

Record of Officer Decision

Decision title:	Habilitation Service for Visually Impaired Children
Date of decision:	14 November 2018
Decision maker:	Director for Children and Families
Authority for delegated decision:	As per the Children and families scheme of delegation (line 49) the Director for children and families; Assistant Director Education Development and Skills; and the Head of Learning and Achievement may carry out this duty to ensure that they keep arrangements for Special Educational Needs provision under review as defined under the Education Act 1996 Part IV, Chapter 1 (sections 312-332B) and Schedules 26 and 27. Secondary - The Education (Special Educational Needs) (England) (Consolidation) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/3455).
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Consultation was undertaken with subject leads to ensure the service specification is in line with relevant duties and will meet local need. An open procurement exercise was undertaken to give providers willing to deliver the service an opportunity to quote for provision.
Decision made:	The contract to provide Mobility and Independent Living Skills support to children and young people with a visual impairment is awarded to Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. It is for a period of 3 years from 1 November 2017 to 31 October 2020 at a cost of £18,000.00 (£6,000.00 per year) with the option to extend for a further 2 years.
Reasons for decision:	<p>A procurement exercise has been undertaken by the Councils Procurement Department asking for organisations to provide a quote to deliver the service on our behalf, due to the complexity of the service delivery requirements only one quote was received and it was evaluated against the service specification and felt that it met all the value for money requirements.</p> <p>Section 19 of the Children and Families Act (2014) states that for children and young people with SEN, Local Authorities must pay particular attention to supporting children's development and helping them to achieve the best possible outcomes. The provision of Mobility and Independent Living Skills enables the council to meet this duty for children with a visual impairment.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	The lack of a quality habilitation service for children with an Education Health and Care Plan may result in them not receiving Mobility and Independent Living Skills support which is vital for their future independence. If it is written in to their Plan that specific habilitation support is required, the absence of this may result in the Local Authority being unable to provide for a pupil in a maintained school, so an out-of-county specialist placement may be requested by parents.

Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Specialist Habilitation could be purchased on a spot-purchase basis for individual pupils as required, however there would be no guaranteed continuity of provision, different staff may be provided each time, making it difficult for pupil, parents and school to build a working relationship; and will be a more expensive approach to meeting need.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	N/A

Signed:

Date: 14 November 2018