

TITLE OF REPORT: Acceptance and Use of Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group Funding by Public Health on Health Inequalities

REPORT OF: Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing

Purpose of the Report

1. To note a decision to accept identified funds from the Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for use on health inequalities, using delegated powers, due to urgency required to accept funds within the timeframe available.

Background

2. Those in our most deprived communities live shorter lives, in poorer health, than their more affluent neighbours. In Gateshead, this means that the gap in life expectancy for males is 10.8 years, and for females is 8.8 years, between those living in the most and least deprived areas.
3. Health inequalities such as these, are a result of differences in the social, economic and environmental circumstances in which people live. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy seeks to address these factors through six evidence-based policy objectives that aim to help people in Gateshead have good homes, jobs, health and friends. Implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy supports delivery of Thrive.
4. At the end of the financial year 2021/22, the CCG identified funds that it felt would be better used by the Council to secure more health gain and specifically to tackle health inequalities, through public health.
5. The total fund allocated to Public Health and Wellbeing from the CCG was: £1.174m. Projected use of the fund, and agreement to this, was set out through a Section 256 agreement between the CCG and the Council.
6. The figures regarding the funding were arrived at late in the financial year, creating the urgency for a decision on receipt and use of funds outside of the timescales that allow for Cabinet authority of such a key decision. Therefore, the Director of Public Health, under general delegation to managers to take urgent decisions, accepted the funding and its projected uses within the necessary timescales.
7. Before the decision to accept the fund was made, the Portfolio Lead for Health and Wellbeing was consulted on the use of this power, the receipt of the funds and projected uses.

8. Within the agreement it was outlined that approximately £380,000 of the funding was to be used for a project proposal by Edberts House to increase capacity for health equity across the Borough, through the recruitment of health equity leads and facilitation of networks, and to pilot a community hub in Highfield (Highfield House) in the Outer West of Gateshead to tackle health and social inequalities and build wellbeing within the area through community-based approaches involving residents, services and organisations in partnership.
9. The remaining health inequalities funding is to be used to support the Health Inequalities Agenda. This will be delivered through priorities set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, using the learning from the recent Director of Public Health, Behind the Mask Annual Report, to ensure it addresses the inequalities created or exacerbated due to the pandemic.
10. Currently work is underway to develop options for intervention, in relation to need and assets already in place.

Proposal

11. It is proposed that Public Health develop an evidence-based options appraisal and business case to support action on health inequalities, aligned with the Health and Wellbeing strategy, for the use of the funding.
12. Key themes to be considered within the options appraisal will include:
 - Interventions to tackle poverty
 - Prevention and intervention to support children, young people and families recover from the pandemic
 - Implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy including training and development; communications, engagement, and collaboration; research and learning.
13. In order to action the decision taken by the Director of Public Health to use approximately £380,000 of the funding to support the Highfield House project, a grant agreement is to be entered into between the Council and Edbert's House. The grant will enable Edbert's House to pilot the community hub in Highfield, and delivery of wider health equity work with the primary care networks and partners in Gateshead, across three years.
14. Legal advice has been sought in relation to the grant award terms and specifically the application of a subsidy control assessment. The assessment concluded that the grant could meet the definition of financial assistance if it is determined that Edbert's House is engaged in an economic activity. On application of the 7 Subsidy Control Principles, it found unlikely that the grant will have a distortive market effect and therefore is not a prohibited subsidy. The grant is to be awarded on the basis that it is a permitted subsidy.
15. Public Health will seek to include shared learning and evaluation within this agreement, so that public health gains are maximised and learning shared in relation to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy across the system.

Recommendations

16. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) notes the receipt of funds from the CCG for use on the Health Inequalities and the use of the delegated powers by the Director of Public Health to accept the funds and its projected uses in accordance with Schedule 5, Part 2 General Delegations to Managers, Paragraph (4) (e) of the Council's Constitution;
- (ii) notes the award of the grant over three years to Edbert's House as set out within the Section 256 Agreement between the CCG and the Council; and
- (iii) notes the proposal that Public Health and Wellbeing develop an evidence-based options appraisal and business case to use the funds to tackle health inequalities through actions aligned with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

For the following reasons:

- (i) To inform Cabinet that the Director of Public Health used delegated powers set out in the constitution to accept the funds and projected uses within the limited timeframe available.
- (ii) The Section 256 Agreement specified that approximately £380,000 of the funding was to be used to fund the Project Proposal for Edbert's House to build capacity for Health Equity and a pilot a community hub at Highfield, building on learning gained from the development of other hubs in Central, South and East Gateshead. The identified method for enabling this would be through provision of a grant agreement.
- (iii) The Section 256 Agreement specifies that the funding transferred will be used specifically to address health inequalities. Public Health will ensure that that an evidence-based approach is developed, in line with identified health needs among the population, and aligned with the priorities and actions set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. Gateshead Council has committed to making Gateshead a place where everyone Thrives. To do this, five pledges guide the Council’s decision-making processes, This Proposal supports delivery of the Council’s Thrive pledges in the following ways:

1. Put people and families at the heart of everything we do;	Accepting this funding through the Section 256 agreement will benefit people and families across Gateshead, especially those experiencing health inequalities.
2. Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance;	Receipt of funding through the Section 256 agreement will enable specific focus and intervention designed to reduce health inequalities. By providing use of this fund, through Public Health and Wellbeing, options will be developed in line with need and evidence. Public Health will draw upon knowledge and intelligence, and lessons learned from the Director of Public Health Annual Report, <i>Behind the Masks</i> , to ensure allocation of funds where they will have most impact.
3. Support our communities to support themselves and each other;	The Projected use of the fund, for the Project Lead by Edbert’s House, is designed with communities at its’ heart. This pilot project will build on the community hub model developed in other parts of the borough, in an area of identified need in the Outer West. The Pilot will be developed and delivered in conjunction with the local community to ensure activities are relevant to their needs, the community is empowered, and their priorities for health and wellbeing are realised.
4. Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough;	<p>The development of the options appraisal for use of this funding will consider the six policy objectives set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It is anticipated this will include interventions to address poverty, building on assets and initiatives such as social prescribing.</p> <p>The Project proposal by Edbert’s House seeks to increase capacity within the system for health equity, building on their work as a trusted and lead partner for delivery of social prescribing community link workers in the Borough.</p>
5. Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead.	Communications, engagement and networks for collaboration, have been identified as a theme to support implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This includes how we work with and harness the power of our VCS and communities. This work will be considered when developing the options appraisal for allocation of the funding.

2. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been adopted as the corporate plan of the Council and is the delivery mechanism for Thrive. Its evidence based strategic priority areas aim to address the wider determinants of health through a place-based approach. They include:

1. Give every child the best start in life, with a focus on conception to age two
 2. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
 3. Create the conditions for fair employment and good work for all
 4. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
 5. Create and develop sustainable places and communities
 6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
3. Use of this funding will support implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Background

4. The Health and Wellbeing Board agreed the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Gateshead in 2020, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic. Two years on, the impact of the pandemic, and learning since, highlighted need to continue to focus on the evidence-based policy objectives set out in Strategy to improve outcomes, and tackle avoidable, unfair, and systematic health inequalities. As such, the Health and Wellbeing Board has established a group to look at the Strategy, areas that need updating since the pandemic, and development of a collective approach to implementation. To take this forward, an implementation group has been established, reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
5. Health Inequalities had already widened over the last decade, and the COVID-19 Pandemic, and current cost-of-living crisis, add to already very challenging and concerning picture. Mortality rates have been significantly higher among those in living in the most deprived areas since the start of the Pandemic. Coming through the Pandemic, incomes have failed to keep pace within rising inflation, pushing more families in to poverty.
6. The Director of Public Health Annual Report 2020/21 reviewed the impact of the pandemic on the population, the distribution of these impacts across the population, and the collective response in Gateshead.
7. Key lessons were drawn from this, providing a focus for recovery from the pandemic, including the need to commit to action on the six policy objectives set out by Marmot, and included within Gateshead's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Our teacher called covid



8. During this time, the CCG also identified funds it felt would be better used by Public Health to maximise health gain and tackle health inequalities. Within a Section 256 Agreement, £1,174,000 funding was set out to secure more health gain via delivery of the Public Health Inequalities agenda, including agreement to support a project at Highfield House to tackle health and social inequalities through community-based approaches and is working closely with PCNs in the area, with leadership from Edbert's House.
9. The Director of Public Health used delegated powers set out in the constitution, to accept the funding and its projected uses, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, and within the available timeframe.

Consultation

10. The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing was consulted on the funding agreement and its projected uses before the decision to accept the funding was made. ~~Legal and Democratic services have been consulted on the award of the Grant to Edbert's House.~~

Alternative Options

11. An alternative option would have been not to accept the funds, along with their projected use for work on health inequalities and the pilot project to be led by Edbert's House on Health Equity and Highfield House. This would have resulted in reduced access to resources to support action on Health inequality and the loss of an opportunity to learn from a pilot working with communities in Outer West Gateshead to develop their own community hub.

Implications of Recommended Option

12. **Resources:**
 - a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the additional funds provide greater resources for action on Health Inequalities with no financial implications for the Council budget.
 - b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no Human Resource implications arising directly from this report.
 - c) **Property Implications** - A Council owned community building was identified for Highfield House and agreed separately to the S.256 agreement.
13. **Risk Management Implication** - The proposal will reduce the risk of the Council not delivering committed actions through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy by providing additional resources for action on health inequalities.
14. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - Receipt of this funding will enable action on health inequalities, this includes those groups with protected characteristics who may experience health inequalities. Equality and diversity implications will be considered through the development of the options appraisal.
15. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – Action to tackle health inequalities may have a positive benefit on factors contributing to crime and disorder. Community Safety will be consulted on use of this funding as part of the Public Health and Wellbeing Group.
16. **Health Implications** – Use of this funding will have a positive impact on population health. It will specifically be used for action on health inequalities, and improved health outcomes will drive the development of its proposed uses.
17. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - There are no climate change implications arising from this report, however, Healthy and Sustainable communities are an objective of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
18. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report
19. **Ward Implications** - The Highfield House Community Hub Pilot will be based within the Chopwell and Rowlands Gill Ward. Health Equity work funded through the grant will be Borough wide. In development of the options appraisal for the remaining health inequalities fund, consideration will be given to allocation of resources in line proportionate to need, as set out as an action within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.