



**FOR PUBLICATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Thursday, 29 April 2024**

**Joint Report of the Director - Public Health and Director of Finance**

**Journal transfer to enable Public Health funding to support Children's Centres**

(Cabinet Member for Health and Communities)

**1. Divisions Affected**

1.1 County-wide

**2. Key Decision**

2.1 This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or savings which are significant having regard to the budget for the service or function concerned (this is currently defined as £500,000) and it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County.

**3. Purpose**

3.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to:

- a) Transfer £1.000m per annum from Public Health to Children's Services via a journal transfer to continue the Public Health investment into the delivery of preventative support interventions from Children's Centres over a 2 year period between 1 April 2025 till 31 March 2027.
- b) To note that this funding will be provided from the Public Health Grant.

#### **4. Information and Analysis**

- 4.1 On 26 July 2018 Cabinet approved the development of a Section 75 Partnership Agreement between the Council (Public Health and Children's Services) and Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust for the delivery of the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service and the transfer of £1.000m to Children's Services to support with the delivery of a preventative offer from Children's Centres to families who had been referred via an Early Help Assessment across Derbyshire.
- 4.2 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was set up between Public Health and Children's Services for the delivery of interventions in Children's Centres and included:
- Parent Education Programmes – Group-based programmes using the evidence-based Solihull approach for the parent/carers of pre-school aged children to enhance the capabilities of parents to provide a supportive and enriching environment for their children to grow up in.
  - Home Learning Programmes – Targeted group based or one-to-one programmes for the parent/carers of pre-school children to help prepare the children for school and nursery and achieve school readiness.
  - Ensuring Children's Centres were compliant with the UNICEF Baby Friendly Standards and that Children's Centres are audited on a biannual basis to comply with the relevant standards.
  - Having a Public Health Champion in each locality across Derbyshire to champion this work.
- 4.3 The SLA commenced on 1 April 2019 and was for a period of two years and six months. As part of the continued Public Health contribution to the delivery of preventative interventions in Children's Centres, three further 12-month SLAs have been approved. The current SLA with Children's Services is due to expire on 30 September 2024, although on 1 February 2024 Cabinet approved a six month extension to the current funding meaning Public Health funding is committed to Children's Centres until 31 March 2025.
- 4.4 SLAs put in place as part of the extended funding over the past three years following the Covid-19 pandemic have emphasised a blended approach of group based and one-to-one interventions as well as face-to-face and virtual delivery depending on the needs of the families. In many cases, face-to-face delivery is essential for the interventions,

however the learning from the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that modern technologies are also beneficial.

- 4.5 Analysis of monitoring data indicates that during the 2022-23 SLA period (October 2022-September 2023), a total of 264 group based or one-to-one support sessions were delivered to 2,464 individuals (parent/carers or close family members and children). Children's Services are also reporting that cases are of an increasing complexity which requires targeted support. Children's Services have continued to meet key performance indicators in relation to the number of families supported each quarter over the past year. Case studies have also been provided each quarter that demonstrate the complex needs of families accessing the interventions and the positive impact that the interventions delivered as part of this SLA have had on families. Work is also currently ongoing to enable Children's Services to provide more data within the quarterly performance reports on the Public Health outcomes achieved that will be used to help further showcase the impact these interventions have on vulnerable families.
- 4.6 Previous approvals to extend Public Health funding into Children's Services have been for a 12-month period. These extensions in funding have been essential for the continuation of the preventative interventions contained within the SLA. However, these shorter-term extensions have made it difficult to undertake a more detailed review of the current SLA and develop a longer-term approach to utilising the Public Health funding contribution into Children's Services. Therefore, this report seeks approval to commit Public Health funding to Children's Services over a 2 year period to 31 March 2027. Providing Public Health funding over a longer period will enable Public Health and Children's Services to collaborate and work together to support the delivery of Public Health outcomes for Derbyshire families.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Public Health and Children's Services will work in collaboration to review the existing SLA and determine the best approach to utilise the Public Health investment into Children's Services to achieve positive Public Health outcomes for Derbyshire families. Advice from Legal Services will be sought to determine any consultation requirements prior to determining and implement the intended approach.

## **6. Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 Alternative option 1. Do not extend the funding between Public Health and Children's Services. Failure to provide additional funding will put at risk the delivery of preventative interventions from Children's Centres that contribute towards positive Public Health outcomes, that in turn will have a significant impact on the health outcomes for the most vulnerable families with young children in Derbyshire. More work needs to be undertaken to understand the impact the interventions delivered as part of the existing SLA have on Public Health outcomes for Derbyshire families and to determine the best approach for Public Health to support Children's Services moving forward. A continued financial contribution to Children's Services is required to help vulnerable families in Derbyshire achieve positive Public Health outcomes. It is for this reason that not providing additional funding into Children's Services is not the preferred option.

6.2 Alternative option 2. Seek approval to extend funding from Public Health to Children's Services for a 12-month period. Previous approvals to extend the Public Health financial contribution into Children's Services have been for a 12-month period and have been used to help continue the delivery of the interventions contained within the existing SLA. On 1 February 2024 Cabinet approved a six month extension to the current funding. However, to further collaborate and develop the existing SLA to maximise the impact of Public Health outcomes requires a longer-term commitment to Public Health investment into Children's Services. It is for this reason why extending this funding for 12 months in line with previous approvals is not the preferred option.

## **7. Implications**

7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

## **8. Background Papers**

8.1 Cabinet Report - 26 July 2018 – 'A New Approach to Public Health Nursing and Achieving Population Health and Wellbeing Outcomes in 0-19 Year Olds across Derbyshire'

8.2 Cabinet Report – 27 July 2023 – 'Public Health Service Level Agreement with Early Help 2023-24 and mitigating the impact of cost pressures within commissioned Public Health Services delivered by Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation Trust' (Restricted Report)

8.3 Cabinet Report – 11 January 2024 – ‘Budget savings proposals 2024/25 to 2028/29’

8.4 Cabinet Report – 1 February 2024 – ‘Revenue Budget 2024-25’

## **9. Appendices**

9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications

## **10. Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet:

- a) Approves the transfer of £1.000m per annum from Public Health to Children’s Services via a journal transfer to continue the Public Health investment into the delivery of preventative support interventions from Children’s Centres over a 2 year period between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2027
- b) Notes that this funding will be provided out of the Public Health Grant.

## **11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

11.1 Cabinet approval is required to provide additional Public Health funding for a 2 year period between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2027 via a journal transfer to continue the Public Health investment into Children’s Services.

## **12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?**

12.1 No

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## **Implications**

### **Financial**

- 1.1 Public Health will continue to provide £1.000m per financial year to Children's Services. The total cost of providing this funding via a journal transfer over a 2 year period between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2027 will equate to £2.000m. This funding will continue to be met out of the Public Health Grant. The first six months of the 2024-25 financial year are covered by a previous SLA that is due to expire on 30 September 2024 and £0.500m investment will be transferred to Children's Services under this arrangement. Additional funding of £0.485m was approved by Cabinet in February 2024 to cover the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025.
- 1.2 The Public Health Grant allocations are confirmed annually, therefore the grant allocations for 2025/26 and 2026/27 have not yet been announced. It is assumed that the grant will remain similar to previous years and this expenditure will therefore be funded from within the grant allocation.

### **Legal**

- 2.1 The Council's Financial regulations state that a journal transfer between departments of more than £100,000 requires the approval of Cabinet following a joint report of the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director. That report must specify the proposed expenditure and the source of funding and must explain the implications in the current and future financial years.
- 2.2 Legal Services have been involved in the development of SLAs that have been put in place between Public Health and Children's Services. Legal Services will continue to be consulted on the development of an updated SLA to enable the continued investment from Public Health into Children's Services for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2027.

### **Human Resources**

- 3.1 It is not the responsibility of Public Health to fund services delivered by Children's Services, however the delivery of preventative support interventions in Children's Centres that has been funded via SLAs between Public Health and Children's Services over recent years has contributed towards positive Public Health outcomes for Derbyshire families. Failure to provide continued funding into Children's Services at

this stage would jeopardise the future level of delivery of programmes and interventions within Children's Services that have a positive impact on Public Health outcomes. This in turn may place some of the workforce within Children's Services at risk if without Public Health funding many of the interventions and programmes that contribute towards Public Health outcomes become economically unviable. Extending this funding for a further 2 years will enable more time to consider the effectiveness of the interventions currently delivered within the SLA and determine an appropriate approach moving forward.

## **Information Technology**

4.1 N/A

## **Equalities Impact**

5.1 Preventative, support interventions offered as part of the SLA with Children's Services are targeted at supporting some of the most vulnerable families with young children across the county. Therefore, Public Health's financial support to Children's Services helps contribute towards the reduction of health inequalities of the most vulnerable families of young children in Derbyshire.

## **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 6.1 All Public Health commissioned services set out to meet the outcomes outlined within the Adult Social Care and Health Service Plan, with a particular focus on:
- Resilient, thriving and green communities which share responsibility for improving their lives and supporting each other
  - Happy, safe and healthy people, with solid networks of support, who feel in control of their personal circumstances and aspirations
  - High quality public services that work together and alongside communities to deliver services that meet people's needs

## **Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)**

### **7.1 Risk Management**

The Public Health Grant is determined annually and is ring-fenced for the use of Public Health functions. However, this current ring-fence is only guaranteed until the end of the 2024-25 financial year. This uncertainty around the ring-fence and annual grant allocation represents

both a financial and reputational risk to Public Health to commit longer-term funding to Children's Services if either the ring-fence is removed and / or if there is a significant reduction in the Public Health Grant allocation. Over recent years the Public Health Grant allocation has failed to keep up with the rate of inflation. This has created an additional financial risk across Public Health delivered services because cost pressures have been identified to deliver services funded out of the Public Health Grant. Therefore, committing to the longer-term funding of Children's Services will increase this financial risk further as the department manages the best way to utilise the Public Health Grant in light of these challenges.

The demand for Public Health services has increased following the Covid-19 pandemic as both the health needs and vulnerabilities of families have increased. The demand for services aimed at children and young people commissioned within Public Health and delivered by the Council and NHS organisations has increased. Failure to continue funding Children's Services to deliver preventative interventions may increase the vulnerabilities and health needs of those target population groups that Children's Services work with. This in turn may put significant strain on the capacity of the wider workforce aimed at supporting the health needs of vulnerable children and young people.