

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE

DELEGATED POWERS OUTLINED IN THE CONSTITUTION



DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION TAKEN BY:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DELEGATED BY:	Choose an item. (date of delegation)
IN CONSULTATION WITH:	Chief Officer
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Childrens Services

SUBJECT: Family Hub and Community Capacity building

1. DECISION

The Strategic Director of Children and Education to agree to the allocation of a small grant to VCSF partner organisations.

2. REASON FOR DECISION

We would like to create a small grant element of the Family hub delivery. The small grants will be for two areas:

- £9,000 – Parent Infant relationships - managed by Spring North
- £9,000 - Infant Feeding – Managed by CVS

The small grant will be until March 31st 2025

Spring North and CVS will be paid £1000 each to manage the small grants process.

3. BACKGROUND

We would like to enhance our services to go further by the provision of peer support for perinatal mental Health (PNMH) and Infant Feeding.

We would like to expand reach and create a place-based approach in local community venues. This would also enhance accessibility for families who struggle to access an existing offer for example within the rural communities.

Spring North and CVS both have experience of managing a small grant process, they have excellent links with community partners and venues. They will manage this process for the LA but there will be LA representatives as part of the grant allocation panel.

Small groups will be able to apply for some money. This could be used for room hire, for example if a group of parents would like to develop a peer support group for them to come together in a more rural area and need to book some space, they can bid for the funds to enable this to happen. Spring North and CVs will monitor to impact of how this is helping families.

Funding Intentions - We would be interested in funding local groups to **creatively** address our aims to support new mums/dads in two areas.

1. To start breastfeeding or continue to breastfeed for longer.
2. Support with Peri natal MH and Parent Infant relationships

Suggestions include:

- Local awareness campaigns
- Targeted support for groups that are least likely to initiate breastfeeding.
- Work with young people to raise awareness of breastfeeding benefits.
- Videos/digital media resources
- Work to support the wider family around breastfeeding.
- Setting up per to peer support around PNMH for evening and weekends

CVS - Infant feeding Outputs:

1. number of people attending sessions.
2. number of mums starting breastfeeding,
3. number of mums continuing breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks and beyond.
4. Outcomes – positive case studies of the mums supported.

Spring North – Parent Infant relationships Outputs

1. Number of parents feeling calmer and their baby too.
2. Number of dads attending groups
3. Number of parents feeling more connected.

Mild-to-moderate perinatal mental health difficulties - Recent investment through the NHS LTP has primarily been in moderate-to severe perinatal mental health difficulties. For example, the development and expansion of mother and baby units, specialist community perinatal mental health teams, and maternal mental health services. The family hub model framework outlines how we should approach delivery of PNMH and parent Relationship services, in line with the key principles of family hub models – improved access, better connected services and professionals, and relationships at the heart of that family support.

We are also working collaboratively with local Specialist mental health teams to identify local training and supervision needs and explore scope to provide training, consultation, and supervision for the wider workforce to support early identification and prevention.

Infant Feeding - In Blackburn with Darwen we want to encourage as many families as possible to breastfeed their babies.

There are several reasons for this:

- Breastfeeding supports bonding and attachment.
- Breastfeeding is free (compared with the rising costs of formula)
- Breastmilk adapts for each baby's unique nutrition and immunity needs.
- Breastfeeding has health benefits for mum and baby.
- Breastfed babies have fewer hospital admissions.
- Breastfeeding requires no preparation (formula carries a pathogen risk if not prepared correctly)
- Breastfeeding supports climate goals – it requires no commercial processing, transportation, or waste disposal issues (formula tins are not currently recyclable.)

4. KEY ISSUES AND RISKS

Introducing a small grant system for the voluntary sector addresses several key issues and mitigates associated risks. Firstly, without such a system, smaller organisations within the voluntary sector may struggle to access funding, hindering their ability to deliver vital services to communities.

This can lead to inequities in service provision, with larger organisations dominating the sector. Additionally, the lack of a small grant system could discourage innovation and grassroots initiatives, as these often rely on initial funding to get off the ground. Moreover, without dedicated support for smaller projects, there is a risk of community needs going unmet, as these projects are often best positioned to address localised issues effectively. Overall, the absence of a small grant system poses a threat to the diversity, inclusivity, and effectiveness of the voluntary sector's contributions to society.

Spring North and VCF will manage the allocation of the funds for small groups, they will monitor and report back. The LA will have a member of staff on the funding allocation panel to ensure transparency and fair process.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This expenditure will be funded via the Family Hub grant allocation. Expenditure against the grant is closely monitored and the funding runs through to the end of March 2025.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Grants will need appropriate Grant Funding Agreements and the contracts for the two organisations who will manage them.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no other resources implications arising from the contents of this report.

8. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not Applicable

9. CONSULTATIONS

Not applicable

10. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of the officer with delegation and any Member who has been consulted, and note of any dispensation granted should be recorded below:

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Maria Nugent
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DATE:	26/02/2024
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:	
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