**School Forum**

**7**

**17th March 2015**

**Secondary Schools Counselling Service**

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| **Lead Officer** | **Mary Kearney Knowles / Mike Bowden** |
| **Contact details** | **Mary\_Kearney-Knowles@bathnes.gov.uk** |
| **Forum asked to decide / steer / be informed** | **To update the forum on the planned award of the project**  |
| **Time Needed** | **5 mins** |

Bath and North East Somerset Council have recently commenced a commissioning process for the provision of a 1 year pilot counselling service for secondary schools (Secondary Schools Counselling Service). This is further to the identification of need due to a rise in both local and national levels of emotional distress and mental ill health in the 0-18/ 25 population. The budget for the pilot was confirmed by the Schools Forum on 27th January 2015.

The proposed service aims to establish a system of school based counsellors, supported by mental health practitioners from the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). There is currently a counselling service in place for children in primary schools across B&NES, with the current provider and providers who expressed an interest during the commissioning of this service (6 in total) being invited to submit a quote for the proposed secondary service.

On 12th February 2015 the final specification was sent to the potential providers. Concurrently the specification was also issued to selected stakeholders (school heads, CAMHS representatives and potential young person participants) with an invitation to participate in the commissioning evaluation panel for the proposed service. The panel was eventually formed to include representatives of B&NES (Specialist and Children’s Health Commissioning), CAMHS and a young person participant.

The panel will convene on 20th March to select a provider from the bids submitted. Further to this B&NES hope to award the contract on or around 23rd March, with the service to commence from 1st April 2015.