

**Report to:** **SINGLE COMMISSIONING BOARD**

**Date:** 6 December 2016

**Officer of Single Commissioning Board** Angela Hardman, Director of Public Health and Performance, Single Commissioning

**Subject:** **HOMESTART HOME VISITING AND BEFRIENDING SERVICE AND TWO YEAR OLD FREE EARLY EDUCATION ENTITLEMENT SUPPORT**

**Report Summary:**

The economy faces significant challenges in working to reduce demand within Children's Services within the available budgets. There is therefore a need to continue to work closely with and support key providers within the local voluntary sector with whom we have existing positive arrangements that support these requirements moving forward.

Work on how best to commission support to families and maximise available budgets has been on-going since earlier this year. Agreement in early September 2016 was reached to commission a single more holistic low level family support service. The new service will be designed with the existing provider to better target vulnerable families by using supervised peer supporter volunteers, by doing this it is hoped that a more sustained asset based approach can be achieved.

The new service will support reducing demand in Early Help and Children's Social Care and complement the transformation programme in 2017/18, which will start the delivery an integrated children's and family services. This will require all agencies locally to understand and collaborate on arrangements for delivering an integrated children and families offer. The work will be aligned to the Integrated Neighbourhoods agenda with the longer term vision to transfer in 18 months the service outcomes into the Integrated Care Organisation programme.

**Recommendations:** That approval is given to grant fund the core activity of Homestart and from 1 April 2017 for 18 months. The grant conditions will include a three month notice termination clause.

**Financial Implications:** Funding for these contracts is within the Section 75 pooled budget of the Integrated Commissioning Fund (£ 0.120m). The contracts provide early intervention, which support families to cope, improve confidence and build better lives for their children. Engaging with families in this way is a much more cost effective way of providing support when compared to supporting a child in need by other means (e.g. foster care). By way of comparison, the average cost per week of a local Homestart volunteer to support a child is £10.69 per week (£22.93 per week for a family), compared to £239 per week to provide foster care (based on care for a 5 year old child. A full cost benefit analysis will be undertaken during development of the future delivery model.

**Legal Implications:** The Single Commissioning Board has full delegation to determine this matter. The offer of grant funding to Homestart will result in the Single Commissioning Board financially supporting the action of an external organisation by means of a subsidy because the activities of that organisation contribute to our agreed policy aims

**(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)**

**(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

and priorities. The grant does not contractually oblige a recipient to perform as otherwise this will amount to a contract which must be procured. The agreement can however set the requirements the recipient must follow if they do perform the services. Moreover, if services are not being performed as required, 3 months notice can be given to terminate the arrangements.

<b>How do proposals align with Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy?</b>	The proposals align with the Starting Well, Developing Well and Living Well programmes for action
<b>How do proposals align with Locality Plan?</b>	The proposals are consistent with the Healthy Lives (early intervention and prevention) strand of the Locality Plan
<b>How do proposals align with the Commissioning Strategy?</b>	The service contributes to the Commissioning Strategy by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empowering citizens and communities;</li><li>• Commission for the 'whole person';</li><li>• Create a proactive and holistic population health system.</li></ul>
<b>Recommendations / views of the Professional Reference Group:</b>	Due to time constraints, the report was circulated to PRG members and no comments were received.
<b>Public and Patient Implications:</b>	None.
<b>Quality Implications:</b>	There is a duty to achieve continuous improvement and value for money in the delivery of its functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
<b>How do the proposals help to reduce health inequalities?</b>	The holistic nature of the new service will ensure that parents will receive appropriate advice and support so that they are able to maintain and maximise their health and their role as a parent and member of their community.
<b>What are the Equality and Diversity implications?</b>	The proposal will not affect protected characteristic group(s) within the Equality Act.
<b>What are the safeguarding implications?</b>	Safeguarding will be central to this service
<b>What are the Information Governance implications? Has a privacy impact assessment been conducted?</b>	The necessary protocols for the safe transfer and keeping of confidential information will be maintained at all times by both purchaser and provider. The purchasers Terms and Conditions for services contains relevant clauses regarding Data Management
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The purchasers will work closely with the provider to manage and minimise any risk of provider failure consistent with the providers contingency plan
<b>Access to Information :</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting

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## **1. INTRODUCTION & SCOPE**

- 1.1 These grant conditions cover two grants for services to be provided by Homestart:
- Home visiting and befriending service (core service delivery – currently funded at £75,000.00 per annum);
  - Two year old free early education entitlement for a parental engagement and participation programme (supporting the Council's statutory duty – currently funded at £45,000.00 per annum).
- 1.2 Homestart supports parents with young families as they learn to cope, improve their confidence and build better lives for their children. The benefits of their support include improved health and wellbeing and better family relationships.
- 1.3 The new statutory duty to provide a targeted offer of fifteen hours a week good quality free early education to disadvantaged two year olds came into force in September 2013. This is part of a wider range of activities aimed at improving young children's learning readiness at school age.
- 1.5 The Single Commissioning Board celebrates the contribution and value of volunteering in all of its diversity to individuals, communities, causes and the wider society and aims to nurture a 'volunteering friendly' economic, political and social environment within the Borough. Generally, Homestart has one hundred and fifty plus active volunteers on its database at any one time.

## **2. BACKGROUND – HOMESTART OLDHAM, STOCKPORT AND TAMESIDE**

- 2.1 Homestart has been operating in Tameside since 1998, and the Council was instrumental in supporting the local organisation to set up at that time. The Council has had a productive partnership with Homestart since around 2008 delivering a home visiting and befriending service. Homestart was established for the benefit and well-being of vulnerable families in Tameside, and its uniqueness is defined in their service model of using trained and supervised volunteers to deliver agreed support interventions to families.
- 2.2 The service has always worked closely with the Council to proactively review its service model and make adaptations to service options in order to meet the changing needs of families locally, and the challenges faced by the locality.
- 2.3 Parents, carers and the wider family accessing the service offered by Homestart are typically vulnerable because they may:
- have poor physical or emotional health, or feel isolated or depressed;
  - have problems with substance misuse;
  - have learning difficulties;
  - have disengaged from statutory services;
  - be living in poor environments with very limited financial resources, poor housing or temporary accommodation and limited means of transport;
  - be bringing up children on their own;
  - be teenage parents;
  - be experiencing domestic abuse;
  - feel discriminated against because they are from black and minority ethnic communities, or because they are refugees or asylum seekers;
  - have been poorly parented themselves and so have few models of good parenting;
  - be experiencing particular difficulties with a child with behavioural problems;
  - be caring for a child with disabilities;

- be a parent of twins or multiples;
- be looking after a child who is looked after.

- 2.4 Homestart has worked with the Council to redesign its service offer over the years, responding to the changing profile of family's needs being presented along with the tightening of financial resources available.
- 2.5 Nationally there continues to be strong government emphasis on early intervention. Early intervention and prevention in Children's Services represents an intelligent approach to spending. It requires small investments to deal with root causes, rather than the much greater costs of dealing with the after-effects. It allows us to act in a less intrusive, more cost-effective for example a preventative community parenting programme, can be save money on high cost interventions (youth crime and prison, unemployment, mental health problems and going into care) further down the line.
- 2.6 Evidence suggests that effective preventative intervention help to break recurring cycles of poor social outcomes, and prevent extensive and expensive responses from public services at a later stage. The aim is to shift priorities and resources from damage limitation to prevention and early intervention. It is fully accepted that this is a long-term endeavour.
- 2.7 In addition to the benefits for children and families from support in the early years, there is a growing body of national and international evidence to show that significant savings can be made to the public purse from effective early year's interventions. There is also a clear economic case for shifting resources into early intervention. Notably, a wide range of economic studies suggest that returns to early investment in children during the pre-birth period and first few months of life, up to the age of eight years old are high, but reduce the later the investment is initiated. Investment in early and effective interventions translates into substantial savings to the public sector.
- 2.8 Locally, the Early Help Strategy provides the strategic framework for the delivery of services across the borough. It highlights the overriding commitment to reduce inequalities and to narrow the gap, particularly for those children and young people at risk of poor outcomes, and recognises the key role that parents play in their children's development and understanding of the world around them.
- 2.9 The Home Visiting and Befriending Service delivered by Homestart over the last six years is a key strand in the borough's parenting provision and support for parent infant attachment. Service evaluation has shown that parents accessing the service become less isolated, more confident and able to cope better as parents. The fundamental purpose of the service is to improve child outcomes through effective prevention, early intervention and quality family support.
- 2.10 The existing service has successfully used volunteers and members of the local community in establishing contact with those families where there is often a mistrust of professionals and a reluctance to use statutory services. Working in partnership with health visitors and early years services has enabled early intervention with vulnerable families. Trained and supported volunteers, who themselves are parents, have offered support in the families' own homes and in children's centres. The volunteers have offered practical help, support and friendship in order to help prevent family breakdown and crisis. Families have received specific and targeted support and have been signposted to other services to support them making healthy life choices.
- 2.11 For the reasons above and the local need to reduce demand whilst building universal, community based provision into our emerging children and families offer, it is proposed that we continue to commission and develop the model with Homestart over the next 18 months.

- 2.12 Agreement in early September 2016 was reached to deliver a single more holistic low level family support service. Our emerging model will aim to achieve positive outcomes for children, mothers and family members who use the service and the volunteers who provide it. Specifically, the service will:
- Provide a strengths-based, empowering service for mothers, partners and family members that reduces isolation, stress and low mood during pregnancy and the first two years after birth.
  - Create a family support approach that will address and support families with a range of issues' Health and wellbeing; Transition; Child Development; Parenting; Learning skills; Financial resilience; Family breakdown and Anti-social behaviour.
  - Recruit and train community volunteers to work as peer supporters, providing them with necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the service and improving their personal confidence, building social capital and enhancing opportunities for further training and employment.
  - Lead to improved outcomes for children; disadvantaged children will benefit particularly from high quality preschool provision and early childhood intervention.
  - Will boost children's confidence and social skills, which provides a better foundation for success at school.
  - Reduce demand into Early Help and Children's Social Care.
- 2.13 The new service will support a reduction in demand in Early Help and Children's Social Care and complement the transformation programme in 2017/18. It will also start the delivery of integrated services for Children and Families, requiring all agencies locally to understand and collaborate on arrangements for delivering a children and families offer. The work will be aligned to the Integrated Neighbourhoods agenda and build on the Integrated Care Organisation programme to date.
- 2.14 Home-Start's volunteer led model of early intervention and prevention is a very cost-effective form of family support:
- On average, it costs a local Home-Start £10.69 per week to support a child.
  - On average it costs a local Home-Start £22.93 to support a family for a week.

### **3. AUTHORISATION TO EXTEND THE CURRENT GRANT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 3.1 Authorisation is sought to extend the current grant arrangement by 18 months from 1 April 2017. This will allow time to plan, design and implement a new model that will be phased in during this period of time.
- 3.2 It is intended that the 18 month extension period will be used to pilot the new service model with Homestart as the supplier. Homestart is a long standing provider of services and has a desirable volunteer based delivery model that our market intelligence would suggest is unique to this provider.
- 3.3 The new design model will ensure alignment with the Care Together vision for integrated children and families with a longer term intention to transfer the new service outcomes into the Integrated Care Organisation programme, via a comprehensive review of the pilot. The pilot will also enable commissioners to ensure that the future budget is also correctly aligned within the supplier market and budget pressures.
- 3.4 Whilst the financial model has yet to be finalised, the likelihood is that the budget will be no more than the current total budget of £120,000.00 and may well be slightly less.

#### **4. VALUE OF GRANT**

4.1 The value of the grant is £120,000 for 2017/18 and £60,000 for 2018/19.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 As set out on the front of the report.