

Report to Director of Education and Skills

September 2020

Award of contract - Education Provision for 14-16 year old SEND pupils

Report by Assistant Director Inclusion and SEND

Electoral divisions: All

Summary

In 2018, as a pilot project, the County Council commissioned Chichester College Group (CCG) to deliver education provision for pupils aged 14-16 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The aim was to improve the outcomes for these young people that the County Council are not able to place in maintained schools or academy provision.

Following the positive results of the pilot it is proposed that the commissioning of this service with CCG will continue for a further 3 years.

There is currently provision for 18 pupils. The new contract will enable this number to be increased to up to 30, and the council has also negotiated improved contract terms.

Recommendation

- (1) That the Director of Education and Skills, approves the award of a contract to Chichester College Group (CCG) to deliver education provision for pupils aged 14-16 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for a period of 3 years to commence in September 2020.
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Proposal

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 A pilot contract with CCG was put in place in 2018 for 2 years to improve outcomes for children with SEND who are not attending mainstream schools or academies.
- 1.2 In December 2018 a variation was agreed on the basis that additional placements could be added to the initial 8 places on a spot purchase basis. The number of pupils at the end of the 2019-20 academic year is 18.

- 1.3 To date 90% of pupils post 16 have benefited from this service in that they have remained in education enabling them to progress and achieve qualifications.
- 1.4 As the existing pilot contract is coming to the end of the term it is proposed to let a further contract with CCG to enable the County Council to continue to access this provision for 14-16 year old pupils with SEND.

2. Proposal Details

- 2.1 Agreeing a 3 year contract with CCG with a set number of places across their colleges will provide them with stability, the ability to staff strategically so they can meet the needs of the County Council over 3 years. It will also assist the County Council to manage the High Needs Block by having a set placement cost that can be used for projecting expenditure.
- 2.2 The 3 year contract will provide continuity for pupils.
- 2.3 Based on a minimum of 18 pupils a negotiation with CCG resulted in a 25% reduction from the costs in the pilot scheme per pupil (after the first 6 pupils) compared to the current contract.
- 2.4 Chichester College Group are the only FE College who cover the majority of West Sussex.

Factors taken into account

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Legal and Financial services have been consulted and have provided input to the contractual arrangement and to ensure compliance with standing orders on contracts.
- 3.2 A dialogue has taken place with Greater Brighton Metropolitan College (GB Met) who are currently engaged in discussions about other services for the County Council at their Worthing College. GB Met are aware of the provision offered by CCG and are not currently in a position to provide a similar offer although they are developing other SEND provision.
- 3.3 No formal consultation has taken place with parents and carers, however feedback received from parents has indicated that their children have had positive outcomes from engaging with the pilot programme.

4. Financial (revenue and capital) and Resource Implications

- 4.1 Under the new contract it has been agreed that the first 6 pupils will cost £20k per pupil per year. The remaining 24 pupils will cost a reduced sum of £15k per pupil (based on a minimum of 18 pupils attending the college during the year).
- 4.2 It is likely that the number of pupils in the first year will be 18, but there is scope in the contract for this to increase to 30 over the next three years. This potentially means that the total value of the contract could be £0.480m in the first academic year, and £1.440m over the three-year period.

4.3 As per the terms of the existing contract, payments to the college will continue to be made termly in advance.

4.4 Revenue consequences of proposal.

	Current Year 2020/21 £m	Year 2 2021/22 £m	Year 3 2022/23 £m	Year 4 2023/24 £m
First 6 pupils @ £20k p.a.	0.080	0.120	0.120	0.040
Up to 24 pupils @ £15k p.a.	0.240	0.360	0.360	0.120
Total	0.320	0.480	0.480	0.160

4.5 Capital consequences - None

4.6 Future transformation, savings/efficiencies being delivered. This provision represents value for money compared to placing these pupils in the Independent Non Maintained Special School sector and results in students continuing their education in the FE college

4.7 The long term financial impact is that 90% of pupils receiving this service benefit to the extent that they remain in Further Education and do not require expensive Independent Sector post-16 solutions.

4.8 Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact – None.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The services are “light touch” schedule 3 services under Procurement and Contract Regulations (PCR) 2015, with the relevant threshold being £663,540. The proposed contract’s potential value has been taken into account within the procurement plan, resulting in approval for a ‘single tender’ approach, which takes account of the limited options for the service within the local market.

6. Risk Implications and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Not achieving the optimum service provision for pupils. Single tender procurement	Market discussions have indicated that there are currently no viable market options. Continuing discussion with the provider should address any developments to service needs.
Financial risk if CCG are unable to deliver the service	The financial risk is low as the additional pupils over and above the first 6 placements are paid for on a ‘spot’ basis based on when the placement commences.

7. Other Options Considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 7.1 Do not continue with the service. This would result in a loss of the benefits of the service outcomes for eligible pupils and the financial benefit for WSCC.
- 7.2 Only contract for a further 1 or 2 years. The reasons for a 3 year contract are set out in 2.1 above.
- 7.3 Greater Brighton Metropolitan College does have a facility in Worthing but are currently working on taking on some of the Fresh Start work currently delivered by Chichester College. They also take the Year 10 and 11 from Oak Grove College on link placements for one day a week and we are in negotiation with them to offer post-16 SEND provision for this group.

8. Equality and Human Rights Assessment

- 8.1 The service supports the Council's duty under the Equality Act to give due regard to the need to:

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

by ensuring that children with protected characteristics have the opportunity to access this provision.

9. Social Value and Sustainability Assessment

- 9.1 Not applicable.

10. Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment

- 10.1 None.

Helen Johns – Assistant Director Inclusion and SEND

Contact Officer: Linda Jones, Procurement Manager – 033 022 28559

Background papers - None