

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Tuesday, 5 May 2009

at 2.00 pm

in Committee Room A, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**
None

2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**
None

3. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**
3.1 Outcome Of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) Evaluation Process – *Director of Children's Services*
3.2 Safeguarding Children in Hartlepool – *Director of Children's Services*

4. **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**
None

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

5th May 2009



Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: Outcome Of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) Evaluation Process

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the outcome of recent evaluations of the Pre Qualification Questionnaires. To advise of the three preferred bidders for the next stage of the BSF ICT procurement.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

This report outlines the process for evaluation of the pre qualification questionnaires and the outcome of process. The report also provides details of the suppliers who submitted PQQs and the three top bidders to go through to the next stage of the process.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

It is appropriate for the Portfolio Holder to note the decision.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key.

5. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To note.

Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: OUTCOME OF BSF ICT PQQ EVALUATION PROCESS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the outcome of recent evaluations of the Pre Qualification Questionnaires. To advise of the three preferred bidders for the next stage of the BSF ICT procurement.

2. BACKGROUND

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a long-term programme of investment and change in England that will help transform education for secondary age students by providing 21st century learning environments that engage and inspire young people, their teachers and the wider community.

Hartlepool is a Wave 5 authority in the BSF programme and has recently received approval from Partnerships for Schools (PfS) for the Outline Business Case submitted in December 2008. This allows the Local Authority to proceed to the procurement phase of the project, with government funding.

An integral component of the BSF programme is Information and Communications Technology (ICT). BSF aims to provide:

- a step change in the level of ICT provision in secondary schools in England;
- buildings designed to maximise the use of ICT;
- managed ICT services which guarantee availability;
- incentives to develop the use of ICT in teaching and learning.

As part of this process the Local Authority advertised the ICT Managed Service contract via the Official Journal of the European Union on 2nd March 2009 and a tender route is being followed which provides for the following timetable:

Stage	Actual or Planned Date
OJEU Notice Published	02/03/09
Issue of Descriptive Document and Pre-	02/03/09 – 08/04/09

Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ)	
Return of PQQ	08/04/09 (noon)
Shortlist of 3 bidders confirmed	05/05/09
Issue of IPD to 3 Bidders	05 May 2009
Clarification meetings with Bidders and site visits	11 May 2009 – 16 June 2009
Return of Initial Bids	26 June 2009
Completion of evaluation of Initial Bids and deselect one Bidder	20 August 2009
Proceed to Stage 2 of the Dialogue	20 August 2009
Conclusion of Dialogue Phase	20 August 2009 – 18 September 2009
Close of Dialogue	18 September 2009
Issue of Invitation to Submit Final Bids (ITSFB)	21 September 2009
Submit Final Bids	2 October 2009
Clarification, specification and fine-tuning and evaluation of Final Bids	2 October 2009 – 23 October 2009
Notification of appointment of Selected Bidder	19 November 2009
Alcatel Standstill begins	20 November 2009 (10 days)
Clarification and confirmation of commitments	20 November 2009 – 27 November 2009
Contract Finalisation	20 November 2009 – 1 February 2010
Contract award (Financial Close)	1 February 2010
Contract commencement	1 February 2010

3. THE EVALUATION AND MODERATION PROCESS

The closing date for the return of the PQQs was the 8th April 2009. Hartlepool Borough Council received 6 PQQs which were subsequently opened at the contract scrutiny panel meeting on the 14th April. Following a compliance check exercise, all PQQs were passed to the evaluation team for consideration.

The evaluation team consisted of representatives from all secondary schools including the PRU and Catcote Special School, internal and external financial advisers, legal advisers, the external ICT adviser, colleagues from internal HR and Insurance, the BSF Strategy Manager and Head of Information, Planning and Support Services who is also acting as the lead officer for the BSF ICT Procurement.

The evaluation process took place from the 15th April and concluded on the 21st April. All of the evaluations were collated and the results presented to a moderation meeting on the 22nd April. Agreement of the top three bidders was reached at this meeting, details of which are contained in **Appendix 1. (This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (para 3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).)**

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

There is a risk of challenge by any of the companies that have not been short listed to proceed to the next stage, however, full composite copies of all documentation including the evaluations have been retained for audit purposes.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The financial considerations for this process are in relation to officer time spent on the evaluations however, the benefits of a thorough process outweigh any financial issues.

Additionally in terms of the actual procurement process, internal and external advisers have evaluated the financial accounts for all companies to ensure financial viability.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

As part of the evaluation process, internal and external legal advisers have considered the responses within the PQQ relating to any legal aspects.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

To note the top three bidders and the intention to proceed to the next stage of the procurement process.

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

5 May 2009



Report of: Director of Children's Services

**Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN
HARTLEPOOL**

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder in relation to the arrangements for safeguarding children in Hartlepool.
- 1.2 To provide an analysis of statistical information in relation to safeguarding activity between January and March 2009.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The report provides the Portfolio Holder with information on the arrangements for safeguarding children in Hartlepool. The report provides statistics of children receiving services from Safeguarding and Specialist Services including children in need (625), children subject to protection plans (81) and children looked after (155).
- 2.2 The service employs 117.5 members of staff employed to work with children and their families. The report details the current staffing structure of the service and information in relation to staff vacancies, cover arrangements and staff absence.
- 2.3 Team managers and Heads of Business Units closely monitor social work caseloads to ensure these are maintained at manageable levels and that only children receiving a service are active on social work caseloads. The service has resolved 4 complaints in the last quarter and received 1 compliment.
- 2.4 Hartlepool LSCB is the co-ordinating body that manages safeguarding arrangements in the town. The work of the LSCB is monitored

through and annual work plan. The draft priorities and work plan of the Board have been developed and will be presented to the Board for ratification in May 2009

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Children's Services issues

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Children's Services Portfolio Meeting on 5th May 2009.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of this report;

Report of: Director of Children's Services

**Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN
HARTLEPOOL**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder in relation to the arrangements for safeguarding children in Hartlepool.
- 1.2 To provide an analysis of statistical information in relation to safeguarding activity between January and March 2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report is being produced to provide the Lead Member for Children's Services with details regarding activity in relation to safeguarding children. In 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families published updated 'Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services.' This document highlights the key roles for the Lead Member (LM) which includes, amongst other things, *'ensuring a clear focus on safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of children across all agencies, especially children looked after.'* The statutory guidance details that *'In order to ensure that co-ordinated action is in place to safeguard vulnerable children, the LM should receive regular reports from the DCS about how services are being delivered.'*
- 2.2 In January 2009 a report was presented to Portfolio Holder providing activity information of the year to date, April to December 2008. This report provides information relating to the last quarter January to March 2009. A full year analysis of child protection data will be prepared for the Annual Report of the Hartlepool Local Safeguarding Children Board and presented to the Children's Trust.

Activity in Safeguarding and Specialist Services

- 2.3 As at 31 March 2009, 861 children in the town were receiving a service. Of these, 81 children were subject to protection plans, 155 children were looked after and the remaining 625 children were children in need who have complex or acute needs.

2.4 In the last quarter, a total of 242 referrals have been received by Safeguarding and Specialist Services which averages at 80 referrals a month, an increase from the previous average for the year of 78. In January 2009 a significantly higher number of referrals were received. This may, in part, be as a result of the current anxiety around safeguarding children in the light of recent high profile national reporting of individual cases. The increase in referrals in January also lead to an increase in the number of children subject to protection plans and looked after by the authority.

2.5 Three main categories under which children are referred for services are:

- Child abuse or neglect
- Family dysfunction
- Family in acute stress.

These categories account for 85% of the referrals to the service in the last quarter.

2.6 There are currently 81 children in Hartlepool who are subject to a protection plan. Compared with the figure of 62 as at 31 December 2008, this represents an increase of 23% in the last quarter. As noted above the increase in the number of children referred to the service in January 2009 has significantly impacted upon the numbers of children subject to protection plans. In January 2009, a total of 12 Initial Child Protection Conferences were held, this was a 200% increase in comparison with the same month in 2008. In January, 23 children became subject to protection plans compared with an average figure of 8.5 across the year. As the numbers of children who ceased to be subject to protection plans in January remained more in line with previous patterns, this led to a net increase in children subject to plans.

2.7 In February and March 2009, activity returned to levels more in line with the annual average. However, emerging patterns and trends are being closely monitored.

2.8 The table below details the breakdown of categories of concerns for children subject to protection plans as at 31 March 2009:

CATEGORY	NUMBER
Neglect	56
Physical Abuse	12
Emotional Abuse	8
Sexual Abuse	5

The category of neglect continues to be the main reason children become subject to protection plans (69%). In comparing with the data

provided in the last report, the increase in numbers of children subject to plans closely correlates with an increase in concern regarding neglect. National trends continue to reflect the local picture where neglect is the largest category leading to a child becoming subject to a protection plan. The issues leading the protection planning under the category of neglect most frequently arise as a result of children affected by parental substance misuse and the impact of this upon their ability to care for and meet the needs of their children. Hartlepool LSCB has recently ratified a three year 'Hidden Harm Strategy' and a revised 'Inter Agency Guidance' and 'Assessment Tool' which has been issued to support all multi agency staff working with children affected by parental substance misuse.

- 2.9 There are currently 155 children looked after by Hartlepool Council. Of these 100 children are subject to legal orders and 55 are accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. In addition, 30 children are receiving short break care on a regular basis as part of a family support package. The vast majority of these children are children with disabilities who access short break care services from Exmoor Grove.
- 2.10 Of the children looked after by Hartlepool Council, 67% live inside the council boundary and a further 17% are placed within the Tees Valley region. Of the remaining 17%, the majority are placed in the north east region. A minority of children reside in specialist residential homes or schools in other parts of the country and these placements reflect the child's needs for specialist services. The following table shows a breakdown of the placement type of children looked after by the Council.

PLACEMENT TYPE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	%
Foster care	135	87%
Residential home/school	11	7%
Placed for adoption	6	4%
Placed with Parents	2	1%
Independent Living	1	1%
Total	155	100%

Staffing

- 2.11 The service employs a total of 119.5 staff to work with children and their families. 57% of the workforce are qualified social workers, this figure increases to 64% when counting only non residential staff. The service is made up of eight social work teams led by a team manager. All the teams have a principal practitioner who deputises for the manager.

- 2.12 Within the service there are a total of 38.5 social worker posts. 21 social workers work within the 4 generic fieldwork teams and a further 16.5 social workers work within the specialist teams i.e. children with disabilities, settled care, leaving care and family placement service. One social worker post is seconded to and based within the child and adolescent mental health service.
- 2.13 The service is supported by three family resource teams plus resource workers based within the specialist teams. Each of the family resource teams has a qualified manager and there are 38 family resource workers in total. The service has one residential unit, Exmoor Grove which provides short break care for children with disabilities. This unit employs one manager, two deputy managers and 11 residential child care officers.
- 2.14 The service currently employs four social workers provided by an agency. These agency workers are being used to cover temporary vacancies of permanent staff who are acting into management posts or long term absence from work. In the last quarter, two new social workers have commenced work in the under 11's Business Unit and a further worker is due to join the service shortly. There are 2.5 vacant posts in the family placement service, it is anticipated that an advert will be made to recruit to these posts this month.
- 2.15 Staff sickness levels are fairly stable. In the year to January 2009, the average number of days sickness per employee in Safeguarding and Specialist Services was 11.34, this exceeds the departmental target of 10 whole time equivalent. This compares with a figure of 9.98 for the previous year.

Caseloads

- 2.16 The Safeguarding and Specialist Services Divisional Management meeting reviews information in relation to social workers' caseloads on a monthly basis and this information is shared with the Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive. The increase in the number of referrals received in January 2009 has had an impact on social work caseloads and there is an increased pressure on the teams. Caseloads remain within manageable levels but this is being closely monitored at present and a review is being undertaken comparing the skills and experience of field social workers with the complexity of the work they are required to undertake.

Comments, Complaints and Compliments

- 2.17 The service has in place a Complaints and Representation Procedure. In the last quarter four complaints have been resolved, two at stage one and one at stage two of the complaints procedure and one complaint was withdrawn. Two complaints remain ongoing and it is anticipated these will be resolved in the next quarter. During the

same period, one compliment has been received about social care services.

Hartlepool Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

2.18 The LSCB is the coordinating body that manages safeguarding arrangements in the town and is chaired by the Director of Children's Services. The LSCB produces an annual work plan which is implemented by the three subgroups of the Board, namely:

- Practice, Policy and Procedure Subgroup
- Quality and Performance subgroup
- Training subgroup.

2.19 The annual LSCB Development Day took place on 14 January 2009. This event was well attended and provided Board Members and other key partners, for example representatives from the voluntary sector and Children's Trust with the opportunity to review the priorities of the Board and establish key areas for activity in 2009/10. The draft annual work plan for the Board has been developed and will be presented to the Board at its meeting on 12 May 2009 for ratification. A copy of the work plan will be provided in the next regular report to the Portfolio Holder.

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no risks associated with this report as it is providing information for the Portfolio Holder.

5. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no legal or financial matters for consideration in this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of this report;

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is part of the Lead Member's leadership role to ensure the effective discharge of the authority's statutory children's services functions. As the Lead Member for Children's Services, the Portfolio Holder has a responsibility to ensure there is a clear focus on safeguarding and that co-ordinated action is in place to safeguard vulnerable children.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- DCSF (2008) 'Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services.' HMSO

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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