

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:

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Author:

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Department:

Children and Families

Contact:

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Subject:

Next Day School Notification of Domestic Violence Incidents

Total Value:

£12,000 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

To use £12,000 from the Public Health budget in 2015/16 to fund a new post in the Domestic Abuse Referral Team (DART) to pilot work to enable schools to be made aware of domestic violence incidents the day after they happen.
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Reasons for the Decision(s)

Initiatives such as 'Operation Encompass' in the County have demonstrated the benefits of notifying a school the next day after a domestic violence incident has been discovered to have taken place in the household of one of its pupils. Notifying the school enables the right level of targeted support to be put in place for pupils following a distressing incident. Schools are therefore able to respond to changes in behaviour in an appropriate manner because they are appraised of the emotional challenges facing the young person.

Key adults will be identified in schools and support and training will be provided to enable schools to be ready and able to support and safeguard as required.

A database of these key adults will be shared with the DART. This way of working will be publicised to councillors, school governors, the police and all parents.

The information shared will only be that which is required to safeguard children, including:

- Date and time of incident;
- Brief circumstances of incident;
- Police action if appropriate.

The protocol will be followed in conjunction with current safeguarding procedures and practitioners' guidelines.

By sharing this information it is hoped that children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse will have access to responsive emotional health and wellbeing pastoral support in schools. Schools will receive information when:

- Police have been called to a domestic abuse incident;
- The child has been present in the household at the time of the incident;
- The child is of school age.

This knowledge, given to schools through Next Day Notification will enable the provision of immediate early support and intervention through silent or overt support, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

RESOURCES

In any 12 month period it can be expected that there will be 5,000 - 6,000 incidents logged through the Domestic Abuse Referral Team, 3,500 of which would be likely to involve school aged children. This would equate to an estimated volume of 15-25 incidents per day that would need communicating to schools. It is anticipated that £12,000 will cover the business support post required over the pilot timescale. This post will sit in the DART.

LEGISLATION

Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 allows for the sharing of this information and the principles of the Data Protection Act are also satisfied under this Act. The handling of such confidential and raw information will be handled at the schools by a trained 'key adult'. they will need to be available each day to receive details of incidents and to make an assessment of the appropriate response to support the child or young person.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A database has been developed that will monitor the number of incidents, age of child, breakdown of levels of risk, actions taken and outcomes for the child or young person. This will be provided to Public Health on a quarterly basis. Cases will be audited against this monitoring information.

Case studies will be undertaken across a number of dip tested cases and schools will be consulted as to the usefulness of the pilot in supporting improved behaviour and learning and reducing exclusion rates.

Other Options Considered:

Not to fund this pilot.
This option was rejected as it would be a missed opportunity to better inform and involve schools in supporting the behaviour and education of children and young people who are living with domestic abuse. Children and young people living with domestic abuse experience poor outcomes, including in relation to education and mental health. It is anticipated that this work will extend support of these children to the education environment, thereby improving their outcomes in these areas.

Background Papers:

Published Works:

Affected Wards:

Citywide

**Colleague / Councillor
Interests:**

Consultations:

Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

**Crime and Disorder
Implications:**

It is well documented that children who experience domestic abuse experience poorer outcomes than their peers across the board, including in relation to drug and alcohol use, being victims of and perpetrators of crime and potentially going on to be perpetrators of domestic violence themselves. The more wrap-around support offered to these children and young people, in all of their environments will go some way to intervening early to break the cycle of deprivation. This could include improving outcomes for them in relation to crime and disorder.

Equality:

EIA not required. Reasons: This is new work that will be universally delivered across the City and is not targeted at any protected group in particular.

**Regard for NHS
Constitution:**

Local authorities have a statutory duty to have regard to the NHS Constitution when exercising their public health functions under the NHS Act 2006. In making this decision relating to public health functions, we have properly considered the NHS Constitution where applicable and have taken into account how it can be applied in order to commission services to improve the health of the local community.

Decision Type:

Officer

Executive Decision? Yes

Scheme of Delegation Reference Number or Other Source of Delegation: 1

Subject to Call In: Yes

Advice Sought: Legal, Finance, Human Resources

Legal Advice: This report does not raise any significant legal issues. Advice provided by Andrew James (Team Leader Contracts and Commercial) on 15/04/2015.

Finance Advice: The Public Health budget for 2015-16 has been confirmed at £27.839m. Savings of £0.579m have been identified in the 2015-16 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This decision will not impact on the ability to achieve these savings. The funding has been identified as being available from the 2015-16 budget.

The decision supports the early intervention program and will deliver value for money by identifying children and families who need support at an early stage. Advice provided by Dee Fretwell (Finance Analyst) on 27/03/2015.

HR Advice: As this is supported financially, as is in line with the early intervention priorities this is supported.

Management are advised to consider the longer term impact following the pilot, and should be mindful of any arrangements around temporary employment contract. The Council's policy/guidance on Fixed Term Contracts should be adhered to and planning for any exit strategy, including exit/redundancy payments and potential release of pension benefits should be taken into account.

Lynn Robinson
HR Business Partner
27 March 2015 Advice provided by Lynn Robinson (HR Business Partner) on 27/03/2015.

Signatures: Alison Michalska (Corporate Director for Children and Adults)

Signature:  Date: 