

# One year extension of cooperation agreements to schools for delivery of Children's Centre Family Services.

Date: 28/08/2024

Report of: Commissioning & Market Management

Report to: Director of Children & Families.

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to extend cooperation agreements to non-maintained schools for the delivery of Children's Centre Family Services.

A one-year extension, commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 is sought to ensure continued delivery whilst allowing time for a review to be undertaken of Children's Centre current arrangements.

The total value of these cooperation agreements is estimated to be approximately £429k per annum.

## Recommendations

- a) In the absence of the Director of Children & Families, the Deputy Director, Social Care is recommended to approve the extension of cooperation agreements to non-maintained schools for the delivery of Children's Centre Family Services, pending a full-service review.

## **What is this report about?**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to extend cooperation agreements of non-maintained schools for the delivery of Children's Centre Family Services. The cooperation agreements fall outside of the Public Contract Regulation 2015 pursuant to Regulation 12(7). Also, for the purpose of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules Clause 1.5.2 will apply as the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply and they are arrangements with another public body. Therefore, these agreements are not procurements for the purposes of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2 The Council delivers family services out of 40 Children's Centres & funds schools to deliver family services in a further 16 Children's Centres.
- 3 Family Services include:
  - Family Support Workers, who can help families through challenging times and also offer support and information on parenting, education, housing, debt and access to specialist services for children & families.
  - Parenting courses including, HENRY, Incredible Years and 0-6 programme.
  - Drop in Stay and Play sessions.
  - Links to child and family health services, including breastfeeding support, midwife clinics and development reviews.
- 4 The arrangements with schools have operated on a contracted basis since 2020 and the Council wishes to continue these arrangements by extending formal cooperation agreements by a period of 12 months with academies, pending a review of all Children Centres.
- 5 The agreements require schools to:
  - Deliver the full core purpose of the Children's Centre in line with DFE and local requirements.
  - Commit to working in partnership with clusters, social work and targeted services.
  - Commit to co-location and integrated working with Health Visiting and Midwifery Services
  - Report through an Annual Conversation on progress made to a Local Authority representative / Early Start Manager
  - Undertake quarterly reviews of the service in conjunction with Local Authority representative/ Early Start Manager.
  - Provide Leadership and management through a named person(s) of the Children Centre services.

## **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 6 The key aim of these services is to ensure all young children and families are supported through evidence-based practice to have the best possible start in life and to achieve good health and wellbeing, learning and school readiness outcomes and reduce the inequalities in outcomes for the most disadvantaged.
- 7 The continuation of arrangements through the cooperation agreements will ensure we have clear expectations of all partners and will ensure accountability for the funding. It will also strengthen our partnership working with schools to drive of quality and ensure continuous improvement. Schools will be required to report against key performance indicators in the Early Start dashboard and demonstrate quality and impact of delivery.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

8 Consultation was undertaken with the schools to make them aware of our plans to extend the arrangements. Advice has been sought from the lawyers within Procurement and Commercial Services.

## What are the resource implications?

9 The overall Children's centre funding for 24/25 (before service review savings targets) is £5,605,000. Of this £985,360 comes from Public Health. Leeds City Council has a savings target for their service review of £1.45m. Of this, 40 are Leeds City Council led (combining Gipton north & south) which receive £4,039,753.25 of that £5.6m total funding. In the Corporate Report from 2018/19, there were 4 centres to be externally funded with the original report stating the figure £520k. However, due to changes, there are now 3 centres to be externally funded with a figure of £429k.

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

10 As the provisions have been in operation for a number of years we do not foresee any significant issues in extending the arrangements. This decision report is purely around extending existing arrangements and is not about creating any provisions.

## What are the legal implications?

11 Although the contract expired in March 2024, there remain extensions available to use. The legal department and procurement colleagues have advised the extension can be implemented.

## Options, timescales and measuring success

### What other options were considered?

12 None.

### How will success be measured?

13 The continued delivery of services from the Children's Centre's pending a review of all Children's Centre provision will be considered a success.

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

14 The timetable for implementation will be immediate. The Commissioning & Contract Management team will support the implementation of the agreements.

## Appendices

- None

## Background papers

- N/A