risk that going out to market may be time consuming with only 1 provider available.
- Process requires intensive resource to enable contract commencement for 1st April 2022.

B: Deliver In-House Service

i. Details of Option

This option would be delivered via Tameside children's services team and is the current model of delivery in place.

ii. Benefits of Option

- Continuation of service and reduced disruption.
- Data set, service monitoring and reporting already in place.

iii. Dis-Benefits of Option

- Unclear if this option is greater value for money than outsourcing.
- Resource intensive on internal team.

C: Modify Stockport Agreement with Together Trust

i. Details of Option

Stockport Borough Council have a contract in place for SENDIASS services for a further year until 1st April 2023. Stockport Councils contract is with the same organisation which expressed an interest in Tameside's SENDIASS Service. Stockport to undertake modification of service and Tameside to complete PID document to achieve collaborative value for money and align with strategic collaboration between Tameside's and Stockport Councils education service.

ii. Benefits of Option

- Compliant route to contract which may deliver efficiencies for both councils.
- Provides potential for collaborative procurement for 1st April 2023 start date.

iii. Dis-Benefits of Option

- No competition undertaken.

D: Direct award following soft market test

i. Details of Option

Negotiated procedure without competition with provider whom expressed interest via soft-market testing.

ii. Benefits of Option

- More efficient contracting method and allows for value for money negotiations to take place.

iii. Dis-Benefits of Option

- Risk of procurement challenge having not gone out to formal tender following market testing.
- Doesn't allow for competition within the market place.

2. Analysis of options

Detailed analysis

	Advantage/disadvantage	Open Tender	Deliver In-House Service	Modification of Stockport contract	Direct award
Advantages	Pre-Agreed Terms and Conditions			X	
	Pre-Identified Competent and Capable Suppliers			X	
	Less grounds for legal challenge to procurement process	X	X	X	
	Full control of specification scope	X			X
	Almost Certain Quick Route to supplier appointment			X	X
	Potentially quick route to supplier appointment	X			
	Full Market Opportunity (open to all – wide range of solutions potential)	X			
	Minimal procurement timescale (in comparison)				
Disadvantages	Restricted Market (small range of solutions potential)			X	X
	Restrictions on Scope of Specification			X	
	Risk of legal challenge to procurement may be higher				X
	Longer procurement timescale (in comparison)	X			

3. Next Steps

Following completion and signing off of the PID, procurement activity can commence.

Discussions between Tameside Council and STAR should occur as soon as possible in order to discuss the appetite for the various procurement routes, and the impacts this has on the options outlined.

The following is an indication of the pre-procurement timeline possible. A timeline for the procurement in question can be produced as and when the preferred procurement routes have been agreed.

Activity	Duration
Options Appraisal and Procurement Routes Agreed	2 weeks
Specification Development* and Tender Docs finalisation	2 weeks
Issue Tenders	1 Day
Tendering Time (including receiving bids and evaluating)	6 weeks
Contract Signatures	1 - 2 weeks

*More time may be needed for this depending on complexity of requirement.

4. Conclusion

This options paper has outlined the procurement routes available for the various requirements in order to deliver SENDIASS services effectively and in a timely manner.

The recommendation from STAR is as follows:

Having undertaken an analysis on the variety of options as detailed above, STAR procurement recommend that the preferred option is to modify the Stockport Council agreement with Together Trust to include Tameside Council for one year with the ambition to procure a joint service from 1st April 2023. The benefit of this is that this approach allows Tameside to compliantly contract with the provider who expressed an interest in this opportunity and also align this contract with strategic objectives between the education departments of the two councils.