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| Contains Confidential or Exempt Information | NO |
| Title | Department of Education Innovation Programme – Adolescents in and on the edge of care |
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| Portfolio(s) | Cllr Binda Rai – Lead Member Children and Families |
| For Consideration By | Corporate Parent Committee |
| Date to be Considered | 23 rd June 2015 |
| Implementation Date if Not Called In | |
| Affected Wards | All |
| Keywords/Index | Innovation Fund, Adolescents, Looked After Children, Brighter Futures |

Purpose of Report:

The authority has been successful in its bid to the Department of Education Innovation Programme to transform its response to adolescents in care and on the edge of care and their families. This report highlights key aspects of this Brighter Futures programme which is being delivered between Jan 2015 and April 2016.

1. Recommendations

1.1 That Members note that Ealing's bid to the Department of Education Innovation Fund bid has now been successful and the authority has been allocated £3.5m to improve outcomes for adolescents in care and on the edge of care from Jan 2015 to April 2016.

1.2 That Members continue to review progress on this Brighter Futures programme over the coming year, as it has significant implications for the way in which we support adolescents in care and on the edge of care and their families and the role of the authority as Corporate Parent.

2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

2.1 The proposal has significant implications for the authority in its Corporate Parent role as it affects children and adolescents in care and on the edge of care and how we support them and their families.

3. Key Implications

3.1 The Children's Social Care Innovation programme is a two year national programme supported by £30m in the first financial year 2014/15 and substantially more in the second – an additional approx. £70m. The programme's key objective is to support improvements in the quality of services so that children who need help from the social care system have better chances in life.

3.2 The government's view is that greater innovation is needed both to deliver better outcomes for adolescents and their families and achieve higher quality and better value for money.

3.3 This opportunity is very timely as it not only provides a chance to address critical value for money issues linked to the authority's placement strategy. It also offers an opportunity to develop an increasingly adolescent focused service responding to many of the issues raised in the extensive looked after children and care leavers customer survey undertaken last year and previously reported to the Corporate Parent meetings.

3.4 The authority submitted an expression of interest last summer to the DfE Innovation Programme which was approved. We were then invited to progress to delivering a fully worked up proposal supported by 20 days of external consultancy to build and test the proposal and submit this in early October.

3.5 Authorities were encouraged to develop bids with partners to increase the innovation aspects of the proposals and start to develop new alliances. Ealing submitted its bid with two external partners – Catch 22 and iMPower.

3.6 Catch 22 are a leading youth charity with significant national expertise in provision of services to adolescents and care leavers who will be providing strategic support and advice to the programme. iMPower are a business consultancy who are undertaking wider activity with the council on value for money and managing demand with a particular focus on increasing the supply of local in-house foster carers.

3.7 Ealing's proposal:

Ealing's bid was for £3.5m to transform its support for adolescents in care and on the edge of care.

The proposal has several key themes which include:

- Transforming our placement strategy and recruiting and supporting many more local foster carers to prevent looked after children being placed far outside the borough.
- Engaging more effectively with the needs of adolescents in care and on the edge of care and their families. Responding in more innovative ways to their needs to help deliver better outcomes and improve their life chances.

3.8 The key details of Ealing's proposal are built around the following changes to the system:

- **Re-designing how we deliver our services:** We are creating multi-disciplinary teams that comprise of a range of core professionals with smaller caseloads and more time to work intensively with the young person and their family/carer. We are re-organising their responsibilities around the young people they work

with and broadening our support package offer, more closely integrating the work we currently do with the third and community sectors.

- **Shifting power and decision making:** We will devolve responsibility for decisions where possible to young people, their families and carers (i.e. young people will choose the lead professional that they work with and give feedback, foster carers will make day to day decisions around parental contact, overnight stays etc). Our staff will make challenging judgements about risk, learn to let go, trusting parents/carers and listening better to young people.
- **Providing intensive early support to young people, families and carers:** Our multi-professional teams will work intensively at an early stage with families whose adolescents are identified as being on the edge of care, to ensure prevention of family breakdown. This approach will also prioritise foster placements at risk of disruption to reduce placement moves. This work will be underpinned by a consistent, intensive, relational approach and we will train staff and carers in this model.
- **Identifying one lead professional, chosen by the young person,** to work closely with the adolescent and coordinate the support plan. This could be a youth worker, peer mentor or teacher and we would like the flexibility to consider delegating the statutory social work function to the lead professional, with appropriate supervision and oversight. Young people's feedback throughout the process and participation will be central to care planning.
- **Providing responsive 24/7 services** delivered from our new Westside Young People's Centre rather than a traditional social work office. Support will be available to the young person, family or carer at weekends and evenings when crises more often occur for adolescents, and someone who knows the young person and the carer will be available to respond. Peer led Helplines will be available and focus on issues such as gangs and crime, substance misuse, sexual exploitation and safeguarding.
- **Increasing choice and power for the young person, expanding support to adolescents on the edge of care:** Giving them access to the same support as those in care - positive activities, education, training and employment support, specialist services for those at risk of involvement in gangs and sexual exploitation, access to delegated budgets.
- **Radically reshaping our Fostering service:** We will aim to recruit and retain 45 new local Foster Carers; change the nature of their role requiring them to provide permanent homes supported by specialist training and 24/7 back up.

We will start this transformation of our system by working with at least 120 young people in and on the edge of care during 2015/16.

3.9 As well as delivering better outcomes for our children and young people and their families the proposal will also ensure the authority achieves better value for money.

The Innovation Fund project will build on the work the authority is already undertaking with iMPower to transform our placement strategy and deliver significant savings, as well as better manage demand and support more adolescents to remain at home with their families with improved care packages and interventions.

3.10 Whilst the programme is for 16 months only, it is felt that the £3.5m programme funding will enable the authority to pilot the new ways of working and set up all the new processes and procedures required. This will include setting up all the relevant systems and processes to transition to a new pattern of service by 2017/18. This should be financially sustainable from savings generated through the new placement strategy. Key to this strategy will be significant reduction in reliance on expensive long distance residential and independent foster placements and an increased pool of well supported local in-house foster carers. In addition there will be a wider range of local supports and interventions for young people. The model will be supported by an intensive therapeutic training programme in partnership with the Maudsley and local CAMHs service.

3.11 Implementation Update: June 2015:

- a) The Brighter Futures service model is about to become operational from the end of June 2015. There will be 3 key elements – 2 new multi-disciplinary Edge of Care Teams and a new In Care Team, comprising about 60 staff in total. The Edge of Care Teams will be based at Westside and the In Care Team based at Perceval House, but interviews and meetings with young people will take place at youth friendly settings, including Horizons. In addition there will be transformation of the existing model of foster care recruitment to deliver more local placements and significant work is taking place on this, including better engagement with the local voluntary sector.
- b) Recruitment has been underway over the past 2 months. Key to the process has been a young persons panel comprising of former LAC and Edge of Care young people whose views have influenced the final selection of staff from Team Managers to front line workers.
- c) Interviews are taking place shortly for 3 young people's mentors to be members of the Teams. Their role will be to engage with young people who are referred to the Teams and support and advocate for them, ensuring that their views are heard and influence the care planning processes. This builds on feedback from last year's LAC Survey where young people expressed strongly a view that they don't always feel listened to or that their views make a difference in the care planning process. The 3 Youth Mentor roles are ring fenced to young people who have previously either been LAC or on the Pathways programme. Better engagement and participation between workers and young people is key to the Brighter Futures strategy.
- d) Structure of the Teams have been agreed and recruitment is almost complete - this includes Social Workers, Youth Workers, Connexions Workers, Clinical Psychologists, CAMHs Workers, Youth Justice Workers plus the young people's Mentors/Advocates.
- e) There will be a consistent approach and training model across all professions. The training model is evidence based on what we know works well and underpinned by the Maudsley Helping Families model and the Family Partnership model. In addition there is adolescent specific training that will be delivered by Ambit and Catch 22.

- f) Business process systems are being set up to identify and transfer appropriate cases into both of the Teams and identify the families most at risk of breakdown without intensive interventions.
- g) 24/7 models of outreach and support for young people and their carers will be firmed up once the Teams are in place. Recruitment is currently underway to the teams and the Youth Service is leading young people's involvement in the selection process. Some external support and positive activities will be commissioned from the voluntary and community sector.
- h) Impower are working with the Fostering Service to deliver an integrated strategy to foster carer recruitment. This will be underpinned by intensive training to support carers to better manage many more young people locally and improve their outcomes.
- i) There is an extensive external independent evaluation programme. This is being led by the Institute of Education. In addition there is an independent young person's evaluation process. This will capture young people's views through social media and the development of an innovative phone app by a young person led social enterprise – 3H (Head, Hand, Hearts). This work is supervised by Dartington Social Research Institute. Ealing young people will be trained up to use the app and continuously seek the views of our young people on what works for them and what doesn't and how the service they receive could be improved.
- j) A clear project management structure and Executive Board is in place to oversee and monitor progress and progress will escalate as we enter the implementation phase over the next 3 months.

4. Financial

a) Financial impact on the budget (mandatory)

The authority will access £3.5m from a DfE Grant to implement the programme from January 2015 – March 2016. There are specific grant requirements to ensure the authority delivers on its proposal.

The programme is expected to deliver savings over 3 years of approximately £7.6m. This includes a reduction in the LAC population of 30% through prevention and more effective family interventions and a marked increase in numbers of in house foster carers rather than more expensive out of borough residential and specialist foster care.

5. Legal

The proposal is set within existing Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004, the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.

6. Value for Money

The proposal will enable the authority to work towards delivering increased value for money from the substantial budgets allocated to children's placements each year through increasing the local supply rather than reliance on more expensive out of borough and residential placements.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

N/A

8. Risk Management

There will be risks associated in transforming the authority's placement strategy and transitioning to a new structure but these will be reviewed on a case by case basis with the aim of reducing risk whilst increasing protective factors for young people.

9. Community Safety

Increasing community safety and reducing risk of young people's involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour will be part of the proposal as it will target the increasing number of adolescents who enter the care system in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour issues aged 15 and above.

10. Links to the 5 Priorities for the Borough

If none, say so. Please keep to one paragraph.

The 5 Priorities are:

- **Making Ealing Safer**
- **Securing Public Services**
- **Securing Jobs and Homes**
- **Delivering Value for Money**
- **Making Ealing Cleaner**

11. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

By better responding to young people's expressed views regarding their placements and wish to remain locally community cohesion will be enhanced.

11. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications

These implications will be considered once the authority has learnt the outcome of its proposal.

13. Property and Assets

There are no property implications.

14. Any other implications:

N/A

15. Consultation

Consultation with young people, staff and foster carers underpins the proposal.

16. Timetable for Implementation

The proposal will be implemented from January 2015 until March 2016.

17. Appendices

N/A

18. Background Information

N/A

Consultation (Mandatory)

| Name of consultee | Post held | Date sent to consultee | Date response received | Comments appear in paragraph: |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Internal | | | | |
| e.g. Martin Smith | Executive Director | | | |
| e.g. Helen Harris | Director, Legal Services | | | e.g. 5. Legal |
| e.g. Adele Taylor | Director, Finance | | | e.g. 4. Financial |
| e.g. Julian Bell | Leader / Cabinet Member for: | | | |
| | | | | |
| External | | | | |
| | eg voluntary organisation | | | |
| | | | | |

Report History

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|-----------------------|--|
| Decision type: | Urgency item? |
| For information | NO |
| Report no.: | Report author and contact for queries: Marcella Phelan First and surname, job title Marcella Phelan Asst Director Children and families Ext 8848 Phelanm@ealing.gov.uk |

