

Report of Commissioning Programme Manager

Report to Chief Officer, Partnerships

Date: 08/03/2018

Subject: Request approval to receive a total of £300k funding from the Leeds Clinical Commissioning Groups to be invested over 3 years (£100k per annum) to contribute to Futures service and associated development work for post removal support



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 seek permission from the Chief Officer Partnerships to accept funding from the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) totalling £300k to be invested in the Futures service over a period of 3 years. This £100k a year investment will complement the previously approved investment from LCC via the DfE Innovations fund in the Futures service which provides support to parents who have had a child removed from their care with the aim of preventing further removals.
2. The Futures service has been developed within Children and Families Directorate utilising a total of £200k investment from the DfE Innovations Fund. The service is initially focusing on those under the age 25 who have had a child removed and prioritising care leavers who are over represented in this group.
3. Colleagues in the CCG have also been working on a project known as 'Breaking the Cycle' aimed at the same client group and it is agreed that pooling our available resources behind the Futures services would enable a more joined up approach and will enable the service to expand to its reach and in particular develop greater links with GPs and primary care services.

4. In conjunction with the 'Breaking the Cycle' project manager in the CCG we have therefore been successful in bidding for financial resource from the CCG to be spent specifically on post removal support.

Recommendations

5. The Chief Officer Partnerships is requested to approve the acceptance of a total of £300k for a three year period to be invested at £100k per annum for investment in the Futures service and associated development of support to parents who have had a child removed.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek permission from the Chief Officer Partnerships to accept funding from the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) totalling £300k to be invested in the Futures service and associated developments in post removal support over a period of 3 years. This £100k a year investment in Futures Service will complement the previously approved investment from LCC via the DfE Innovations fund in the Futures service which provides support to parents who have had a child removed from their care with the aim of preventing further removals.

Background information

- 1.1 In February 2017 Leeds City Council Children and Families Directorate was successful in being awarded £9.6m over three years from the DfE for its Innovations and Partners in Practice work. As part of this development a Futures service was established to work with parents who have had a child removed with the aim of preventing further removals.
- 1.2 This funding was invested in recognition of the importance of working with parents who have had a child removed. This was highlighted in Lancaster University's research that showed that 'at least 1 in 4 women will return to the family court, having previously lost a child through a court order, and the chances of having a child removed increase to at least 1 in 3 for the youngest women who were teenagers at the birth of their first child.
- 1.3 Local research has shown that from a sample of cases that from a sample of cases where an infant entered care, nearly two thirds of families had had previous children removed. Leeds is listed amongst the authorities who number the highest percentages of repeat care proceedings (national average is 29%, Leeds experiences 37%). Action to address this was identified as priority for investment from the Innovations funding.
- 1.4 Currently, parents fall between services as, at the point of removal of a baby, they are no longer within the remit of children's services. Additionally, this is at the time when they are most vulnerable, experiencing acute loss and trauma and are least trusting of professionals. They therefore become 'lost' and often re-emerge when there is another pregnancy and the cycle repeats.
- 1.5 CCG colleagues have also work to prevent repeat removals as a priority and have been working on a project known as 'Breaking the Cycle'. It is agreed that pooling our available resources behind the Futures services would enable a more joined up approach and will enable the service to expand to its reach and in particular develop greater links with GPs and primary care services.

2 Main issues

- 2.1 Working in conjunction with colleagues in the CCG Children and Families Directorate have been successful in securing funding from the CCG to support

work to parents who have had a child removed from their care with the aim of preventing further removals.

- 2.2 This funding will be spent on further developing the Futures service and other specific developments in supporting parents who have had a child removed. The money has been awarded by the CCG for this specific purpose and therefore should be ring-fenced to this activity.
- 2.3 The initial remit of the Futures service has been for those mothers and fathers under the age of 25 at the point of removal with a specific focus on care leavers who are over represented in this group. The additional funding provided by the CCGs will enable the service to expand its reach and in particular develop closer links with GPs and primary care services who will often come into contact with this group.
- 2.4 The additional financial resource will allow additional capacity within the service and will enable the development of specific referrals pathways and closer joint working between the service and health services such as GPs.
- 2.5 Parents who have had a child removed often require intensive support and those working in this field report it usually takes time to develop productive working relationships with professionals given their negative experience of previous professional involvement however this is increasingly recognised as an extremely important area of work.
- 2.6 Leeds has a key priority to ensure children remain in safe and supportive families wherever possible. If the right support can be provided to parents following a child being removed from their care we have an opportunity to address support needs at that point and prevent the likelihood of future removals.
- 2.7 This is also a priority for health services who also recognise that parents who have had a child removed often have a range of health needs.
- 2.8 A number of outcome measures will be agreed with CCG colleagues to enable us to monitor outcomes being achieved and progress being made on an ongoing basis.

2.9 Consultation and engagement

- 2.9.1 This reports seeks to accept funding from the CCG to further develop an approach that is already in existence through the Children and Families Futures service.
- 2.9.2 A range of partners have been engaged including discussion at the Children and Families Joint Commissioning Group and a Futures stakeholder event which took place in February 2018.
- 2.9.3 The proposal for funding from the CCGs has also been discussed and agreed at a number of levels within the CCGs.

2.10 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

2.10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening document has been undertaken and there is no impact in respect of equality and diversity.

2.11 Council policies and best council plan

2.11.1 The outcomes the Futures service is working to are very much aligned and are in fact critical to achieving many of the key priorities within the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2015 – 2019 including the priority that children remain in safe and supportive families wherever possible.

2.12 Resources and value for money

2.12.1 This report requests approval to accept a total of £300k from the CCGs to be invested over a period of 3 years at £100k per annum. This funding is being awarded specifically to support the local authority's developments around post removals support including the Futures service and should therefore be ring-fenced and retained for that purpose.

2.12.2 The funding being provided to the local authority by the CCGs under a Section 256 agreement.

2.12.3 A number of performance and outcome measures are being put in place which will be overseen jointly by the local authority and the CCG to ensure anticipated outcomes are being achieved.

2.13 Legal Implications, access to information and call in

2.13.1 This report seeks approval from the Chief Officer Partnerships to accept the funding allocated by the CCGs to support the local authority's developments around post removal support including the enhancement of the Futures service.

2.13.2 This is a significant operational decision and therefore not subject to call in. This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.

2.14 Risk management

2.14.1 Officers including the Commissioning Programme Manager and MST Programme Manager who have led on the development of the Future service have been in regular contact with the CCG 'Breaking the Cycle' Project Manager. Regular reporting is taking place into the Children and Families Joint Commissioning Group and a steering group involving key stakeholders is being established to oversee the further development of the Futures work.

2.14.2 If the acceptance of this funding is not approved the further developments to the Futures service, including the further development of critical links to primary care services, would not be possible and there is a risk that the positive impact of the service would be limited.

3 Conclusions

3.1 The Chief Officer Partnerships is requested to approve the acceptance of the funding from the CCG as outlined in this report to be ring fenced for the Futures service and associated development work around support to parents who have had a child removed with the aim of preventing further removals

4 Recommendations

4.1 The Chief Officer Partnerships is requested to approve the acceptance of a total of £300k for a three year period to be invested at £100k per annum for investment in the Futures service and associated development of support to parents who have had a child removed.

5 Background documents¹

5.1 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.