

Decision Maker: CARE SERVICES POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 28 June 2016

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: SOCIAL CARE INNOVATIONS GRANT UPDATE ON OUTCOMES

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Ward: Borough-wide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The report presented to Executive on 15th July 2015 (reference: CS15904) requested drawdown of external funding for a time limited project designed to develop a programme of innovation in connection with assessments for short breaks which would be linked to Education, Health and Care plans for disabled children and young people.
- 1.2 The funding period ceased in March 2016. This report notes the main detail and outcomes from the project and reports on further work currently being undertaken, with a view to testing identified outcomes prior to implementation in September 2016.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment upon the contents of this report for information purposes.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status:: Existing Policy Draft Care Services Plan for 2016/17
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People: enjoy learning and achieve their full potential; ensuring the health and well-being of children and young people and their families, promoting independence:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: 2015/16 £100,000
 2. Ongoing costs: Non recurring
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Disabled Children's Team, Children's Social Care
 4. Total current budget for this head: n/a
 5. Source of funding: External Funding : Department of Education, Social Care Innovation Fund
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): One part time temporary position for 32 weeks. Ceased 31 March 2016.
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:

Approximately 500 hours over period to 31 March 2016.
Ongoing approximately 200 hours from 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016.
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in:: Not applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):

Approximately 1000 disabled children and young people who have, or will have, EHC Plans and may request information regarding short breaks from the Disabled Children's Team.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The Social Care Innovation Fund (SCIF) is a national programme funded by the Department of Education and led by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC). Bromley was successful in securing funding of £100,000 from SCIF to develop and test innovative solutions to the assessment procedure and the processes by which families receive social care services from the statutory sector, with the aim of engaging parents, carers, young people and professionals to 'discover, define, co-produce and test' a seamless process which would be innovative and deliver improved outcomes for all involved whilst offering value for money.

3.1.2 The project was designed to explore a new approach to proportionate assessment for children and young people as they enter the statutory system and to understand the opportunities for streamlining the links to other existing assessment processes, particularly Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. This would ensure that qualified Social Workers can direct their resources to support those children and families in most need.

3.1.3 The project included the following key principles:-

- Empowering families, increasing their resilience and improving their experience of the assessment process
- Developing methods of meaningful co-production and positive relationship building between professionals, parents/carers and children and young people
- Developing proportionate methods of assessment
- Testing approaches that demonstrate potential savings and value for money
- Clarifying the role of the Social Worker

3.1.4 The project team worked with the following broad range of stakeholders:-

- Parent/s carers of disabled children and young people, facilitated by Bromley Parent Voice
- Disabled children and young people, facilitated by Advocacy for All
- Marjorie McClure Special School, the Glebe Special School, Riverside Special School
- Borough wide voluntary sector organisations, including Bromley Mencap, Burgess Autistic Trust, CASPA, the Maypole Project
- Local authority staff from SEND Services and Social Care teams

3.1.5 Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) was kept informed on progress with a view to considering whether GPs, GP surgeries, local pharmacies and other health professionals might have a role in future in signposting parent/carers to appropriate community provision, without the need for referral into Social Care.

3.2. Project Outcomes to date

3.2.1 The first phase of the project was tasked with understanding the experiences of families, young people and key stakeholders regarding social care assessments. The key findings were:-

- The current assessment process takes too long, is too complex and is undertaken for too many children/young people who might better be signposted to universal/community provision.
- The assessment is often duplicating in some respects other statutory assessments, i.e Education, Health and Care Plans

- The involvement and cost of Social Workers for the purpose of awarding a low level short break is not commensurate with the cost of the short break
- The assessment framework and eligibility for provision is unclear
- There is variance in experience of the assessment process
- The process is based on what provision is available rather than best outcomes for the child/family
- Wherever possible the child or young person concerned needs to be involved in the decision

3.2.2 The second phase identified solutions to tackle and improve the outcome from phase one. This was in the context of :-

- Biggest potential for improved outcomes for families
- Greatest value for money, including proportionate use of Social Worker resource
- Biggest potential for supporting relationships between families, practitioners and the wider workforce
- Whether these changes could be linked to the EHC Needs Assessment

3.2.3 The third phase involved a 'design' period whereby all partners further developed the solutions into small scale workable models, including :-

- An online self-assessment for short breaks
- Individuals who prepare EHC assessments with parents asked to include reference to social needs within their assessment process
- A tool for enabling disabled young people to understanding 'social need' developed
- Communication media developed to facilitate better understanding for parents as to how their social needs can be met, without recourse to social care support, i.e. promoting 'self help'.
- Key 'trigger' questions identified and refined which would quickly lead to, or eliminate the likelihood of, eligibility to specialist short breaks, whilst also included signposting to universal services
- The role of a 'trusted/nominated professional' to verify on line applications for short breaks
- Parallel testing of applications for short breaks both on line and through the traditional method of Social Worker visits, with a view to determining whether outcomes would vary
- Identification of a clear, transparent process, including improved consistency of decision making by Social Workers

3.2.4 The final phase was to review the outcomes from phase three, refine and build a programme for piloting.

3.2.5 The above phases were completed in March 2016 and further funding of £25,000 was identified in order for the pilot to commence in April 2016. (see **3.4 Project Funding** below)

3.3 Conclusions to date

3.3.1 An on line assessment tool has been developed which will enable parents/carers to request 'low level/micro' short breaks without the need for intensive support from Social Workers. This should also reduce waiting time within the system for parents/carers to receive support.

- 3.3.2 The increase in contracts managed by self-assessment should lead to an increase in social Worker capacity to prioritise safeguarding workloads.
- 3.3.3 The outcomes from the above pilot are expected to be sufficiently robust to inform better ways of working and should be cost neutral to implement.
- 3.3.4 There are other identified service improvements which will require further testing and consideration of how to embed, for example, workforce training. This will enable the development of an inclusive assessment at the EHC assessment stage.
- 3.3.5 Changes must be fit for purpose for the entire relevant Bromley population, including hard to reach groups.
- 3.3.6 Bromley's Local Offer requires ongoing updating to ensure that relevant services within the community are recorded. A separate piece of work is currently underway to identify short break provision within Bromley's neighbouring boroughs which could provide alternative signposting opportunities.
- 3.3.7 The scope of the project is beginning to compliment the 'front door redesign' which has been successfully implemented in Adult's Social Care.
- 3.3.8 The scope of the project proposals are expected to not only benefit Bromley's social care offer but will in time provide a much better community offer which links very strongly into Bromley's 'Building a Better Bromley' key priority areas in terms of 'supporting our children and young people' and 'supporting independence'

3.4 Project Funding

- 3.4.1 The original funding of £100,000 for the financial year 2015/16 has been accounted for.
- 3.4.2 In order to progress the project into a full testing and mobilisation phase, further funding of £10,000 was agreed by CDC for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016. CDC are holding this funding which was enabled the original Project Co-ordinator to continue to be funded for the project in the capacity of an Associate of CDC.
- 3.4.3 The local authority has also allocated £15,000 to the project from external (DfE) Transformation Funding for 2016/17. This funding is intended to ensure that EHC reforms are embedded within Bromley systems and the learning produced from this project in respect of the 'care' element of EHC transformation is justifiable expenditure from the Transformation Funding.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This project is in line with the Care Services Portfolio Plan 2016/17 : to support children with complex disabilities to remain within their family home and their local community

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Authority has a duty to provide social care assessments within designated timescales and to ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable children. The online referral supports this duty and allows parent/s carers to request a Social Work Assessment if they so wish.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial and Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Report to Executive 15 th July 2016 CS15904 Social Care Innovation – Drawdown of Funding