

Delegated Decision Report



Subject:	Grant Award to Homestart Host to Expand Existing Services
Decision maker: Senior Officer	Julie Daniels, Strategic Director Children & Young People
Decision date:	13 August 2025
Report author:	Laura Farnworth, Children's Commissioning Strategic Manager
Ward (s):	ALL

Reason for decision

Approval is sought for an award of grant funding of £50,000 to be made to Homestart HOST, to support the delivery of Play, Learn Grow and enhance their bilingual support offer across the borough from 1st September 2025 up until 31 August 2026.

Recommendation(s)

To approve the award of grant funding of £50,000 to Homestart Host to enable them to enhance Play, Learn, Grow across the borough and to build on their bilingual support offer to encourage more BAME families to access targeted early help support.

The grant would run from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026, with an option to extend for a further one year up until 31 August 2027 should funding be available and it be identified that there is still a need across the borough. Funding will be from the DfE Family Hubs Grant, with no additional cost to the council.

1. Background

Homestart Host are a respected partner organisation who deliver a variety of services across the borough to offer early support to families. They offer services such as, Infant Feeding Peer Support, Play Learn Grow, Genetic Outreach, Dad Matters and the Befriending Service.

The Family Hubs grant provided to the council by DfE provides an opportunity to enter into a grant agreement with Homestart to enable them to enhance some of the services they deliver in areas where we know families would most benefit.

Enhancing Play, Learn, Grow and increasing bilingual support within services will have a positive impact on our most vulnerable families. Homestart have a high success rate engaging with families as they use a peer support model. Harder to engage families are often more willing to work with peers than professionals. Providing support in community languages will encourage BAME families to take up the support they require earlier, thus preventing escalation to higher cost, more intensive services further down the line.

Alternative option(s) to be considered

Option One – recommended option.

To approve the award of grant funding of £50,000 to Homestart Host to enable them to enhance Play, Learn, Grow across the borough and to build on their bilingual support offer to encourage more BAME families to access targeted early help support.

The grant would run from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026, with an option to extend for a further one year up until 31 August 2027 should funding be available and it be identified that there is still a need across the borough. Funding will be from the DfE Family Hubs Grant, with no additional cost to the council

Option Two

Do not approve grant funding from DfE Family Hubs Grant for Homestart Host This is not recommended as this option will not provide additional support for some of our most vulnerable families, with the risk that children will not achieve their potential and needs escalate into higher cost services..

Consultation

Homestart regularly consult with families and look to co-produce services wherever possible. Children's Services Directorate Management Team have been consulted about the proposal.

Risks

As this is a grant and is being given to allow Homestart the opportunity to enhance some of their existing delivery models, the risks of providing this grant funding are low. Not investing however, could impact Homestart's capacity resulting in them being unable to support families most in need across Oldham. An option to extend within the grant agreement would only be exercised if sufficient funding was to be available.

Implications

Financial	This report seeks approval for the award of grant funding to Homestart Host to support the delivery of the <i>Play, Learn, Grow</i> initiative across the borough for a period of 12 months, from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026. There is an option to extend the grant for a further year, subject to available funding and continued identified need, up to 31 August 2027. The total cost of the grant for the initial 12-month period is £50,000. This expenditure will be fully funded through the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme (FHSLP) grant and has been incorporated into the overall Programme of works for FY2025/26.
-----------	--

	Programme delivery, funded by the Family Hubs grant, is subject to robust monitoring by the Council from both service and financial perspectives. Regular liaison with the Department for Education ensures that the full scope of work is delivered within the available resources throughout the Programme's duration. The Local Authority has received confirmation of its FHSLP grant allocation for FY2025/26, which totals £1,381,400. Further details are provided in the attached grant letter.  Oldham_December_2024_Family_Hubs_a Vicki Hayes – Senior Accountant
Procurement	Not required for grant funding
Legal	This proposal has no legal implications assuming all proper procurement process have been followed and appropriate legal terms used – Mike Grocott – Solicitor
Equality impact including implications for Children and Young People	The proposal will have no adverse impact on any groups with protected characteristics, but will support better outcomes for children, young people and families

Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution?	Yes
Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget?	Yes
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	No

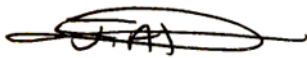
Background Papers under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

1. None

Appendix

1. None

Report author sign-off	Laura Farnworth
Role	Children's Commissioning Strategic Manager
Date of sign-off	12/8/25

Approval	
Officer approval sign-off	
Role	Julie Daniels, Strategic Director Children & Young People
Date of sign-off	14.08.25