



0-19 Commissioning Update

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission

Date: 11 August 2022

Lead Director: Ivan Browne

1. Summary

Post-COVID restoration and Recovery work

- Work to recover and restore Healthy Together services is now completed with all services being fully delivered from April 2022. This has included a move to a skill mix model due to a national shortage of Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors)

Recommissioning of 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (Healthy Together)

- The current contract has been extending to 30th September 2023
- We continue to progress the Section 75 route to re-commissioning and are not exploring any other commissioning options
- The contract will be for 7 years (till 30th Sept 2030) and the proposed starting budget is £7,965,000 (current budget of £8,165,000 – delayed savings of £200,000)
- A small working group from LCC and LPT has been established, this group meets monthly are working to a project timetable. Work is currently on track. Key activity to date includes: Equality Impact Assessment on current service provision; listening and engagement events with LPT staff, services users and young people beginning in October.

2. Recommendations

Post-COVID restoration and recovery work

- 1) Recognise and acknowledge the hard work that Healthy Together staff undertook during the pandemic in order to support some of the most isolated and vulnerable children and families in the City.
- 2) Recognise that the Healthy Together workforce remain stretched, tired, and under considerable pressure. High recent levels of Covid-19 infection rates has continued to put pressure on staff due to sickness absence.
- 3) Recognise that full post-COVID-19 recovery is compromised because of a national shortage of Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors) meaning that vacancies remain unfilled and the team have had to move to a skill mix model to deliver the restoration of key mandated contacts. Risks associated with this move have been added to the corporate risk register.

Recommissioning of 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (Healthy Together)

- 1) Note progress to date
- 2) Continue to support the use of Section 75

3. Supporting information including options considered (please include the contribution this work makes to physical and mental health):

Back ground and context

0-19HCP is the recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. In Leicester this

service is called Healthy Together and comprises of:

- **Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting)** a universal service delivering 5 mandated contacts and additional packages of evidence based Public Health interventions. More intensive support can be accessed via Universal Plus and Universal Partnership Plus, and Safeguarding. There is a digital offer via www.healthforunder5s.org.uk and a parents free and confidential text service (Chat Health)
- **Public Health Nursing (School Nursing)** a universal service accessed by children via referral, or self-referral, the team offer up to 4 packages of evidence based public health interventions. Public Health Nurses (School Nursing) work in 2 teams; one focusing on the Public Health offer in schools, and the other focusing on Safeguarding. Schools are invited to participate in a Digital Health Contact at year 7,9,11 and there is a digital offer via www.healthforkids.org.uk and www.healthforteens.org.uk and a young persons free and confidential text service (Chat Health)
- **Breastfeeding peer support and Infant feeding Support**
- **Early Start** Intensive evidence-based support for vulnerable pregnant women
- **National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)** This is the recording of heights and weights of school children in reception and year 6, and is a mandated contact carried out by the Public Health (School nursing) team.
- **Oral health promotion** including the co-ordination and distribution of resources
- **Healthy Settings Programme** for Early Years
- **Healthy Start vitamins** Healthy Together organise the co-ordination and distribution of vitamins
- **Child Weight Management Service**, Known locally as FLiC – Family Lifestyle Club, predominantly accessed via NCMP

The original contract began on 1st July 2017, and was intended as a 2 year +1 +1 contract. The impact of COVID-19 has meant the contract has been extended to 30th Sept 2023.

Post-COVID restoration and Recovery work

During the pandemic the Government guidance around mandated contacts meant that many children and their families missed out on key contacts, or were sign posted to a website and/or chat health for support, rather than receiving a face to face contact. During this period Public Health Nurses (Health Visiting and School Nursing) worked tirelessly to ensure that those who needed support were able to access it. Prioritising the most vulnerable and isolated children and their families and all safeguarding cases.

In order to manage restoration and recovery LCC and LPT set up monthly meetings where LPT's plans, and timelines were shared, as was a Quality Impact Assessment (a risk register tool). Restoration of services focused first on the 2 – 2 ½ year check, and then the 1 year check, beginning with families in areas 1 and 2 on the Index of Deprivation, and now moving to decile 3.

The service has fully recovered and is fully operation (from April 2022).

Because of the high level of assurance and oversight Healthy Together leaders were able to provide, these meetings have now ended and the agenda item added to the standard 6 weekly contract meeting.

Healthy Together staff have formally flagged the workforce is tired, and they are continuing to manage sickness levels. There is concern that enduring levels of

COVID-19 transmission and possible high levels of 'flu will impact negatively on the workforce over the coming winter. To attempt to manage and mitigate for this, Healthy Together and the Commissioner will regularly reviewing the staffing levels and have mitigation plans ready to be stepped up if necessary.

As part of the Recover and Restoration meetings it was flagged by Healthy Together that full post-COVID-19 recovery is compromised because of a national shortage of Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors) meaning that vacancies remain unfilled and the team have had to move to a skill mix model to deliver the restoration of key mandated contacts.

Healthy Together are not unique in moving to a skill mix model and this is deemed to be the most feasible and safest option available currently and has therefore been endorsed by the commissioners, but all contacts that should be carried out by Public Health Nurses (Health Visitors) and are carried out by a less skilled member of staff carry a risk. This risk had been added to the corporate risk register. Long term Healthy Together are looking at 'grow your own; models to increase Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting) capacity.

Recommissioning of 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (Healthy Together)

Use of Section 75

The preferred re-commissioning route is Section 75. This is Section 75 of the of National Health Services Act 2006. The intention of Section 75 Agreements is to improve services for users through **either** 'pooled budgets' (where two organisations bring together resources) **and/or** 'delegated functions' (where one organisation exercises an agreed function on behalf of another) **if it could be reasonably expected that this would lead to an improvement in health as a result of the way those functions are exercised.** It has previously been agreed that the delegated function route would be suitable rational for exploring the use of a Section 75.

A section 75 is a contractual partnership, it is legally binding, for a specific length of time (but partners are able to leave/terminate early), with clear outcomes that partners are accountable for achieving (these are decided via collaboration and co-design).

In November 2019 we held a Market test event, where we spoke to prospective Providers about our the re-commissioning routes we were exploring, we identified that we might use a Section 75 agreement. Since then 2 organisations (Virgin and Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust) have been back in touch to ask how re-commissioning plans are progressing, with support for Legal Services and the Procurement team we replied explaining our intention to use a Section 75 with the current provider. There was no further enquiry. Therefore we feel the risk of challenge to the use of a Section 75 remains possible but low.

Budget

The contract will be for 7 years (till 30th Sept 2030) and the proposed starting budget is £7,965,000 (current budget of £8,165,000 – delayed savings of £200,000).

Work to date

A joint working group between LCC and LPT has been established and meets monthly. Key tasks to date include:

- Establish a RAG rated timeline for the re-commissioning process
- Begin an Equality Impact Assessment on current service provision. This work is being lead by Claire Mellon. This work will help us understand the impact to vulnerable groups that any changes to the service specification might have – these changes could be both positive and negative.
- Listening and Engagement events with LPT staff, services users and young people beginning in October. This work is being lead by Colin Cross (Family Services manage at LPT) and Clare Mills. This work will help inform the draft service specification, which will be shared for Public Consultation in early 2022.