

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of the Corporate Director for People and
the Director of Public Health

to

Southend Health and Wellbeing Board

on

3 September 2014

Report prepared by:

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and

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Manager

Fulfilling Lives: A Better Start Southend

People Scrutiny Committee

Executive Councillors: Councillor Ian Gilbert and Councillor Anne Jones

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the initial work being undertaken on the *Fulfilling Lives: A Better Start initiative*. The Southend partnership led by the Pre-school Learning Alliance was awarded £40 million from Big Lottery Fund in June 2014. This money will be invested over the next ten years to improve outcomes in pregnancy and early childhood (0-3 years).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **To note the set up work to be undertaken on *Fulfilling Lives: A Better Start initiative***
- 2.2 **To note the extended set up period of 9 months from 1 September 2014 - 31 Mar 2015**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Big Lottery Fund's *Fulfilling Lives: A Better Start* initiative is a new strategy launched in 2013 to specifically support programmes around the country to use preventative approaches to improve the life chances of children aged 0- three years old in three key outcomes:

- communication and language development
- diet and nutrition and
- social and emotional development

- 3.2 Southend is one of five areas in England to be awarded funds from Big Lottery. The other areas are Blackpool, Bradford, Lambeth and Nottingham.

3.3 This money will be invested over the next ten years to improve outcomes in pregnancy and early childhood (0-3 years) for children and families in six key wards across Southend: Kursaal, Milton, Victoria, Westborough, Shoebury, and West Shoebury.

3.4 The Southend bid development was coordinated by staff from Pre-school Learning Alliance and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. Local staff were supported by the Dartington Social Research Unit.

3.5 The Big Lottery Fund panel reported that the strengths of the Southend bid were:

- Evidence of a strong and effective shared leadership with existing relationships that will continue to be involved in delivery of the project.
- Strong public health proposal that will strengthen universal services as its core offer, with specialist services available for those identified as in need.
- The partnership is already delivering a good range of services and interventions and this project will build on these, supported by peer work.
- A commitment to innovation
- Strong ethos to commit additional funds

4.0 Preparation and support for mobilisation

4.1 Michael Freeston will be the Pre-school Learning Alliance strategic lead. Michael has held initial meetings with the Director of People, Director of Public Health and the three bid coordinators.

4.2 Big Lottery held a 2 day briefing event for successful sites in July 2014. The event had two main aims:

- 1: to allow representatives from the 5 successful bid areas to meet each other and share their proposals. Big Lottery are encouraging the sites to work collaboratively and to share good practice
- 2: to introduce support partners and to inform sites about the support available for sites during the mobilisation and delivery phases

4.3 *A Better Start* is a 'test-and-learn' initiative, so expects each area partnership to not only deliver a great portfolio of interventions at an individual area level, but also expects that as a collective of investment areas the 5 sites will work together with the evaluation partners to produce robust evidence of what works in early years prevention.

4.3 Partners for *A Better Start*

The *A Better Start* collaboration is made up of Big Lottery Fund (the funder), The Warwick Consortium and the London School of Economics (to ensure coherent and effective evaluation activity), the Social Research Unit at Dartington (to support sites during portfolio set up), and the five sites as grant holders and primary delivery agencies. As a collective, these make up the *Partners for A Better Start*.

4.4 Role of support partners

- a) **BIG Lottery:** will work with all sites throughout the duration of the grant to provide support, resolve problems, and ensure compliance with terms and conditions of the grant so that monies are spent on approved, eligible costs and activities that will keep sites on track to achieve the agreed outcomes, and the overall aims of the A Better Start investment. The support will be at both a strategic and operational level.
- b) **Social Research Unit (SRU) Dartington:** will work with sites during set up phase to support service design activities, data analytics and capacity development. Southend has been allocated a dedicated SRU Associate - Frances Kemp - to provide help, advice and constructive challenge.

SRU will develop a single Data Dashboard and web-based Management Information System (MIS) capable of providing real time data to allow high-level monitoring and accountability.

- c) **Warwick Consortium:** The Warwick Consortium, a large, multi-disciplinary evaluation team, will conduct a 10 year study to evaluate the impact and implementation of A Better Start interventions. The Consortium includes specialists in the field of early years and education.
- d) **London School of Economics:** will undertake the economic evaluation of effectiveness, and will help develop locally-relevant costing tools and economic models.

5.0 Next steps

- 5.1 The set up phase will commence on 1st September 2014 and will run for 9 months to 31 March 2015. This is an extended period of mobilisation, in recognition of the scale of the initiative.
- 5.2 BIG Lottery Fund have provided a detailed timetable of activities and milestones, and the 4 support organisations will have an active role in ensuring sites have good infrastructure and processes before delivery commences.
- 5.2 The Pre-school Learning Alliance will be recruiting a programme manager during this set up period. The postholder will lead the delivery of the local plan.