

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

21 January 2014

Report of the Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults

Report on the Findings of the Consultation Undertaken on the Re-Commissioning of a Family Support Service – (Children and Young People)

1. Purpose of Report

To inform Cabinet of the results of the consultation on low to medium need family support services and the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment.

Cabinet is asked to agree that:

1. low to medium need family support services for families with children aged 0-5 years continue to be commissioned via children’s services and local health services across the county
2. the Council does not re-commission a new low to medium family support service to be provided from 1st April 2014 through the mechanism of an external competitive tendering process
3. the contracts of current providers Amber Valley, Erewash, High Peak, and South Derbyshire HomeStarts are extended to the 31st May 2014, and that notice is also given to the providers allowing the HomeStarts a four month time period in which to prepare for change.

2. Information and Analysis

On 30 July 2013, Cabinet agreed to a period of formal consultation on the provision of family support services. This was not designed to be a consultation specifically about HomeStart. The purpose was to inform a Cabinet decision on whether to re-commission a low to medium need

family support service when the existing HomeStart contracts expire in March 2014.

In addition to HomeStart customers, volunteers and staff having the opportunity to contribute to the formal county wide Family Support Consultation, on the 18 of November 2013 Council representatives met with representatives of the Derbyshire HomeStart schemes thereby providing a further opportunity for discussion.

Local authorities across the country are facing significant financial challenges, which for Derbyshire represents a cut to its budget of £157m over the next 5 years. In order to meet these targets, Cabinet will be invited to review all contracts and review every service when the opportunity arises to see whether that service is now affordable.

On April 1 2008 Derbyshire County Council commissioned HomeStart to provide a low to medium family support service for families with young children in the council districts of Bolsover and North East, High Peak, South Derbyshire, Erewash and Amber Valley. Bolsover and North East HomeStart chose to close its operations in 2011, and a Home Start has never operated in the remaining council districts of the Dales and Chesterfield. On March 31 2014 these contracts will have operated for the maximum five year term plus a one year extension. Therefore Cabinet is now invited to review the service to assess whether it is still affordable or whether the service can be provided in a different way in order to achieve the required level of savings.

The results of the recent consultation exercise, together with the Equality Impact Assessment, suggest that the “Children Centre Offer” can provide sufficient and appropriate services for a child aged four or below.

Family Support Consultation Content

The consultation occurred over a six-week period, concluding on the 31 October 2013. It was structured to recognise that families contain children across different age groups. Therefore, an opportunity was afforded to:

1. express opinions across family support services divided into child/ young people age groups, age appropriate services, and relevant services for adults/family households
2. inform about services used in the last twelve months, satisfaction with those services, and identify service gaps

3. identify specific interventions to ascertain need and patterns of use, but not providers. However, it did specifically ask about parent/carer isolation and adult emotional wellbeing. Responding to this need in parents/carers of children aged four or below is the core of the HomeStart service
4. rate overall satisfaction of services received from major providers including the voluntary sector.

An additional questionnaire was widely circulated to gather professional perspectives on service range and capacity.

Consultation process

The Family Support Questionnaire was promoted through:

1. a "CAYA all" e-mail (circulated twice) to capture
 - professional opinions
 - views of parents that are also staff
2. "Adult Services All" email on 9/10/13 to increase the questionnaire reach to the sizable volume of parents working in adult services
3. VCI partners including all HomeStarts
4. DCC locality delivery staff with an emphasis on children centres and the overarching MAT structure
5. health visitors (200 pre-printed versions sent to the health visiting service in two separate batches of a 100 each)
6. 10 paper copies to every GP surgery and library
7. Twitter and Facebook
8. relevant members of Chief Executives Standing Consultation Forums.

Focus Groups

In mid-October 2013 three focus group opportunities were provided with a target attendance of 10 parent/carers at each group. Focus Groups were offered in towns covering the cross section of Derbyshire's geography of rural (Buxton), semi-rural (Alfreton) and urban (Chesterfield). Three time slots were offered covering a morning, an afternoon, and an evening to capture different family childcare commitments and working patterns. Support with child care and transport was offered to encourage attendance.

The focus group dates, times and venues were advertised by:

1. notification to the VCI sector on the 15 of August 2013 (including HomeStart)
2. an article in the Derby Telegraph
3. publicity amongst existing Derbyshire standing consultation forums
4. personal letter or e-mail to questionnaire respondents that stated an interest in being consulted further. On the 15 of October 2013 this number stood at 104 individuals
5. an offer being made to all respondents expressing an interest in being further consulted of support with child care and/or transport.

The focus groups primarily targeted parents of children aged four or under, any of whom could be existing or potential HomeStart customers, as the HomeStart service access criteria is a child aged four or under and an expectation that the adult carer will benefit from a weekly home visit. The purpose was to explore with attendees the particular components of different services used in the last twelve months and understand the value placed on different service aspects. This would include, amongst other components, outreach per se alongside home visiting by volunteers which is the core of the HomeStart service.

In total five adults confirmed a focus group attendance of whom three actually attended on the day. The Chesterfield group was well attended by children centre service users. The two further groups held in different HomeStart areas were attended by one parent of two children aged over five years. It was therefore only possible to conduct one of the three possible focus groups. This is an insufficient number from which to draw conclusions, particularly as eight of the ten attendees profiled themselves as very satisfied "Children Centre Offer" customers, of whom the majority had or were receiving an outreach service from the children centre.

Focus Group Details

Location	Rurality	Date	Time	Home Start Area	Attendance
Chesterfield-Birdholme Children's Centre	Urban	11/10/13	1.30 to 3.30 pm	No	10
Alfreton – Polygon Centre	Significantly Rural	15/10/13	5.30 to 7.30 pm	Yes	1
Buxton - St Nicolas Church Hall	Rural	14/10/13	10.00 am to 12.00 pm	Yes	0

Headline Questionnaire findings

A total of 423 parents responded across all age groups. 239 parents of children under five years old responded.

The headline findings for those parenting a child under five are that 93% of respondents had used a children's centre in the last 12 months, of whom 70% were very satisfied with the service they had received, and 20% were fairly satisfied. Health services for this age group received a very satisfied rating of 49%, and a fairly satisfied rating of 40%. In conclusion, both of the key services providing low to medium family support for families with a child under five are well utilised and regarded by service users. 53% of relevant respondents had not used the voluntary sector in the last twelve months. Those who responded and had used the sector rated it as 63% very satisfied and a further 14% fairly satisfied. All providers achieved low scores on the fairly dissatisfied and very dissatisfied option.

Families parenting at least one child under five identified their major need areas as:

- child and young person's development: 45%
- emotional wellbeing of parents: 32%
- child/young person's emotional health and wellbeing: 26%
- difficulties managing child behaviour: 23%
- parental isolation: 22%
- difficulty accessing local facilities: 10%.

In answer to the question: “Is there anything else you or your family need?” 1 response out of 43 responses asked for an increase in time made available to them in their home by their family support worker.

Responses to the questionnaire about which children’s centre services had been used in the last 12 months, matched across to need expressed and coupled with the high level of satisfaction rates amongst service users, strongly indicates the children centre offer provides sufficient of the right interventions at the right time.

Headline children centre services used in the last 12 months by respondents were:

- children’s play and development opportunities in a group setting: 69%
- opportunities to make new friends: 28%.
- a service delivered in your home: 20%
- nutrition and healthy living: 18%
- parenting classes: 14%
- 2 Year Old child care: 9%
- engagement in adult Learning/volunteering: 8.4%

In answer to the question: “In your experience what should there be more of?” 6 individuals out of a total of 89 responses named increasing HomeStart services.

Conclusion

Since the HomeStart contracts commenced in 2008 there has been a marked increase in the availability of multidisciplinary support delivered through the county’s network of children centres, and a substantial increase in the range and availability of interventions delivered through trained personnel that are validated as “effective practice”. Engaging families in children centres opens up a range of opportunities to meet need through the knowledge, skills and resources held by the variety of multiagency staff that comprises the “children centre offer”.

At 2014 the HomeStart service is a very small part of county family support provision. Although it is accepted that the HomeStart model of service delivery makes the adult recipient “feel better”, the service has not been validated as “effective practice”. Very recent research has classified it at best as “promising practice” that requires further and more vigorous research. Given the “feel better” impact of the HomeStart model, children centres will offer outreach to existing HomeStart service users requesting a continuation of the HomeStart model of support.

The additional commitment required from internal resources has been committed to by senior officers. However, it is anticipated that no additional funding will be required to deliver this service. Learning from the closure of the Bolsover HomeStart demonstrates that service users in receipt of a HomeStart service did not request alternative provision.

4. Financial Considerations

The combined funding to the four Derbyshire HomeStarts is £212,000 funded from the CAYA budget. The reduction in budget allocation if the service ceases will contribute to the budget reductions already allocated to CAYA for 2013-14.

As detailed above, Senior Management are aware of the potential additional work which may fall to Children's Centres but do not consider that this will result in an increased financial commitment

5. Equality Consideration

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached to this report in order that the Council may have regard to its human rights obligations when making a final decision in the light of the consultation process.

The main conclusion following an analysis of Derbyshire HomeStart service user monitoring data is that women, and single parents on welfare benefits, could potentially be adversely affected should Cabinet decide to bring to an end the external commissioning of a low to medium family support service for families with a child under the age of five. This is because:

1. of protected groups, women are very significantly more likely to use a HomeStart service. 182 women out of 198 families were recorded as the main recipient of a service in the financial year 2012/13
2. HomeStart monitoring data does not inform about numbers of service users either in the ante or post natal period. However, one would anticipate a small percentage of service users to be pregnant with a second or subsequent baby, or at six weeks or less post delivery
3. there is a higher than expected use by single parents and families receiving welfare benefits, both indicators of financial challenges

4. use by other legally protected groups of HomeStart reflects a profile in line with what is known about the composition of Derbyshire's population.

Analysis of the Impact of Ceasing to Externally Procure a Low to Medium Family Support Service on Existing HomeStart Service Users.

1. In 2012/13 203 or 0.6% of Derbyshire families of children aged 0 to 5 families were contracted to receive a service. A total of 198 families received a service. Working on an average of 200 families per annum, and from 2012/13 contract monitoring data, and presuming a three month notice period on contracts, one can presume that:
 - 26.5 families would cease to receive a HomeStart service in a three month period.
 - 28 families would not be referred in and accepted as new work.
2. Based on an average of 1.7 children per family, numbers of children recorded as in receipt of a Safeguarding or Common Assessment Framework plan indicates 47 families are also in receipt of substantial statutory provision in addition to a HomeStart service. HomeStart is not contracted to be the Lead Professional.
3. 7 of the 10 pregnant teenagers reside in a Family Nurse Partnership area. Teenage pregnancy is defined as conception under 19 years of age. Teenage parents demonstrating need will either access the Family Nurse Partnership scheme or be entitled to receive targeted or specialist provision.
4. The above assumptions based on HomeStart monitoring data for 2012/13 reduce the number of HomeStart families not in receipt of at least one other proactive targeted service from 200 families to 92.

Action Plan to Protect Existing HomeStart Service Users and Home Start Volunteers in the Proposed Change to Provision

1. The Council will replicate the core provision currently procured from the HomeStarts of one hour's outreach per week from the resources held within its "children's centre core offer". Based on

the contract size of each HomeStart, this will in practice require Erewash to provide an additional service of one hour's face to face outreach to 31 adults in Erewash, High Peak 25, Amber Valley 20, and South Derbyshire 16.

2. HomeStart monitoring data provided indicates a closure rate of 26 families per quarter. On the presumption that the closure rate applies to families with lower tier needs, this indicates that within a twelve month period all 92 service users only in receipt of a HomeStart service will have stepped down to not requiring the home visit, or in exceptional circumstances stepped up into targeted or specialist provision.
3. In 2012/13 HomeStart reported a pool of 176 volunteers. The children centres have an active volunteer base and agreed processes to recruit, train, manage and develop volunteers which it will apply to any HomeStart volunteers wishing to remain in active volunteering roles with families of early years children.
4. It is therefore proposed that both the volume and needs of service users and volunteers currently utilising HomeStart services can be met from the resource located in the "children centre offer", and relevant partner services in public health. The main change will be the home visit could be provided by an employee as opposed to a volunteer given some HomeStart volunteers allocated to one of the 92 families may chose not to become a children centre volunteer or undertake any required additional checks, training, and supervision requirements. This occurred when Bolsover HomeStart closed.

Arrangement for Potential Future Service Users of HomeStart Services

Since current HomeStart contracts commenced in 2008, the following additional targeted and universal provision from the ante natal period to age five has been introduced in Derbyshire to support children and parents of children under five. This extensive menu of services is available to potential future HomeStart service users.

1. County coverage by a network of children centres
2. Enhanced midwifery and health visiting for vulnerable families
3. Family Nurse Partnership targeting teenage parents in the most populated areas

4. Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) supporting parents skills as first educators of their children
5. Investment in the Every Child a Talker (ECaT) in the most deprived areas supporting parents help their child acquire language
6. The Healthy Eating and Nutrition in the Really Young programme (HENRY)
7. The Incredible Years baby and two to eight years parenting programme for parents experiencing higher level parenting issues
8. The Living with Children programme for families experiencing lower level parenting issues.
9. The expansion of the Every Child a Mover programme to improve children's core body strength.

It is proposed that potential service users of HomeStart will have their needs met from the mainstream "children centre offer" and the menu of early years targeted services commissioned since 2008. In addition, increased children centre income maximisation services and peer breastfeeding services are being procured.

6. Human Resources

The HomeStart service is primarily delivered through volunteers. Whilst the County Council does not have a legal obligation to the small number of paid staff associated with each HomeStart, it is noted that those staff may be vulnerable to losing their employment in any change.

7. Legal Considerations

The Council has a duty to conduct appropriate consultation with people and agencies who may be significantly affected by changes in policy and procedure. The consultation process should be tailored to consider the needs of persons being consulted so as to enable them to participate fully in this process. Due regard should be had to the information obtained as a result of the consultation in the decision making process.

When considering the proposals it will be essential for Members to have due regard to the importance of protecting and promoting the welfare and interests of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic

(age; disability; gender reassignment ; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation). The proposal have been the subject of an Equality Impact Assessment and Members should carefully consider the attached Equality Impact Assessment and, in particular, consider the effectiveness of any measure(s) which it is intended to put in place to mitigate or eliminate any potential adverse effects.

It is proposed that the current HomeStart Contract should be extended until 31st May 2014. The current contracts expire on 31st March 2014. The Local Government Act 1972 states that a local authority may exempt a contract from its standing orders when the authority is satisfied that the exemption is justified by special circumstances. The Council's Standing Orders permit Cabinet or Cabinet Members to waive the requirement to seek competitive tenders for proposed services where it is satisfied that there are such special circumstances.

Accordingly, the Director of Legal Services has advised that it would be justifiable to waive Standing Orders in Relation to Contracts to enter into a short extension to the current contract with HomeStart for a maximum of two additional months in order to provide sufficient time for the transitional arrangements detailed in the report to be put in place.

8. Other Considerations

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

9. Background Papers

1. Cabinet Report – Extension of Existing Home Start Contracts – Young People - dated 4 September 2012.
2. Children Trust Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy – Adopted 12 July 2012.
3. Cabinet Report - Proposed Consultation on the Re-Commissioning of a Family Support Service – dated 30 July 2013.
4. Equality Impact Assessment.

5. Family Support Consultation Headline Findings for Families Caring for Children Aged Four or Under.

10. Key Decision

Yes.

11. Is it required that Call-In be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed within this report?

No.

12. Strategic Director's Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to agree that:

- i. low to medium need family support services for families with children aged four or under continues to be commissioned through children's services and local health services
- ii. a new low to medium family support service is not re-commissioned from the market place through a competitive tendering process
- iii. the Council extend its contracts with Amber Valley, Erewash, High Peak, and South Derbyshire HomeStarts to the 31st May 2014, facilitating a four month notice period in which to prepare for change.

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults

Derbyshire County Council

Equality Impact Analysis Record Form 2012



Department	CAYA
Service Area	Universal and Targeted Services
Title of policy/ practice/ service of function	HomeStart
Chair of Analysis Team	Susanna Williams

Stage 1. Prioritising what is being analysed

- a. Why has the policy, practice, service or function been chosen?
- b. What if any proposals have been made to alter the policy, service or function?

Why

To ascertain if ceasing to provide the low to medium family support services currently provided by Home Start will impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

To ascertain if provision currently provided by four HomeStart schemes in some areas of Derbyshire is required from 1st April 2014.

To ascertain the impact on Derbyshire's population of current family support services given the landscape of Derbyshire's "family support" services has changed over the time period current HomeStart contracts have been operational. (2008 to 2014).

To inform commissioning priorities going forward.

What

In 4th September 2012 Cabinet waived standing orders enabling the HomeStart contracts to be extended one year beyond their original maximum term of five years. The four current HomeStart contracts expire March 31st 2014. It is timely to consider the service at this point in time.

A Family Support Consultation has been conducted between August 2013 and

October 13. The consultation has contributed to understanding whether the services provided by HomeStart are still required by families needing the input or support of the Council.

The consultation has informed the proposals regarding commissioning family support services for families with young children. The outcome of consultation and on-going needs assessments for families in Derbyshire has been used to help inform the recommendations within this Equality Impact Analysis and future procurement of services.

Internal and external services funded by the County Council within “Early Intervention and Prevention” are in the process of being reviewed against the adopted measure of “evidence based”, as stated in the Derbyshire Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy adopted by the Children Trust on 12TH July 2012. Any new commissioning activity undertaken as a result of the Family Support Consultation will be expected to meet the “evidence based” criteria.

c. What is the purpose of the policy, practice, service or function?

Home Start services were commissioned in 2008 by Derbyshire County Council to provide a weekly volunteer home visit to the adult carer/s of a child under five years of age requiring low to medium family support. The Equality Impact Assessment and Family Support Consultation sought to test whether the services currently and previously provided are required going forward, and the impact of any cessation of service on families. The outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment has led to a decision to cease the external commissioning of the provision currently provided by HomeStart.

Derbyshire HomeStart schemes provide on average one home visit per week to an adult/s in each family open as case work. In addition it provides some group work to support adult wellbeing alongside crèche, some signposting activity, and periodic family activity days. Some funding for the range of services is achieved through fundraising activities and grant applications. Volunteers on average contribute three hours a week in service delivery activity. Currently HomeStart is asked to provide or promote

1. Early intervention and timely support for families to promote emotional and mental wellbeing and effective parenting.
2. To promote protective factors and strengthen families resilience.
3. To work in partnership with other agencies as part of integrated service delivery, including involvement with Common Assessment Framework

and Team Around the Child plans.

4. To support parents to meet their child developmental, health, social and educational needs through role modelling, encouragement and focussed interventions.
- 5 To build capacity and skills within the community through volunteer recruitment, training support and supervision.
- 6 To promote healthy lifestyle choices and help parents overcome some of the barriers to healthy lifestyles.

Since 2008 there has been rapid expansion in universal and targeted provision for families requiring low to medium family support services:

1. County coverage by a network of children centres delivering a range of services and family support provision within the Multi Agency Team locality structure.
2. Midwifery and health visiting services contracted to identify vulnerability at the earliest point and offer additional support.
3. The Family Nurse Partnership contracted to support teenage parents in the most deprived and densely populated areas.
4. Parents Early Education Partnership (PEEP) is delivered by most children centres most of the time supporting parents to engage positively with their children's intellectual development.
5. The Healthy Eating and Nutrition in the Really Young family programme (HENRY)) is provided by Derbyshire's children centres.
6. The Incredible Years baby and two to eight years parenting programme is delivered as a rolling programme in all localities, supported by the Living with Children programme.
7. An increased and targeted investment across age all age groups in children and younger adults with disabilities under the banner "Aiming High".
8. In addition Derbyshire County Council is in the process of commissioning additional breastfeeding support, and income maximisation and debt advice services.
9. Every Child a Talker(ECaT) by January 2015 will be available in all early years settings servicing a high percentage of children from deprived

communities.

10. Every Child a Mover programme is expanding its reach into an increasing number of settings to improve children's core body strength.

The Government has invested in "free" two year old child care provision for children eligible for free school meals. In Derbyshire additional two year old places have been made available for the children of specified vulnerable parents irrespective of household income. Amongst the groups are parents open to services addressing domestic abuse, alcohol or drug misuse, mental health need or for children cared for by grandparents because of parents incapacity in response to the above issues.

The Family Support Consultation asked about need, ascertained service use amongst respondents and determined the level of satisfaction with these services. By extrapolating the information in these responses the Council has been able to formulate a programme of services to addresses the needs of families with a children aged four or under experiencing low to medium family support need.

Stage 2. The team carrying out the analysis

Name	Area of expertise/ role
(Chair)	
Susanna Williams-Chair	Family Support Services - Commissioning
Sara Lewis	Derbyshire Management Information - provision of statistical data
Barbara Ackrill	Research and Information - support to the Family Support Consultation
Kevin Carter	Legal Advice
John Cowings	Senior Policy Officer, critical friend from equalities perspective only

Stage 3. The scope of the analysis – what it covers

To understand in Derbyshire the current need in the under-five population, and in their families

To understand the Derbyshire service user perception and experience of family support services and most particularly those available to families with children under the age of five.

To identify from the customers perception unmet need in current service provision, and more specifically identify any need to externally commission a specific service for children aged under five and their families.

To ascertain the impact on Derbyshire's population if those services currently funded by the County Council and delivered by four HomeStart schemes were removed from the Family Support landscape.

To ascertain and understand how any groups of people with particular protected characteristics would be affected by ceasing to fund the service currently contracted to be delivered by HomeStart.

To understand what factors and services could effectively mitigate against potential but avoidable negative impacts on the Derbyshire families with children under five years of age, and any groups of people with particular protected characteristics.

Stage 4. Data and consultation feedback

a. Sources of data and consultation used

Source	Reason for using
Derbyshire HomeStart contract monitoring information	Customer experience and satisfaction data provided by HomeStart
Research on HomeStart	Provides evidence and information on the impact of services provided by South Derbyshire
National Literature Reviews	Literature reviews across the range of academic research on HomeStart service effectiveness. The relevant sections on HomeStart services identified and reported on.
Erewash HomeStart submission	Customer experience and satisfaction data provided by HomeStart, and a proposal to extend role.
Learning from the closure of	Demonstrates previous closure arrangements made when Bolsover and Clay Cross HomeStart chose to close in July

Source	Reason for using
a HomeStart Scheme	2011
Web publications by HomeStart	HomeStart data and reports outlining performance
Family Support Consultation	Data ascertained from a family support questionnaire. Data ascertained from a staff questionnaire on family support. Feedback from families and individuals using services or likely to need services.
Volume of alternative provision	Evidence the likely capability of absorbing HomeStart families into alternative provision.
Volume of provision for adult volunteering opportunities	Ascertain examples of other types of volunteering opportunities.

Stage 5. Analysing the impact or effects

a. What does the data tell you?

Protected Group	Findings
Age	<p>The age of the parent who is the recipient of the service is not reported in the monitoring data, but the vast majority of recipients will be women of child bearing age as the criteria for accessing the service is a child under 5 years old. There may also be a small number of grandparents undertaking parenting tasks because the biological parents are unavailable.</p> <p>The 198 families supported in 2012/13 parented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 263 children under the age of five • 79 children over the age of five.

	<p>This is 0.6% of the total Derbyshire 0 to 5 population, and 0.2% of the total 0 to 18 Derbyshire.</p> <p>Derbyshire Home Start monitoring data 2012/13 states over 90% of home visited families report that their initial expressed need was either fully met or significantly improved.</p> <p>This data should be read in the context of National Government, Derbyshire County Council and health services substantial investment in families of Early Years children in recognition of validated research evidencing investment in the crucial early years' impacts on individual's lifelong outcomes. Families in receipt of HomeStart services are simultaneously able to access a wide range of universal provision.</p>
Disability	<p>In 12/13 15 parents and 25 children receiving a Home-Start service are recorded as disabled.</p> <p>The Disability and Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person. Absolute figures on the number of children with disabilities are difficult to establish but Contact a Family estimate that in the UK there are 770,000 disabled children under the age of 16. This equates to one child in 20. Research by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) and Together for Disabled Children (TDC) suggests that 6% of children are likely to be disabled and 1.2% severely disabled.</p> <p>Applying this logic to ONS 2010 mid-year population estimates, Derbyshire would have approximately 8,782 disabled children aged 0-16 and 9,965 disabled children aged 0-18. Of these 1,756 0-16 year olds and 1,993 0-18 year olds are likely to be severely disabled.</p> <p>Applying ONS logic to specific age groups, there are an estimated 2,516 disabled children aged 0 to 4 in Derbyshire. Just over 500 are estimated to be severely disabled.</p> <p>Out of the 342 children that HomeStart worked with, 25 (7.3%) had a disability. This is within the range of national estimates. HomeStart is not providing a</p>

	<p>service that is specifically attractive to families caring for a disabled child, or the individual needs of a disabled child.</p> <p>Services for disabled children and support to their carers has significantly improved access to universal, targeted and specialists services under the banner Aiming High. The implementation date for Support and Aspiration addressing ages 0 to 25 is anticipated as September 2014.</p> <p>7 % of Home Start families (15 parents) were disabled. The main source of information about numbers of disabled parents is the <i>Labour force survey</i> commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions. Since 2004, the <i>Labour force survey</i> has used the definition of disabled person contained in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995: that is, anyone with a long-term health problem or disability which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Using this definition, about around 12-15% of Britain's parents are disabled.</p> <p>7 % of Home Start families (15 parents) were disabled. HomeStart is not providing a service particularly utilised by disabled parents, after allowing for HomeStart primarily providing a service to women, many of whom are single parents.</p>
Gender (Sex)	<p>Of the 198 families supported in 2012/13</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 182 women are reported as the main recipient of support. 2. 1 man was reported as the main recipient of support. 3. The implication is the remaining 15 families were supported as couples.
Gender reassignment	<p>No monitoring is currently available but gender re assigned parents have been and continue to be equally as eligible to receive services.</p> <p>Going forward there is a need to collect this data to be assured families including a trans gender parent do not experience less favourable access to services as a result of gender re assignment.</p>

<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p>70 of the 198 families supported in 2012/13 were single parent households. No additional relationship status data is reported.</p> <p>As at the 2011 National Census, 6.1% of households in Derbyshire are lone parent households with a dependent child(ren). This compares with 7.1% in England. HomeStart supported 70 single parent households out of a total of 198 families (35%) which is a higher percentage than both the Derbyshire and England figures.</p> <p>Single parent households are on average less affluent indicating HomeStart does provide services to Derbyshire's more financially challenged families.</p> <p>National research indicates that children without a father figure do less well at school and are more likely to come to the attention of the Justice System.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>In 2012 /13 a total of 10 teenage pregnant young women or actual mothers were supported by HomeStart. Five were in Erewash, three in High Peak, two in South Derbyshire.</p> <p>Family Nurse Partnership operates in Chesterfield, North East, Erewash, Amber Valley, and Swadlincote. The three teenage parents that received services in High Peak would not have been provided for in the FNP scheme.</p> <p>However, a teenage parent would be prioritised to receive a service from a children centre, and receive targeted support from mainstream health visiting given the specific vulnerabilities of teenage parents and their children.</p> <p>It is therefore most unlikely that HomeStart was the only service these teenage parents received. It is most likely HomeStart was an additional service to mainstream targeted provision as referred to in the expansion of universal and targeted services for early year's children and their families.</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>Most residents in Derbyshire belong to the White British Group (96%). Derbyshire's black and minority</p>

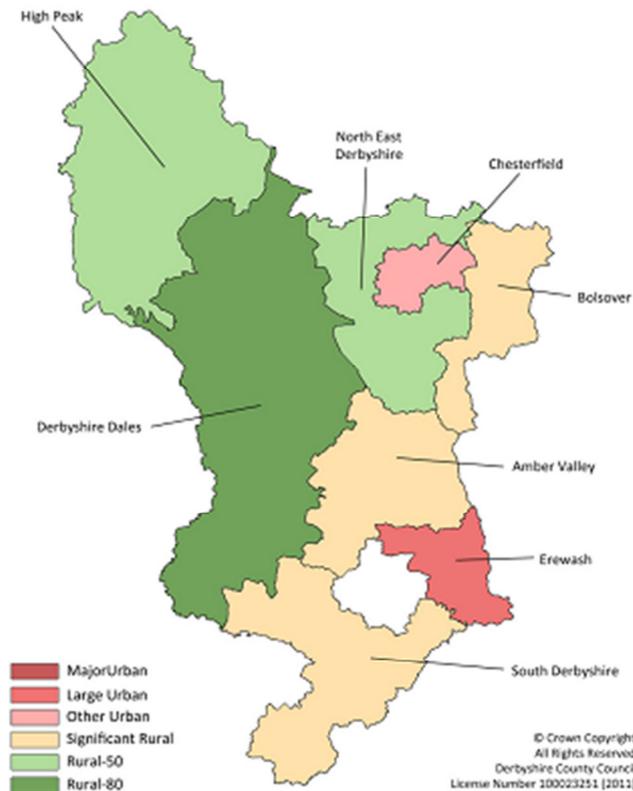
	<p>ethnic (BME) population has increased slightly from 3% in 2001 to 4% in 2011.</p> <p>Due to the small percentages of BME along with the reliance on self-reporting, the profile data provided by HomeStart with regard to ethnicity is as expected.</p>
Religion and belief including non-belief	<p>No monitoring is currently available but families from different religious backgrounds have been and continue to be equally as eligible to receive services.</p> <p>Going forward there is a need to collect this data to deliver culturally sensitive support services to families and children.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>No monitoring is currently available but same sex parents have been and continue to be equally as eligible to receive services.</p> <p>Going forward there is a need to start collecting this data to understand whether culturally and sensitive services are provided to children and families.</p>

Non-statutory

Socio-economic	<p>HomeStart currently operates in South Derbyshire, High Peak, Erewash and Amber Valley. It does not operate in Chesterfield, Bolsover, North East or Derbyshire Dales council districts. Deprivation per council district is ranked below, with 1 indicating the most deprived area and 9 the least. The more deprived an area is the more likely children and families are to require services to enable family members to reach their full potential. HomeStart areas have been starred</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>District Council</th> <th>Average IMD Score</th> <th>Rank</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bolsover</td> <td>27.04609294</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chesterfield</td> <td>24.34791603</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Erewash *</td> <td>19.41824342</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amber Valley *</td> <td>17.96099588</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>North East Derbyshire</td> <td>16.79550446</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High Peak *</td> <td>16.15537788</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South Derbyshire *</td> <td>13.80341804</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Derbyshire Dales</td> <td>12.78675582</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Derbyshire</td> <td>18.66867784</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	District Council	Average IMD Score	Rank	Bolsover	27.04609294	1	Chesterfield	24.34791603	2	Erewash *	19.41824342	3	Amber Valley *	17.96099588	4	North East Derbyshire	16.79550446	5	High Peak *	16.15537788	6	South Derbyshire *	13.80341804	7	Derbyshire Dales	12.78675582	8	Derbyshire	18.66867784	
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	<p>The recorded characteristics of HomeStart service users in financial year 2012 to 2013 indicative of living within limited resources were</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 70 households supported were headed by a single parent. 2. 115 children were living in a workless household. 3. 4 families were living in temporary accommodation. 4. 5 households are recorded as living in overcrowded accommodation. <p>More than one characteristic may be recorded against the same family.</p> <p>Home Start does not operate in Derbyshire's two most deprived council districts.</p> <p>However, it does provide a service weighted towards single parent households. This points towards a weighting in favour of lower income families resident in a district.</p>
Rural	<p>With the Peak District National Park covering more than a third of Derbyshire's total land area, and with only a few densely populated towns, the county may be described as largely rural. According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) six of the county's districts are classified as rural with only Erewash and Chesterfield classified as urban.</p> <p>Urban Erewash HomeStart is contracted to support 68 families per annum.</p> <p>Amber Valley and South Derbyshire are described as significantly rural. The two HomeStarts together are contracted to support 80 families.</p> <p>High Peak is categorised as rural and contracted to support 55 families.</p> <p>Neither Derbyshire Dales not North East Derbyshire is provided for by a -HomeStart.</p> <p>Together a total of 203 families are contracted to be open to a Derbyshire HomeStart in any one year.</p>

Rural / Urban Classification by Local Authority (2009)



Data Source: Rural/Urban Classification of Local Authorities in England, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), April 2009

Rurality impacts on ability to access services, and most particularly if financial challenges limit personal transport options

Conclusion to the monitoring data analysis

The main conclusion following an analysis of Derbyshire HomeStart service user monitoring data is that women per se, and single parents on welfare benefits, could potentially be adversely affected should Cabinet direct the cessation of the external commissioning of a low to medium family support service for families with a child under the age of five. This is because:

1. of protected groups, women are very significantly more likely to use a HomeStart service. 182 women out of 198 families were recorded as the main recipient of a service in the financial year 2012/13

2. HomeStart monitoring data does not inform about numbers of service users either in the ante or post natal period. However, one would anticipate a small percentage of service users to be pregnant with a second or subsequent baby, or at six weeks or less post delivery
3. there is a higher than expected use by single parents and families receiving welfare benefits, both indicators of financial challenges

Use by other legally protected groups of HomeStart reflects a profile in line with what is known about the composition of Derbyshire's population.

- b. What does customer feedback, complaints or discussions with stakeholder groups tell you about the impact of the policy, practice, service or function on the protected characteristic groups?**

Family Support Consultation

Headline Questionnaire Findings in Relation to Services for Families of a Child Aged Under Five

239 adults caring for a child under five years of age responded to the Family Support Questionnaire.

The headline findings for those parenting a child under five are that 93% of respondents had used a children centre in the last 12 months of which 70% were very satisfied with the service they had received, and 20% were fairly satisfied. Health services for this age group received a very satisfied rating of 49%, and a fairly satisfied rating 40%. In conclusion both of the key services providing low to medium family support for families with a child under five are well utilised and regarded by service users. 53% of relevant respondents had not used the voluntary sector in the last 12 months. Those that responded and had used the sector rated it as 63% very satisfied, and a further 14% fairly satisfied. All providers achieved low scores on the fairly dissatisfied and very dissatisfied option.

Families parenting at least one child under five identified their major need areas as:

- child and young person's development 45%.
- emotional wellbeing of parents 32%.
- child young person's emotional health and wellbeing 26%.
- difficulties managing behaviour 23%.
- parental isolation 22%.

- difficulty accessing local facilities 10%.

Responses to the questionnaire about which children centre services had been used in the last 12 months, matched across to need expressed, and coupled with the high level of satisfaction rates amongst service users, strongly indicates the Children Centre Offer provides sufficient of the right interventions at the right time.

Headline children centre services used in the last 12 months by respondents were:

- children's play and development opportunities in a group setting 69%.
- opportunities to make new friends 28%.
- a service delivered in your home 20%.
- nutrition and healthy living 18%.
- parenting classes 14%.
- 2 Year Old Child Care 9%.
- engagement in Adult Learning/volunteering 8.4%.

Three focus group opportunities were provided with a target attendance of 10 parent/carers. The focus groups dates, time and venues were advertised by:

1. notifying on the 15th of August 2013 the VCI sector (including HomeStart).
2. by an article in the Derby Evening Telegraph.
3. through existing Derbyshire standing consultation forums.
4. by personal letter or email to questionnaire respondents stating an interest in being further consulted. At 15/10/13 this number stood at 104.
5. through the offer of support with child care and transport.

In total five adults confirmed attendance of which three attended on the day. The Chesterfield group was well attended owing to members of a morning children centre group remaining at the centre for the afternoon focus group.

The focus groups primarily targeted parents of children aged four or under, any of which could be existing or potential HomeStart customers, as the HomeStart service access criteria is a child aged four or under and an expectation that the adult carer will benefit from a weekly home visit. The purpose was to explore with attendees the particular components of different services used in the last twelve months, and understand the value placed on different service aspects. This would include amongst other components outreach per se alongside home visiting by volunteers which is the core of the HomeStart service.

The two groups held in HomeStart areas were only attended by one parent of two children aged over five years of age.

It was therefore only possible to conduct one of the three possible focus groups. This is an insufficient number from which to draw conclusions, particularly as eight of the ten attendees profiled themselves as very satisfied children centre offer customers mirroring the consultation questionnaire findings.

Location	Rurality	Date	Time	Home Start Area	Attendance
Chesterfield-Birdholme Children Centre	urban	11/10/13	1.30 to 3.30pm	no	10
Alfreton – Polygon Centre	significantly rural	15/10/13	5.30 to 7.30 pm	yes	1
Buxton - St Nicolas Church Hall	rural	14/10/13	10.00am to 12.00 pm	yes	0

The profile of respondents to the Family Support Questionnaire amongst parents/carers of at least one child under the age of five years old.

Protected Group	Findings
Age	Respondents were across all adult age groups. However, the vast majority were aged 18 to 44 reflecting the questionnaire target population of parents of early years children. 1 respondent was over the age of 65 years of age.
Disability	2.9 % of respondents identified themselves as disabled. 4.6 % identified their child as disabled.
Gender (Sex)	Not identified in the questionnaire
Gender reassignment	Not identified in the questionnaire
Marriage and civil partnership	Not identified in the questionnaire
Pregnancy and maternity	127 of the 239 respondents of a child under five had used midwifery or health visiting services in the last 12 months.

Race	99.6 of respondents identified themselves as White British
Religion and belief including non-belief	Not asked
Sexual orientation	Not asked

Non-statutory

Socio-economic	6.7 % of questionnaire respondents of a child under five per cent identified household income as a need and 4.6 % identified housing as a need.
Rural	9.6% identified accessing local services as a need. The reason is not definitively understood, but it is presumed rurality will have influenced the percentage of respondents identifying access as a need.

- c. Are there any other groups of people who may experience an adverse impact because of the proposals to change a policy or service who are not listed above?

In 12/13 Derbyshire Home-Starts received the vast majority of its combined referrals in the geographical areas it operates in from either health personnel (98) or Children Centres (79). Self-referrals accounted for only 20 families.

Home-Start in 12/13 utilised 176 trained volunteers across the four schemes allowing “people to get involved and become active citizens” (ref 12/13 Home Start Monitoring and Performance Report return).

Referrers

The professional questionnaire on services elicited 104 responses, of which DCC staff contributed 83% of returns. Amber Valley made up 43% of responses, Derbyshire Dales 15%, with the remaining districts making return within the 20% decile.

In response to being asked about satisfaction on the range and capacity of services for families with a child aged under five years old, professionals responded:

Satisfaction Level	Range of Services	Capacity of Services
Very satisfied	30 %	18 %
Fairly satisfied	47 %	42 %
Neither satisfied not dissatisfied	16 %	18 %
Fairly dissatisfied	6 %	18 %
Very dissatisfied	1 %	4 %
Total	100%	100%

77 % of professionals were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the range of services available to families with a child under the age of five of

60% of professionals were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the capacity of services available to families with a child under the age of five.

A high percentage of staff are more than satisfied with the range and capacity of services available.

The reduction of a service reaching only 0.6 % of relevant children's families in any one year is unlikely to alter the overall satisfaction of professionals perspectives across the whole resource committed to maternity and early years services across CAYA, clinical and public health, early years education services and the wider voluntary sector.

Volunteers.

0.4 % of responses to the parent/ carer family support questionnaire were from voluntary sector representatives. The free text boxes did contain some very positive comments about the HomeStart service from current and past service users. More HomeStart service was requested by these individuals in the identifying "service gaps" section. It is also logical to assume that some HomeStart volunteers are drawn from the pool of past service users, and that their positive experience of both the service and current volunteer role will inform a view that HomeStart services should be maintained or indeed expanded.

d. Gaps in data

What are your main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your policy and services? Please indicate whether you have identified ways of filling these gaps.

Gaps in data	Action to deal with this
Academic Research	See below
Focus Groups “conversation”	Rely on questionnaire information

Research Sources

1. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/07/08102811
2. [www.ioe.ac.uk/TCRU Issues in Earlier Intervention.pdf](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/TCRU_Issues_in_Earlier_Intervention.pdf)
3. [www.homestart.org.uk/about us/what we do/hermanns research feb 2013](http://www.homestart.org.uk/about_us/what_we_do/hermanns_research_feb_2013)

Please see appendix A for full extracts from research documents

Key Messages from the Research

The research reports do not convincingly show that a low to medium home visiting family support service is an effective change intervention in families.

Some research statements acknowledge Home Start as “Promising Practice”

The key issues arising from the literature reviews and research submitted by South Derbyshire HomeStart can be summarised as follows:

1. Chronic need responds to intense structured programmes. HomeStart is not commissioned to provide these interventions.
2. Need arising from a crisis will revert to the median as the crisis period moves from the present to the past tense. Service users feel HomeStart has effected change, but the most likely change factor is the passage of time.
3. Claims made on effecting change on children’s behaviour cannot be substantiated as the reported change is has not been measured by an independent validated measurement tool.
4. The most recent and positive research is not robust as the control group was flawed, sample sizes were small, and the effects of the service on children were self-reported by mothers.

5. One research report proposes that as the effect of HomeStart is limited, it is an additional cost on top of mainstream service support and interventions.
6. This research does not negate the fact that Home-Start does make the main adult recipient of the service “feel” better as reported.

Stage 6. Ways of mitigating unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact, or to promote improved equality of opportunity or good relations

Volume of Families Requiring Alternative Provision

1. In 12/13 203 families were contracted to receive a service, but 198 families received a service. Working on an average of 200 families per annum, working from 2012/13 contract monitoring data, and presuming a three month notice period on contracts one can presume that
 - 26.5 families would naturally close in the three month period.
 - 28 families would not be referred in and accepted as new work.
2. Based on an average of 1.7 children per family numbers of children recorded as in receipt of a Safeguarding or Common Assessment Framework plan indicates 47 families are in receipt of substantial statutory provision in addition to a HomeStart service. HomeStart is not contracted to be the Lead Professional.
3. 7 of the 10 pregnant teenagers reside in a Family Nurse Partnership area. Teenage Pregnancy is defined as conception under 19 years of age. Teenage parents demonstrating need will either access FNP or be entitled to receive additional mainstream services. It is improbable that HomeStart was the only agency providing a service to the teenage parents.
4. The above assumptions reduce the number of families requiring transfer to an alternative service from 200 to 92 families.

Heading	Amber Valley	Erewash	High Peak	South Derbyshire	Total
Family contracted numbers	45	68	55	35	203
Percentage of contract	22%	33%	27%	17%	100%

Numbers requiring transfer on adjusted family numbers	20	31	25	16	92
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Transfer to children centre implications per district

- Amber Valley has 9 children centres, so each centre would be required to absorb 2.3 families.
- Erewash has 6 children centres, so each centre would be required to absorb 6 families.
- High Peak has 4 children centres, so each centre would be required to absorb 6.5 families.
- South Derbyshire has 5 children centres, so each centre would be required to absorb 3.2 families.

Because of the profile of HomeStart service users some Protected Groups will be impacted on by Derbyshire County Council ceasing to procure an external low to medium family support service such as that currently provided through four Derbyshire HomeStart schemes.

There is evidence that the women will be disproportionately affected. It is also reasonable to presume that a number will be ante or post natal given the target HomeStart client group of carers of early years children. In addition a more than average number of service users were both single parents and in receipt of benefits indicating financial challenges for the family.

However, the impact of ending current arrangements with HomeStart and the impact on disadvantaged groups of people within the protected groups can be mitigated by ensuring an action plan operates to ensure service users are not disadvantaged.

Service users in targeted provision will automatically have their needs re assessed at regular intervals and the social worker or lead professional will with the family agree an appropriate response to the absence of an externally commissioned low to medium family support service.

Service users not already in targeted provision led by a social worker or Common Assessment lead professional will be offered a minimum of an hour per week home visiting. This will be provided through a paid employee if the families existing volunteer does not chose to engage in the children centre

volunteering programme, policies and procedures. The Bolsover HomeStart closure experience indicates that this is likely to be the case.

Derbyshire County Council through its internal children centre volunteering service and VCI sector partners will support any HomeStart volunteers requesting help to engage in new volunteering opportunities.

The plan will be managed and monitored by the Locality Manager in each of the relevant districts.

Of the maximum of 92 lower tier families expected to require a similar replacement services, HomeStart monitoring data indicates that they will on average cease to require a home visiting service at a rate of 26.5 in any three month period. It is anticipated that as lower tier need families close by the end of 12 months all existing 92 HomeStart customers only in receipt of a weekly Home Visit will have closed. The exception will be a few service users that "step up" into Common Assessment Framework plans or Safeguarding.

It is impossible to identify prospective HomeStart service users as the only criteria is having a child under five, and the service user or referring professional anticipating the service user will benefit from a HomeStart service. However, it is expected that future HomeStart services users' needs will be met from the umbrella of children centre core offer services, and "step up" targeted services

It must be noted though that the action plan is reliant on the anticipated

- 92 service users
- 176 volunteers

accepting contact by Children Centre staff to make arrangements.

It is also reliant on the HomeStarts understanding of their ability to share client and volunteer information with the county council.

Historical Learning from the Closure of Bolsover and Clay Cross HomeStart in July 2011

Bolsover and Clay Cross HomeStart was contracted to deliver an annual output of:

- 76 families to receive a service per annum.

- 50 volunteers to be maintained.

When the Bolsover/Clay Cross HomeStart chose to cease operations in July 2011 partner Derbyshire HomeStarts chose not to merge to ensure service continuation. HomeStart UK subsequently advised Derbyshire County Council of the exit arrangements for both service users and volunteers.

Family exit arrangements

HomeStart identified 6 families where child safeguarding was of note but the child was not on a safeguarding plan. HomeStart UK advised:

- 4 were open to a children centre worker.
- 1 was open as a Child in Need to a social worker.
- 1 family has refused a CAF but the local children centre contact was provided to the family. Concern was not sufficient to refer to Call Derbyshire.

The original referrers of families without any safeguarding concerns were informed of the schemes closure and asked to speak with the family about alternative support arrangements.

Families that had self-referred or were closed to the original referrer were advised by HomeStart to contact their local children's center or health visitor if they felt the need for ongoing support.

HomeStart informed both volunteers and families in person and writing of the schemes closure. It was clarified in writing that any contact between families and volunteers would from July 2011 be a private arrangement.

A copy of all correspondence was sent to HomeStart UK for safe storage in line with HomeStart's record keeping retention policy.

Volunteer exit arrangements

HomeStart was unable to share volunteer details or service users not known to Derbyshire County Council services as data sharing was deemed a contravention of the Data Protection Act and HomeStart's Confidentiality Policy. HomeStart offered a forwarding service to volunteers should any chose to volunteer in alternative organisations. No volunteers came forward asking to be directed to a new volunteer role, so alternative placements were not pursued by Derbyshire County Council on Home Starts behalf.

Only a "handful" of HomeStart volunteers have chosen to take up an additional two sessions of training to equip them with the DCC Children Volunteer Passport which would enable them to volunteer across children's

services. This implies a primary loyalty to Home Start and indicates that the volume of volunteers seeking new placements will be limited, as was borne out on the closure of Bolsover and Clay Cross. However, for those that do request a new role both Children Centre's and partners in the VCI sector deploy volunteers on a regular basis and would welcome experienced and trained individuals.

Conclusion

Experiential learning indicates that:

1. the absorption of HomeStart service users into other community based services is very feasible.
2. the majority of HomeStart volunteers will not request a new role to be found on their behalf.
3. the main referrers to HomeStart (health visitors and children centres) will be able to re-absorb families into mainstream provision.
4. as self-referrals are very limited (in 12/13 health personnel made 98 referrals, Children Centres 79, and self-referrals 20) families will overwhelmingly continue the practice of seeking support initially from personnel working in universal services.
5. Electronic data and paper records will be retained by HomeStart UK.

If Cabinet directs a new service to be commissioned it will be advertised on the "open market" and any willing provider will be eligible to bid for the contract award. In such a scenario Cabinet has committed to the continued funding of HomeStart pending the award of a new contract.

Stage 7. Do stakeholders agree with your findings and proposed response?

Home Start Organisations

Derbyshire HomeStarts state they are a necessary service in the county and promote their value as:

1. an organisation with high customer satisfaction ratios.

2. added value through the attraction of additional funding via charitable donations, grants and successful bids.
3. their contribution to the voluntary sector landscape of provision.
4. HomeStarts reciprocal interface with partners to both complement and form a coherent and viable family support service across the statutory and VCI landscape.
5. a cost effective unit of service delivery.
6. an expanding ability to be increasingly flexible across need, age, service range and geography.

Erewash HomeStart has independently advocated it receives on-going funding that progressively reduces in response to DCC saving activity, and that it correspondingly increases the level of funding acquired from alternative sources. It cites child welfare indicators to demonstrate that Erewash in particular requires more, not less of the type of family support it can provide.

Home Start Customer Feedback

Monitoring returns and HomeStart national data indicates a very high level of customer satisfaction with the service. It is most unlikely customers would advocate a HomeStart schemes closure. Two of the three focus groups were held in a HomeStart service delivery area. No service users or volunteers attended to contribute to the discussion, although questionnaire responses evidence HomeStart service users were aware of the family support consultation.

In answer to the question: "Is there anything else you or your family need?" 1 response out of 43 responses asked for an increase in time made available to them in their home by their family support worker.

In answer to the question: "In your experience what should there be more of?" 6 individuals out of a total of 89 responses named increasing HomeStart services.

Universal and Targeted Services

Health personnel (98) and Children Centres (79) made the majority of referrals in 2012/13. Responses to satisfaction about capacity and range of services indicates a good level of satisfaction overall in both areas. The reduction of a non-essential service reaching only 0.6 % of relevant children's families in any one year is unlikely to alter the overall satisfaction of professionals perspectives across the whole resource committed to maternity and early

years services across CAYA, clinical and public health, early years education services and the wider voluntary sector.

Stage 8. Main conclusions

Main Conclusions

1 Protected Groups

Protected Groups will be impacted on by Derbyshire County Council ceasing to commission a low to medium family support service such as that currently provided through four Derbyshire HomeStart schemes.

There is evidence that the women will be disproportionately affected. It is also reasonable to presume that a number will be in an ante or post natal period given the target HomeStart client group of parents of early years children. In addition a more than average number of service users were both single parents and in receipt of benefits indicating financial challenges.

If the services currently provided by HomeStarts in Derbyshire are decommissioned from 31st of May 2014 an action plan will operate to ensure HomeStart service users are not disadvantaged.

However, the impact of ending current arrangements with HomeStart and the impact on disadvantaged groups of people within the protected groups can be mitigated by offering an outreach service for a minimum of one hour from the umbrella of services hosted under the title of the “children centre core offer”

Service users in targeted provision will automatically have their needs re assessed at regular intervals and the social worker or lead professional will with the family agree an appropriate response the absence of an externally commissioned low to medium family support service.

Service users not already in targeted provision led by a social worker or Common Assessment lead professional will be offered a minimum of an hour per week home visiting. This will be provided through a “children centre core offer” paid employee if the families existing volunteer does not chose to engage in the children centre volunteering programme, policies and procedures. The Bolsover HomeStart closure experience indicates that this is likely to be the case.

The Bolsover HomeStart closure experience also indicates that some

volunteers and families that have formed a positive relationship may choose to maintain their home visiting arrangement outside of the auspices of HomeStart on the basis of friendship.

Derbyshire County Council through its internal children centre volunteering service and the VCI sector will support any HomeStart volunteers requesting help to engage in new volunteering opportunities.

The plan will be managed and monitored by the Locality Manager in each of the relevant districts.

Non Statutory Protected Groups

Single parents are a greater percentage of the total HomeStart service user group than is present in the Derbyshire population as a whole.

2 Academic Research

Robust academic research does not find the primary HomeStart intervention of a weekly home visit by a volunteer to be an evidence based change intervention.

Whilst families receiving support from Home Start are positive about their experiences of receiving support from the organisation, academic research has not been able to provide proof that the service impacts to achieve change in family functioning.

3 Learning from the Closure of Bolsover and North East HomeStart

The historical closure of Bolsover and Clay Cross Home Start provides an example of a closure where families were readily re absorbed into existing provision. It is anticipated the same experience will be repeated if the four remaining schemes were to close given:

- i. There is identifiable duplication in service provision to the same family.
- ii. Some of the 92 families identified as potentially requiring a service if HomeStart was no longer available will be open to children centres but not readily identifiable through HomeStart monitoring data as in receipt of a CAF or Safeguarding Plan.
- iii. The volume requiring absorption into existing provision is within the capacity of existing children centres, and targeted midwifery and health visiting services.

4. Equity of Provision

As HomeStart services are not currently available across the whole of Derbyshire, sustaining current arrangements would leave all areas within adequate provision but some without the support of HomeStart.

Family Support Consultation

Responses to the questionnaire about which children centre offer services had been used in the last 12 months, matched across to need expressed, and coupled with the high level of satisfaction rates amongst service users, strongly indicates the children centre offer provides sufficient of the right interventions at the right time. The Children Centre Offer incorporates public health provision such as midwifery and health visiting community based services.

The volume of protected groups known to have responded to the Family Support Questionnaire is within the expected range for the profile of Derbyshire residents and size of response.

Conclusion

Protected Groups will be impacted on by Derbyshire County Council ceasing to commission a low to medium family support service such as that currently provided through four Derbyshire HomeStart schemes.

However, if the services currently provided by HomeStarts in Derbyshire are decommissioned from 31st of May 2014 an action plan will operate to ensure HomeStart service users are not disadvantaged.

The plan will be managed and monitored by the Locality Manager in each of the relevant districts.

Appendix

Academic Research

Three Pieces of Research Evaluating the Effectiveness of Home Start

Research Source 1. A Literature Review Commissioned by The Scottish Government Published in 2008

Summary source 1: what do we know about the effectiveness of Home-Start?

- There is little information about the effectiveness of the intervention in Scotland - an evaluation of the 18 schemes operating in 1998 appears to have relied on survey information and self-reported health improvements.
- The volunteers who delivered the scheme were valued as friends who offered practical support.
- An evaluation of the costs and outcomes of Home-Start support in Northern Ireland and the south of England found that mothers valued the service, exhibited fewer depressive symptoms at follow-up and were experiencing less parenting stress. However, much of the change appeared to be due to the passage of time and greater experience of parenthood. At follow-up, there were no significant differences in formal service costs between the study and comparison groups, although the receipt of Home-Start services pushed costs for the study group higher than costs for the comparison group.
- The researchers who carried out the costs and outcomes study suggested that the benefits of a community-based initiative, which does not aim to provide a structured, intensive programme, might only, be apparent after a number of years.

Reference **The Effectiveness of Interventions to Address Health Inequalities** in the Early Years: A Review of Relevant Literature ref Section 4.6 and 4.6.1 www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/07/08102811

Research Source 2. Research Report Commissioned by the English Government Published 2010.

Extract

“Evaluations of HomeStart, where trained volunteers visit and support families with young children who are experiencing difficulties, have also tended to show that families receiving such support do not improve more than control group families who do not receive additional help. In one such study (McAuley et al., 2004), outcomes for both groups had improved 12 months later. This could indicate that the services provided were not necessary as mothers would get better anyway, or that the services provided were not effective in achieving their aims. However, a third possibility is that the support was effective in helping families to cope better, but that these improvements were in the form of faster ‘recovery’ from their difficulties, and that this effect had washed out and was no longer evident when outcomes were measured twelve months later. These findings contrast with those from evaluations of projects such as the extensive Springboard family support initiative in Ireland, where the evidence suggests that vulnerable families do not tend to experience ‘spontaneous remission’ in their problems, and that ‘the option of “doing nothing” is often tantamount to permitting further deterioration in their wellbeing’ (McKeown et al., 2001). These somewhat disparate findings suggest the need to distinguish identification of additional needs based on ‘crisis’ from that based on chronic problems: families identified at crisis points will tend to get better (on the basis of regression to the mean) while no such process will operate for those with chronic problems, which are unlikely to change.”

Reference - **Identifying and Supporting Children with Additional Needs.** Thomas Coram Research Unit, University of London. Commissioned by DCSF. Reference research report DCSF-RR205, March 2010 ref Page 45 [www.ioe.ac.uk/TCRU Issues in Earlier Intervention.pdf](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/TCRU_Issues_in_Earlier_Intervention.pdf)

Research Source 3. Research undertaken by Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Article published 2013

Extract

“Using five measurements in a period of four and a half year the present study shows that positive changes in maternal and child functioning take place in the time window of the intervention Home-Start i.e. are measured directly after the intervention that lasted an average of 6 months. Additional changes were observed in the three and a half years thereafter. Though this cannot be seen as a direct demonstration of effectiveness of Home-Start, change over time is observed to be more pronounced in the Home-Start group than in a

group of families with an elevated level of stress and need for support and also more frequent than in a community sample with average levels of stress and no expressed need for support. Positive changes in the Home-Start group are observed on a number of measures of well-being of mothers, parenting behaviour and child behaviour. Taking into account that the design of the study only allows for tentative conclusions, these findings suggest long lasting changes of home visiting by volunteers, offering support on domains that families themselves bring forward.Of special interest is that improvements in parental wellbeing, parenting and child behaviour seem to progress after the intervention, again suggesting that families regained self-regulative capacities and that the intervention enabled them to deal with new challenges in new developmental stages. This supports a number of previous finding in the early intervention research, showing that some early interventions can have long lasting effects ([Eckenrode et al., 2000](#); [McIntosh, Barlow, Davis, & Stewart-Brown, 2009](#)). The findings of this study seem to contradict current views that interventions in the early years of life should by necessity be focused, highly structured and delivered by professionals ([Olds et al., 2007](#))

Later extract

This study has an additional number of weaknesses. The allocation of families to research conditions was not at random. There were several reasons for this choice. Service providers strongly opposed to randomization, because assignment to a control group would deprive families in need from Home-Start support. It was also expected that these vulnerable, low income families with a relatively low education would not agree with or would not be able to participate in complex, formal procedures of random allocation. It was expected that the degree of nonparticipation would be relatively high in the most problematic families. One of the weaknesses of the study that follows from this choice is that the groups selected as comparison group is not completely comparable to the Home-Start group, given that there are differences in life-events and family income. Consequently, we cannot imply that being in the program has added a significant gain that is not present in the other two groups, as groups differ on many other dimensions. An additional weakness of the study is the loss of families in the years after the intervention, leading to small sample sizes. The dropout ratio was rather small in the first four waves of data collection. However, a number of addresses of families could not be traced in the last wave of the study. Though, this is not uncommon in studies like this, it forms a threat to the validity of the findings, because selective attrition cannot be ruled out. The differences in demographic characteristics between dropouts and included families were small, but some form of self-selection, related to family functioning is not unlikely. Another limitation is that the child outcomes are also mother reported. The study would have been more convincing if more informants on family functioning and child behaviour were included.

Nevertheless, the findings suggest positive long term changes in several domains of family functioning of families in need after a community based inexpensive intervention delivered by volunteers. This adds to previous findings suggesting that the Home-Start intervention is a promising family support program that deserves more study.”

Reference - **Long-term changes in parenting and child behaviour after the Home-Start family support program.** Jo M.A. Hermanns [a](#), [□](#), Jessica J. Asscher [a](#), Bonne J.H. Zijlstra [a](#), Peter J. Hoffenaar [a](#), Maja Dekovič [ba](#) University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands,[b](#) Utrecht University, The Netherlands. [a r t i c l e i n f o a b s t r a c t](#), Article history: J.M.A. Hermanns et al. / Children and Youth Services Review 35 (2013) 678–684 Available online 8 February 2013 Ref page 682.

www.home-start.org.uk/about_us/what_we_do/hermanns_research_feb_2013