

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP SERVICES

TO:	Health and Wellbeing Board		
DATE:	22 January 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	Children's Services Commissioning Intentions Update 2016-17		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Gavin	PORTFOLIO:	Children's Services and Families
SERVICE:	Children's Services	WARDS:	Borough wide
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is intended to provide an update on the development of a set of commissioning intentions for children's services, for noting and comment by Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.2 When finalised, the Commissioning Intentions will form part of our suite of documents which outline the approach and activities we expect to take to review, improve and commission services for children and young people in Reading during the next financial year.
- 1.3 This document includes an initial indication of our key priority focus areas and of the strategic direction that our commissioning activities for children and young people will take over the coming year. It will be supported by an operational commissioning work plan, which is also currently under development.
- 1.4 A full set of commissioning intentions will be developed for the beginning of the new financial year. These will be informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment currently under development and emerging themes from the Access to Resources Panel which considers requests for placements and packages of support for children and young people.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the current position regarding development of commissioning intentions for children and young people, and to comment on the indicative priority areas for commissioning of services during 2016-17, in order that a final version of commissioning intentions can be published and shared with partners and providers.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Children's Services Commissioning Intentions will be based on delivering services within the context of the Children's Services Vision, which is to work to achieve:

- All Reading children are *safe*, reach their *full potential* and lead *fulfilling lives*.
- Families are helped to *take control*, and that we have a *positive impact* on their lives
- We will aim for the *right outcome* for each child working in a child centred, transparent, timely and inclusive way.

### 4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The Commissioning Intentions will serve to set out for all potential and current providers the information and intelligence that will enable businesses to plan how they might offer to meet the assessed needs of children and young people in Reading in future tenders and contract negotiations.

4.2 The full Commissioning Intentions for 2016-17 will incorporate priorities already set out in the following documents:

- a) Reading Borough Council Sufficiency Strategy for Looked After Children 2015-2017
- b) Project Initiation Document for Move on for 16+ and Care Leaver Housing Project (and resulting Young People's Housing Strategy)
- c) Short Breaks Process 2016-17

4.3 In addition, the following priority areas will be incorporated into the final Commissioning Intentions document:

a) **Children and young people's mental health**

Our partners in the CCGs have added £1m recurrent funding to tackle capacity issues. We are working on a comprehensive CAMHS transformation plan (Future in Mind) with our health partners. We have decided to pool our funding for youth counselling.

b) **Health visiting/school nursing**

These services will be reviewed in the coming year to ensure they are fully embedded within RBC and that service specifications are considered within the context of developing a 0-19 service.

c) **SEN provision**

A sub-group of Schools Forum is leading a review to examine how we can better meet the needs of our young people with SEN locally, and how we reprioritise our spend in this area.

d) **NEET**

Through our City Deal programme called 'Elevate' we will provide more job and training opportunities for 16-24 year olds who are not in education, employment or training, along with a joined-up offer of support across

agencies. We will be reviewing our contract with Adviza to enable our work to be more targeted.

e) **Independent Fostering Agency framework**

The current framework for Independent Fostering Agencies ends in March 2017. Work is underway with our partners across the 11 south central local authorities in the framework to plan the retendering of the contract.

f) **Framework for residential and independent special schools**

Our continued participation in this framework will be reviewed over the coming year.

g) **Children's social care placement costs**

We will be engaging cost analysis experts to carry out more detailed work on individual placement costs.

h) **Domestic Abuse**

Reading Borough Council is in the first stages of a procurement exercise for Domestic Abuse Services in Reading. As part of this Reading is intending to combine all three current domestic abuse related contracts, and associated funding, into one commissioning cycle.

New contract arrangements are due to be in place by April 2017 and will ensure that the appropriate support is available for those experiencing domestic abuse, perpetrating abuse or living within a household where it is taking place. This will include, but is not limited to:

- Refuge provision
- Outreach support/ drop in facilities
- Ongoing support for all the family including young people
- Perpetrator support
- Training and awareness raising

i) **Advocacy/Independent Visitors for Looked After Children**

This contract is coming to an end and we are currently reviewing our options for re-commissioning the service - possibly in conjunction with the tender for advocacy for adult services, or in collaboration with other local authorities.

j) **Youth Services**

Reading Borough Council will be undertaking a full review of the range of youth services currently provided with a view to re-shaping the service to create significant efficiencies

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Children's Services Commissioning Intentions will be informed by the development and delivery of a range of services which primarily support numbers 1,2,3 and 6 of the following Corporate priorities:

1. Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
2. Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living;

3. Providing homes for those in most need;
4. Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active;
5. Providing infrastructure to support the economy; and
6. Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The final document will make specific reference to integration with Health colleagues and to co-production with service users, their families and carers. It will also contain a set of principles (in line with the Adult Social care Commissioning Intentions) which capture the expectations on which we will be basing our commissioning decisions. These principles will include specific reference to safeguarding requirements, co-production, voice of the child and use of direct payments and other personalisation tools.
- 6.3 Any service changes resulting from delivery of the final Commissioning Intentions will be undertaken with sensitivity and consideration of the impact on individual children and young people and their carers / families

## 7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Commissioning Intentions document in itself will not specifically impact any protected groups and will be informed by the EIAs completed for individual service strategies.
- 7.2 It is likely that some individual re-commissioning exercises will require an Equality Impact Assessment, depending on changes determined as part of the specification process. An EIA will therefore be undertaken for each relevant exercise as appropriate.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules some of the proposed commissioning projects may be regarded as high value procurements and will be dealt with in accordance with the rules referred to.

## 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Services to be re-commissioned under the proposed Commissioning Intentions will be funded from confirmed budgets within Children's Services or other service areas.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Reading Borough Council Sufficiency Strategy for Looked after Children 2015-2017 (ACE 29th June 2015)
- Project Initiation Document for Move on for 16+ and Care Leaver Housing Project (and resulting Young People's Housing Strategy)
- Short Breaks Commissioning Process 2016-17 (attached)

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION & EARLY HELP SERVICES

LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR GAVIN		
DATE:	JANUARY 2016		
TITLE:	SHORT BREAKS PROCESS 2016/17		
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the plan to create a more personalised approach to short breaks services in Reading through the creation of unique and individualised packages for families. The current traditional approach to 'grant funding' organisations will need to evolve to enable families with direct payments to purchase the care they want at the time and quality which is right for them, and to purchase those services from their chosen provider. The consultation process will determine a timeline, but we plan to have the Direct Payment funded groups in place during 2016/17.
- 1.2 In 2015/16 Reading Borough Council's spend on short breaks was £102,000. This budget supported around 200 families using short breaks services. The number of young people in Reading aged 0-19 living with a disability or longstanding illness is estimated at 6,635 (*Public Health England, 2011*). Better value for money through improved choice and control for service users will be achieved by delivering services through Direct Payments to those who are eligible.

## 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 It is the recommendation of the Director of Children, Education and Early Help services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Children's Services and Families, for Reading Borough Council to evolve the current short break grants mechanism into specified contracts and to start providing short break services through Direct Payments. Further consultation work will take place with key stakeholders and timescales will be announced. It is proposed that this recommendation is agreed by the ACE Committee.

## 3. CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to provide short breaks care for children with disabilities and their families/carers. Care options will continue to be provided to those in need, both directly and through VCS organisations and other providers. In the increased uptake of Direct Payments, freedom is provided to those in receipt to buy and choose services tailored to their needs, rather than solely those provided by the Council and or its partners.
- 3.2 The current grants with short break providers expire on 31 March 2016.
- 3.3 In 2015/16 approximately 200 of Reading's young people have taken part in a short break by attending an afterschool, evening, weekend or holiday club. This is out of an estimated 6,635 children with disabilities or longstanding illnesses. There are currently eight providers receiving funding.

## 4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Discussions with family forums, the voluntary sector and short break providers will take place from January through to April 2016. RBC will identify the organisations, groups and families that will be affected. Families will be made aware of the Direct Payment process and given links to the Family Information Service. They will give families options on where short breaks can be purchased.
- 4.2 Providers will go through a bidding process to demonstrate how they plan to run the new Direct Payment funded short break groups. RBC will be represented at meetings for key stakeholders to explain what this bidding process will look like.
- 4.3 Consultations will identify any stand-alone services that need to be commissioned. For example, a BME service may need to be purchased separately.

4.4 We anticipate that tendering will commence from June 2016. Bidders will be notified whether successful or not. Talks on setting up groups will follow, as will exit strategies.

## 5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

5.1 RBC has already consulted with with Reading Families' Forum, the voluntary sector and short break providers. The Short Breaks Working Group met a number of times in 2015. This group discussed the future of short breaks for Reading. The current services were reviewed and gaps for certain demographics were identified. We hope to continue these relationships and work together through the proposed changes.

5.2 RBC will have representatives at meetings for each of the key community groups to discuss short breaks and consult on how we plan to move forward into a Direct Payment funded service. We want to know thoughts, questions, risks, etc.

5.3 All parties included in the consultation process will be kept in the loop. RBC will send out information including a 'You Said, We Did' document.

## 6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The current grants expire on 31 March 2016, so some contracts will need to be extended and VCS and other providers will need to prepare for a formal bidding and contracting process.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The total spend on voluntary sector short break groups for 2015/16 is currently at £ £102,000.

7.2 RBC hopes to save money in certain service areas for short breaks. We expect to achieve better value for money by providing services to only those eligible for a Direct Payment, and by ensuring that families have better choice and control over the services they wish to purchase.

## 8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 Parents at Reading Families' Forum who use these services have advised that they consider moving to Direct Payments will cost the council more in the long-run. It was speculated that the cost of a short break for one child could fund a whole group.

8.2 It is not clear whether providers will get on board and put their time into a short breaks group funded only by children with Direct Payments.

- 8.4 Will there be an approved list of short breaks providers? If so, who will manage and quality assure this list?
- 8.5 Will the CYPDT have capacity to cover all assessments for Direct Payments?
- 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS
- 9.1 Additional short breaks data for 2015/16 and previous papers/timelines on changes to the short breaks process are available from the Children’s Commissioning Team on request.

**APPENDIX 1**

Proposed timeline for consultation:

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
January - June 2016	July - November 2016	December 2016 - March 2017
Preparation & consultation	Bidding for start-up funding	Successful bidders are notified and set up their operations in Reading.