

10 November 2014

LATE REPORT - LET'S WORK TOGETHER

INTRODUCTION

In March 2013, the Board agreed to continue funding for Support Staffordshire to deliver Lets Work Together. It was agreed that funding should be extended on a rolling basis, with a projected end date of November 2014.

Members will recall that LWT is a model for training home visitors to spot home based risk which could threaten the safety and / or independence of vulnerable households or individuals. The aims of the project are consistent with the need to focus public resources on those most at risk and prevent crises from occurring (as advocated by the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Police and Crime Commissioner's Plan 'Safer, Fairer, United Communities'). The project has been managed by Support Staffordshire (Lichfield and District) since spring 2012 and funded through the LSP budget (£21k allocated for 13/14).

PROGRESS DURING 13/14

The Board has received regular progress reports during meetings in 2013 /14. Further training opportunities have been provided to home visitors and investment has been made in developing an e-learning tool with financial support from Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands; this has been launched and does provide a more sustainable approach to delivering consistent training without requiring significant input from partners. Work has also continued to broaden the engagement of other Districts / LSPs.

There is a widespread view that LWT is of value, although it has proved difficult to show this in terms of outputs and outcomes.

SUSTAINABILITY

Discussions about the development of a LWT central offer have failed to find an effective solution that has support from all LSPs, with many wishing to develop their own very local solutions. However, many LSPs also have called upon support from Support Staffordshire Lichfield, notably for advice and support and to make use of the e-learning tool.

The long term for LWT is unclear, and the District Board has provided short to medium term funding to enable LWT to develop and embed. However, this state of affairs will need resolution and a number of options are available as follows:

Option 1: Maintain a level of funding (currently £12k per anum) for the foreseeable future

- This option would require funding from Partnership reserves or from contributions from all partners. It is unclear what level of support there is for a longer term commitment to LWT.
- We do not have a satisfactory mechanism for understanding how effective LWT is, which might make it difficult to obtain funding from partners.
- Most other LSPs do not spend as much on LWT as Lichfield. The Lichfield LSP contribution enables support to be provided to other Districts. Wider support could be withdrawn and the level of funding reduced to support basic training and administration for Lichfield District only

Option 2: Support LWT for the remainder of the financial year, and ask Support Staffordshire to use this time to consider other sources of funding.

- Support Staffordshire could seek funding from the Locality Commissioning Prospectus (in Lichfield District and in other Districts), although ongoing funding for LWT would be reliant upon a successful bid. This would fit with the shift to Locality Commissioning and the emphasis on commissioning for wellbeing at District level
- Support Staffordshire could also canvas support from all LSP's currently delivering LWT and seek direct financial support from them.
- It is possible that funding for LWT would end in April, this would mean the project could cease completely (although LWT activity would continue with existing trained LWT frontline staff). It would, however, give Support Staffordshire time to explore other opportunities.

Option 3: End all financial support for LWT

- LWT would continue, in that existing front line staff would still continue to deliver LWT and refer between agencies. It is likely that activity would 'decay' over time as staff move on and training is ended
- Ongoing training for staff would cease and the impetus for LWT would ultimately end. Support Staffordshire would have no time to develop an exit strategy or explore other opportunities

RECOMMENDATION

The District Board is asked to:

1. Consider the options and agree a preferred way forward for LWT in Lichfield District

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