



Date: August 2021

REPORT TITLE:	CONTRACT VARIATION TO THE HEALTHY CHILD PROGRAMME (FOR 0-19 YEARS) TO FUND ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF COVID-19
REPORT OF:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

REPORT SUMMARY

This report outlines a proposed additional allocation of funding to the contract currently held by Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust to deliver the Healthy Child Programme for 0–19-year-olds to address the consequences of COVID-19 on children and young people in Wirral.

The proposed actions affect all Wards within the borough, the decision requested is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Director of Public Health is recommended to allocate additional funding of £195,112 from the Public Health Grant for activity to address the consequences of Covid 19.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 This additional financial allocation will support the service to address a backlog of contacts/pressures resulting from COVID-19 restrictions and the direct impact on children and young people’s mental and physical health of the pandemic.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Undertaking a procurement process to secure this additional support was discounted as services need to be in place as soon as practicable after the start of the 2021-22 academic year.
- 2.2 Not funding additional support presents a risk of not addressing mental and physical health issues presented by our children and young people at the earliest opportunity resulting in longer term problems.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The contract held with Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust for the Healthy Child Programme was awarded in 2020 and complied with Public Contract Regulations and Wirral Council’s Contract Procedure Rules. The value of the proposed variation is within the Council’s Contract Procedure limits.
- 3.2 The contract variation will be operational by the 1st of October 2021. Outcomes achieved from this additional allocation will be monitored through contract meetings held with Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust.
- 3.3 The requirement for additional support to meet the physical and mental health needs of children and young people has been well documented both nationally and locally due to restrictions on service delivery as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside reduced school attendance and opportunities for socialisation.
- 3.4 The additional services to be provided are as follows:

Service	Description
Education/Health Co-ordinator – clinical background £62,858	This role will provide additional support in schools to ensure that needs identified are swiftly responded to. An increase in referrals to the 0-19 service has been recorded through the pandemic. Schools will receive a timetable of support with direct on-site provision to review and plan for the needs of children and young people requiring additional support.
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Pathway – Nurse £50,759	The need for additional support for the for the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder pathway has been identified due to increased waiting times. The following table illustrates increased demand with referrals up by 80% between 2019 and 20 and again in 2021:

	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>No. of referrals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>424</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020</td> <td>763</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021 (first 2 quarters only)</td> <td>727</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This role will assess and process referrals ensuring that there is additional resource to manage increased demand.</p>	Year	No. of referrals	2019	424	2020	763	2021 (first 2 quarters only)	727
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2021 (first 2 quarters only)	727								
<p>Speech and language needs practitioner</p> <p>£45,275</p>	<p>There is a need for a lead role within the speech and language service to focus on speech and language development of children affected by lack of access to usual socialisation opportunities due to the restrictions put in place to control the pandemic e.g. disrupted school attendance.</p> <p>This role will provide a Wirral wide approach working with a range of partners e.g., children’s centres, Koala NW and local nurseries. They will provide a key contact for settings where there is a concern with a child or young person over their speech and language development. Identifying these vulnerabilities early will prevent further pressures in the system later.</p>								
<p>Early Years Integrated Health Practitioner</p> <p>£36,220</p>	<p>This role will offer additional support to development reviews, offering catch up sessions and input for families who have identified a health/development concern throughout or after lockdowns. Providing a Wirral wide approach the practitioner will provide an immediate response for packages of care.</p> <p>The Practitioner will work with children’s centres, community groups and childminders to identify and respond to needs. This role will also offer an opportunity to develop a bespoke approach to needs in different parts of the borough.</p>								

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The additional allocation is from the Public Health grant for 2021/2022 which is £30.1m.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is necessary to ensure the proposed procurement complies with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and Wirral Council Contract Procedure rules. The additional spend within the contract variation would not breach this requirement.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 Staff recruitment will be undertaken by Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The value and availability of the Public Health grant for 2021/2022 is £30.1m. It is important to acknowledge that the council will need to review all financial allocations to achieve a balanced budget over the next few years. The Public Health department has and maintains a five-year financial plan to provide assurance that the projected funding is in place for the commissions that it makes. This contract variation period is within this timeframe.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The original commission incorporated findings from a range of consultations/insight work, including the Youth Offer Review completed during 2019 by the Children and Young People's Department and the 'Moonshot' insight work undertaken by a range of partners with children, young people, and families. Consultation and engagement has taken place with key stakeholders to generate solutions to the current issues resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Equality Impact Assessment for this commission can be found at - <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

9.2 The commissioned services will be compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty as contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no direct impact on emissions of carbon dioxide.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Healthy Child Programme (0-19 years) Core Programme specification and contract

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
JOINT STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING BOARD Proposed Public Health Commissioning Intentions 2019-2020	4 th December 2018