

Award of grant agreements to schools for summer transitional projects in support of the Leeds SAFE Taskforce programme

Date: 13.06.2022

Report of: Deputy Director Learning

Report to: Director of Children and Families

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- The report concerns the award of grant agreements to a number of secondary schools, predominately in the east of the city for provision of summer transitional projects to support young people at risk of involvement in violence to re-engage with education. These awards are made on behalf of the Leeds SAFE (Support, Attend, Fulfil, Exceed) Taskforce using grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the cross-government Beating Crime Plan published in July 2021.
- This decision supports the 2020-25 Best Council Plan priority to make Leeds a Child Friendly City where families are supported to give children the best start in life.

Recommendations

The Director of Children and Families approved the award of grant agreements for provision of summer transitional projects in support of the Leeds SAFE Taskforce programme. The value of each grant will be between £15,000 and £18,000, with a maximum budget available of £232,000. The agreements shall start in June 2022 and expire 30/09/2022 and will be with the following schools:

- a) Bishop Young Church of England Academy
- b) Brigshaw High School
- c) Corpus Christi Catholic College
- d) Garforth Academy
- e) John Smeaton Academy
- f) Leeds East Academy
- g) Mount St Mary's Catholic High School
- h) Temple Learning Academy
- i) Temple Moor High School
- j) The Cooperative Academy of Schools
- k) Trinity Academy Leeds
- l) Dixons Academy Chapeltown

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The DfE has made available grant funding to establish SAFE Taskforces in 10 local authority areas across the country, as part of the cross-government Beating Crime Plan published in July 2021, which announced investment in specialist support in schools in serious violence hotspots to support young people at risk of involvement in violence to re-engage with education.
- 2 SAFE Taskforces will bring together mainstream schools to commission evidence-based interventions to **Support** young people with challenging behaviour, enabling them to **Attend** school regularly so they can **Fulfil** their potential and prevent costly poor life outcomes by inspiring them to **Exceed** their expectations.
- 3 The programme is designed to be schools led because school leaders, teachers and staff have a distinct expertise and access to make a difference in young people's lives. As part of the Taskforce, the DfE are asking schools also to work alongside other local partners who can provide expertise and support. This programme will enable schools to support young people within their school and community, by bringing them together to collectively manage a pot of funding. Each SAFE Taskforce will need to commission and fund evidence-based interventions to support young people at risk of serious violence and re-engage them in education.
- 4 In Leeds, Leeds City Council has agreed to act as a central repository for the grant funds on behalf of schools, with the Taskforce established through the existing Area Inclusion Partnership (AIP) arrangements. AIPs bring schools together in a recognised & equitable partnership to deliver & coordinate services to keep children and young people in vulnerable circumstances and at risk of exclusion from education, included in high quality learning.
- 5 Leeds will receive total grant funding of £3.7 million over three years (2022/23 – 2024/25). This will be in two phases, the set up phase and the delivery phase, with £2,810,875 available for the commissioning of interventions.
- 6 Provision will be focused in the East AIP in line with our Strategic Needs Analysis, which indicates a higher prevalence across the target indicators in wards in the East of the city; Gipton & Harehills, Burmantofts & Richmond Hill and Killingbeck & Seacroft were the wards most consistently represented across the indicators based on home or offence postcode. Numerically and proportionately pupils attending school in the East AIP area have the highest persistent absence, persistent unauthorised absence and severe absence. Two schools outside the East AIP will also employ Mentors (in North-East and North-West AIP areas), which are in designated areas for hot spots.
- 7 Part of the DfE set up grant for mobilisation of the SAFE Taskforce can be used to fund some initial transition activities during summer and autumn terms 2022, i.e. interventions for transition cohorts. Transition activities are not required to be detailed in the SAFE Taskforce Delivery Plan and are not subject to the same level of performance and impact monitoring. However, it is essential for the SAFE taskforce to be able to demonstrate how the funding was used and how many young people benefited. This funding is therefore being made available to schools by the Leeds SAFE taskforce as a grant.
- 8 The Leeds SAFE Taskforce is to offer grants of between £15,000 and £18,000 to the 13 target secondary schools (11 in East AIP, 1 in NE AIP and 1 in NW AIP) to fund transitional activities over the summer holidays and up until 30th September 2022. Schools will be asked to apply for funding to deliver schemes that will be universally available but will reach young people from the target cohorts based on our priority needs identified from the Leeds SAFE Taskforce Strategic Needs Assessment.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 9 Leeds has established the SAFE Taskforce through the East AIP, where there is currently the highest incidence of violent crime. The focus for the funding will therefore be in the areas and schools covered by the East AIP, however, the benefits of the programme may reach wider.
- 10 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken. This identifies the decision will have a positive impact for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration because it will support young people at risk of involvement in violence to attend school and re-engage with education. The cohorts Taskforces will focus on are pupils already known to be involved in serious violence or who are in close proximity to serious violence due to contextual factors such as peer groups, family, or neighbourhood; and pupils who are disengaged from education e.g. truancy, suspension or exclusion from school who are more likely to end up on the pathway into serious violence. This means the cohort is likely to include high proportions of pupils from recognised vulnerable groups (e.g. Children in Need, Looked After Children and those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)).

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 11 A project team has been established within Children and Families comprising of representatives from Learning Inclusion, Performance Management and Improvement, Learning Systems and Commissioning. Regular consultation is taking place with Heads from schools within the East AIP and advice sought from Finance and Procurement. The SAFE Taskforce is meeting monthly currently to complete key tasks to finalise key documents such as the Delivery Plan, manage the budget and determine which interventions to commission.

What are the resource implications?

- 12 The maximum budget for these grant agreements is just over £232,000.
- 13 These grant agreements are funded through additional revenue funding that is ring fenced to deliver the outcomes specified in the DfE set-up grant agreement. Children and Families directorate entered into an agreement with and accepted grant funding of £323,100 from the Department for Education (DfE) for establishment of a SAFE Taskforce in March 2022, which could be used to fund staffing resource in support of the Taskforce and transitional activity.
- 14 Leeds City Council has agreed to act as central repository on behalf of schools.

What are the legal implications?

- 15 This is a significant operational decision due to the value and is not subject to call in.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 16 The main risk is that the projects do not reach the target cohort or that they are unable to identify and record their attendance accurately. This would impact on the SAFE Taskforce's ability to report accurate and take up by young people from the priority cohorts. These risks will be mitigated by the clarity of information given to schools by the Leeds SAFE Taskforce on the priority cohorts and an easy to use monitoring form to record attendance. The main mitigation is

that schools are aware of the young people due to leave year 6 and the young people that may struggle to engage.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

17 This proposal supports the council's health & wellbeing pillar and the commitments city & council ambitions of:

- Improving educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes
- Improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- Helping young people into adulthood, to develop life skills and be ready for work

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

18 These interventions meet the requirements of the DfE grant funding for transitional activities and the options are limited to spend this funding to deliver positive benefits in the timeframe. The projects have been proposed by schools based on what they know works and will benefit young people from the priority cohorts.

How will success be measured?

19 The Leeds SAFE Taskforce will provide a monitoring form for schools to report on the young people from the target cohorts who attended the project.

What is the timetable for implementation?

20 It is the intention to award the grant agreements in June 2022 for projects to be delivered during the school summer holidays and into the start of the Autumn term.

Appendices

21 EDCI screening.

Background papers

22 None.