DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS – DIRECT AWARD TO PLAYGROUPS REGISTERED WITH THE CARE INSPECTORATE WITHIN WEST LOTHIAN

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council Executive approval to make a direct award to local playgroups who are registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide funded placements to children aged two years from eligible households.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council Executive approves an initial award to local playgroups who are registered with the Care Inspectorate to the value of £40,000 and up to two further annual awards of the same value to a total of £120,000 over the total three year period. Successive awards will be subject to ongoing funding provision and officer satisfaction with the service provided.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable, making best use of our resources.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Direct awards will be made in accordance with Standing Orders of West Lothian Council and the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	None.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The budget of £40,000 is included within the approved 2018/19 revenue budget for Education Services.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP / Executive Committee**	None.

VIII Other consultations None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to provide 600 hours of early education and childcare for 2 year old children from eligible households from August 2014. Education Executive on 10 June 2014 approved the recommendation that places for 2 year olds should be sought from a mix of providers.

The Scottish Government estimated in 2014 that with a 70% uptake, places for 237 children would be required across the Council area for 2014/15, rising to 600 in 2015/16 (when the eligibility criteria was extended to those households in receipt of free school meals). A number of places have been provided within Council establishments but this cannot accommodate all potential applications and alternative provision is required, including child minders, playgroups and local family centres which receive grant funding by the Council.

Demand for places has remained low over the last four years and total expenditure across playgroups/childminders for eligible two year old placement has averaged only £30,000 per annum.

However, this award will enable the Council to continue to offer parents/carers more choice of care in those areas where there is no Council run facility and provide a local playgroup/family centre to be offered as an alternative.

Individual places are 'commissioned' as required at the local playgroup (£3.63 per hour) and childminders (cost per place £4 per hour x 600hours = £2,400) as agreed by Education PDSP/Executive in 2014. Whilst the annual value of £40,000 is within the Head of Corporate Services delegated approval level, the aggregated value of this request exceeds that delegated threshold. Accordingly, Council Executive approval is sought for the total requirement.

D.2 Budget Allocation

The budget for year one (£40,000) is included within the approved 2018/19 revenue budget for Education Services.

E. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the Council Executive approves the direct award to local playgroups who are registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide funded placements for children aged two years from eligible households across West Lothian.

The budget of £40,000 is included within the approved 2018/19 revenue budget for Education Services, and up to two further annual awards of the same value to a total of £120,000 over the total three year period. Successive awards will be subject to ongoing funding provision and officer satisfaction with the service provided.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments:

None

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