

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Children and Education Services
2.	Date:	16th February, 2015
3.	Title:	MISPER Service
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhood and Adult Services

5. Summary:

The current contract to undertake return interviews and provide one to one support for children and young people up to the age of 16years in Rotherham, who have run away from home or care or are at risk of doing so, will end on the 31st March, 2015. This contract is currently with the charity Safe@Last for Rotherham.

A variation to the existing contract is now required to enable the same level of service to be provided for 17 year olds. The additional funding required to deliver this is £3,266.61 (detailed at 7.3).

Sub regional commissioning across South Yorkshire for missing persons (MISPER) has taken place with the intention that a contract was in place from 1st May, 2015 until 31st March, 2018. However, the tendering process for this ended on the 30th January, 2015 and no tenders were received. Therefore further consideration will need to be given as to whether the South Yorkshire commissioning approach is the best way forward or indeed whether we should continue with local commissioning arrangements. For this reason, it is proposed that the existing contract with Safe@Last is extended for two months until 31st May, 2015 to enable no break in service.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet Member is to approve:

- 6.1 The variation to the existing contract to enable Safe@Last to provide the same level of service young people to 17 years old.**
- 6.2 An exemption from standing order 48 (contracts valued at £50,000 or more should be tendered) in accordance with Standing Order 38 (exemptions from contract standing orders) for two months to enable the longer term commissioning approach to be considered.**
- 6.3 An extension to the existing Safe@Last contract for two months until 31st May, 2015 so there is no break in service.**

7. Proposal

7.1 Background Information

One to one support is provided to children and young people in Rotherham who have run away from home or care or who are at risk of doing so. The aim of the MISPER service is to improve the outcomes for children at risk through running away. The majority of referrals to the service are from the Police.

All young people for whom a referral is received are contacted and offered a return interview and then offered ongoing support if appropriate. The young person may choose to decline an interview. The interviews provide the opportunity for project workers to discuss additional services young people can access. Young people are supported with a wide range of issues, which include family breakdown, anger issues, bereavement, self-harm, eating disorders, substance misuse, sexual exploitation, mental health issues and depression.

The current service is commissioned by RMBC for Rotherham young people. The intention was to commission across the sub region of South Yorkshire for 2015 -2018 as all local authorities currently commission separately. However, no interest has been shown in delivering this service (as at 30th January) and therefore further consideration will need to be given as to whether a South Yorkshire contract is appropriate or whether local commissioning should continue.

7.2 Current Performance of current provider - Safe@Last

For October and November 2014:-

- 65 children have been referred to the service
- 33 (50.7%) have had a return interview.

There are various reasons why young people run away, the current highest recorded reason being “to be with friends” and “family problems”.

With the permission of the young person, a copy of the return interview is sent to Children’s Social Care through the CART team to enable any potential CSE concerns/trends to be identified.

The young person has a choice with regard to an interview and unfortunately, not all return interviews are taken up despite the efforts of Safe@Last to encourage young people. It is recognised that often it is the carer that refuses the interview or the young person is uncontactable after referral. The reasons for refusal has only recently started to be collated so over time this will provide a better indication of the reasons why young people refuse to take up an interview, so actions can be taken.

7.3 Additional Provision to include 17 year olds

The current contract is for young people up to the age of 16 (as was all the MISPER contracts) in line with guidance at the time.

It is recognised that young people between the ages of 16 to 18 years are equally as vulnerable as younger children with “missing” being a trigger for CSE. Safe@Last have recognised that the needs of 17 year olds will be different and they propose to appoint an additional project worker to provide the same level of service to 17 year olds in Rotherham. They are unable to provide this within the existing contract due to the lack of capacity. Therefore a variation to the existing contract to include 17 year olds is required. The funding has been agreed by the Director of Safeguarding

CYPS. The cost to deliver the service to 17 year olds from January 2015 to March 2015 (13 weeks) is:-

Salary – Project Worker	£2145.00
NICS	£172.00
Travel	£341.25
YP Food and drinks	£50.00
Management	£266.00
Admin	£292.36
Total	£3, 266.61

7.4 **Waiver of Standing Orders 48- South Yorkshire Missing Persons (MISPER)**

The MISPER service is required by all local authorities in South Yorkshire. The commissioning group includes representatives from the four Local Authorities, South Yorkshire Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This group was to enable a South Yorkshire MISPER Service to be commissioned through an open tender process. It was the intention that this contract would be awarded from 1st May 2015. The funding for this South Yorkshire MISPER contract is based on the current year's funding within each organisation, at a total value of £106,000.

A waiver of Standing Order 48 is required to cover the time required to determine the best approach going forward to either recommission for a South Yorkshire service or continue with a locally commissioned service. No other provider could offer this service for the two months and provide the same level of value for money.

8. **Finance**

The additional finance to provide a MISPER service to 17 year olds until the 31st March, 2015 is £3266.61. The annual cost to deliver the South Yorkshire MISPER Service for Rotherham will remain at £12,000 per annum.

9. **Risks and Uncertainties**

Should the waiver of Standing Order 48 not be agreed the service will not be provided for 2 months and young people will not be supported should they run away.

10. **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Children and Young People's Plan 2013 -2016

11. **Background Papers and Consultation**

Safe@Last Contract 2014/15. The additional provision has been discussed with Safe@Last.

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