

Name of meeting: Cabinet
Date: 1 September 2020
Title of report: Spen Place Partnership - supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people as they return to school settings

Purpose of report:

To consider allocating a sum of funding from the Place Partnership mental health themed budget towards support for children and young people returning to schools in the Spen Valley Place Partnership area.

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| Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards? | No |
| Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>? | No |
| The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny? | Yes |
| Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning? | Rachel Spencer-Henshall – 18/08/20 Eamonn Croston – 18/08/20 Julie Muscroft – 20/08/20 |
| Cllr Cathy Scott Housing & Democracy | Cllr Cathy Scott – Housing & Democracy |

Electoral wards affected: Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike, Liversedge & Gomersal, Mirfield

Ward councillors consulted: Cllr V Kendrick, Cllr S Hall, Cllr A Butt (Heckmondwike) Cllr D Hall, Cllr L Holmes, Cllr M Grainger Mead (Liversedge & Gomersal), Cllr A Pinnock, Cllr K Pinnock, Cllr J Lawson (Cleckheaton) Cllr K Taylor, Cllr V Hamilton Lees (Mirfield) Cllr M Bolt (Mirfield) has been informed.

Public or private: Public.

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

A million pounds in total has been allocated by the Council to the seven place partnerships in Kirklees, for mental health and well-being initiatives.

The Spen Place Partnership led by Cllr Andrew Pinnock (comprised of the wards identified above) is collaborating with local schools, focussing on activity to support mental health and wellbeing of children and young people as they return to school settings in the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Evidence suggests that a range of low-level intervention and prevention activities can promote good mental health. The partnership acknowledges that schools are uniquely placed to support children, identify issues early on and address them with early intervention support, to prevent problems escalating.

Councillors are mindful of the adverse effect the pandemic and the loss of usual activities and routines has had on children and young people. They may have experienced anxieties, bereavement, change in family circumstance such as relationship strain or loss of employment in the family. Community Hub Co-ordinators and Community Hub leads have been engaged, who welcome the scheme and feel this additional funding will help them to support children and young people in settling back into the educational setting and coming to terms with issues they may have experienced during lockdown and ongoing restrictions.

Each school is unique. With knowledge and understanding of their pupils, they can tailor interventions to suit the specific needs within their schools.

Schools (28 in the area) will be invited to submit proposals to the place partnership framed on that local knowledge, and experience. These will be short-term early interventions made sustainable wherever feasible, where success is evident.

This initiative enhances arrangements and plans that the schools have in place to mitigate the impact on mental health during the pandemic and it compliments arrangements available from Northorpe Hall, government led initiatives, support from Kirklees Council and other organisations, to benefit the mental health and wellbeing of young people in Kirklees.

It meets the Spen Place Partnerships priority to improve mental health and wellbeing for children and young people and to build up knowledge and understanding in collaboration with other services and organisations, to glean a richer picture of issues in the area and interventions which have positive outcomes.

The scheme once evaluated, may be extended to colleges at a later date.

2. Information required to take a decision

There is a real need to act swiftly to support local schools in delivering early interventions and support for low level mental health needs, as children and young people return to their school settings, many who have been away from school for several months, during the pandemic. Pastoral care will be hugely important. The Spen Place Partnership wishes to support and enhance the arrangements and activities that schools are able to put in place at this difficult time.

Councillors in the Spen Partnership with their local knowledge and leadership roles, in consultation with school hub leads and support officers, feel the best approach is to

allocate funding at this point and give assurance that schools can build in support at the earliest opportunity.

If funding is approved by Cabinet, £120,000 will be distributed between the schools at the direction of the Spen Place Partnership and on proposals being submitted to the partnership outlining the initiative details, associated costs, expected mental health outcomes, and sustainability. Projects will commence as soon as is feasible and within the financial year.

Expected impact/outcomes will be identified for each initiative. Community Hub Co-ordinators have offered to work with schools, to develop initiatives that meet identified outcomes of better mental health. Evaluation will be required, and successful initiatives will be shared through the place partnership and hub structures so they may be sustained wherever feasible.

3. Implications for the Council

- **Working with People**

Each school is unique and uniquely placed to identify what will work best in their school with their pupils, to address any difficulties pupils may be experiencing. We seek approval by Cabinet of the funding allocation to progress the delivery of a suite of schemes tailored by each school in consultation with others, for maximum impact and benefit to mental health.

- **Working with Partners**

The place partnership has collaborated with Community Hub Co-ordinators in the partnership area and hub leads (where in place) have been consulted. Emotional wellbeing of children and young people is a priority, particularly now on returning to school in the wake of the pandemic. This funding if allocated, will give them more opportunity to deliver low level support, timely and tailored to issues that each school may encounter.

- **Place Based Working**

Placed based working recognises that the needs of local communities will vary. The partnership wishes to harness the local knowledge of those working most closely with children and young people and allow them to put forward their proposals to achieve the best outcomes and have maximum impact. Councillors wish to give an assurance to schools in the partnership area that £120,000 has been allocated for Mental health and wellbeing interventions as schools open up in September. There will be ongoing collaboration with the school hubs which consist of schools, council services, partner and community organisations, as the proposals are developed, submitted and initiated in schools

- **Climate Change and Air Quality**

No change

- **Improving outcomes for children**

Agreement to allocate this funding will have an impact on the Council priority: 'Children will have the best start in life'.

- **Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

The legal power for grants is section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (general Power of Competence). Also the council must when providing grants comply with Financial

Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution and in particular FPR 20.7 to 20.13.

Do you need an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)?

Yes, stage 1 will be undertaken and stage 2 if required for equality considerations regarding access to provision.

4. Consultees and their opinions

The Service Director for Learning and Early Support has commented that the approach suggested fits with priorities agreed by The Education and Learning Partnership Board, led by Cllr Carole Pattison where wellbeing has been identified as key. As part of this, the Council is investing in a resource available to all secondary schools to support wellbeing (a project run by a company called the Riot Act) this will be communicated to heads shortly and would complement arrangements that individual schools wish to make. There are opportunities for the proposal to complement the Government programme - Wellbeing Education Return Grant for which the Council has been allocated funding to deliver training for education staff. The core training objectives identified for education staff are to:

- Increase knowledge of the potential mental health and wellbeing impact of Covid-19 on staff, children and young people, and parents and carers.
- Build understanding of evidence-based and straightforward responses and resources to support recovery.
- Develop knowledge to introduce school and college staff to evidence-based and straightforward resources and structures for dissemination to children and young people and parents and carers.
- Raise awareness of specialist and wider support services (statutory and independent) and when and how education professionals might signpost or refer children and young people, staff and/or parents and carers to them.

This will be led locally by our Educational Psychology and Public Health teams.

Public Health undertook a survey with youngsters, the outcomes of which would support schools in terms of practical planning. This will be available shortly to all schools.

Discussions have been held with Community Hub Co-ordinators within the Spen Place Partnership Area. They are supportive. Community Hub Leads/ contacts welcome the scheme.

5. Next steps and timelines

Schools will be invited to submit proposals. Community Hub Co-ordinators will on request support schools, to identify specific proposals. Sustainability will be built where feasible and monitoring and evaluation of all proposals will be required. This will inform future planning. It is envisaged that proposals could be submitted and implemented from September to March 2020 with children and young people benefiting from that period and beyond.

Officer recommendations and reasons

The Cabinet is asked to approve funding from the Place Partnership mental health theme allocation to benefit children and young people in the Spen Place Partnership.

£120,000 in total to be distributed to schools in the place partnership area. Schools will be invited to submit proposals to the Spen Valley Place Partnership identifying how positive mental health outcomes will be achieved, evaluated and sustained.

Reasons for recommendation:

Covid 19 has had an adverse impact on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. As schools open up in September the Spen Place Partnership wishes to see an allocation of funding to achieve positive outcomes in supporting the mental health of children and young people in the area.

In collaboration with schools via hub structures and their support arrangements, a richer picture of the needs will be identified, initiatives and good practice can be shared and outcomes can be maximised.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Cathy Scott, Cabinet Portfolio Holder Housing and Democracy, is happy to support this proposal indicating that young people's mental health has been greatly impacted particularly in this COVID-19 pandemic. "Welcoming schools to submit their proposals will be far more reaching and will ensure the young people receive the much needed support or resources needed". The portfolio holder recommends that Cabinet approve funding from the Place Partnership mental health theme allocation to benefit children and young people in the Spen Valley Place Partnership.

Cllr Pattison, Cabinet Portfolio Holder Learning, Aspiration and Communities – "happy to support this recommendation and I recognise the need for this support. I hope schools will work swiftly to make use of this opportunity and that any learning from the outcomes of this project can be shared across all educational settings".

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7. Contact officer

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8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Annual Council 22nd May 2019 – item 7 Ward and Place Partnerships – establishment of place partnerships

9. Service Director responsible

Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director Corporate Strategy, Commissioning & Public Health - 01484 221000 - rachel.spencer-henshall@kirklees.gov.uk