

**IMPROVING OUTCOMES
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
IN LEEDS**

**Early Intervention Fund
(Budget Holding Lead Professional)
PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

Background

Leeds was one of 16 pathfinder Local Authorities piloting the use of a budget holding lead professional (BHLP). The BHLP was an enhancement of the lead professional role and therefore based on the Common Assessment Framework aimed at helping to identify and address [additional needs](#). The pilot was funded by the Department of Children, Schools and Families exploring if access to a budget helps:

- Ensure children and families can access services they need when they need them
- Deliver personalized packages of support to meet specific needs of children and young people
- Improve multi-agency working
- Reduce the likelihood of overlaps and duplication of work among practitioners,
- Identify gaps in service provision to inform the commissioning of services

Following the success of the pilot the work is now being mainstreamed as the **Early Intervention Fund**.

Principles and Values

The Early Intervention Fund will be an integral aspect of service delivery identified within the Children and Young People's Plan. This plan guides the work of Children's Services, focusing on personalised services targeted at greatest need with an increasing focus on preventative work. In addition, the following principles will underpin the development of this work.

- A minimum of a common assessment undertaken to identify need
- Goods and services delivered against assessed needs to achieve identified outcomes
- Activity developed on evidence based best practice
- Recognising statutory responsibilities should not be compromised by use of alternative funding
- Integrating initiatives and processes across services
- Shift from reactive to preventative practice ensuring access to the universal offer entitlement
- Maximising use of existing resources and avoiding duplication
- Maximising learning across all agencies by use of case studies and ongoing evaluation reports
- Minimising bureaucracy promoting flexibility for practitioners to work creatively
- Working to agreed levels of service delivery
- Supporting identification of service gaps and issues and helping to explore solutions
- Establishing clear lines of accountability
- Monitoring and evaluating activity to ensure a quality assured process

How the Early Intervention Fund Is Accessed

Any assessor may have access to the early intervention fund through you wedge Integrated Processes Coordinator ([IPCs](#)).

Practitioners accessing the EIF will require the following additional skills:

- an understanding of the availability and cost of local resources including
- the capacity to record and disseminate learning from using the fund
- a commitment to engage in the research
- sufficient knowledge and understanding of financial regulations

The Process, Roles and Responsibilities

The flow chart at Appendix 1 outlines the process by which the Early Intervention Fund will operate as an integral part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and lead professional processes.

A common assessment (CA) is completed by a professional (assessor) and needs are identified. A maximum of four priority needs are highlighted and become the focus of service delivery to achieve the agreed goals stated within the common assessment. The assessor negotiates an agreed outcome with the family to ensure the goals are achieved. Possible outcomes include the following; no additional service delivery, single agency support, multi agency support or request for a specialist response.

Where a multi agency response is not an outcome but identified needs require some additional support, the assessor is responsible for coordinating that support. Where no current service response exists to meet identified needs the assessor may use the Early Intervention Fund to access, commission, or in other ways provide goods or services to meet the need and achieve the goals stated in the assessment.

If the common assessment outcome is a multi-agency response, a meeting with parents and carers (and children and young people as appropriate), is held and a [Lead Professional](#) is nominated that can, if a need for an additional budget arises, access the Early Intervention Fund through liaison with the Wedge Integrated Processes Coordinator (IPCs).

Where services cannot be provided even with the use of the fund, practitioners are required to feedback to the IPC's for this information to be recorded and analysed for reporting purposes to inform the development of services at wedge and city-wide levels.

The assessor or lead professional must be prepared to write-up a case study (see appendix 3.) using information from the Common Assessment, multi-agency action plan and review meeting to explore where a budget is and is not of additional benefit. They will be required to record and consider;

- The situation before the work was undertaken
- Additional needs identified by the Common Assessment
- What action was taken to address identified needs and by whom
- The cost of the action and who was affected
- How have things changed for the child, young person and family
- What difference a budget made to the actions and outcomes for the child / young person

Financial Principles and Probity

A number of principles apply to the use of the budget. These are:

- 1) Not to replace statutory funding, not be a replacement of the benefit system (e.g. Unemployment benefits, child benefit, disability learning allowance, income support) payments provided through Local Authority's Social Services Department (Section 17 Children in Need of 1989 Children Act)
- 2) If funds can be accessed by alternative routes they should continue to be used otherwise there is a threat that such funding streams will be reduced or lost (e.g. Maternity Grants)
- 3) Unpredictable "quick fixes" evidence how they link to a package of support to ensure meeting needs longer term in a sustainable way.
- 4) When procuring services, reference must be made to the Local Authority's preferred providers and best value must be a priority at all times.

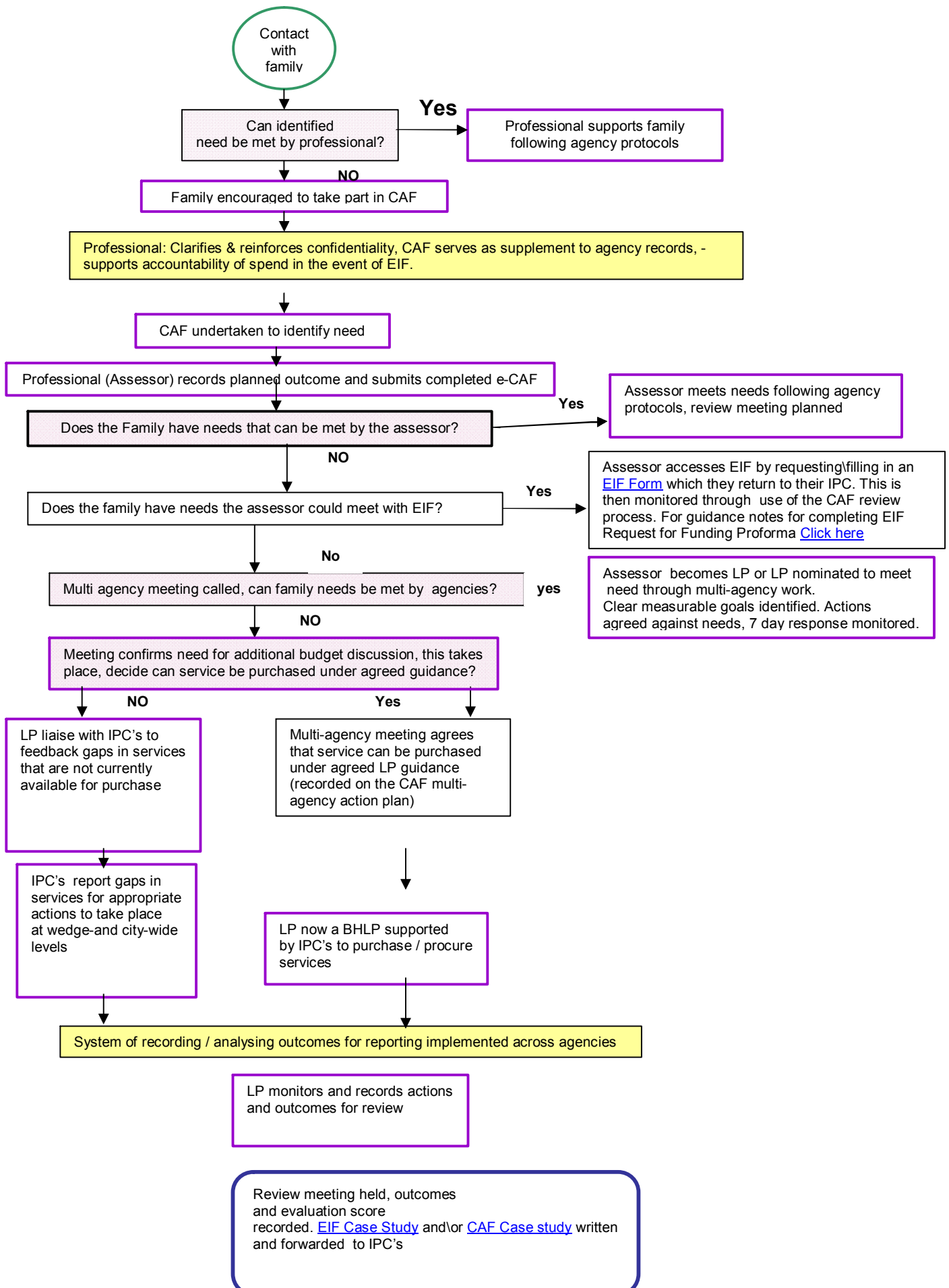
Examples of how the budget might be spent include:

- Transport to enable a family to access services
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training
- Childcare through crèche provision
- Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) sessions in community outreach settings
- Emergency provisions for those at risk of, or fleeing, domestic violence
- Breast-feeding equipment and materials
- Debt support through the Credit Union
- Special needs materials and equipment
- Counselling sessions
- Women's Aid work
- Out of school provision

Support and Accountability

In order to carry out the functions of a LP, it is vital that practitioners have access to good professional supervision and management, and where appropriate, additional training. This should enable them to acquire the appropriate knowledge skills and understanding needed for the role, including the ability to assess the needs of the child, their own skills to intervene, the need for additional support from other practitioners and the need for specialist referral.

BUDGET HOLDING LEAD PROFESSIONAL FLOWCHART



OBTAINING EIF FUNDING - PROCEDURE GUIDANCE FOR LEAD PROFESSIONALS

It is expected that the Guidance will be followed by a practitioner in order to ensure that access to the EIF is allocated through the Common Assessment and Lead Professional frameworks.

When a need for an additional budget has been identified the following steps will be taken:

- 1) **The Professional will contact the IPC** (table 1) in their wedge area to outline the rationale for the additional budget and the amount of funding required.

During periods of annual leave or sickness, IPC's will cover other areas. All lead professionals will be notified in advance of these arrangements

Table 1: **IPC's contact details**

Wedge Area	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
WEST	Eren Weekes		07891271021	Eren.weekes@leeds.gov.uk
NORTH WEST	Jackie Goodwin	Quarry Mount Children Centre Pennington Street LS6 2JP	07891276170	Jacqueline.goodwin@leeds.gov.uk
NORTH EAST	Jackie Claxton-Ruddock	Chapelton Children's Centre Leopold Street Chapelton Leeds LS7 4AW	07891275881	Jackie.claxton-ruddock@leeds.gov.uk
EAST	Yvonne Butterfield	1 st Floor East Leeds Family Learning Centre Brooklands View LS14 6SA	07891271042	Yvonne.butterfield@leeds.gov.uk
SOUTH	Christine Thornton	Middleton Family Centre 256-262 Sissons Road, LS10 4JG	07949102172	Christine.thornton@leeds.gov.uk

2. There are two possible routes to purchase services:

Route A The Service is approved and ordered by an IPC

Route B Cash is given to the Lead Professional to purchase the service direct.

Route A The Service is Ordered by IPC's

If the service can be obtained through the Council's supplier list or if the organisation is considered to be of sufficient financial viability to be able to invoice the Council (e.g. Citizen's Advice Bureau), an order will be made by an authorised officer following the Council's procedures.

In such cases, Lead Professionals are required to forward to the IPC's **evidence of need** for the funding. Appendix 3 details the information that will provide this evidence. This information must be recorded on the CAF and Multi-agency Meeting Record.

Route B Cash is given to the Lead Professional to purchase the service direct

If there is a known, reputable, local supplier and/or if route A is thought to create an unnecessary delay, the Lead Professional, now a Budget Holding Lead Professional will be required to sign for cash.

The IPC's will agree with the Lead Professional a suitable time to collect the budget.

Following purchase by the Lead Professional s/he will be required to return to the authorised persons any unspent money and receipts for expenditure incurred.

Evidence of need, as described for Route A above, must be produced.

Completing the Case Study Proforma. During and at the end of the process the LP will be expected to complete a Case Study Proforma (appendix 3) and forward this to the IPC when complete.

Case Study Proforma CAF no:.....