

Family Action – Integrated Family Support offer contract - exercise break clause

Date: 9/1/24

Report of: Head of Service for Early Help

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

Brief summary

The Children & Families Leadership Team received a paper relating to a review of the current commissioned services and proposals to either cease or reduce some areas of commissioned activity in order to deliver their savings target of £1.2m for 24/25.

This review indicated that £3.5m of commissioned activity could be in scope for potential reductions but an element of that total spend would not be possible to de-commission due to statutory obligations and deliver savings for 2024/25, this then generated a potential list of activity that could be subject to reductions that would enable savings to be delivered in 2024/25. Additional savings will continue to be sought whilst trying to maintain essential and statutory service provision.

As part of this programme of decommissioning the contract held with Family Action for the delivery of the Integrated Family Support service was deemed to be in scope for decommissioning. This contract is currently due to expire on 30th June 2025 and a request to terminate this contract early by exercising the 3-month break clause has been sought.

As part of the proposals presented to the Executive Board on the 13th December 2023 it was agreed that we must enter into a period of consultation before the break clause in this contract can be exercised.

The consultation commenced at 5pm on the 22nd December 2023 when this was added to the list of forthcoming key decisions and the consultation period lasted 28 days. This consultation period also includes consideration to any TUPE implications.

A full impact assessment is being compiled with the provider and with various support teams within Leeds City Council to enable a successful decommission process.

Recommendations

- a) The Director of Children & Families is recommended to approve the request to exercise the contract break clause and terminate the contract with Family Action for the delivery of the Integrated Family Support service.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report sets out the requirement to end our service contract with Family Action for the delivery of the Integrated Family Support offer due to the need to release savings of £1.2m from our commissioned services during 24/25.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 The end of this contract will have an impact on area social work team capacity. The service was commissioned to deliver family support through an early help/intervention model. Due to local capacity challenges within area social work teams the service has been delivery high risk, child protection work. The removal of this service offer will impact on the capacity within this already challenging area of work.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 3 There is an agreement in Leeds to move towards becoming a Marmot city with the aim to reduce health inequalities. The removal of an early help service which supports some of our most vulnerable cohorts of children and families could be detrimental to achieving this vision.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 4 Consultation as part of the key decision-making process. Open consultation for 28 days from the publication of this decision on the key decision list 22nd December 2023.

What are the resource implications?

- 5 If this contract is not terminated and £614,000 released as part of our savings target for 24/25 it will be necessary to reconsider those services deemed to be not in scope for decommissioning as classified as either essential or statutory. In turn placing delivery of our statutory responsibilities at risk.

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

- 6 Risk around social work capacity to deliver family support that is a vital element of child protection and child in need plans.

It must be noted that due to the consultation process that must be adhered to, savings cannot be realised until May 2024. Therefore, the full £614,000 may not be saved.

What are the legal implications?

- 7 This is not a statutory duty for the local authority however if we do not terminate this contract there could be legal implications for meeting our statutory obligations if we have to reconsider talking savings from services deemed as essential or statutory.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 8 The review of commissioned activity indicated that £3.5m of commissioned activity could be in scope for potential reductions but an element of that total spend would not be possible to de-commission due to statutory obligations and deliver savings for 2024/25, this then generated a significantly reduced potential list of activity that could be subject to reductions that would enable savings to be delivered in 2024/25.

Additional savings will continue to be sought whilst trying to maintain essential and statutory service provision.

How will success be measured?

- 9 Closure of service and savings released by May 24.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 10 Contract closure January 2024 – May 2024

Strategic Commissioning Programme Lead – Joint Commissions, Services and Partnerships

Appendices

- EDCI

Background papers

- None