



Walsall Council

**REPORT OF THE:
Education and Children's
Services Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

**DATE:
06.11.17**

**REF.NO:
CG/PAF/E&CSOS**

TITLE OF THE MATTER CALLED-IN:

Award of new contract for 0-19 early help locality services

DATE CONSIDERED BY CABINET: 25 October 2017

CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor A. Nawaz

**DATE OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY AND
OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING:** 6 November 2017

Grounds under which the matter was called in for scrutiny:

The following reasons were provided on the Call-in form notice 31 October 2017:

1. The above award has raised concerns and many local residents are asking questions of the tendering process.
2. For the benefit of openness, transparency and justice we are seeking the calling –in of the Cabinet decision to be reviewed.

This was signed by Councillor M. Nazir, Councillor S. Ditta, Councillor H. Sarohi, Councillor N. Gultasib and Councillor E. Russell.

Record here the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's conclusions and proposals:

The Committee received representation from four of the five Councillors who had signed the Call-in notice. The Committee also received representations from three community members, and those members of the public present at the meeting were invited to ask questions. With respect to the latter, a question was asked by the current manager of the Palfrey Community Association. A number of questions had also been posed in correspondence received from Valerie Vaz, MP.

The Committee considered the matter in detail and it received expert legal and technical explanations in relation to the entirety of the procurement process, including the consultation undertaken, preparation of the tender specification, advertising and notification of the tender, and the evaluation methodology and process. The Committee concluded that the process was fair, open and transparent, that it had been correctly adhered to, and that none of the organisations tendering for the contract had been disadvantaged.

There was also discussion by the Committee in relation to adherence in this matter to the principles and policies of the Corporate Plan (2017). It was noted that the links to the corporate plan priorities had been set out in paragraphs 4.1.1 to 4.1.4 of the report to Cabinet on 25 October 2017 and the links to the Marmot principles at 10.3 of the same report. However, some Committee Members expressed doubt that there was full compliance with the principles contained within the Corporate Plan and requested that the Cabinet review the decision's compliance with the Corporate Plan and Marmot principles. An example of non-compliance was given from the penultimate paragraph of page 8 of the Corporate Plan that emphasises the importance of working with the local voluntary and community sector, designing services around local need and empowering communities to support themselves.

Record here the specific recommendations of the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

That the decision be referred back to the Cabinet to ensure that the decision is in line with the principles and policies of the Corporate Plan and, if not, to agree to re-tender the contract with specific direction that all tenders must be in line with the Corporate Plan directives and Marmot principles.

Explain here how the proposals/recommendations of the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee differ from those of Cabinet:

The recommendation provided above is that, in the view of the representations from those Councillors signing the Call-in notice and from members of the local community, and in the light of the Committee's comprehensive discussion of the procurement process, the Cabinet should be requested to review its decision to ensure that there is no doubt that it is compliant with the principles and policies of the Corporate Plan and of the Marmot principles.

This form provides an accurate record of the meeting of the above named Committee.

Chair of Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Councillor C. Towe

Signature:

Date: 9 November 2017

