

Presentation

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Innovation Fund Bid 'Active Agents for Change'

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What is the Innovation Fund?

- One-off pot of money from the Department for Education (DfE) for local authorities to initiate innovation and change programmes
- Expression of interest submitted in September
- Response received early November – positive
- 1 month to work up a full bid with high level of financial and practical detail
- Presentation to DfE panel 12/1/15
- Confirmation of successful bid 22/1/15
- £4m, mainly for 2015/16 some carry over to 2016/17

Starting Position

- We start from a position of strength, strong Ofsted history, stability and continuity
- Isle of Wight (IOW) partnership – strong on improvement and analysis of how systems fail
- Consistent thresholds

But, like all authorities, we have pressures, between 2011 and 2014:

- 43% increase in assessments
- 51% increase in Child Protection Plans (CPPs)
- 17.3% increase in children looked after

Defining the 'problem' cont'd

- Social work as *reportage* ?
- Financial reductions but rising demand for services, this is unsustainable for everyone
- The costs for children in care are rising and there could be better ways to care for these children
- How to achieve better outcomes for children and create cashable savings? More than a \$64,000 question

What's the problem?

Four inter-related points:

- How can we transform services in order to reduce demand for specialist services?
- How can we create capacity to deal with rising demand?
- How to create the conditions in which we can help improve the quality of social work practice and bring about change within families?
- How can we get it right first time more often to reduce the revolving door and improve outcomes for children?

Underpinning Principles

- No silver bullet – but system change is necessary - a series of inter-related, creative ideas that can help create the right conditions for good social work practice to flourish
- Services for the family are a pre-requisite to create change for children
- Social workers, families and communities need to work together
- We must create the conditions where professionals become ‘active agents for change’, with more capacity, confidence and a better range of interventions to create change
- We must maintain confidence and any changes that we make must be evidentially better than what we have now -therefore if it is not working we will stop doing it

Underpinning Principles cont'd

- Good pro-active social work can be the key to managing the problem of rising demand
- Good pro-active social work can be the key to improving outcomes for children
- Good pro-active social work can be the key to ensuring that Hampshire continues to be a good place for social workers to practice
- High quality training and support is a pre-requisite for high quality practice
- We have to demonstrate effectiveness in terms of practice and reducing demand, the two go hand in hand
- Independent evaluation

The Proposal

1. Family Intervention Teams
2. Trained Volunteers
3. Social Work Co-ordinators
4. Services for children on the edge of care
5. Services for children who go missing, are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) or trafficking
6. Social work surgeries
7. A Partnership for Excellence with Higher Education Institutions to support and train for the above

Family Intervention Teams

- Develop Multi-Disciplinary Family intervention teams (FIT) based around current Children in Need (CIN) teams
- Will include new workers for domestic abuse, substance misuse and parental mental health
- One FIT per district (incl IOW)
- Retain the focus on the child
- Managed within Children's Services
- May link to further (minor) changes within CIN teams – consultant practitioners – currently being considered

The challenge: can this service help to create change for families so that fewer children need to come in to care. We estimate that if the service prevents 22 children (across Hampshire) from entering care then it will pay for itself.

Creating a Cohort of Trained Volunteers

- Strong history of volunteering in Hampshire
- Co-ordinated via the 10 Early Help hubs (plus 3 on IOW)
- 5-6 volunteer co-ordinators, 20-30 volunteers in each hub
- Part of the *raison d'être* is to foster greater links between children's social care services and the communities that we serve
- Return interviews with young people that go missing
- Trained support to families – training programme to be designed learning from Pillars of Parenting
- Support for teenagers on the edge of care
- Lots of up-front costs but maintenance is more economic/business as usual

The challenge: If each EHH hub supports families so that 1 less child from each district comes in to care then the service will pay for itself.

Social Work Co-ordinators

- Learning from the Basingstoke pilot
- 'business co-ordinators' for social workers
- Referral & Assessment (R & A), CIN and Children in Care(CiC) teams
- Links to digital transformation
- Reduce the need for social workers to be office based
- Increase capacity for social workers to work with families – skills??
- Up to 50 co-ordinators

The challenge: recruitment, training, impact. Are social workers ready to be freed?! Can we evidence that this frees up social worker time and that that freed time has an impact upon our practice with families? Can we reduce agency costs? Can we measure an impact on reducing the number of children coming in to care (2 per district)?

Young People on the Edge of Care

- First time entrants to care at 14+ are 20% of care population but care outcomes are not good for this group
- Rethinking services that we offer at this point
- Links to existing Intensive Support Service (ISS)
- Family focused shared care
- Buddy Scheme – link to volunteer scheme
- A range of activities eg Dance Academy, study centres, voluntary sector partners that are aspirational, develop resilience
- Social workers to have more options

The challenge: decrease the number of children entering care (15 across Hampshire) whilst ensuring that those children remain safe and properly cared for.

Services for Children who go Missing, are at Risk of Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

- Develop multi-agency team, complementing Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and police teams
- Understand and identify, prevent, intervene and support, disrupt
- New ways of working – outreach
- Cross refer to volunteer scheme, edge of care etc
- Can take caseholding from other teams

The challenge: Can we appropriately prevent 5 children from entering care by supporting them earlier?

Social Work Surgeries

- Munro report, social work advice needed at early help stage
- But does this stoke demand or help professionals manage risk better?
- Small scale pilot in 2 districts
- Surgeries in community settings – schools, GPs, pharmacies etc
- Offer advice, guidance and support
- Reduce contacts and referrals

The challenge: can we evidence that such posts can reduce demand rather than increase it?

Partnership for Excellence

- Supports the development and delivery of the above strands
- If we want to change the conditions and culture of children's social work for the better then we need to bring the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with us
- Closer partnership with two local HEIs
- Develop a 'kitemark' scheme for learning and development

The challenge: can we deliver the skills training and create the culture change necessary in the time available?

Expectations

- Realistically, probably not everything will work
- Equally, some things probably WILL work
- Proper evaluation and learning – honesty, this is not doomed to success (or failure)
- Participation from all of us in sharing the challenges, the learning and the success
- Sharing the learning with others – other authorities, other agencies
- Seize the opportunity, it may not come again

Outcomes

- Create the conditions to improve social work practice; more capacity, more resource, more accuracy in targeting our interventions, new ways of working and more ability to create change with families
- Improved outcomes for children – more families better able to care for their children properly and safely without resort to care
- Where things do not work we stop doing them
- Where something is successful then we embed this and it becomes part of the Hampshire way
- Transforming children's social work in Hampshire and the IOW ...and wider?

Next Steps

- Recruitment underway
- Discussions with partners and potential partners
- Confirm evaluators
- Develop the right business processes
- Get cracking

Questions?