

PURPOSE: Key decision**MEETING:** Cabinet**DATE:** 01 November 2022

TITLE	SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) contract	
Ward(s)	City Wide	
Author: Gail Rogers	Job title: Head of Service, Children’s Commissioning	
Cabinet lead: Cllr Asher Craig - Deputy Mayor - Children Services, Education and Equalities	Executive Director lead: Hugh Evans – Executive Director, People	
Proposal origin: BCC Staff		
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet		
Purpose of Report: This report seeks approval for a new contract to deliver the statutory SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). The new contract will be for an initial 2 years from the 1 st of April 2023 – 31 st of March 2025, with the option to extend a further 12 months up to 31 st of March 2026.		
Evidence Base		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bristol City Council has a legislative duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to provide impartial, confidential, and accessible information, advice and support to the parents of children with special educational needs and/or disability; as well as to young people (age 16+) with special educational needs and/or disability. This includes advice on education, social care and health related topics. This duty is met by the SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) contract 2. Section 2 of the SEND Code of Practice sets out the requirements for Local authorities in providing information, advice and support (IAS). It states that, “Information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service.” 3. The contract will be commissioned in line with the 2019 National Minimum Standards for SEND Information, Advice and Support Services. The Standards are co-produced with the DfE, DHSC, Information Advice and Support Service managers, families, Local Authorities and the chair of the IASP board. The 21 standards prescribe how the service should delivered. 4. The service delivers impartial, confidential, and accessible information, advice and support to the parents of children with special educational needs and/or disability and to young people (age 0-25) with special educational needs and/or disability. 5. Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (BNSSG ICB) will work in collaboration to jointly commission a regional service. Bristol City Council will be the lead commissioner. 6. The annual budget for the regional service will be £331,492. Bristol’s annual contribution will be £140,000, (ICB contribution of £42,642 included). The combined spending commitment for 3 years is £994,476. Bristol’s spending commitment for 3 years is £420,000. 7. The contract will deliver a year-round a flexible service which is open during normal office hours, including a direct helpline, 24-hour answer machine and call back service and signposting service. The service will have a website and social media presence, with accessible, accurate and impartial information available. The service will work to ensure young people with SEND have equal educational opportunities, provide support to parents, young people and professionals. 8. As of January 2022, there were 63,254 children on roll in Bristol schools and 11,689 pupils with special educational needs (SEN). 3,639 children and young people (0–25-year-olds) in Bristol have an EHCP. Around a third of EHCPs are for young people over the age of 16. The support service offered needs to work directly 		

with these young people, and a suitable offer made available to them.

9. The current contract is performing well. Key Performance Indicators have been met or exceeded:
 - a. Ensure SENDIAS provides a high-quality IAS service to the target audience.
 - b. Accessible branded information, promotional material and website.
 - c. Range of IAS and advocacy support (including through SEND processes and Tribunals) offered.
 - d. Engage young people parent / carers and families and other key stakeholders in service design / delivery.
 - e. Strategic partnership working and ensuring young people with SEND and their families are well represented at strategic levels.
 - f. Implement regional and national learning to improve the service.
10. The service is well regarded amongst parents, carers and young people:
 - a. Of the 1000 telephone service users who agreed to give feedback, 99% said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received. (Target is 80%)
 - b. Of the 710 who agreed to give feedback, 97% said they could access the service when the needed and in the way they wanted. (Target is 90%)
 - c. Of the 111 face to face service users who agreed to give feedback, 100% said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received. (Target is 90%)
11. Feedback from families in the Long Service User Satisfaction Survey (SUSS):
 - a. Over 70% felt more confident and 45% had a better understanding of the Send Code of Practice
 - b. *"I have made a number of calls to your service and received really helpful advice"; "Very friendly and I always leave the call feeling reassured"; "I was very happy and now feel more informed"*
12. The number of young people receiving direct IAS work is increasing and is on track to be above target in the current financial year. The service is undertaking outreach work in diverse communities and the % of BAME service users worked with is above target.
13. The Local Area Joint Commissioning strategy for SEND sets out how we will work together with NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board plan, commission and deliver services in a holistic and joined up way across education, health and care. The SENDIAS Service is a clear example of this. The commissioning strategy commits us to recommission SENDIASS.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Authorise Executive Director of People in consultation with the Deputy Mayor with responsibility for Children's Services, Education and Equalities, to take all steps required to jointly commission with partner authorities and enter into a regional SEND Information, Advice and Support Service for 2+1 years from the 1st of April 2023.
2. Note the consultation report at Appendix B.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

1. Equality and Inclusion. The service will support children with special education needs to achieve their full potential and further engage them in education.
2. Children and Young People. The service will equip children and young people with the skills and tools to live fulfilling, successful and rewarding lives.
3. Health, Care and Well-being The service will empower children and young people with special education needs to access health services and advocate for themselves.
4. Economy and Skills. The service will help young people to understand their employment rights and will keep them informed to enable them to access education and employment.

City Benefits:

1. This service will improve outcomes for children and young people and their families by supporting them to understand their rights, engage with services and decisions about their care and empower them to challenge services where appropriate.
2. SENDIASS has a strategic function in bringing together other services in the Bristol SEND community. The service also works collaboratively with organisations outside of the city boundaries to improve knowledge and understanding of inclusion.

Consultation Details:

Consultation has taken place with the current provider and the relevant BCC SEND, legal and procurement staff members.

Engagement workshops were run with the children and young people with SEND and with parent carers. A Public consultation has taken place.

Background Documents:

[SEND code of practice](#), [National Minimum Standards](#), [SEND Commissioning Strategy](#)

Revenue Cost	<p>Bristol: £140,000 PA (including £42642 pa contribution from BNSSG ICB) £420,000 total</p> <p>South Glos £86,792 PA £260,376 total</p> <p>North Somerset: £104,700 PA £314,100 total</p> <p>Combined cost over 3 years: £994,476</p>	Source of Revenue Funding	BCC Children, Families and Safer Communities and Education and Skills.
Capital Cost	£0	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>			

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**1. Finance Advice:**

This report seeks approval to procure and award a new contract to deliver the statutory SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS). The new contract will be for an initial 2 years from the 1st of April 2023 – 31st of March 2025, with the option to extend a further 12 months up to 31st of March 2026.

As outlined in the report, Bristol is joining with local partners (North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and the BNSSG ICB) to commission and fund the contract. The estimated value of the contract and partner contributions are as follows:

Table 1 Estimated Cost and Funding Contributions

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 (potential extension)	TOTAL
	2023/24	2024/2025	2025/2026	
Estimated Value	£331,492	£331,492	£331,492	£994,476
Partner Contributions				
Bristol City Council	£97,358	£97,358	£97,358	£292,074
BNSSG ICB	£42,642	£42,642	£42,642	£127,926
South	£86,792	£86,792	£86,792	£260,376

Gloucestershire				
North Somerset	£104,700	£104,700	£104,700	£314,100
TOTAL	£331,492	£331,492	£331,492	£994,476

The Bristol City Council annual cost of £97,358 is fully funded and will be met from general fund by a £42,642 contribution from Children, Family and Communities and £54,716 from Education budgets. The procurement will need to be met from within this budget envelope.

Finance Business Partner: Denise Hunt, 12 October 2022

2. Legal Advice: The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements. The consultation responses must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the decision. There must be clear evidence that the decision maker has considered the consultation responses, or a summary of them, before taking its decision.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor Legal, 19 October 2022

3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT in regards to this activity.

IT Team Leader: Gavin Arbuckle – Head of Service Improvement and Performance, 12 August 2022

4. HR Advice: There are no significant HR issues arising from this report.

HR Partner: Lorna Laing HR Business Partner, 22 August 2022

EDM Sign-off	Hugh Evans	7 September 2022
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr Asher Craig	29 September 2022
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	3 rd October 2022

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	NO
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	YES
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO