

Report of Children’s Head of Commissioning and Market Management

Report to the Chief Officer, Partnerships

Date: 23rd January 2018

Subject: Grant awards to Leeds Weekend Care Association for delivery of targeted short breaks for disabled children, young people and their families



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 type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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. The purpose of this report is to outline recommendations for grant awards to Leeds Weekend Care Association to deliver targeted short breaks for children and young people with SEN and disabilities for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.
2. These grants are worth a total of £129,613 and will enable approximately 1634 opportunities for children and young people to access a total in excess of 11783 hours of short breaks.
3. The purpose of these grants now and in the future is to maintain high quality and varied targeted short breaks for children and young people with SEN and disabilities and their families, which comply with the principles of the Children and Families Act 2014 and are as self-sustainable as possible.

Recommendations

4. The Chief Officer, Partnerships is recommended to approve the awarding of grants for the delivery of targeted short breaks to Leeds Weekend Care Association for the total value of £129,613 for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.
5. The Chief Officer, Partnerships is also recommended to approve the invocation of Financial Procedure Rule 9.6 for the payment in advance of receipt of these projects.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline recommendations for grant awards to Leeds Weekend Care Association to deliver targeted short breaks for children and young people with SEN and disabilities. These grants are worth a total of £129,613 and will enable approximately 1634 opportunities for children and young people to access a total in excess of 11783 hours of short breaks.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Targeted short breaks are part of a continuum of provision and are a vital element of the duty to provide short breaks, which came into force in April 2011. The focus in Leeds is on increasing access to universal settings, so that children and young people with SEN and disabilities can take part in activities with their non-disabled peers. This should result in reducing demand on specialist services such as residential and Individual Support Workers. This is important if families are to be empowered to live normal lives and not become dependent on intensive services, with many children and young people then experiencing a sharp drop in provision when entering adulthood. Targeted services tend to have higher staff to user ratios than universal, but are less intensive than specialist provision. The challenge is to ensure these services are available for those who are assessed as needing them, whilst encouraging providers to be flexible, personalised and sustainable.
- 2.2 Until April 2015, Leeds City Council had a Service Level Agreement in place with the NE SILC for the Leeds Partnership Short Breaks service. The main purpose of the service was to allocate and monitor funding to other providers for the delivery of targeted short breaks.
- 2.3 Since April 2015, the allocation process for targeted short breaks funding has been administered by Children's Commissioning and Market Management in partnership with parents and carers, children and young people, the voluntary sector, the Placements Service and Complex Needs Service. This decision was taken because it represents best value for money.
- 2.4 In 2015/16, following a waiver of contract procedure rules (CPRs), two contracts were put in place with LWCA to deliver targeted short breaks for children and families; Weekenders Club (£171,852) and Out & About Club (£22,362). A contract with this organisation had existed since 2009/10, where a number of lots were tendered for different types of short break. However, following two successive years of waiving CPRs and a need for it to be scrutinised by a competitive process, the organisation was invited to bid alongside other Targeted Short Breaks for a grant.
- 2.5 Applications were invited via YORtender to ensure the advertised opportunity were visible by all prospective suppliers. As part of this process, the panel were keen to expand the range of targeted short breaks as part of the preventative, early-intervention strategy.
- 2.6 An allocation panel was held on 18th December 2017, consisting of representatives from EPIC Leeds parents forum, Scope in Leeds, Placements

Service and the Complex Needs Service to consider applications accepted via YORTender. As part of the panel it was agreed that all services should represent value for money relative to that of a Direct Payment, excluding oncosts.

- 2.7 A total of 29 applications were received from 16 organisations, 3 of which are internal to the local authority. As well as being asked for further information following the panel meeting, providers were asked to complete a Service Cost Analysis Form (SCAF) to provide a better breakdown of income and costs. Discussions and meetings with prospective providers were held during January to refine submissions and highlight further opportunities for progression based upon the comments raised at panel.
- 2.8 These recommendations have been discussed with the Complex Needs Area Lead for Short Breaks and the Head of Complex Needs for their approval. A delegated decision is now needed before grant agreements can be awarded and funding released.
- 2.9 As this process is developed, it is our intention to ensure the views of children and young people and parents and carers have a greater influence over how funding is allocated and to support providers to meet the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014. Business support will be offered to all providers. The Placements Service will be responsible for ensuring referrals are correctly matched into activities, families are supported to have greater choice and control and grant conditions are met by providers through robust performance management.
- 2.10 The purpose of these grants now and in the future is to maintain high quality and varied targeted short breaks for children and young people with SEN and disabilities and their families, which comply with the principles of the Children and Families Act 2014 and are as self-sustainable as possible.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 This report relates to recommendations for funding to Leeds Weekend Care Association, who deliver a variety of activities for children and young people with SEN and disabilities.
- 3.2 The re-commissioning of targeted short breaks involved a significant change in model to ensure effective contribution to the Children and Families Act, which was introduced in 2014. The change involved in-depth consultation with families, providers and other stakeholders before the implementation of a grants allocation system that has been instrumental in stimulating the market and developing a diverse local offer. In addition to this arrangement, LWCA were awarded two one year contracts without competition to afford time for a full needs analysis and tender process to be completed regarding the particular client group the Weekenders group delivered to, i.e. children eligible for specialist provision.
- 3.3 Quarterly monitoring reports from the Contracts and Strategic Investment team show that LWCA are consistently achieving all KPI's relating to referrals and service standards. The provider offers appropriate activities that challenge and develop children and young people and satisfaction levels amongst service users

and their families and carers are high. The strength and quantity of LWCA's surveying methods and the quarterly 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) outcomes-focused case studies submitted to LCC provide evidence that the provider is contributing strongly towards the achievement of ECM outcomes. Any issues with this provider are generally limited to future development needs around responding to the personalisation agenda and the need to become more self-sustaining and market driven.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Consultations with families, providers and other stakeholders are ongoing to ensure up to date and accurate information informs commissioning decisions. To date an online survey with parents and carers has been completed and focus groups are being arranged and this will be followed up with a joint mobilisation meeting for Leeds providers and the establishment of a networking forum. It is the intention that families continue to be involved in decision making for the allocation of grants.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.2 There are no adverse implications for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration resulting from this decision. These services benefit children and young people with SEN and disabilities and their families.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

4.3.3 This provision contributes to the Children and Young People's plan to ensure;

- *All CYP enjoy healthy lifestyles*
- *All CYP have fun growing up*
- *All CYP are active citizens who feel they have voice & influence*

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.4 This decision relates to one year grant awards at a total value of £129,613 revenue. The value of this grant award may reduce as part of the process of agreeing grant agreements with the providers as there may be further savings identified.

4.4.5 The Complex Needs Services has identified a total budget for grant allocation of £500,000 to Targeted Short Breaks and Play Schemes for 2018/19.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.6 This decision is over £100k. It is therefore a high value procurement but is not subject to call in, being under the threshold of £250k. There are no grounds for keeping the content of this report confidential under the Access to Information Rules.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 If this decision is not approved, there is a risk that disabled children, young people and their families will lose much valued services.
- 4.6.2 The main risk identified with payment in advance is that services, for which payments are being made in advance, are not subsequently delivered. This would require funding to be clawed back from the provider, which can be a lengthy and difficult process. However, this risk is mitigated by paying in two instalments rather than all at once. Quarterly performance management will identify whether this funding is not being spent and whether this funding is being spent correctly or not. Quarterly monitoring returns will include outcomes for disabled children and how many short breaks nights and hours were delivered as a result.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This decision will benefit children and young people with SEN and disabilities and their families by helping to fund high quality and diverse targeted short breaks. Recommendations are based on a competitive grants process and providers will be monitored to ensure value for money and positive outcomes for families are delivered.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer, Partnerships is recommended to approve the awarding of grants for the delivery of targeted short breaks to Leeds Weekend Care Association for the total value of £129,613 for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.
- 6.2 The Chief Officer, Partnerships is also recommended to approve the invocation of Financial Procedure Rule 9.6 for the payment in advance of receipt of these projects.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ 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.