

**TO: DIRECTOR, CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING
17 JULY 2017**

**COMMUNITY LEARNING: EXTENSION OF SUBCONTRACTS
Head of Community Learning**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To gain approval for the extension of contracts for the delivery of community learning programmes by subcontractors for the year 2017-18.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Bracknell Forest Community Learning has contracts with Involve and Bracknell Forest Homes for the delivery of community learning programmes for the period 1 August 2015 – to 31 July 2017. Payment is based on the number of learners taking part in programmes. The maximum annual payment to each subcontractor is £12,500.
- 2.2 Due to uncertainties about continued funding for Community and Adult Learning by the Education and Skills Funding Agency in 2017-18, it has not been possible to re-tender for the future provision of services. As provided for under the terms of the Agreements it is proposed that each of the contracts be extended by one year for the period 1 August 2017 – 31 July 2018.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **to agree to the extension of existing contracts as provided for, for the period 1 August 2017 – 31 July 2018.**

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 It had been anticipated that there would be significant changes to ESFA funding for Community and Adult Learning for 2017-18 and work on re-tendering was delayed until funding arrangements were confirmed. Confirmation was received very late and due to other pressures associated with staffing and improving services in response to the Ofsted inspection of Community Learning in 2016, there was insufficient time and resources to re-tender.
- 4.2 Involve and Bracknell Forest Homes are contracted to provide programmes that meet the needs the third sector, community organisations and volunteers in the community. Such provision supports all six of the Council's six strategic themes, in particular ensuring people have the skills and education opportunities they need (in turn supporting a strong and resilient economy) and ensuring people live active and healthy lives. By supporting the third sector and community organisations it also contributes to the development of strong, safe and self-reliant communities. Provision compliments that offered by the Council and under the terms of the Agreements should not duplicate any courses offered by the Council directly.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Provision could be brought in-house. This would reduce costs associated with contract management but would increase administration costs and costs associated with quality assurance of in-house provision. Contracting out this provision increases the likelihood of reaching targeted learners and provides opportunities for the third sector and community organisations to develop and build capacity.

6 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 6.1 The current contracts were let in 2015 and cover the period 1st August 2015 – to 31st July 2017. Each of the contracts contains provision for the contract to be extended at the discretion of the Council for no more than one year from the end of the initial term.
- 6.2 Detailed service specifications and arrangements for contract management are set out in the relevant contracts. Subcontractors and tutors employed by them are routinely monitored by Community Learning and are subject to inspection by Ofsted. Community Learning managers are working with subcontractors to ensure that recent improvements in services offered directly are mirrored in services offered by subcontractors.
- 6.3 In 2015-16, 439 learners enrolled on a total of 568 courses offered through sub-contractors . Number of learners and payments to each subcontractor are set out below (figures for 2016-17 are not yet available).

Provider	Number of learners	Payment
Involve	251	£12,550
Bracknell Forest Homes	188	£ 9,400
Total	439	£ 21,950

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The extension is permissible under the Contract and our Contract Standing Orders. Contract extensions up to the value of £100k. may be signed by the Director.

Borough Treasurer

- 7.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that sufficient resources exist to fund the costs of the contracts.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 Delivery of services by subcontractors significantly increases the “reach” of service provision. This is particularly true of older residents of Bracknell Forest Homes and those with other disabilities.

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

8.1 Initial discussions have taken place with subcontractors and they are aware of proposals to extend their existing contracts.

The views of learners are routinely monitored through course evaluations and are consistently positive in terms of quality of provision by subcontractors.

Method of Consultation

8.2

Representations Received

8.3

Background Papers

Contact for further information

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Approved by Nikki Edwards
Director, Children, Young People & Learning

Signature.....

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