



***Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children,
Education & Families***

***Monday, 20 April 2015 at 12.00 pm
County Hall, Oxford***

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 28 April 2015 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

Handwritten signature of Peter G. Clark in black ink, underlined.

Peter G. Clark
County Solicitor

April 2015

Contact Officer: *Deborah Miller*
Tel: (01865) 815384; EMail:deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 11 May 2015

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. **Declarations of Interest**

2. **Questions from County Councillors**

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. **Petitions and Public Address**

4. **Recommended Preferred Sponsor for the New Primary School at Barton, Oxford** (Pages 1 - 2)

Forward Plan Ref: 2014/184

Contact: Diane Cameron, School Organisation Officer Tel: (01865) 816445

Report by Director for Children's Services (**CMDCEF4**).

New school for Barton, Oxford : approval of preferred provider.

The Cabinet meeting of 4 September 2012 approved a process for the identification of sponsors for new academies to meet the needs of population growth such as this which requires a new primary school for 2016. In July 2014 Cabinet agreed that the decision on the preferred option could be delegated to the Lead Member for Children Education and Families.

This process has been followed and has now reached the point where a preferred provider has been identified from a group of 2 short-listed bidders which were assessed against criteria.

The Lead Member is asked to agree the preferred provider which will be submitted to the Regional Schools Commission for a final decision.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families is RECOMMENDED to agree The Cheney School Academy Trust as the recommended provider to be submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioner for final agreement.

5. Contract to Supply Children's Advocacy Services to Private Residential Homes (Pages 3 - 6)

Forward Plan Ref: 2015/021

Contact: Nancy Kurisa, Complaints & Information Manager Tel: (01865) 323572

Report by Director for Children's Services (**CMDCEF5**).

Volunteer Independent Visiting and Advocacy Service (VIVA) is a Council run service providing Independent Visiting and Advocacy to young people who are either Looked After by Oxfordshire County Council or have been in receipt of Council services. VIVA has been approached by a Private Residential Home to provide up to four Independent Visiting Sessions per year to support privately placed young people who are not Looked After by the Council but who may benefit from advocacy to ensure that their voice is heard in matters relating to their care and support.

The Care Act 2014 has put a much bigger emphasis on the importance of ensuring that advocacy is available to strengthen the voice of people who use services and we anticipate that VIVA will be approached by other private residential homes to provide a similar service. To provide this service VIVA would have to charge a fee to cover staffing costs, travel expenses and administration costs.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families is RECOMMENDED to agree that VIVA can charge costs including overheads of providing independent advocacy services to Private Residential Homes. The Cabinet Member is also asked to agree in principle to the provision of the service as outlined in this paper.

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Division(s): Barton Sandhills & Risinghurst, Headington & Quarry,
Churchill & Lye Valley, Marston & Northway

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES – 20 APRIL 2015

NEW SCHOOL FOR BARTON: REPORT ON SELECTION PROCESS FOR APPROVED PROVIDER AND APPROVAL OF PREFERRED OPTION

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. The Cabinet meeting of 4 September 2012 approved a process for the identification of sponsors for new academies to meet the needs of population growth such as the one at Barton, Oxford. The cabinet meeting of 15 July 2014 gave approval for the decision to be delegated to the Lead Member for Children, Education and Families, unless there are exceptional circumstances. There are no exceptional circumstances in this case.
2. The approved specification for Barton sought a provider for a new 1.5 form entry primary school in the new development at Barton.
3. The specification did not impose restrictions on the nature of provider – e.g. faith organisations, or existing providers – given that the local consultation was inconclusive on these issues.
4. The specification invited interest from providers able and willing to work with the county council to promote inclusive opportunities for the most vulnerable children and have a strong focus on equalities, early intervention, and supporting the needs of the local community.

Background

5. The agreed process has now completed the following stages:
 - (a) Assess expressions of interest and then invite detailed bids to show clear plans of how they will contribute to the raising of education standards, add diversity of choice and which best fits the local requirements and meets the needs of those within groups offered specific protection under s149 Equality Act 2010;
 - (b) Assess bids against criteria and rank in order of preference. Agree a preferred option to be approved by Lead Member for Children, Education and Families.

6. Two expressions of interest were received. These were assessed according to criteria derived from Department for Education (DfE) Academy / Free school presumption paper October 2014 and also from the council's specification document for Barton previously agreed by Cabinet. A scoring system was used to assess the strongest applications. As both providers achieved high scores in some but not all areas both were taken through to the shortlist.
7. The two shortlisted providers were:

The Cheney School Academy Trust

The Trust manages The Cheney School in Headington. It was also approved as sponsor for Bayards Hill Primary School which joined the Trust in October 2014.

GLF Schools

The Trust currently has 13 schools and the group contains primary, secondary and special schools. It has been approved as the provider for one of the new primary and the new secondary school in Great Western Park, Didcot.

8. The shortlisted providers were asked to complete a more detailed application form and make a presentation to a panel consisting of officers and the cabinet member for Children Education and Families. The providers were again scored against specified criteria.
9. The highest scoring provider was The Cheney School Academy Trust.

Financial and Staff Implications

10. There are none arising directly from this report. However, once an approved sponsor has been confirmed by the Secretary of State there will be a need for significant and on-going liaison with council officers.

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families is RECOMMENDED to agree The Cheney School Academy Trust as the recommended provider to be submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioner for final agreement.

JIM LEIVERS

Director for Children's Services

Contact Officer: Charlotte Christie, 01865 328567

March,2015

Division(s): N/A

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES – 20 APRIL 2015

Provision of Advocacy Services to Private Residential Homes

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. Volunteer Independent Visiting and Advocacy (VIVA) is an independent service, run by Oxfordshire County Council, providing children and young people with an independent visitor or advocate. VIVA is part of the Complaints and Information Team within Joint Commissioning, in the Social and Community Services Directorate.
2. Independent visiting and advocacy is provided by volunteers or paid sessional workers who are not part of social care services. An independent advocate acts as a representative or assists the young person or vulnerable young adult with getting their voice heard. An independent visitor helps young people who are mainly Looked After by Oxfordshire County Council who have little or no family contact by befriending and providing opportunities to talk.

Background

3. A new statutory duty from the Care Act 2014 supports the principle of enabling everyone to be involved in key decisions that affect their lives and part of this is ensuring that independent advocacy is available to those who need it.
4. VIVA has been approached by a Private Residential Home that supports young people who are privately placed and may benefit from independent advocacy. VIVA has been asked to provide up to four generic independent advocacy sessions per year. In this setting, the role of the Independent Advocate is to act as an impartial person within the residential home to listen and represent the voices of the children and young people placed within the home. This can either be on a group basis or one to one support, depending on the needs of the children and young people placed at any particular time. Visits will last for approximately 45 minutes to one hour and this excludes additional specialist advocacy work which will be agreed as and when required.
5. As a result of the new duties in the Care Act, VIVA anticipates that it will be approached by other Private Residential Homes to provide a similar service. VIVA is keen to be able to support this in order to raise the profile of the service and to reach out to more young people, who may not have had an opportunity to be heard previously.

Corporate Plan/Priorities

6. The proposals within this report support the vision and objectives of the Corporate Plan by working in partnership to achieve a Thriving Oxfordshire by helping young people to help themselves, by ensuring that their voice is central to all aspects of their care and support. Independent Advocacy also provides a vital safety net for the most vulnerable young people within the County who may not feel able to talk to professionals or family members.

Legal Implications

7. For VIVA to provide this service a spot contract is required which has been drawn up by Oxfordshire County Council's legal team. The spot contract is designed to be a generic contract which can be used again if VIVA is approached by additional private residential homes.

The Council's Legal and Insurance teams have recommended a low cap on liability as this is a non-profit making activity for the Council and, as such, it is reasonable that we do not take on any additional financial risk above the contract price. This is because the Council is providing a service rather than receiving one and the Council is covered to do this in terms of professional indemnity/negligence insurance.

Financial and Staff Implications

8. To provide this service to Private Residential Homes VIVA will charge a fee to cover costs and overheads of providing generic advocacy sessions. This is because Private Residential Homes are profit making organisations and charge a fee for supporting the young people placed in their care. However, if any young person placed within any Private Residential Home is Looked After and funded by Oxfordshire County Council, VIVA would not charge to provide specialist individual advocacy support. A charge of £50.00 per hour plus travel expenses is proposed to cover staffing costs, travel expenses and administration charges.
9. A small number of the volunteers managed by VIVA have become trained sessional workers recruited to Oxfordshire County Council's casual bank and provide specialist services for VIVA. These paid sessional workers will be used to provide this service. There are no significant staffing implications for VIVA other than the administration of the service. The role of the Independent Advocate will be managed and supported by the Council but it will be the responsibility of the Private Residential Home to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the Independent Advocate whilst on their site.
10. The Private Residential Home that has approached VIVA for this service is requesting up to four independent advocacy sessions per year. Sessions will last for up to an hour and therefore the charges are small, in this case approximately £200.00 per year.

Equalities Implications

11. By providing this service, VIVA is helping to ensure equality of access to the service for children in Private Residential Homes who may otherwise not have opportunities to have their voice heard in important matters relating to their care and support.

RECOMMENDATION

12. **The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families is RECOMMENDED to agree that VIVA can charge costs including overheads of providing independent advocacy services to Private Residential Homes. The Cabinet Member is also asked to agree in principle to the provision of the service as outlined in this paper.**

JIM LEIVERS

Director for Children, Education and Families

Background papers: Nil.

Contact Officer: Nancy Kurisa, Complaints and Information Manager

March 2015

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