

**Open Report on behalf of Stuart Carlton, Assistant Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	<b>Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning</b>
Date:	<b>31 May 2012</b>
Subject:	<b>Procurement of an Evidence Based Training programme for Family Support and Social Workers in response to The Munro Review</b>
Decision Reference:	<b>02058</b>
Key decision?	<b>No</b>

**Summary:**

In 2011 the child protection review by Munroe, stated that "Preventative services will do more to reduce abuse and neglect than reactive services and the coordination of services is important to maximise efficiency" (Munroe 2011). Within the report Munroe demonstrated that supporting parents through an evidenced based parenting programme has a significant impact on outcomes for children and young people and improves safeguarding.

The Early Intervention - Next Steps review by Graham Allen also suggested that evidence based parenting programmes underpin early intervention and the Triple P programme is named as one of the recommended programmes. The Triple P methodology is recognised nationally and internationally for its evidenced based approach to parenting training programmes and resources.

In 2011 Lincolnshire restructured its family support services to ensure that it works cohesively with the specialist support services that are provided through FAST teams. It is imperative that these teams have common practices, principles and methodologies to ensure we have a well-trained, highly skilled workforce.

In response to this it was agreed that, as a pilot, Lincolnshire would procure an evidenced based training programme for both Family Support Workers and Social Workers. It was agreed that Lincolnshire Children's Services would procure Triple P UK, to deliver a fixed number of the Standard and Teen combined training programmes to Family Support Workers and Social Workers and following the completion of these courses an evaluation would take place as to the success of the programme within the county.

The aim of the approach was to ensure staff undertook a common core of training which supported an ethos of reflective practice, sound supervision and appraisal; to ensure the workforce has the ability to respond to the needs of families. As research suggests the Triple P methodology allows practitioners to

work with families to improve their outcomes.

It was envisaged that if the pilot was deemed a success within Lincolnshire we would aim to train all Family Support Workers and Social Workers in the delivery of the combined

Standard Triple P and Standard Teen Triple P training programme.

The initial training focused on the one to one delivery, as this is felt to be an area that needs to be strengthened within Lincolnshire. This provides measurable evidence on how we improve outcomes for children and families who access targeted and specialist services within the county.

The programme of training in the pilot has now been delivered and this has been well received by both managers and practitioners who feel it to be an excellent programme that will support all aspects of the practice and work with families. The take up for the programme has been greater than expected and demand for places has been overwhelming. Staff who have taken part in the training programme and have begun to work with families feel it has a positive impact on outcomes for families

It has also been recognised by managers and practitioners that there would be significant benefit in an identified number of staff undertaking additional Triple P training to work with the families in highest need of support. These staff would need to be accredited in the combined Standard and Teen programme to progress to further enhance their knowledge and skills of the Triple P programme.

Approval is being sought to contract directly with Triple P UK to deliver a second phase of training to the remaining Family Support Workers and Social Workers who were not able to secure a place on the pilot programme. It is also proposed as part of this process, that training is also procured in the Triple P Enhanced programme and the Triple Pathway training programme, as this would ensure we had a work force that would be trained to work with families across the spectrum of need from targeted through to specialist.

This report sets out to propose an Exception, as provided for in the Council's Contract Regulations, for an alternative procurement route to the Council's Contract & Procurement Procedure Rules and to request that Lincolnshire County Council, Children Services enter in to negotiations and then a formal contract with Triple P UK, up to the value of £249,215 to provide training to the staff as described above; Triple P will provide

- Combined standard and teen Triple P positive parenting training programme
- Enhanced Triple P training programme (level 5)
- Pathways Triple P training programme (level 5)
- Triple P training and implementation resources for staff
- Triple P staff support and technical Assistance
- Practitioner Accreditation

The programme provides a multi-level framework aimed to tailor information, advice, and professional support to the needs of individual families. It

recognises that parents have differing needs and desires regarding the type, intensity, and mode of assistance they require.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Executive Member is requested to consider the report and approve the approach as an exemption to the normal tender route laid down by the County Councils Procurement Procedure Rules and enter in to one contract with Triple P UK to provide the above training programme.

**Alternatives Considered:**

1. The Triple P Positive Parenting training programme, methodology, approach and training materials are under copyright and can only be provided by this organisation. Market research has been undertaken and there are no other alternatives that have been identified.

The Triple P evidence demonstrates measurable outcomes equal or greater than the input “intervention” received. Triple P has been delivered and successfully implemented in over 23 countries across the world and has evidence to demonstrate that socio economic and cultural backgrounds do not impact on the benefits of supporting families to undertake this programme.

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

This programme meets the needs of the Children Services core training requirements for the defined group of staff. There are a number of studies which have evaluated the impact of Triple P interventions which clearly evidence improved outcomes for families.

The Triple P Positive Parenting programme is an evidenced based programme that was identified within the Independent Report to Her Majesty’s Government in 2011 by Graham Allen MP; Early Intervention: The Next Steps. This report highlights several programmes however the Triple P methodology is recognised as best practice, providing a flexible approach to working in groups and on a one to one basis with parents. Lincolnshire will pilot the 1 to 1 interventions to focus on families who access both targeted and specialist services.

Studies conducted on each intervention level of the Triple P delivery formats demonstrate consistent results in the following

- o -Fewer behavioural and emotional problems in children
- o -Greater parental confidence and use of positive parenting techniques
- o -Less negative parenting, reducing stress, depression, and anger in parents
- o -Less marital conflict over parenting

This outcome would reduce demand on specialist and targeted services and enable families to function in a more positive way and children and young people to develop in a positive environment.

We have had a 100% take up for places with an average completion rate of 92%, (the main reasons for this have been unavoidable due to staff being called to court) Where staff have been unable to complete the course for the above reasons they have been reassigned on to a later course to ensure all staff are successful through the accreditation process.

The programme has been so positively received by staff and managers that we would like to propose we continue to train Family Support Workers and Social Workers in this programme.

## **1. Background**

This is an evidenced based parenting programme that draws on social learning, cognitive-behavioural and developmental theory, as well as research into risk and protective factors associated with the development of social and behavioural problems in children.

The program's multi-level framework aims to tailor information, advice and professional support to the needs of individual families. It recognises that parents have differing needs and desires regarding the type, intensity and mode of assistance they may require.

Triple P interventions range from the provision of media messages on positive parenting, through to information resources such as tip sheets and videos, and targeted interventions (for specific behaviour problems) offered by primary care practitioners at Levels 2 and 3, to more intensive parent training at Level 4 and Level 5 programs targeting broader family issues such as relationship conflict and parental depression, anger and stress.

The programme promotes an independent approach to parenting with an ethos of providing the least intervention for the greatest impact, in times of limited resources this principle supports the approach adopted by Lincolnshire; supporting families to remain together with support wherever possible. The programme has evidence that it has demonstrable impact on children and parents who are also accessing either the fostering or adoption services and can support Children with Disabilities. This supports Lincolnshire integrated locality delivery.

The programme has a clear structure and robust approach to evaluation this is undertaken following each course at the end of the programme, with parents and children throughout the delivery of the intervention process.

## **2. Conclusion**

It is recognised that this is a significant investment for Children's Services however this robust evidence based training programme gives both training and

accreditation to staff including follow up support sessions post implementation to ensure staff feel confident to deliver the programme and achieve the agreed that outcomes. It also provides extensive staff resources and tools to support working with families.

Triple P also includes resources for parents which are a fundamental part of the delivery approach as this gives parents more involvement and ownership in the change programme and therefore leads to improved outcomes.

If approved, the second phase of delivery will aim to be delivered throughout 2012 following on from the pilot, funding for implementation of the programme has been secured through the Early Intervention Grant.

If this report is accepted it is felt that staff who undertake this training, will have a robust set of methodologies, tools, and resources at their disposal to work with parents in a positive and outcome focused approach which will further improve outcomes for families.

### **3. Legal Comments:**

The value of the contract as stated in the report is within the 'Exceptions to Normal Routes' levels set out in the Council's Contract Procedure Rules for approval by the Executive Councillor.

The issues to be taken into account in making this decision are fully set out within the report.

### **4. Resource Comments:**

The Council's Contract Regulations state the exceptional circumstances in which competition may be limited. Given the background outlined in the report, it is considered that there are no other alternatives following market research and evidence from the pilot has demonstrated good value for money through this strategy.

## **5. Consultation**

### **a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?**

n/a

### **b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?**

Yes

**c) Scrutiny Comments**

This has not been considered by a Scrutiny Committee.

**d) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

n/a

**6. Background Papers**

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Early Intervention - Next Steps	<a href="http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/early-intervention-next-steps.pdf">www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/early-intervention-next-steps.pdf</a>

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