

OFFICER DECISION RECORD

For staff restructures, please also complete an RA1 form to update the HR Portal. This is attached at Annex 2.

Decision Ref. No:
AHWB/102/2017
Innovation Fund Stronger Families

Box 1

DIRECTORATE: AHWB

DATE: 06/10/2017

Contact Name: Matt Cridge

Tel. No.:737637

Subject Matter: Innovation Fund

Box 2

DECISION TAKEN: To develop an Innovation Fund based on the Stronger families model for the Complex lives Programme. Allocate £30k from the Flexible Homelessness/Rough Sleepers Grants to meet the costs of the Innovation Fund.

Box 3

REASON FOR THE DECISION: The Complex Lives project is built on many of the principles and activity of the Stronger Families programme. The workers engage with individual adults who have multiple issues and complex lives; supporting them to improve their lives and build resilience to maintain a more stable lifestyle.

The Stronger Families Programme has been running a successful 'Innovation Fund' initiative since 2013 in which workers have easy access to small amounts of funds to support individuals in a wide variety of ways. This allows workers to quickly respond to issues and needs which support the individual and also strengthen the engagement and relationship between the worker and individual.

The Stronger Families Innovation Fund taken from the troubled Families grant has proven to be successful in improving engagement and maintenance of progress in families who have benefited from it as well as avoiding subsequent higher cost service interventions too. As such it is both economically positive and has a good impact on outcomes.

The changing Lives Fund, as it is to be known, is to be funded from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Homelessness Support Grant, and that the use of the amounts stated for this purpose has been agreed by Directors on 12th June 2017. This funding of £15,000.00 per annum is secured for the financial years 17/18 & 18/19; after which it is envisaged that the Complex Lives Alliance Partners will consider the ongoing investment in this as part of their future plans for sustaining the model.

The Fund's primary aim is to provide small low cost support such as clothing, food or travel help which is not easy to access elsewhere, when all other funding options have been exploited. The fund is to support progressive work to enable individuals to meet identified outcomes, for example purchasing items to enable someone to move into accommodation or a bus pass so they can engage in treatment. Individual's behaviour is taken into account when reviewing entitlements to this funding.

A rigorous process, already in use for Stronger Families is being adopted.

Approval will be requested in the Q4 finance and performance report to carry forward any unspent amount into the following financial year.

This is a high profile project. Support is required to be in place as part of the preparations for dealing with increases in homelessness with the onset of winter.

See more detailed information in attached proposal and application process.

Box 4

OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION:

Do nothing; this means that workers spend a great deal of their time chasing opportunities and this impacts on their time and effectiveness. Often these searches are fruitless resulting in frustration by the worker and client; thus impacting on outcomes.

Rely on existing crisis funds available; this would restrict the type, amount and timeliness of access to funds that are required to support these individuals. The fund will be an additional resource for this cohort.

Reproduce the Stronger Families Innovation Fund: this is the preferred option as it already has been implemented and tested with Stronger Families and proven to be effective. The 'Changing Lives Fund' as it is to be known will provide the lead workers with small amounts of funds to enable them to improve engagement and progress of individuals by providing practical support to issues they face.

Box 5

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with a general power of competence, allowing the Council to do anything that individuals generally may do.

Funding has been received from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Homelessness Support Grant. The report author must ensure that the grant received is used for the purpose it was given to avoid claw back.

Due to the nature of what the grant is to be used for it is not appropriate for funding

agreements to be entered into with each recipient, however for audit purposes, accurate records should be maintained in line with the requirements of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Homelessness Support Grant

Name: _Nicky Dobson_ Signature: _by email_ Date: 18th October 2017 _____

Signature of Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services (or representative)

Box 6

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

It is proposed to allocate £30k from the Flexible Homelessness/Rough Sleepers Grants to meet the costs of a new Innovation Fund to support individual adults who have multiple issues and complex lives. The funding will be £15k per annum in 17/18 and 18/19, after which it is envisaged that the Complex Lives Alliance Partners will consider the ongoing investment in this as part of their future plans for sustaining the model.

The process for allocating the funds will mirror the Innovation Fund which is already in place to support families supported by the Stronger Families Programme. Full details of the process have been attached to the ODR. As with the Stronger Families process, a mix of payment methods will be used depending on the service/item to be purchased. However no cash will be given to service users directly.

The £30k for this new Innovation Fund will be funded from Flexible Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Grants allocated to the Council by DCLG/SCR. In total the Council has been allocated Flexible Homelessness Grant of £207k in 2017/18 and £227k in 2018/19 and Rough Sleepers Grant of £37.5k per annum in 2017/18 and 2018/19.

On 12 June 2017 the Council's Directors' Meeting considered and approved a report outlining how the two grants would be spent. This included indicative costings showing £28k allocated to the Innovation Fund; this has subsequently been increased to £30k. There is likely to be an unspent balance of the grants at the end of 2017/18. The terms and conditions of the grant mean the unspent balance will be treated as having "restrictions" which means it will be automatically carried forward at the financial year-end as an earmarked reserve without the need for further approval.

Name: Signature: Olivia Brown / Matthew Smith Date: 18/10/17

**Signature of Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
(or representative)**

Box 7**HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no Human Resources Implications.

Name: Kelly Wilks **Signature:** _By Email_____ **Date:** __11th
October 2017_____

Signature of Assistant Director of Human Resources and Communications (or representative)

Box 8**PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS:**

These monies will be spent on a variety of goods and/or services to assist in meeting the objectives of the project. If any of the contracts exceed the threshold of £5,000 then 3 informal quotations must be sought, one being from a Doncaster based business.

I would recommend that these monies have the correct control processes in place to eliminate any risk of inappropriate use to the organisation. I would also promote the use with local based businesses, where possible and if applicable.

There are no significant procurement implications linked to this ODR.

[redaction]

Name: Holly Wilson **Signature:** _____ **Date:** 09/10/17
Signature of Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
(or representative)

Box 9**ICT IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no anticipated ICT implications in implementing the recommended option detailed in this ODR. If as a result of implementing the recommended option, any ICT or technology requirements are identified, a business case should be submitted for consideration by the ICT Governance Board.

Name: Peter Ward (Governance & Support Manager)

Signature: [redaction] **Date:** 11/10/17

Signature of Assistant Director of Customers, Digital & ICT (or representative)

Box 10

ASSET IMPLICATIONS:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report that impact on the use of DMBC assets.

Name: Gillian Fairbrother (Assets Manager, Project Co-ordinator)

Signature: By email **Date:** 6th October, 2017

**Signature of Assistant Director of Trading Services and Assets
(or representative)**

Box 11

RISK IMPLICATIONS:

To be completed by the report author

Funding has been identified for this initiative and a precedent has been set. Without setting up this fund workers will be very limited in the practical support they can offer these people. Many require small low cost support such as clothing, food or travel help which is not easy to access elsewhere.

This inability to be able to offer instant help often results in withdrawal from clients or further mistrust of services as being unable to help. This will mean the Complex Lives programme will not meet its required outcomes and the highly visible high profile issues in the town centre will remain.

(Explain the impact of not taking this decision and in the case of capital schemes, any risks associated with the delivery of the project)

Box 12

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

To be completed by the report author

The fund is to be used at the workers discretion and will allow them to support people with a range of issues quickly. Individuals with a range of the protected characteristics will be supported and data collated to record impact.

[redaction]

Name: Matt Cridge **Signature:**
(Report author)

Date: 06/10/2017

**Box 13
CONSULTATION**

Officers

Partner organisations in the Complex Lives Strategic Alliance and the officers who make up the Assertive Outreach team have been consulted on this proposal and influenced its final structure and processes.

The proposal was agreed by Directors on the 12th of June 2017 at the Directors meeting.

**(In addition to Finance, Legal and Human Resource implications and Procurement implications where necessary, please list below any other teams consulted on this decision, together with their comments)
The Complex Lives Steering group have been consulted and have agreed to the funding to be made available.**

The Assertive outreach team were consulted and assisted in the drawing up of the proposal to the Steering Group.

Members

Under the Scheme of delegation, officers are responsible for day to day operational matters as well as implementing decisions that have been taken by Council, Cabinet, Committee or individual Cabinet members. Further consultation with Members is not ordinarily required. However, where an ODR relates to a matter which has significant policy, service or operational implications or is known to be politically sensitive, the officer shall first consult with the appropriate Cabinet Member before exercising the delegated powers. In appropriate cases, officers will also need to consult with the Chair of Council, Committee Chairs or the Chair of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel as required. Officers shall also ensure that local Members are kept informed of matters affecting their Wards.

Please list any comments from Members below:

Box 14

INFORMATION NOT FOR PUBLICATION:

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, it is in the Public's interests for this decision to be published in full, redacting only the signatures.

**Name: Gillian Parker Signature: by email Date: 18/10/2017
Signature of FOI Lead Officer for service area where ODR originates**

Box 15

[redaction]

**Signed: _____ Date: 24/10/2017
Debbie John – Lewis Assistant Director Communities**

**Signed: _____ Date: _____
Additional Signature of Chief Financial Officer or nominated
representative for Capital decisions (if required)**

**Signed: _____ Date: _____
Signature of Mayor or relevant Cabinet Member consulted on the above
decision (if required).**

- This decision can be implemented immediately unless it relates to a Capital Scheme that requires the approval of Cabinet. All Cabinet decisions are subject to call in.
- A record of this decision should be kept by the relevant Director's PA for accountability and published on the Council's website.
- A copy of this decision should be sent to the originating Directorate's FOI Lead Officer to consider 'information not for publication' prior to being published on the Council's website.
- A PDF copy of the signed decision record should be e-mailed to the LA Democratic Services mailbox

Complex Lives programme proposal to develop a Stronger Families 'innovation fund' type pot of money.

V0.3 05.10.2017

Context

An 'innovation fund' was introduced in the Stronger Families Programme in 2013. The Stronger Families innovation pot is intended to provide workers with quick access to small amounts of funds to unblock barriers to outcomes on the Building Stronger Family agreed family plan and help improve engagement with resistant families.

The funds are coordinated by the relevant Area Manager for DMBC in their area who will ensure the funds are appropriately targeted, monitored and evaluated. Funds can be used to spot purchase services or goods where a clear link to an agreed outcome is present (EG travel pass to get to interviews / work programme) or an identified barrier is preventing engagement or progress.

All other avenues must have been exhausted before using this fund (EG: food bank, local assistance fund, other funding routes, etc.) so that the fund is appropriately used as part of the wider support mechanisms available.

Where practicable this fund must also encourage future resilience and so an agreement to open and save to a credit union account is encouraged as part of the solution. The initial fee and deposit can be included in the amount required from the fund but must be separately indicated on the form.

Families are reminded that although the fund is not a loan, failure to engage with the programme or keep up credit union account savings could mean the funding will be clawed back, thus encouraging sustained savings (this never happens).

The fund has proven invaluable in helping workers engage with often very difficult to engage families and has shown to be effective in supporting progress of families to improve their lives. An evaluation of the fund in Phase one of the programme showed that all the families who benefited from it went on to be families we were able to claim Payment by Results reward for and was excellent value for money.

Proposal

It is envisaged that a similar fund would help workers who are attempting to engage complex adults in a similar manner. The details of this proposal are based upon the financial precedent and the operating framework are in place already for Stronger Families.

A workshop was held with the Assertive Outreach Team to determine the needs, processes and governance for an Innovation Fund for Complex Lives. At this workshop the team discussed issues processes and potential impacts of a fund on the work they do and the client group. It is important that the fund is flexible and accessible otherwise it will not be effective.

Complex Lives Innovation Fund

Access and Governance

The fund will be available to workers via a simple application form (Appendix 1) which the worker will complete prior to requesting funds. This will be countersigned by another team member to provide a first line check and balance to ensure the funds being requested are appropriate and can be linked to benefit or progression for the client.

It is proposed this form will be submitted to Joanne Evans, DMBC Stronger Communities Co-ordinator, for authorisation to release the funds. The Assertive Outreach team would request the Steering Group to determine the authoriser.

The authoriser will collate monthly spend to produce a quarterly report for the Steering Group to review. The Penultimate report (9 months) will also include proposals for any further extension to the fund into the new financial year.

The fund needs to be flexible and it is proposed that the access and processes are regularly reviewed by the Assertive Outreach Team and they are given authority to do this without requiring consent from the Steering Group unless it changes the monetary value (ie increase in spend).

It is proposed that there is a ceiling on the amount that can be spent on a single purchase or 'dip' into the fund. This is currently proposed to be £200.00, however it is far more likely that individual spend amounts will be well below this threshold. Due to the chaotic nature of the individuals, relapse and regression is part of the process of change, evidenced in many studies and explained by Prochaska and DiClemente as the 'Stages of Change'; therefore it is not envisaged that there will be a restriction on the number of 'dips' into the fund as long as there is continued engagement and it is not for repeat items.

The impact of the fund is difficult to measure in terms of firm outputs or outcomes, however proxy measures can be linked directly to the fund and case examples will provide anecdotal evidence of impact at an individual basis, potential cost avoidance of much higher cost service need and improved engagement leading to faster and more effective improvements.

Suggested measures are:

- Improved engagement / sustained engagement
- Increase in independence
- Pathway to employment
- Sustaining treatment
- Attending appointments (medical, benefits, etc)
- Sustaining tenancy

Examples of current needs that the Assertive Outreach Team have witnessed or faced are:

- Funding for ID documents (to open bank account)
- Travel (to see family, for training, appointments)

- Non –prescription medicines / treatments (EG Lice, Athletes foot, etc)
- Basics for tenancy (plates, cutlery etc)
- Food
- Utilities
- Diversionary activities (to improve sustained improvements)
- Course fees (pathway to employment)
- Clothes

The following amounts are requested:

Y1 – 2017/2018 £15,000

Y2 – 2018/2019 £15,000

Approval will be requested in the Q4 finance and performance report to carry forward any unspent amount into the following financial year.

The current cohort is 86 individuals, this means that there would be a maximum of £175 per user if all used the fund in any given financial year. Consideration will need to be given to the need for potential growth in the cohort size and scope to adjust spend as time progresses if required.

Author: Matt Cridge, Head of Stronger Families

Changing Lives Fund Application Processes

- The Changing Lives fund is only accessible to a pre-determined set of lead practitioners working with individuals who are determined as having complex lives.
- The access to the fund is through a simple but consistent auditable process with sign off at a managerial level.
- Lead practitioners who wish to access the funds can only do so by completing the fund application form in full (attached).
- The form requires Lead practitioners to briefly explain why the funds are required and what the impact will be of having them and when this will be evident.
- Applications also need to evidence that they have looked elsewhere at other funding opportunities first to ensure this is the most appropriate fund to draw upon.
- As part of the Complex Lives Programme is about building resilience, individuals will be encouraged to open a Credit Union Account if they have not already done so to enable them to build a small reserve of funds and access low cost loans and support services.
- This is then reviewed by the manager and if in agreement the proceeds are released or agreement given to purchase the goods or services.
- A review is set from the outset to check the funds had the intended outcome and if not why not for future learning.
- As with the Stronger Families process a mix of payment methods will be used depending on the service / item to be purchased. However no cash will be given to service users directly.