



EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director Children and Education
DATE:	12 May 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Children, Young People and Education

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

SUBJECT: Paediatric Occupational Therapy for Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and Education Service

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The commission of the Paediatric Occupational Therapy for Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and Education Service for the last six years has been delivered by Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust (LSCFT). The contract was due to end on the 31st March 2023 and the plan was to bring the service back in house, however this was not carried out in timeframe due to the Covid Pandemic.

This paper sets out the intention to bring the service in house.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member approves:

- the request to bring the service back in house and end the current commission with LSCFT
- the increase in budget for this service of £40K which will be taken from the Dedicated Schools Grant as it is now.

3. BACKGROUND

Background and Service Specification:

Since April 2016, the Council's Children's Service has commissioned Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust (LSCFT) to provide Paediatric Occupational Therapy (OT) services to children and young people aged 0-18 years old (19 years if in full-time specialist education). These children are those who have an identified functional impact arising from disability where an assessment for equipment and environmental adaptation may be beneficial.

DFG grants are available to adapt the homes of people within the Borough who have identified functional needs thus enabling them to live independently and be cared for at home. For example:

level access to a property, widening of door frames, showering facilities and through floor lifts. The provision of a DFG, is dependant on:

- The works being necessary and appropriate.
- The works being reasonable and practicable.
- Certificates and conditions of occupations
- The relevant financial assessments being undertaken.

DFGs are available to applicants classed as residing in a permanent dwelling regardless of tenure. The grant amount is set by Statutory Order and is currently £30,000.

In October 2022, a letter was sent to LSCFT from the BwD Commissioning Team which highlighted that it was the local authority's intention to bring in-house the DFG process of assessment and planning, along with the assessment and review of social care equipment in the home and at school.

LSCFT will continue to have their statutory responsibility to children and young people who require an assessment of clinical equipment in the home which will remain their core business.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The process for bringing the service back to the local authority commenced in 2019 although this was paused following the impact of Covid.

An agreement has been reached with LSCFT that they will continue to offer a service until the end of June 2023 with some slippage time. If this is approved, a Waiver will be requested and a short term contract put in place.

It is expected that there will be no staff transfer from LSCFT to BwD as a result of the transfer of service provision.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As Adult Social Care already have this service in place and there is evidence of what a positive impact the Policy and Procedures has had on this service, the Children with a Disability Team have adapted that DFG Policy and made it applicable for Children's Services.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staffing and budget recommendation:

- 1.0 Occupational Therapy Team Manager Grade J Grade
- 1.0 Occupational Therapist Grade H
- 1.0 Occupational Therapy Assistant/Review practitioner Grade F

The Occupational Therapy Team would be located within the Children with Disabilities Team (CwD), and in turn, this would provide greater autonomy in the service specification and service delivery due to this collaborative and multiagency approach, with shared objectives. It is anticipated that the OT

Team Manager and the CwD Team Manager will work closely together to ensure assessments are holistic and prevent delays for children and families.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

DFGs are provided under The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (HGCRA). Additional guidance to support and assist local authorities in fulfilling these statutory duties is found in "Home Adaptations for Disabled People, a Detailed Guide to Related Legislation, Guidance and Good Practice 2013".

Although there will be no transfer of staff arising from the transfer of service provision, the agreement with LSCFT relating to the exit arrangements should confirm this, and provisions regarding liabilities and indemnities before and after the transfer date.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

As the service will be managed in house, there will be greater oversight over the effectiveness and delivery of all aspects of the service, and provide better use of council resources. This includes the timeliness of assessment, opportunities for joint social care assessments, high quality recommendations, a more coordinated approach, less duplication and a closer working relationship with Adult Social Care promoting a more proactive transition process for children moving between services.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

Discussions have taken place internally between the previous Service Lead for Permanence, Head of Service and Strategic Director of Children's Services & Education (DCS), as well as the current post holders, along with commissioning colleagues. Also, there has been extensive consultation with the DFG and OT Service within the Adults Department, in addition to regular consultation with LSCFT and colleagues at Lancashire and South Cumbria who commission the health service.

Formal communication with families who have open cases will need to take place once the new proposal has been agreed.

The Communication Strategy has been formulated which is embedded a demobilisation plan.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

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CONTACT OFFICER:	Suzanne Kinder
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DATE:	22 nd February 2023
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	The Communication Strategy which is embedded in the Demobilisation Plan
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