



Officer Decision Record – Operational Decision

1. Cabinet date and copy resolution this key decision relates to

N/A

2. Subject and details of the matter (to include reasons for the decision)

Acceptance of the Early Years Financial Incentives Pilot Grant The government has introduced the Early Years Financial Incentives Pilot to ascertain if providing a financial incentive will lead to an increase in new entrants and/or returners to the Early Years career pathway. A government webinar was held on 25th January to launch the pilot.

Forty local authorities in England were invited to take part in the pilot, with twenty allocated funding (the treatment group), the remaining twenty being the unfunded control group. North East Lincolnshire Council was selected to be part of the treatment group.

New recruits, or people returning to the early years' workforce can receive a £1,000 "golden hello". The provider receives £1,350 which covers tax and NI contributions on the £1000 that the recruit receives. This will work via an application to the local authority, then funds are passported to the provider.

The local authority will receive a grant of up to £111,962 for a potential seventy-plus recruits. 5% of the grant will be retained by the LA to administer this incentive.

3. Decision being taken

That the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education accepts the Early Years Financial Incentives Pilot Grant of £111,962, as part of the Early Years Financial Incentives Pilot and thereafter takes all reasonably arising steps to implement in accordance with any funding conditionality.

4. Is it an Urgent Decision? If yes, specify the reasons for urgency. Urgent decisions will require sign off by the relevant scrutiny chair(s) as not subject to call in.

No

5. Anticipated outcome(s)/benefits

The 'golden hello' grant of £1000 payable to each early years' career entrant or returner, will incentivise the workforce and lead to a greater supply of early years practitioners in the borough. In turn, this will enable settings to offer more funded and paid-for childcare places, increasing sufficiency across the borough. This will benefit parents as they will be able to access work or training, which will benefit the local economy. Children will benefit as there will be a greater number of skilled early years practitioners within settings, and more childcare places across the borough.

6. Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision (this should be similar to original cabinet decision)

No other options were considered, as acceptance of the grant will support the drive to recruit more early years practitioners. Currently, there are not enough early years practitioners in the borough to meet demand, and some settings have reported that they have had to reduce the number of childcare places on offer as they can't recruit enough staff.

7. Background documents considered (web links to be included and copies of documents provided for publishing)

Early Years Financial Incentives Pilot: Guidance for Local Authorities



EYFI Guidance.pdf

Early Years Financial Incentives Pilot Grant Determination Letter

FINAL - 7042 FI S31
Grant Determination

8. Does the taking of the decision include consideration of Exempt information? If yes, specify the relevant paragraph of Schedule 12A and the reasons

No

9. Details of any conflict of interest declared by any Cabinet Member who was consulted by the officer which relates to the decision (in respect of any declared conflict of interest, please provide a note of dispensation granted by the Council's Chief Executive)

None declared.

10. Monitoring Officer Comments (Monitoring Officer or nominee)

Any legal implications will be around the conditionality of the funding and Legal Service colleagues can support. The merits of the scheme fit with the Council's stated objectives and priorities

11. Section 151 Officer Comments (Deputy S151 Officer or nominee)

The acceptance of the grant of up to £111,962 will help to support sufficiency of Early Years placements across the Borough. Whilst the Council will have to administer payments, 5% of the grant will be retained to cover these additional responsibilities. Therefore, all expenditure incurred will be covered by the grant income.

12. Human Resource Comments (Head of People and Culture or nominee)

There are no direct HR implications

13. Risk Assessment (in accordance with the Report Writing Guide)

There are no risks to the local authority in accepting this grant as the local authority passports the grant directly to early years providers to pay to the career entrants or returners.

14. Has the Cabinet Tracker been updated with details of this decision?

N/A

15. Decision Maker(s):

Name: Ann-Marie Matson

Title: Director of Children's Services

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 8th April 2024

16. Consultation carried out with Portfolio Holder(s):

Name: Councillor Margaret Cracknell

Title: Portfolio Holder for Children and Education

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 5th April 2024

17. If the decision is urgent then consultation should be carried out with the relevant Scrutiny Chair/Mayor/Deputy Mayor

Name:

Title:

Signed:

Dated:

Key Decisions are defined in the Constitution as:

A decision (whether taken collectively or individually by members) which is likely:

- (i) to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

A decision will be considered financially significant if:

- (i) in the case of revenue expenditure, it results in the incurring of expenditure or making savings of £350,000 or greater;
- (ii) in the case of capital expenditure, the capital expenditure/savings are in excess of £350,000 or 20% of the total project cost, whichever is the greater

In determining whether a decision is significant in terms of its effect on an area comprising two or more wards, consideration shall be given to:

- (i) the number of residents/service users that will be affected in the wards concerned;
- (ii) the likely views of those affected (i.e. is the decision likely to result in substantial public interest)
- (iii) whether the decision may incur a significant social, economic or environmental risk.