

Procurement Title

Framework Agreement - Provision of Apprenticeship Levy Training and Assessment Providers

Procurement Option

Restricted - restricted to those providers listed on the Education and Skills Funding Agency Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers.

New or Existing Provision

Existing – current framework end date 30/08/2021

Estimated Contract Value and Funding Arrangements

Approximately £6.5 million over the four year framework agreement term.

Where an employers' pay bill exceeds £3m – the Apprenticeship Levy will be charged at a rate of 0.5% of the pay bill. Each apprenticeship qualification is allocated to one of 30 funding bands, which range from £1,500 to £27,000. This band sets the maximum amount of digital funds an employer who pays the levy can use towards an individual apprenticeship.

Contract Duration

Initial period of 24 months with an option to extend the framework beyond the initial term to a maximum of a further 24 months.

Lotting

The framework will be lotted by area of training specialisms across 16 Lots covering;

- Lot 1 – Social Care
- Lot 2 - Schools
- Lot 3 – Business Administration
- Lot 4 – Leadership and Management
- Lot 5 - Chartered Management
- Lot 6 - Facilities
- Lot 7 - Finance
- Lot 8 - Construction and Engineering
- Lot 9 - Electrical
- Lot 10 - Cultural Services
- Lot 11 - IT
- Lot 12 - Project Management
- Lot 13 - Outdoor Activity
- Lot 14 - Schools Admin
- Lot 15 – Schools Sports
- Lot 16 – Youth

Each Lot contains a number of different apprenticeship qualifications in relation to that particular area (e.g. Social Care). A single supplier will be appointed to each Lot to deliver all of the apprenticeship standards contained within that Lot for the period of the framework. Bidders will be permitted to tender for a maximum of five Lots.

Evaluation

Quality Criteria 80%	Financial Criteria 20%
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Apprenticeship qualifications are subject to funding bands, resulting in minimal pricing differences across training organisations, the financial criteria weighting is deliberately low (at 20%) in order to allow a higher focus on the required quality aspects. Social value will account for 10% of the quality criteria focusing on delivery of the main social value objectives, in particular, retaining skills within the Lancashire area, promoting training and employment opportunities for local people and raising the living standards of local residents.

Contract Detail

The Apprenticeship Levy is a levy on UK employers to fund apprenticeships. In England, control of apprenticeship funding is managed through the Digital Apprenticeship Service account (DAS). The levy is charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's pay bill. The Levy arrangements were introduced in April 2017.

The Council's Skills, Learning & Development Team are responsible for the management of the Apprentice Levy funding that supports the apprentice qualification training to all of the council services and the 300 Schools (where the Council is the Employer).

The Levy funding can only be used to fund apprenticeship training – it cannot be used to the fund salaries of employees.

When the Levy was introduced in 2017, the Council successfully procured a range of training providers to deliver apprenticeships, via a restricted OJEU tender exercise, the resulting framework agreement expires on the 30th August 2021.

The Council is therefore required to undertake a further tender exercise to meet the apprenticeship needs of the Council and Schools for 2021 onwards, based on an initial framework period of 24 months with the option to extend for a further 24 months.

To be eligible to deliver apprenticeship training, training providers must be listed on the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA) Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) as a main provider.

The RoATP has been created following on from a Pre-Qualification stage conducted by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. In order to ensure compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, an Invitation to Tender stage must be completed by the Council (restricted to those organisations listed on the RoATP) in order to select the training providers that will be appointed to the Council's framework to deliver the Council's requirements.

Benefits of this procurement exercise will include the robust and quality delivery of training provision due to the due diligence of the Education and Skills Funding Agency and compliance with the Council's tender requirements, resulting in:

- Continued engagement and positive relationships with local and national providers to meet the training needs of the Council and Schools
- Opportunity for local providers to engage with the Council and enhance and add value to the development of employees
- Return on investment for the Council investing in apprenticeship qualifications

Procurement Title

Provision of Provider List for Break Time, Day Time and Night Time Services for Children and Young People with Disabilities.

Procurement Option

The proposal is to deliver a Provider List based on an appropriate selection criteria according to service type. From this list new services will be commissioned based on need. Commissioning will be carried out via mini competitions, negotiation or direct award. The Provider List will remain open to new applications at any time and assessment of acceptance onto the Provider List will take place at least annually.

New or Existing Provision

Existing provision - current frameworks have now lapsed and existing service contracts are outdated.

Estimated Contract Value and Funding Arrangements

The estimated annual spend on these services is £1.1million for Break Time and £2million for Short Breaks.

Contract Duration

It is intended that the Provider List will remain in effect for 5 years. Service contracts awarded as call-off contracts from the Provider List will be up to 7 years in length. They will include initial periods, break points and potential extensions configured to balance stability of care for service users and manage service provider performance.

Lotting

The Council has a statutory duty to provide a full range of Short Break services to children/young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The Lots have been developed to cover the range of services available and have been grouped to align to the service area types and service user's needs:

- 1a Break Time
- 1b Break Time Plus
- 2a Day Time Community Outreach
- 2b Day Time Personal Care
- 3 Night Time Overnight Short Breaks
- 4 Intensive Positive Behaviour Support

Evaluation

Acceptance onto the Provider List will be based on the published evaluation criteria and will include:

Lot specific selection criteria focussing upon CQC and OFSTED registration & rating (where appropriate), insurance, safeguarding and data protection policies and service delivery experience and capability.

Service Contracts will be awarded following an assessment of service delivery proposals based on the requirements of the specification for each Lot; this will include service specific requirements and an assessment of price.

Contract Detail

The purpose of services provided under this Provider List is to provide short breaks for disabled children and young people (CYP). The aim is to provide individualised packages of support which builds on the strengths of families and enables parents and carers to fulfil their parenting and caring role and CYP to engage in life enriching activities within the community.

A total of 1,204 children and young people participated in Lancashire Break Time activities between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, attending 72,791 activity hours. This equates to an average of 60 hours per child or young person. The range of hours accessed by individual children and young people was between two and more than 643 hours. 2018/19 data is the most accurate data available currently.

The Service will support the Council in fulfilling its statutory duty to provide a full range of Short Break services to children/young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which is sufficient to assist their primary carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.

Short breaks are intended to have positive benefits for both disabled children and young people and their parents and carers. Short breaks have a dual purpose:

1. The main aims of short break services are to provide disabled children and young people the opportunity to:

- spend time away from their parents and carers
- relax and have fun with their friends
- develop their independence.

2. They also give families an opportunity to:

- have a break from their caring responsibilities
- rest and unwind
- spend time with other members of their family.

The current framework in place for Break Time and Short Breaks has now lapsed and the service contracts are no longer fit for purpose and do not provide appropriate means for effective performance management.

Head of Service for the Inclusion Service took a report to Cabinet in March 2021 to seek approval for the 'Review and Redesign of Lancashire's Short Break Offer for Children and Young People with Disabilities', which was approved. In developing the proposed new Provider List, the Council has fully considered feedback from parents, carers, children and young people and short break providers, which was gathered as part of the review and redesign process.

The Council proposes an inclusive and flexible approach to procuring the Break Time, Day Time and Night Time services that will seek to minimise disruption to service users care arrangement, which ensuring the new agreement provides for robust contract performance monitoring.

The Provider List will remain open to new applications at any time and assessment of acceptance onto the Provider List will take place at least annually, or sooner if more than 10 applications are received since the last evaluation phase.

There will be consideration to award new business via mini-competition, service user choice or direct award. Existing business is anticipated to be retained by providers successful in applying to the Provider List, largely on the basis of service user choice and continuity of care.

The Provider List is expected to commence in late Summer early Autumn, allowing time to prepare the documentation, with commissioning of packages of care commencing following the establishment of the Provider List.