

Report title	Grant Awards for Children Services
Decision designation	AMBER
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor John Reynolds Children and Young People
Key decision	Yes
In forward plan	Yes
Wards affected	All Wards
Accountable Director	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services
Originating service	Children's Services
Accountable employee	Andrew Head of Service, Children Improvement Wolverson Tel 01902 555550 Email Andrew.wolverson@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Children's Services Leadership 17 September 2020 Team

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Approve the establishment of supplementary revenue expenditure budgets totalling £1,712,371 funded by:
 - a. What Works for Children's Social Care, Department for Education Grant of £411,675.
 - b. Department for Education, Wellbeing for Education Return Grant (2020-2021) of £36,942.
 - c. National Lotteries grant of £1,263,754 to extend the HeadStart programme until July 2022.
2. Approve the Council entering into such grant agreements as are necessary or the funds to be received by the Council

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of three grant awards to Children's Services that will support the continued transformation journey of the directorate and support our response to the priorities of relighting our city. As a result of these grants, changes are needed to the Council's budget approved by Full Council on 4 March 2020. These are set out in the body of the report.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council and its partners have a shared vision of improving the life chances of all children and young people living in Wolverhampton by ensuring that families get the right help, at the right time and in the right place and, as far as possible, keep families together.
- 2.2 Children Services have been successful in being awarded a number of grants to continue its transformation journey.

3.0 Social workers in schools.

- 3.1 The Social workers in schools (SWIS) Scale-up is the continuation of a programme of work that began with three pilots in Lambeth, Southampton and Stockport in 2019. This next phase is to scale-up the programme and to conduct a more rigorous evaluation, so that we can better understand if, how well, and in what circumstances placing social workers in schools works to improve outcomes for young people. The randomised controlled trial methodology is being adopted and is widely considered to provide the best possible evidence of the effectiveness.
- 3.2 The Social Workers in Schools programme aims to embed social workers in secondary schools to reduce referral rates to children's social care (CSC), and reduce the numbers of Section 17 or Section 47 investigations, along with the overarching aim of reducing the number of children in care and improving educational attainment. It is hoped that this will also promote better inter-agency working between schools and the children's social care system.
- 3.3 Wolverhampton has been successful in securing grant funding totalling £411,675 from the What Works for Children's Social Care, Department of Education.

4.0 Social worker in Schools – How it will work?

- 4.1 Six social workers within the existing staff and one team manager will be deployed to the project. Backfill for the posts deployed into the pilot will be provided for the duration meaning that the overall number of social workers within the city will increase by seven posts.

- 4.2 Twelve mainstream schools will be identified, and an independent evaluator will randomly select six schools to have a social worker. The schools without the social worker will still need to be part of evaluation. Schools who have put themselves forward are aware that they may not be selected to have a social worker but will still need to participate in the pilot.
- 4.3 Social workers will be attached to one secondary school each and will be physically based in schools as much as possible and integrated into the life of the school. They will be conducting statutory social work as the focus of their work, holding cases and working with children and families from their school.
- 4.4 Social workers will also work with staff in the school to develop a deeper understanding of safeguarding and child protection, and to increase mutual understanding of the goals and ways of working of both schools and social care.
- 4.5 Local authorities will be expected to provide data to the evaluator to facilitate their analysis, particularly concerning the rate of referral, child in need plans, child protection plans, and children becoming looked after who attend each school in the trial (this includes both the 'intervention' schools with social workers and 'comparison' schools without social workers). They will also be expected to make available staff, including social workers, for interviews, focus groups and/or surveys. Schools in both groups will be expected to provide access to students (subject to consent), and teachers.
- 5.0 S31 Grant Determination Letter for the Wellbeing for Education Return Grant (2020-21)**
- 5.1 The Grant under a Section 31 is a non-ring-fenced transfer (Local Government Act 2003). It is intended that local authorities use the funds to support the aims of the Wellbeing for Education Return project.
- 5.2 The purpose of the grant is to support the Wellbeing for Education Return project which seeks to better equip education settings to support pupils and students' wellbeing and psychosocial recovery as they return to full-time education this autumn following the Covid-19 outbreak. This will be achieved by;
- a) delivering the Wellbeing for Education Return training package to include local context and information about local services.
 - b) making accessible, and delivering, the adapted Wellbeing for Education Return training package to all state-funded education settings in their area in the first half of autumn term 2020.
 - c) providing ongoing support to all state-funded settings in their area, on promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing over the next six months.
- 5.3 It is anticipated that the training will be delivered through a range of partners and the grant monies will be used to provide backfill for those agencies that support the training roll out. This will include the council, health and voluntary sector organisations. Wolverhampton has been successful in securing grant funding totalling £36,942.

6.0 HeadStart National Lotteries Grant Phase 4

- 6.1 In July 2017, HeadStart Wolverhampton was awarded £9.5 million in funding over five years from the National Lottery Fund to further support its work with young people, their families and the professionals who impact on their lives.
- 6.2 National Lotteries has committed to extending the HeadStart programme for another 12 months, up until July 2022. The grant award is £1,263,754
- 6.3 HeadStart phase 4 will build on what we have learnt so far, not only about the barriers and challenges, but also what has helped from what we have tested to date. It will consider Covid-19 and the new challenges the pandemic has brought. Young people, families, schools, and communities have all been affected.
- 6.4 In May 2020, the online counselling and mental health support service Kooth published data about changes in demand for services and children and young people's needs during the Covid-19 crisis. It reports that within the Midlands there have been increases in children and young people seeking support for bereavement (51 per cent increase in demand), eating issues (38 per cent increase), school/ college worries (71 per cent increase), suicidal thoughts (250 per cent increase), and for young people with an autism spectrum condition (400 per cent increase). There have been decreases in demand in the Midlands for issues relating to family relationships (40 per cent reduction) and loneliness (33 per cent).
- 6.5 HeadStart Phase 4 will consider the above issues in their revised action plan. Key priorities will include;
- a) City-wide mental wellbeing information and awareness raising
 - b) Coproduction. Giving young people a voice in shaping and developing services
 - c) A skilled workforce equipped to deal with wellbeing and mental health
 - d) Supporting schools - 'Universal +' services for young people in schools
 - e) Supporting Parents and Carers in Wellbeing
 - f) Targeted Intervention for those most at risk with a focus on Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND), black and minority ethnicity (BAME), lesbian, gay, bi sexual, transgender and questioning (LTBTQ)
 - g) Community Consortium – Place- based approach

7.0 Reasons for decision

Grants have been awarded to support children and young people in Wolverhampton. It will add value to the existing work in the City.

8.0 Financial implications

- 8.1 The Council has been successful in securing grant funding totalling £1,712,371. This report seeks approval to build in supplementary revenue budgets fully funded by the following grants:

- What Works for Children's Social Care, Department for Education Grant of £411,675
- Department for Education, Wellbeing for Education Return Grant (2020-2021) of £36,942
- National Lottery, Headstart of £1,263,754
[AS/30092020/K]

9.0 Legal implications

- 9.1 Grants are subject to formal conditions that will need to be adhered to and the Council may be subject to clawback if it does not comply with any such conditions.
[TS/10092020/Q]

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 By offering earlier support, the projects aim to ensure young people have opportunities to thrive and succeed in life. By targeting those young people, families and communities who are likely to have poorer outcomes, this contributes to narrowing the gap and reducing inequalities.

11.0 'Climate change and environmental implications'

- 11.1 In the development of the implementation plan, consideration will be given to climate change and environmental implications.

12.0 Human resources implications

- 12.1 Existing social workers will be deployed to the social work project. The funding will be used to backfill staff.

13.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 13.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this report.

14.0 Health and Wellbeing implications

- 14.1 The project will have a beneficial impact on children, young people and families by intervening earlier on to prevent escalation of need.

15.0 Covid implications

- 15.1 The projects will require some face to face. All staff working on the projects will comply with Covid-19 guidance and social distancing.

16.0 Schedule of background papers

- 16.1 None