

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****30 September 2014****Report of the Director of Public Health****RE-ESTABLISH A SUPPORT SERVICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN DERBYSHIRE AFFECTED BY SUBSTANCE MISUSE
(Health and Communities)****1. Purpose of the report:**

To inform Cabinet about plans to re-establish a support service for children and young people in Derbyshire affected by substance misuse of parents or carers, and to seek approval for the proposed use of grant funding for Action for Children to deliver this service in conjunction with the existing Derbyshire County Council's Young Carer service as an interim measure prior to integrated commissioning of all substance misuse services in 2017.

2. Information and Analysis:**2.1 Background**

Public health commission specialist and targeted substance misuse services to advise, support and treat children and young people.

Current services include:

- Targeted services delivered by multi-agency teams, including health, to provide planned interventions to support young people who are using substances. Interventions include education, harm minimisation, assessing readiness to change and deterrence.
- Specialist services delivered by CRI (Crime Reduction Initiatives – a health & social care charity) for young people whose substance misuse becomes problematic eg to health, family and friend relationships and are who are identified as being likely to have complex, sometimes profound and persistent needs.

A service to support children and young people affected by parental or carer substance misuse was delivered in Derbyshire by Action for Children until 2011 when funding arrangements changed.

It has been identified that some children and young people affected by parental or carer substance misuse may not be accessing other services or getting the kind of support they need. Public health funding of £70,000/year has therefore been identified to develop a service to meet this gap in provision.

2.2 Information

For children living in families where parents are affected by drugs or alcohol misuse, life can be extremely challenging. These children are often affected by domestic violence, poverty, low self-esteem and may be forced into prostitution (Children's Society). These children are at high risk of abuse or neglect and often lead chaotic lives. (NSPCC)

Living with a substance misusing parent affects children's self-esteem and can generate feelings of isolation as they try to make sense of their world. They are seven times more likely to misuse substances in later life leading to a harmful lifestyle and suffer problems with their health, education or criminal behaviour.

It is difficult to assess the number of children affected. Estimates are only available from those known to services. Surveys that rely on self-reporting have identified that:

- In a school which has 1,000 pupils, about 20–30 pupils will have a parent who uses drugs and even more whose parents use alcohol (Hidden Harm)
- One in 7 babies under 1 year of age, equivalent to almost 110,000 in the UK live with a substance misusing parent (NSPCC).

In Derbyshire, 31% of adult drug service clients have a child living with them and a further 27% are parents not living with their children.

2.3 Analysis

A number of options have been explored for service provision in Derbyshire. It is recommended that Action for Children be commissioned to provide this service for the following reasons:

- Derbyshire CAYA has contracted Action for Children, a children's charity, to deliver the Young Carer service since 1996. There is strong local joint working and the service has continued to deliver the required outcomes. They are therefore a well-established and integrated provider with an understanding of working within Derbyshire structures.

- In order to support the current strong partnership work in Derbyshire and complement existing services it would be cost-efficient and time-efficient to link with current DCC services, and thus make best use of scarce resources. The value and duration of the contract may make this unattractive for the market to go through the expensive tendering process.
- A focused service will be able to help children and young people to feel they are not alone in their struggles with substance abusing parents/carers. Previous young people who accessed the service say this is a vital part of the support provided for them.
- Action for Children previously delivered the service for children affected by substance misuse which was highly regarded by partners and young people. The evaluation of the previous service was excellent and young people describe the benefits they received. They therefore have a proven track record; have adequate managerial and administrative systems already in place and links with potential referrers and experienced staff with established networks in the multi-agency team provision,
- Requests for support for young people are being received in schools and multi-agency teams and other services and there is no current specific service to refer these to. Action for Children have the resources and capacity to be able to accept referrals within weeks and can fulfill the need in the interim until the service is procured alongside all substance misuse services in 2017.

3. Legal Considerations:

On the basis that Action for Children are best placed to provide this service, the Director of Legal Services advises that it is reasonable for a grant-funded arrangement be established to provide an immediate interim solution pending the commissioning via open competition of an integrated service from April 2017. By grant funding, Action for Children will not be contractually obliged to deliver any particular services although the Council may be able to claw back grant if it is unspent or misapplied.

4. Financial Considerations:

The annual budget for this service is £70,000. Grant funding would be for a maximum of 2½ years until re-procurement in April 2017 (total value £175,000).

5. Other Considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, and property considerations.

6. Background papers:

- Cabinet 04 September 2012 Report of the Strategic Director of Policy & Community Safety Family and Carer Substance Misuse Support Service
- Cabinet 30 July 2013 Report of the Director of Public Health, Health & communities: Public Health Commissioned Services in 2013-15
- Report to Derbyshire Substance Misuse Strategic Commissioning Group Judith Moore June 2014

6. Key Decision:

No

7. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

No

8. Officer's Recommendation:

That Action for Children to be grant funded to deliver a support service for children and young people affected by substance misuse on an annual basis until March 2017.

Elaine Michel
Director of Public Health