

Key Decision by an Officer with Delegated Powers

Dates between which the decision will be taken by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health:

Earliest date: 2 December 2021

Latest date: 9 December 2021

Any representations should be sent to:

Siobhan Farmer, Deputy Director of Public Health

Tel: 01452 324249

Email: Siobhan.farmer@gloucestershire.gov.uk

By 5pm on Wednesday 1 December 2021

Executive Decision Making by an Officer with Delegated Powers

Decision to be taken by: *Sarah Scott, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health*

Pursuant to an Authorisation from Cabinet:

Decision: To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities and the Executive Director for Corporate Resources to allocate the Local Authority Contain Outbreak Management Fund in order to deliver the objectives in the Local Outbreak Management Plan in accordance with the Council's standing orders and procurement legislation.

Taken by: Cabinet 27.01.21

Came into force: 04.02.21

Report title: Local Authority Contain Outbreak Management Fund allocation to reduce the impact of lockdown on disadvantaged babies, toddlers and their families/carers

The decision	Having consulted with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities in accordance with a Cabinet decision dated 27th January 2021: <u>DECISION</u> To approve the allocation of £919,509 from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (described in the Resource Implications section of this report) in order to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fund variations to the council's services contracts with each of Barnardo's and Gardner's Lane and Oakwood Federation ("GLO") for the purpose of providing targeted outreach services to support families;2. Provide a funding transfer to Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning
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Group (“GCCG”) in order for it to commission additional community nursery nurse capacity for health visiting teams provided by the Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust.

Such funding allocations will be made on the following basis:

(a) GLO Federation will receive a total of £332,500 to cover its increased staffing costs (£256,982); the cost of spot purchasing specialised support and access services (£20,000), and the cost of providing resources for groups and activities that have been set-up specifically for the provision of this project (£22,000). The remaining balance (£33,518) shall be used to meet travel and training costs, as well as resources and activities which are already provided under the current contract but will have a wider reach as part of this project to focus on families who are at a higher risk of deprivation and health inequalities. The required contract variation is permissible under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCRs) on the basis that:

i. GLO is the council’s sole contracted supplier for the provision of outreach services from Children and Families Centres in Cheltenham and Tewkesbury. A change of supplier cannot be made due to the fact that the Steps Ahead project is specifically going to be embedded within Children and Families Centres and outreach to be undertaken from these Centres, hence a change of supplier would prevent the use of the existing Children and Families Centre contract provision to support the embedding of the Steps Ahead project.

ii. a change of supplier would cause a substantial duplication of costs given that the Steps Ahead project will support existing Children and Family Practice and processes by focusing on a specific cohort of families who are at a higher risk of having health inequalities and deprivation which will have been exacerbated the COVID-19 pandemic, whereas the appointment of a new supplier would result in a duplication of costs as many of the services offered by the Steps Ahead project will build on existing provision in Children and Families Centres to support families impacted by COVID-19; and the value of the proposed variation will not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract with GLO.

(b) Barnardo’s will receive a total of £300,000 to cover its increased staffing costs (£238,461); and its partnership connections with local community organisations (£25,000). The remaining balance (£36,539) shall be used to meet the cost of project resources, travel, training and activities. The required contract variation is permissible under PCRs on the basis that:

- i. it will not alter the overall nature of the existing contract;
- ii. its value is below the relevant PCRs threshold; and
- iii. its value, after taking into account a previous reduction in contract price, is less than 10% of the initial contract value.

3. GCCG will receive a total of £287,009 by way of a funding transfer from the council under a Section 76 Agreement. The majority of this

	funding allocation is for staffing costs and associated on-costs.
Background documents	<p>Gloucestershire Outbreak Management Plan</p> <p>https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/covid-19-information-and-advice/gloucestershire-covid-19-local-outbreak-management-plan/</p> <p>COMF Cabinet Paper</p> <p>https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1608</p> <p>Business case available on request</p>
Reasons for the decision	<p>The Department for Health and Social Care requires that each top tier local authority has a Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) in place and has allocated funding to implement the plans. The fund is to be used to mitigate and against outbreaks and minimise the effects of Covid-19.</p> <p>Covid-19 has had a significant impact on young children's development, social skills, and school readiness. It has knocked the confidence of many parents as they have been isolated for months without the usual support networks they can rely on. Without intervention there is a danger that that these children and parents will face real inequalities which could have a permanent impact on their life chances.</p> <p>Given that this project will support existing work within the community, contract variations for both the health visiting and children and families centre contracts would be completed following the decision being taken. This will both save time and increase efficiency in beginning this project to support vulnerable children and families.</p>
Resource implications	<p>£919,509 allocation will be funded from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) of £17.900 million that has been allocated to Gloucestershire County Council from the Department for Health and Social Care, for the purpose of implementing the Gloucestershire Local Outbreak Management Plan. £16.4 million is currently earmarked including the spend related to this decision.</p>
Who has been consulted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cabinet Member of Public Health and Communities, Tim Harman • Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years, Stephen Davies • Executive Director for Corporate Resources • Executive Director for Children's Services • Finance Business Partner • Assistant Director of Legal Services • Information Management Service • Communications Business Advisor - Covid • Gloucestershire Covid-19 Health Protection Board

What were their comments?

The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities has considered the proposal and has approved the allocation of funds from COMF.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years and Executive Director for Children's Services have considered the proposal and approve the arrangements

All consultees are supportive of the proposed decision.

Background/Context

A Cabinet decision was taken on 27.1.21 to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities and the Executive Director for Corporate Resources to allocate the Local Authority Contain Outbreak Management Fund in order to deliver the objectives in the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) in accordance with the Council's standing orders and procurement legislation.

The aim of this project is to reduce the consequences of lockdown on babies, toddlers and their families/carers by providing enhanced opportunities across the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Gloucestershire in and around the children and family centres. By targeting areas that experience greatest health inequalities our intervention will lead to a reduction in further longer-term health inequalities. By focussing on prevention and the wider implications of Covid, we will contribute to the national strategy to "build back fairer".

This partnership proposal ensures Gloucestershire County has accessible provision. Barnardos will lead in Gloucester, Forest of Dean and Stroud.

Gardners Lane & Oakwood Federation (GLOW) will lead in Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and the Cotswolds, with targeted outreach support across localities if there are children and families in need without easy access to an existing Children and Family Centre.

The proposal will be further enhanced by the Health Visiting Team delivering a progressive universal approach to an identified cohort of families, with a community nursery nurse attached to each of the 16 children's centres for two days each week. Plan Do Study Act model is being used to structure the proposed service delivery, where we are offering progressive universal approach to an identified cohort. The objective is to plan service delivery around previously identified locations where inequalities in health and deprivation have been recognised. The proposal is to place one community nursery nurse into each of the sixteen children centres for two days per week.

Alternative options considered and why they were rejected

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The first option was to do nothing. This would mean that young children and their parents who have had minimal contact with universal and targeted services during the pandemic may be at risk of not receiving the support they require following the pandemic. This could lead to a long-term impact of health conditions that worsen with time and require support from specialist services in the future, which could have possibly been prevented through early intervention measures.

The second option was to offer a limited provision. This would require that each third-party agency involved in this work (Barnardos and Gardeners Lane and Oakwood Federation)

reviews their own budgets to assess what they could offer to support families who may suffer health inequalities. This would mean that, if anything, the offer would be smaller and have limited reach within the most deprived areas in Gloucestershire.

Risk Analysis

This project poses a risk to statutory services, due to the potential increase of referrals to them. Due to the pandemic community services are already facing a backlog of referrals and waiting listings for assessments and treatment and this project may exacerbate the issue further. To mitigate this risk, the details of the project have been shared with the Deputy Service Director for Children and Young People in the Trust, who has agreed that the benefits of this project outweigh the risk of increasing referrals and that this project will have a positive impact on early intervention and preventative approaches for children and families who may otherwise have gone unnoticed.

By not undertaking this project there would be a risk that babies born during the pandemic may go on to suffer health inequalities that could have been identified and dealt with at an early age. This could then mean that they require intervention from specialist services, potentially over the longer term, as they grow older, causing a future capacity risk to health services.

There is a risk in respect of any contract variation that it may be subject to a legal challenge under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (“PCRs”). While it is acknowledged that a contract variation/modification is permissible under the PCRs only on very limited grounds, the proposed variations/modifications to the council’s contracts with GLO and Barnardos are justified under Regulations 72(1)(b) and 72(5) PCRs respectively on the grounds set out in the “Decision” section of his report.

Data Protection risks for this project have been considered and a DPIA Checklist has been completed. It has been recommended by the Information Management Service, that the DPIAs for the existing contracts are amended to reflect the change in service as part of this project, or alternatively if not suitable to amend then a new DPIA to be developed specifically for this project. The risk category of this project is ‘low’.

Equalities considerations

A Due Regard statement has been completed for the LOMP.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities have read and considered the Due Regard Statement in order to satisfy themselves as the decision makers that due regard has been given.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed? Yes

If ‘Yes’, please attached the signed Equality Impact Assessment.

Contact details for further information:

Officer: Siobhan Farmer, Deputy Director of Public Health

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