

Operational Decision Record

Publication Date 23 August 2022	Decision Reference Number 4699
Decision Title Commissioning a Health Mentor Service	
Decision Value £43,200	
Revenue or Capital Spend? Revenue	
Department People	
Contact Officer Jasmin Howell, Head of Nottingham City Virtual School jasmin.howell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Decision Taken <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the expenditure of £43,200 to commission a Health Mentor for a period of one academic year (from September 2022 until August 2023) to work with individual children in care to provide support to improve their education outcomes. 2. To delegate authority to the Head of Nottingham City Virtual School to sign and enter into the contract with the mentoring service. 	
Reasons for Decision and Background Information <p>Children in care are vulnerable to underachievement and poor educational progression, are more likely to be excluded and are also more likely to have special educational needs than non-looked after children. The Virtual School has a statutory duty to support and improve the educational outcomes of the Council's children in care and receives Government grant to support with this. The Virtual School intends to commission this service from the grant funding provided to support the Council in its duty to improve the educational outcomes of children in care.</p> <p>A Health Mentor service was commissioned by the Virtual School in the previous two academic years from a company called Evolve and was a success. The Virtual School does not have sufficient capacity in the team to offer the support and interventions the Health Mentor will provide to children in care, so it therefore intends to recommission a mentor service so that the Council's children in care receive continuity of this support.</p> <p>The Health Mentor will be an employee of the commissioned company, and not of the Council directly. The Health Mentor will be funded through the Pupil Premium</p>	

Plus grant allocated to Virtual Schools to support and improve the education of children in care, so the Council's budget will therefore not be affected.

Other Options Considered and why these were rejected

As the Virtual School does not have the capacity and resources in the team to deliver mentor interventions to support children in care, it is therefore necessary to commission these services.

Reasons why this decision is classified as operational

The Health Mentor will be purchased from the Pupil Premium Plus grant funding, which is funding allocated to the Virtual School specifically to support the educational outcomes of children in care. The Virtual School has accounted for this spend within its annual budget plan, so a proportion of the budget has been set aside for this intervention.

Additional Information

Finance implications:

Funding for the proposed contract in this decision has been earmarked within the Pupil Premium Plus Grant (PPPG). This funding is allocated to the Local Authority by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) each year on a financial year basis.

The PPPG for the financial year is forecasted to be £1.142 million. This is based on the number of looked after children (LAC) pupils recorded as being looked after for at least one day as recorded in the March 2021 children looked-after data return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2020. This will be adjusted in December 2022 to reflect the LAC pupils recorded as being looked after for at least one day in the March 2022 children looked-after data return (SSDA903) and aged 4 to 15 at 31 August 2021.

The proposed cost of the contract is £43,000. As the PPPG is given on a financial year basis and the funding requested is for an academic year it will mean that £25,000 will be funded from the 2022/23 PPPG and £18,000 will be charged to the 2023/24 PPPG.

It is a requirement that any unspent grant funding at the end of each financial year has to be returned to the ESFA. The Council has always maximised the grant and not had to return any of the PPPG funding.

Commissioning and Procurement implications:

The Lead Commissioning Officer has supported with the drafting of a Service Specification for this service. The Lead Procurement Officer has supported with arrangements for obtaining three quotes from providers before awarding a contract for this service.

Data Protection implications:

A Data Protection Impact Assessment will be completed and submitted to Legal for advice and sign-off before awarding a contract for this service. A Data Protection Agreement (DPA) will be in place for this service and the commissioned provider will be required to sign the DPA.

Decision Maker
Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People
Scheme of Delegation Reference Number
7
Date Decision Taken
11 August 2022