

**Report of Area Head of Targeted Services**

**Report to Director of Children's Services**

**Date: 23 December 2014**

**Subject: "Family Valued"- staffing and resources to implement DfE Innovations Fund Bid**



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. With significant partnership, council and cross-party support, Leeds made a bid to the DfE Innovations Fund on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014 for £4.85 million for our proposal titled 'Family Valued: A Restorative Approach to Transforming the Children's Social Care System'. On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015 the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed that (subject to Ministerial sign-off) the full Leeds bid has been approved and arrangements will be made shortly to transfer funds. Spend can take place between 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. Leeds City Council is the prime recipient of the grant, but is required to allocate resources across the partnership and work at pace.
2. To realise our restorative ambitions we need to invest in the continued training and development of our workforce across the partnership, expand family group conferencing and provide enhanced services for parents and children to address some of the most challenging issues.
3. The report contains proposals to secure staffing and service resources, both internally and externally, to enable the swift implementation of the Leeds Innovations Fund Bid. It covers additional staff in the FGC Service and workforce development, enhanced interventions put in place through external providers, and support for programme management and evaluation.

**Recommendations**

4. The Director of Children's Services is asked to:

Approve the proposals contained in this report to secure staff resources and give permission to procure enhanced services to enable the swift implementation of the Leeds Innovations Fund Bid.

## **Purpose of this report**

The report outlines proposals for the implementation of the staffing and service resource changes in the Leeds Innovations Fund Bid 'Family Valued: A Restorative Approach to Transforming the Children's Social Care System'.

### **1 Background information**

- 1.1 Leeds has an ambition to be the best city in the UK, the best city for children and young people, a child friendly city. We are working with our partners to ensure that all children and young people have the best outcomes wherever they are born or grow up in the city. Through our bid to the Innovations Fund we now want to do more to support our ambition. An executive summary of the Innovations Fund Bid is attached along with a glossary of the letters of support from partners (appendix one).
- 1.2 The bid represents a real opportunity to elevate the tried and tested approaches of restorative practice and family group conferencing to the position of service system-changes.
- 1.3 By investing in different ways of working *with* families not doing things 'to them or for them', we believe we are in a unique position to renegotiate the social contract between local government and local citizens, empowering families themselves to access previously untapped resources to help tackle challenging issues, giving them genuine involvement and influence in decisions that affect their lives.
- 1.4 Our approach is captured in the following statements of intent agreed by the Children and Families Trust Board and adopted as policy statements:
  - 1.4.1 *The default behaviour of children's services in all its dealings with local citizens/partners and organisations will be a restorative one - high support with high challenge*
  - 1.4.2 *Children's Services in Leeds will ensure that families, whose children might otherwise be removed from their homes, are supported to meet and develop an alternative plan before such action is taken*
  - 1.4.3 *For all families where a plan or decision needs to be made to help safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or children, the family will be supported to help decide what needs to happen*
- 1.5 The commitment from our partners is strong. The Children and Families Trust Board have fully endorsed the innovation bid and have committed to supporting the approach to Leeds becoming a restorative city. The letters of support in the bid include: Cross-party political support from local political leaders; Key implementation partners: Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, NHS Leeds and Leeds Community Healthcare, schools, the third sector, the courts and the three Leeds universities; Key partnership bodies: The Leeds Health and Well-being Board and Safer Leeds: the Leeds Community Safety Partnership; International and academic partners: Paul Nixon (Chief Social Worker, New Zealand) and Kate Morris (Professor of Social Work University of Nottingham);

Key supporters: The Yorkshire Evening Post newspaper and the Leeds Rugby Foundation.

## **2 Main issues**

### **2.1 Making Leeds a Restorative City**

2.2 To realise our restorative ambitions we need to invest in the continued training and development of our workforce and expand family group conferencing into more areas where it can make a difference and help address some of the most challenging issues. We plan to use the innovation fund to achieve this as outlined below. The timeline of the Innovation Fund award will require rapid implementation of service change alongside intensive service redesign achieved at pace and with the maximum of flexibility. The governance arrangements for the proposals detail the membership of the shadow programme management team chaired by the Director of Children's Services. This paper identifies the main decisions required to achieve this change.

### **2.3 *Expand the offer of a Family Group Conference to more families, including those affected by domestic abuse:***

2.4 Family Group Conferencing is at the heart of the restorative approach being adopted in Leeds to reduce the need for children to become looked after. Family Group Conferencing aims to support families to develop their own solutions to the difficulties they may be facing.

2.5 From our previous expansion of the service we now have a structure with three area teams and a total of 22 FGC Co-ordinators. We also have a pool of sessional staff doing a small number of additional FGCs for us to support service flexibility.

2.6 Our innovation proposal is to significantly (further) expand the service and target a proportion of delivery to challenge the pattern of domestic violence in the city and the impact this has on families. This will require additional resources. These will include appropriate FGC management and administration support and additional FGC co-ordinator roles in line with the current model, posts and grading. The principle of three area based teams will be retained however specialism of some staff to a dedicated domestic violence role will be considered as part of the next stage of design. The resource will be a major contributor within the corporate priority ("breakthrough project") to reduce domestic violence in the city.

2.7 This will enable us to make a FGC service offer to families along the following lines:

**Supporting families with significant safeguarding concerns** - This will build on our current FGC offer to families in Leeds. Our aim is to offer an FGC to all families with unborn babies and children at risk of care and all families where Initial Child Protection Conferences are planned. We anticipate 90 -100 referrals per month to the service, with around 60 per month taken up by families.

**Supporting families affected by domestic violence and abuse** - we are developing a pathway to support families affected by domestic abuse. Our aim is to offer a FGC to families with unborn babies and children at risk because of domestic violence and abuse. This will link in with existing and planned DV support services for families, women, men and children. We anticipate around 60 referrals per month to the service, with around 30 families taking up the offer each month initially.

**Supporting family re-unification** – improving the support given to children (and their families) to return home from care wherever appropriate and support children in care to develop improved relationships with their family. We anticipate supporting around 10 families per month with this service, linked to other support services such as kinship care support.

- 2.8 At this design stage we are planning to broadly double the FGC service offer in the city if the bid is supported in full. An outline of the broad staffing proposals for the FGC service is summarised in Appendix two.
- 2.9 ***Flexibly train more frontline practitioners across the children’s workforce to use restorative approaches***
- 2.10 Key to achieving the whole-system change that we want to bring about in Leeds is embedding restorative practices deeper into and further across the children’s workforce. This is a culture change model for the whole partnership of services in Leeds. The bid outlines the three tier model of training we wish to implement, which builds on the positive progress we have already made. Awareness training for an estimated 4,500 staff, from child-minders to police officers will get the city talking about restorative practice and plant the seed of an alternative approach, creating the conditions for a new, common language and shared way of working. Deep dive training will target those colleagues going into homes or settings with more direct day-to-day contact with vulnerable families. It will give them a series of practical tools to start using restorative practice in their daily work. ‘Train the trainer’ courses will create a highly skilled group of multi-agency professionals equipped to train their colleagues in restorative practices, with an expectation that they will do so beyond the life of the innovation funding and therefore underpinning the sustainability of the training model. Collectively this package will create a sense of purpose and understanding and a commonality of approach across the city that has the potential to transform our work with families.
- 2.11 In order to do this it will be necessary to both retain suitably skilled expertise of recognised national / international credibility to pump prime a programme of skills expansion. We require permission to procure a flexible framework contract which will allow external delivery capacity to be drawn down to Leeds on an ‘as needed’ basis. We will also need to increase internal resources and will recruit and train a temporary training manager, training co-ordinators (up to 15) and support team (up to 4).
- 2.12 Given the requirement in the bid to train in volume, at pace and as a city multi-agency partnership, flexibility of venues for training will be a critical success factor. It is therefore recommended that venue choice and hiring will be conducted on the

basis of best value, partnership work and impact on the progress of the innovation bid plan. Specifically this recommendation means that training delivery funded by a successful DfE innovation grant will waiver usual restrictions limiting use of venues to those owned by Leeds City Council. We will, however, seek to use Leeds City Council or bid partner venues where possible.

- 2.13 Appendix Two summarises the anticipated staffing proposals to enable this workforce development over the lifetime of the programme, subject to the agreement of the design team considering the finer details of this proposal. This includes permission to flexibly procure external resources on an 'as needed' basis.
- 2.14 *Redesign our response to domestic violence using FGC and enhanced services for families***
- 2.15 The innovation bid proposes changing the current system of response to one of the most challenging issues facing Leeds communities - domestic violence in families. Current support services have focused in the main on the individual experiencing violence and ensuring their wellbeing and safety. In families this is typically the mother. This provides positive victim/survivor support but often fails to account for the system roles in a domestically violent or abusive relationship and fails to assess abusive partners. This has the consequence that victims often maintain contact with existing or fresh perpetrators, and 'separation as safety' frequently fails to be a strategy chosen or adopted by families however preferable it may appear to professionals.
- 2.16 Commissioning support against a FGC plan in a restorative context will fundamentally move away from a compartmentalised and professional values response. Instead, families affected by family violence and abuse will consider how each family member needs to be supported in future. This is likely to have more positive impacts on behaviour change, maternal and paternal mental health, along with the ability of the direct and wider family to manage the impact on children of domestic violence and support children with their behavioural and emotional needs. It will recognise the individualised needs of each party (including physical and emotional safety) and their interaction.
- 2.17 Component interventions with an evidence base will be used in commissioning specifications for services for children, mothers and perpetrators but with a requirement to work in collaboration with each other and the FGC plan. They will include:-
- Services targeting victims/survivors/ mothers will utilise safety planning, support for communication with their children and psychotherapeutic intervention,
  - Services for children that raise capacity for safety planning, resilience and emotional support at the centre of an individualised approach but also see children as an influential shaper of perpetrator and victim/survivor support services.
  - Services for perpetrators will blend the research base on core therapies such as cognitive behavioural interventions with a focus on gender equalities, with restorative practice/justice interventions.

- 2.18 Early pregnancy provides a unique opportunity to work with families where motivation to change is high and therefore a strand of the above approach will focus on targeting families in the pre-birth period.
- 2.19 Skills and capacity to implement the above programme are not currently present to the quantity required within the council workforce. To meet the timescales and ambition of the innovation bid, permission is therefore sought to procure up to £1M of external services to action the above model (across the service responses detailed).

## **2.20 *Co-ordination, oversight and evaluation of the programme***

- 2.21 In order to provide effective programme and project management and performance monitoring the following additional staffing proposals are included in the bid: appointing a temporary Programme Manager, a Project Officer and a Programme Administrator.
- 2.22 Appendix two summarises the staffing proposals to enable effective programme management and monitoring to take place.

## **2.23 *Implementation Arrangements***

- 2.24 As indicated in the bid and the accompanying Implementation Plan, implementation needs to progress at pace to maximise the funding opportunity from the DfE resources for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 and support the invest-to-save elements covered in the bid.
- 2.25 Over this period the budget implications for the local authority and partners will provide a challenging climate for implementation of the innovation plans with risks to staffing levels and structures in some services. Mitigation of risks to staff will require full use of the flexibilities that are available to LCC as an employer to promote expedited applications to test skills against the requirements of the innovation roles. Similarly it is likely that the authority will need to procure in a flexible approach recognising skills and jobs in the city at risk which may contribute to the innovation bid implementation.
- 2.26 In order to offer opportunities for staff across a number of service areas who may be affected by service change we are working with the Resourcing Team to identify any opportunities for staff at risk and also proposing to advertise these opportunities to staff across children's services in the first instance and arrange open days for staff. We will ask staff interested in these opportunities to fill in a shortened application form to register their interest and these will then be followed up with assessment centres and offers of employment to successful candidates. Any outstanding vacancies would then be progressed in line with existing arrangements for filling posts. It is believed this approach will support workforce development and retention and also fit with the new flexibility protocol introduced across the council on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

- 2.27 Initial discussions with services, HR and Finance have taken place and the initial target dates for the proposals are identified below to support service planning. The Deputy Head of HR is identifying key HR contacts to provide support throughout the recruitment process. The Programme Team will maintain oversight of implementation and have supported the integrated approach in this bid to bring the staffing opportunities together and progress with recruitment as soon as possible once the bid has been presented to the DfE Panel.

Issue	Target Date
Bid development and final submission	9/12/14
Further work on bid and service design	December / January
Compilation of report, informal consultation, discussions with HR and Finance	December / January
Discussions with staff, unions, stakeholders in children's services	December / January
Director Decision published and call in period commences	Early January
Director Decision subject to call in and expected to be implemented after	26/01/2015
Open days for staff to outline opportunities and outline proposed steps for recruitment	January
Internal recruitment process commences - staff complete shortened application for posts	From 19/01/15
Internal recruitment processes completed for each type of post	February/March
Outstanding vacancies discussed with HR and arrangements progressed	February/March
Induction and training programme developed	January / February
Induction and training programme delivered	From February
Most staff start in post from	13/04/15 – 05/05/15
Accommodation, ICT and office set up for new posts	January- March

### **3 Corporate Considerations**

#### **3.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 3.2 Previous consultation exercises with staff, unions and stakeholders have shown support for the further development of FGC work and restorative approaches and there has been support for the proposals and the additional expansion of these services at a time of considerable financial pressure on services and budget cuts in other services.
- 3.3 Consultation and engagement regarding the proposals has taken place with a range of services and partners and there is strong support for the bid as indicated in the letters of support for the Innovations Bid received to date.



3.4 Further discussions with staff in existing services are taking place and staff will be invited to open days to learn more about the opportunities available. The proposals will be discussed with the unions through JSG meetings.

### **3.5 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

3.6 A number of strands of activity in the bid have equality impact assessment work in place or planned.

3.7 An initial Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening is attached as appendix three and this is being developed further. This will be reported to and monitored by the Programme Team.

3.8 Colleagues from HR are supporting the process to expand the services identified. HR input will ensure there are no adverse impacts to specific groups of staff as a result of the proposed service developments.

### **3.9 Council policies and City Priorities**

3.10 The proposed developments fit with the vision for Leeds to be a child friendly city, with change being driven through using restorative approaches.

3.11 There is a strong connection with the obsession to safely and appropriately reduce the need for children to be looked after in the city along with contributions to other obsessions relating to school attendance and NEET. The council has recently agreed a 'collective agreement' which brings some changes to terms and conditions of employment. These changes took effect from 1 December 2014 and will save the council money on staffing, and help to protect jobs and services as we enter our most difficult and challenging year in this period of austerity and cuts to our funding.

3.12 Through working closely with HR, the Innovations Bid will seek to utilise the new 'flexibility protocol' to support staff deployment to service opportunities, thereby reducing the need for external recruitment or agency costs, as well as reducing the likelihood of staff in other services being at risk of redundancy.

### **3.13 Resources and value for money**

3.14 The innovations bid contains comprehensive information on programme spend, implementation plans and financial modelling. A senior officer from Finance is part of the Programme Team and this will support effective utilisation and monitoring of resources along with future considerations relating to sustainability.

3.15 The expansion of restorative approaches in Leeds and the specific work to achieve this within the innovation fund bid are integral to a wider strategy for changing the relationship between the state and its citizens and making Leeds the best city to grow up in. Strategically, therefore we have widespread commitment to making this work a success, which is key to ensuring it continues beyond the life of the funding. We have a clear sustainability plan, outlined in the table below. It is based initially on using savings that can be generated through a reduction in the number of looked after children, alongside existing spend on placing looked after children, to support the sustainability of the FGC service. In addition to this,

we anticipate that reductions in domestic violence referrals achieved, in part, through the use of family group conferencing in this area offer further potential savings across our partnership, particularly to police and health services. As evidence around this work emerges wider consideration can therefore be given to reinvestment in the restorative approaches that have helped to achieve this.

							£000s					
							14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	Total
<b>Costs</b>												
Set up costs							60	130	0	0	0	190
Other One off costs							133	2,183	0	0	0	2,315
On going costs:												
Workforce Development							24	153	153	153	153	634
Family Group Conferencing							204	2,755	2,755	2,755	2,755	11,224
Targeted Services							303	2,619	2,619	2,619	2,619	10,779
Sub- Total Ongoing Costs							531	5,527	5,527	5,527	5,527	22,637
<b>Total Cost</b>							<b>723</b>	<b>7,839</b>	<b>5,527</b>	<b>5,527</b>	<b>5,527</b>	<b>25,142</b>
<b>Funding</b>												
Department for Education							(191)	(4,658)	0	0	0	(4,848)
Leeds Base Budget							(532)	(3,182)	(3,182)	(3,182)	(3,182)	(13,258)
Savings:												
CLA Placement Budgets							0	0	(2,638)	(4,345)	(6,051)	(13,034)
<b>Total Funding</b>							<b>(723)</b>	<b>(7,839)</b>	<b>(5,820)</b>	<b>(7,526)</b>	<b>(9,233)</b>	<b>(31,141)</b>
<b>Balance of Funding Required / (Savings)</b>							<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(293)</b>	<b>(2,000)</b>	<b>(3,706)</b>	<b>(5,999)</b>

3.16 Our ambition is to embed wide-scale culture change that creates the conditions for lasting system-change. This is why the wider training strand of our bid is so important to the sustainability of this model. Our expectation is that restorative practice training will lead to changes in working practice. This needs therefore to become part of the ‘management expectations’ across our workforce. Through one-to-one and appraisal meetings practitioners will be supported and challenged to use restorative solutions to issues they face, both with customers and colleagues. We have already seen evidence of where this works well in Leeds and how this spreads restorative behaviours into more and more settings and situations (for example pupils at one of our schools that use a restorative approach have reported that they are now using it successfully to resolve conflict within their families).

3.17 By including the ‘deep dive’ and in particular the ‘train the trainer’ elements to our restorative training offer, we will create a ‘pool’ of colleagues from across the children’s workforce partnership who are able to continue sharing the training beyond the initial extensive roll-out.

### 3.18 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

3.19 There are no legal implications for Children’s Services arising from these proposals.

3.20 The recommendations in the report fit with plans to develop and expand the services and have been supported in reports to the LSCB, Children and Families Trust Board and other partnerships.

3.21 This report is subject to call in due to the overall financial implication of the decision across internally retained and externally secured resources.

### **3.22 Risk Management**

3.23 The bid contains a detailed risk register. This will be monitored and updated regularly by the Innovations Bid Programme Board.

3.24 A key risk on the register is that unbudgeted commitments or spend could take place before all funding is confirmed from LCC and DfE. The implementation plan has been carefully constructed to support preparatory work but spend will be contained until funding approval is in place for each strand of work.

## **4 Conclusions**

4.1 Leeds has an ambition to be the best city in the UK, the best city for children and young people, a child friendly city. We are working with our partners to ensure that all children and young people have the best outcomes wherever they are born or grow up in the city.

4.2 We believe in the use of restorative approaches when working with our citizens, but also as our default behaviour in the workforce. The evidence of the impact of high support and high challenge is gaining momentum and we have seen how this has changed culture and behaviours. The impact on outcomes for children is emerging, with the evidence from the work showing that we have safely and appropriately prevented children from entering care, which is better for their longer term future and also makes financial sense for the council and local taxpayers.

4.3 We recognise that the bid is ambitious and implementation needs to move at pace but Leeds has a strong track record of delivering at scale and we are confident that the expansion of training on restorative approaches is achievable. It has the potential to transform the way the city's partners work on early intervention and with families affected by domestic violence and abuse.

4.4 In summary, we are seeking an investment of £4.85 million from DfE to transform the children's social care system in the city, implementing a restorative, family centred model. This includes proposals to use:

- £1.32 million to train an estimated 6,000 practitioners across our multi agency workforce in restorative techniques, so these can be applied earlier in the life of a problem and prevent issues escalating to the point where a social care intervention is required.
- £1.57 million to expand the use of Family Group Conferencing services to more areas where this can have an impact, particularly domestic violence.
- £800k to commission more services that offer restorative models of support where we identify that these can create the strength to change, including victim, perpetrator and child-centred programmes for domestic abuse victims and a programme for young mothers to be, known to social care who have already had multiple pregnancies
- £1.16 million to support programme costs, scaling up and evaluation costs for the whole programme, including working with DfE evaluation partners

## **5 Recommendations**

5.1 The Director of Children's Services is asked to:

Approve the proposals contained in this report to secure staff resources and give permission to procure enhanced services to enable the swift implementation of the Leeds Innovations Fund Bid.

## **6 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.