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DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

26 April 2018

Report of the Strategic Director for Children's Services

**EARLY HELP SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND
THEIR FAMILIES – (Children and Young People)**

1. Purpose of Report

To advise Elected Members of the outcome of the engagement process.

To seek approval to commence consultation on the proposed redesign of the Early Help Service with employees, trade unions and the public, following a period of further engagement with all stakeholders of the Early Help Provision.

2. Information and Analysis

The current Early Help structures were established in 2011 and Multi-Agency Teams (MATs) were formed to provide early help services aligned with school clusters. The services that were integrated into these teams were:

- Children's Centres and Sure Start Programmes
- Family Support Workers
- Education Welfare Service
- Youth Service
- Careers Guidance (Connexions Service)

In 2013 a further review of services led to additional services being integrated into MATs:

- Intensive Family Support (forerunner to 'Troubled Families' Programme)
- Family Support Centres
- Domiciliary Care

In 2015 the 'Rethink of Early Help Offer' (REHO) developed a partnership with schools to 're-pool' funds to DCC for the continued delivery of Early Help via MATs. This led to an alignment of services to meet some school cluster requirements and more of a mixed economy of service provision to families across the Localities.

This history of the development of MATs has led to a wide range of functions, responsibilities and duties that have been devolved to them. This means that the MATs currently deliver services across the spectrum of Universal, Emerging Needs, Targeted Early Help and Statutory duties, some of which are outlined below.

- **Universal Provision:** Community based youth clubs, Youth Forums and local participation, Parental advice and guidance, School Attendance Panels
- **Emerging Needs:** Early Help Assessments (EHA) and casework, parenting programmes, targeted school youth groups
- **Targeted Early Help:** EHA's and casework where needs are more significant or established, Evidenced Based Programmes (EBP's) parenting programmes and youth programmes
- **Statutory Duties:** parenting assessments where children are subject to statutory social work intervention and/or care proceedings, supervision of contact between children in care and birth family, missing children return home interviews, support and direction for NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people

This range of duties delegated to MATs over time has created a number of issues:

- Prioritisation of resources and budget spend to support early help and statutory services
- Postcode variance of available services due to variable re-pooling from schools and differing custom and practice
- Demand and expectation management
- Confusion of role and duties within the teams
- Broad spectrum of knowledge and skills with reduced specificity and impact

It is apparent that Multi-Agency Teams need to be reviewed to ensure that statutory duties are prioritised and resourced accordingly and that there is sufficient capacity to target interventions towards those most vulnerable children and their families to prevent risk/deterioration/escalation of needs.

In the current financial climate the capacity of the Multi-Agency Teams cannot be sustained and agreement is sought to consult on a proposal for remodelling the teams to provide an affordable and efficient service within the reduced budget envelope. Account will be taken of the remodelling and growth in social care which has been approved by Cabinet on 22 February 2018. It must be emphasised that the growth in social care is necessary to effectively meet child protection duties and responsibilities which are presently compromised and that whilst for some cases there is dual allocation with the MAT, the work of the MAT is different to that of social care.

The lower threshold for intervention leads to a level of choice in the provision of early help services via the MATs and a remodelling of the service will address current inefficiencies.

Although there are elements of choice, early help remains statutory for children's services, it is a fundamental part of the 'offer' to safeguard and protect children and is an expected area of service highlighted in Working Together 2015 and remains apparent in the yet to be published Working Together 2018. In addition, early help is subject to inspection and regulation by Ofsted under the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services framework (ILACS).

Ofsted regulation states and provides a scope for inspection element which is: *"Those children and young people at risk of harm (but who have not yet reached the significant harm threshold) and for who preventable service would provide the help they and their family need to reduce the likelihood of that risk of harm escalating and reduce the need for statutory intervention."*

Ofsted's inspection judgement of overall effectiveness of Children's Services is cumulative and derived from a number of factors including the experience and progress of children who need early help and protection.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (2018 Draft) states:

"Local areas should have a comprehensive range of effective, evidence-based services in place to address assessed needs early. The early help offer should draw upon any local assessment of need, including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and the latest evidence of the effectiveness of early help and early intervention programmes. In addition to high quality support in universal services, specific local early help services will typically include family and parenting programmes, assistance with health issues and help for problems relating to domestic abuse and drug or alcohol misuse by an adult or the child. Services may also focus on improving family functioning and building the family's

own capability to solve problems; this should be done within a structured, evidence-based framework involving regular review to ensure that real progress is being made. Some of these services may be delivered to parents but should always be evaluated to demonstrate the impact they are having on the outcomes for the child.”

Nationally the landscape across agencies delivering early help and safeguarding for children and families is changing. The remodeling of the early help offer will take into consideration national agendas and research evidence, to inform our vision for early help and safeguarding in Derbyshire.

It is important to recognise the benefit of maximising early intervention services to reduce spend on high cost acute services and to reduce the number of children becoming Children in Care; the review will therefore take account of this need to balance meeting current budget reductions whilst minimising the risk of unintended consequences and increasing numbers of families in acute need.

In 2015 the Early Intervention Foundation researched the cost of spend on acute level services, estimated to be £17 billion per annum.

There is also clear evidence that effective early intervention can provide reductions in spend in acute services and this research will be considered within the review and remodeling of early help services to ensure:

- The right intervention is offered at the right time.
- Resources are used to deliver Evidence Based Programme (EBP) interventions
- Practitioners have appropriate comprehension and ability to deliver EBP early interventions.

Early Help Data

Derbyshire currently has 4101 children who have an allocated MAT worker and these children will have their needs assessed by using the ‘Early Help Assessment’ (EHA). The majority of children will then be supported by a multi-agency ‘Team Around the Family’ (TAF) and these professionals work with the family to deliver a child’s plan.

At the moment the vast majority of early help cases in Derbyshire are held by the MATs.

Local data tells us that some of these children could be supported by universal services with some advice and guidance from Children's Services. In fact, 28% of completed Early Help Assessments lead to 'No Further Action'. This suggests that with some initial work supporting families to understand their child's emerging needs and support from school or health, issues can be resolved.

Within 22% of early help cases, Children's Services provide some single focus work and this could be part of a low level school attendance matter or some NEET work with a teenager.

The remaining 50% of cases do require a more intensive support package. These cases are predominantly where emerging needs are substantial and families require help from a more targeted and long term intervention to achieve positive sustained change. To support these families MAT's implement systemic practice using 'Stronger Families, Safer Children' and will also consider the most appropriate evidence based intervention package to effect change.

MATs also support families open to social care and can provide a range of interventions that supports the social worker to enable successful delivery of the families Child's Plan, e.g. Parenting Assessments and Supervised Contact, Graded Care Profile and parenting programmes and youth support work for children at risk of exploitation.

The current estimate is that 30% of the Early Help resources are used to support this statutory work.

Engagement with Stakeholders

During January – February 2018 Children's Services undertook an extensive engagement process with Early Help staff and key stakeholders. The feedback has enabled the local authority to evidence the most effective early intervention practice and identify how the council can support partners to increase their capacity to deliver early help casework.

Health partners have agreed a new early intervention pathway and this will support health colleagues across the range of health services, e.g. GP's, Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting and School Nursing), Community Paediatrician's, Hospital services and emergency services.

Schools have identified elements of the service the Council offers which is key to supporting vulnerable children and these will enable schools to increase their capacity to deliver more early help case work. This includes:

- A link worker to support schools to undertake EHA's and lead TAF's.
- Monthly panel meetings for advice and guidance on support for vulnerable students
- Accessible Parenting Programmes and targeted Youth Programmes
- School Attendance Panels and guidance on the legal attendance work

MATs have evidence of effective interventions using a range of therapeutic approaches based on Systemic, Personalisation, Cognitive and Narrative theories. These include:

- Stronger Families, Safer Children casework: Chronologies, Cultural Genogram and Eco Mapping, Child's Voice and Lived Experience to analyse risks and effective change work
- Parenting Programmes: Solihull Programme, Incredible Years, Non-Violence Resistance, Systemic and NVR Family Therapy
- Child development: HENRY, ECAT and Little Learners
- Youth Programmes: Healthy relationships and C Card, Emotional Wellbeing and IAPTS CBT, Angry Gremlins, Aspirations and NEET work, Lifestyles work including: Drugs, risks of exploitation and online safety

The Derbyshire Children's Services Early Help Strategy priorities are:

- Increased Community Resilience
- Enhance the Early Help for Emerging Needs
- Provide Targeted Early Help, where emerging needs are significant or need longer-term intervention

Community Resilience

Currently the DCC Thriving Communities project, Public Health, District and Borough Councils work in partnership with VCI sector and other stakeholders to invest in community resilience and local champions, community leaders, volunteers and families lead community development initiatives. The success of this work could lead to a reduction in demand of Children's Services.

Emerging Needs

Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) has a duty to work with the local authority and have oversight of the Early Help offer. The DSCB has an agreed policy with partners for the Early Help Assessment (EHA) and Team Around the Family (TAF) processes. Health, Education, VCI and other stakeholders are able to undertake EHA's and offer appropriate early help using TAF processes.

In light of the evidence from the engagement feedback, remodelling of services will seek to provide a partnership arrangement with stakeholders, to strengthen early help for emerging needs and provide an effective interface with Children's Services.

Targeted Early Help

The vision will be for Children's Services to remodel their current Early Help offer and provide a service that is focused on achieving positive outcomes for children and prevent further escalation within safeguarding thresholds.

This would mean council services will be offered if emerging needs are significant and other services have not been successful in reducing levels of safeguarding concern. Targeted early help will support the local authority to fulfil its statutory duties and address issues of safeguarding concern where a child may be at risk of neglect, abuse or vulnerable to exploitation.

Troubled Families Transformation (including Department of Work and Pensions supporting families into work)

The Department for Local Government and Communities has committed to the delivery of the Troubled Families programme to 2020. A key priority for this is to transform local services for families including addressing issues of aspiration and employability within families. The review of services will seek to deliver improved targeted early help to better support this initiative and will enable maximisation of the payment by results funding into Derbyshire.

Other services to be reviewed

Separate cabinet reports will be presented on other linked services that will be under review. These include Services for Teenagers and the Integration of services for 0-5year olds.

Rethinking Early Help Offer – (REHO) Partnership with Schools

The engagement feedback has identified the strengths of the REHO partnership and the benefits schools have gained from this arrangement.

- There is recognition that regular contact to discuss support plans for vulnerable pupils is positive and the school attendance panels have provided positive impact to increase attendance figures
- Targeted group work for children has improved emotional wellbeing, increased awareness of healthy relationships and reduced children's risks of exploitation
- Parenting programmes have been delivered within school clusters and in partnership with school staff. Children's Services have delivered 'Incredible Years 12 week programmes', Living with teenagers bespoke packages, parent drop-ins offering parental advice and guidance. These targeted groups have evidence of benefits for improved parenting capacity
- Early help casework, using Stronger Families, Safer Children has provided excellent outcomes for children. Schools have requested support to enable staff to improve their early help work.

The timeline for the REHO 're-pooling' budget arrangement has a 3 year timeline and this will be ending in March 2020. Based on the feedback from schools, the Local Authority will be seeking further consultation to develop a future robust funded partnership arrangement that meets schools' current needs; capturing the strengths already developed within REHO.

It is recognised that as schools' funding is reduced and schools change the way they are arranged through academisation, the choice to 're-pool' becomes more compromised. This review will seek to ensure arrangements with schools are sustainable to support families and provide a stable early help workforce.

Derbyshire and Locality Children's Partnerships

The recently developed Derbyshire Children's Partnership and Locality Children's Partnerships, along with the DSCB play a pivotal role in the consultation on future commissioning and funding of Early Help. The consultation will also be informed by these partnership developments:

- Troubled Families Transformation Programme
- Futures in Mind
- Health STP
- Schools and Multi Academy trusts

Workforce Development Programme for future Early Help Services

In recent years the MAT workers and managers have experienced significant instability and insecurity leading to retention issues for the service. This review will seek to establish an early help service which is affordable for the future and stabilise the workforce going forward.

The Early Help workforce development programme is being reviewed to deliver the appropriate training internally and externally to achieve a workforce with contemporary skills to address modern day issues.

Children's Services have a skilled workforce who have trained in a range of evidence based interventions. To ensure council services maximise the effectiveness of these skills and maintain integrity to therapeutic approaches, Children's Services will seek to establish reflexive practice supervision groups, which will complement the operational management structure.

Reflective practice supervision will include: Systemic and NVR family practice, School Attendance, Vulnerable Children and CSE, IAPTS CBT and NEET work.

The Troubled Families Transformation plan and funding, along with the apprenticeship levy, will support the achievement of this transformation and lead to new training partnership arrangements:

- Apprenticeship Pathways

- Regional training programmes
- External training providers of licensed practice
- Innovation 'Teaching Partnerships'
- Internal training team refresh offer
- Accredited qualification routes

Conclusion

After full consideration of the feedback from the 'Engagement Phase' and the need to ensure Early Help services operate within the funding envelope; we have identified some of the potential impact of these proposals.

Children who have emerging needs and or vulnerability rely on universal services for support. For some children the support is supplemented by the work of the MAT's to prevent escalation of need/risk.

The impact of a reduction in the Early Help service is difficult to quantify within the complex partnership arrangements. However any reduction in preventative services poses potential risks for individual children, families and the council.

To mitigate this we will consult with partners about a joint response to the potential for increased risks. Within the proposals we have included a new role, whose key function will be to support universal services to increase their early help work.

Key stakeholders will be consulted with including:

- Early Help Workforce
- Key partners including Safeguarding teams, Schools & Health
- Current & potential service users

Our workforce currently consists of approximately 400 FTE's across a range of 13 job titles:

Data Redacted for publication

Within the new arrangements we will seek to reduce the range of job roles to meet the requirements of new arrangements.

Our proposals will include:

- Development of targeted Early Help intervention teams practising with evidence based programmes. Our offer will include two primary functions:

- Family Support: to prevent harm to children, reduce family conflict and breakdown, improve parenting capacity and family functioning
- Youth Support: to prevent harm to children, reduce child vulnerabilities and risk of child exploitation, reduce NEET and support successful transitions into adult life.
- Revision of the arrangements to provide contact for children in our care and their families to maximise efficiencies
- Early Help Advisors to support universal services to increase their early help work.
- Development of a stable business model with the schools moving forward to replace the REHO arrangements and support the schools and Multi Academy Trusts, in their early help activity, new arrangements will be based on schools engagement feedback

3. Human Resources Considerations

As key stakeholders, all employees within the service and trade unions will be consulted, alongside the public.

A period of stakeholder engagement has already taken place with staff, trade unions and current service users and other partners and a further report will be submitted to Cabinet with the finalised proposals and the impact for employees. Any new structure will be consistent with the Council's Organisational Design Principles and will enable and support service delivery.

It is proposed to consult with staff, trade union and stakeholders during May and June 2018 on the proposed new structure. Work will then be undertaken to consider the outcome of the consultation meetings; this will then inform a further report which will be submitted to Cabinet in November, detailing the outcome of the consultation meetings and requesting permission, subject to the outcome of the wider consultation being undertaken, to implement a new structure to take effect from September 2019.

4. Financial Considerations

The MAT current staffing as set out in Appendix A has a current budget allocation of approximately £11.128m. In addition there is further budget provision of £1.203m to cover premises, travel and other non- employee related costs. The gross budget for the service, excluding Business Services, is therefore £12.331m.

In order to meet previous years' savings targets, Derbyshire schools and academies have been contributing towards the cost of Early Help

Services. An Early Help income budget of £5m has been set, however, the actual income received has fallen below this figure, with shortfalls of £1.486m and £1.287m (estimated) in 2016/17 and 2017/18 respectively.

It is no longer anticipated that this shortfall can be closed and therefore service reductions are required in order to keep within the available funding envelope.

In addition to the above shortfall, the Children's Services budget plan has identified that savings of £0.300m in 2018/19 and £1.592m in 2019/20 will need to be made within Early Help Services. Savings of at least £1.892m, plus ~£1.5m to cover anticipated future shortfalls in income, are therefore needed.

The above savings figure could increase still further, depending on future budget settlements for Children's Services. Under the Council's 5 year Financial Plan reported as part of the Revenue Budget on 25 January 2018, the Authority is anticipating that further savings of £25.175m will be required for 2020/21 and 2021/22. Children's Services will be expected to deliver further savings to contribute to this total which could in turn further impact on Early Help Services funding.

The commitment schools are making to work in partnership with the Local Authority in order to provide an offer of Early Help has resulted in a contribution of £3.713m in 2017/18. Elements of the work being undertaken by the Authority on Early Help is reliant on this partnership arrangement and should the level of contributions reduce in the future, this would add further financial pressures to those already detailed above.

5. Legal Considerations

Services to protect children, prevent children coming into care or to enable a sustained return home, or support children in need (including disabled children) are provided under Sections 47 and 17 of the Children Act 1989. The consultation to be undertaken following the further discussions with stakeholders will need to identify the full potential impact on children and families in order that consultees can respond effectively. Any final proposal will need to comply fully with the Council's statutory and contractual duties.

6. Social Value Considerations

Development of community and family resilience to support vulnerable children and young people will be beneficial, including increasing positive parenting in Derbyshire. Key stakeholders will be consulted to review arrangements that can support this agenda.

7. Equality and Diversity Considerations

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a child-centred framework within which services to children are located. It spells out the basic human rights that all children have, including: the right to life/survival; to develop to the fullest; to be protected from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to be able to participate fully in family, cultural and social life.

Children in care and care leavers often have poorer outcomes than the general population, and so maintaining and supporting young people safely within their own families is likely to lead to improved outcomes.

An equalities impact assessment will also be undertaken on the Early Help review and the results reported to Cabinet.

8. Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

9. Background Papers

- Remodelling Children's Social Work in Derbyshire 2017
- Council Budget Paper 2018
- Health and Social Care Services for 0-5 year olds 2018

10. Key Decision

No

11. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report?

No

12. Officer's Recommendation

Approval is given to commence consultation on the proposed redesign of the Early Help Service with employees, trade unions and the public, following a further period of engagement with all stakeholders of the Early Help Provision.

The contents of this report, once approved, be disclosed far as is required for the purposes of consultation

That Cabinet receive a further report following the consultation process and the carrying out of an equality impact assessment.

Jane Parfremment
Strategic Director for Children's Services