

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**SCHOOLS FORUM****9th JUNE 2015****Radical Rethink of Early Help Offer Project – Scoping report****Introduction**

1. Since the summer of 2014, Derbyshire has been focused on the question of how it might respond effectively to the impending challenge around the sustainability of early-help services. These services – which span pre-school activities (particularly in the network of Children's Centres and associated outreach work), a range of school-based casework functions (including education welfare officers and family support/resource workers) and youth services, and which are currently organised within the Council's Multi Agency Team (MAT) structure – are funded from the non-DSG part of the CAYA budget.
2. Expenditure on the services in 14/15 was just under £21.9m, which breaks down as follows (£000s):

Children's Centres	8031.3
Family Support	8337.8
Youth Service	2161.3
Domicillary Care	453.8
Family Support Centres	2354.4
FIP	518.2
TOTAL	21856.8

3. The challenge (often referred to as 'the wicked issue') facing these services can be understood as one of economic externality: the County Council funds activities that create potential benefits not just for the authority and for individual young people and their families, but also for the schools attended by those young people. In times of plenty, this difference between 'who funds' and 'who benefits' is not necessarily problematic. But in the current times of austerity, with early-help services required to achieve a net reduction of up to £10m annually at the end of the current three-year projection for CAYA, there is a risk of a major scaling back of provision; and this scaling back, in turn, will have an impact not just on the County's objectives for young people in need but also on schools' performance - with those young people, and with pupils more generally. The impact on individual schools from such a scaling back is likely to be hard to predict and unevenly distributed.
4. The other principal impact of a significant reduction in early-help services will be on the Council's child-protection function, which generates a significant proportion of cases for the MATs and which relies on MAT capacity to support

children for whom need is de-escalating. The ideal state of affairs – robust and rigorous integration of functions across the continuum of need, with all parties (schools, MATs, and child-protection staff) working in concert to ensure an efficient and effective response to every child – will be challenged by the implementation of big reductions in budgets.

5. It is unlikely that these challenges can be addressed simply by devolving responsibilities and (reduced) budgets to individual schools. The pursuit by each school of its direct interests will risk an outcome in which there is insufficient provision for children of pre- and post-school age across any given locality – and that shortfall in provision is likely, in turn, to impact on each school's ability to educate all of its pupils effectively. Rather, the answer to the challenge is likely to involve some new model of collaboration between the County and schools; but the way in which this collaboration might occur is not self-evident.
6. At the start of 2015, Derbyshire initiated a consultancy project to consider ways in which the authority and schools might respond to the challenge – and, in doing so, to assess the feasibility of a radical rethink of Derbyshire's early help services. This report outlines the analysis and conclusions of the first phase of the project, summarising the outputs from a series of workshops and reference group meetings in Derbyshire and from desk research and financial modelling that the consultancy team has undertaken.

Responding to the challenge of the 'wicked issue'

7. The project has considered the merits of two types of approach to the challenge:
 - A 'top-down' approach, under which the Council would develop a single set of authority-wide proposals to bridge the financial gap; and
 - A 'bottom-up' approach, under which the Council would work with schools across different localities to develop and test a range of models, looking to scale up the successful results.
8. Within each approach, there is scope to concentrate efforts more on cost reduction (through the identification of efficiencies and the elimination of lower-priority activities) and more on value generation (through the identification of new sources of income, and through new ways of combining Council and school-based resources to generate outcomes that both parties perceive to be of value).
9. The magnitude of the challenge suggests that it would be prudent for the authority to pursue both top-down and bottom-up approaches – and, within each, to focus on both cost reduction and value generation. In adopting this comprehensive strategy, the Council will need to ensure that the top-down proposals do not crowd out the space for bottom-up experiments.

Top-down efforts

10. The Council has a number of cost-reduction and income-generation initiatives that can contribute towards the bridging of the financial gap:

- i) The integration of management and some operational structures for early help and safeguarding services is expected to reduce early-help expenditure by £0.94m per annum
- ii) The authority has undertaken a review of family support centres that has identified approximately £0.5m of improvement opportunities
- iii) A proportion of the Public Health Resource Fund will be allocated to early-help services. Both the amount of grant received by the Council and the share of this grant allocated by the Council to early-years services are not known for 15/16 or beyond – the current estimate is that income of £0.95m might be available to the early-help budget.
- iv) The authority is due to receive £1.1m in reward grant from the Troubled Families Initiative's payment by results scheme in 2016/17 – subject to the continuation of the scheme and continued performance by the Council, it is reasonable to project a similar amount into future years.
- v) Schools Forum has approved £1.0m from the core DSG budget and £2.0m from one-off funds from previous years' DSG balances for 15/16 as a collective contribution to the early-help portfolio. The extent to which the Forum and/or Secretary of State for Education are prepared to continue to provide support from non-delegated DSG resources beyond 15/16 has still to be established. The potential for longer-term DSG funding will be the subject of further discussions with the Schools Forum later in 2015 and will be informed by the emerging prototype schemes described later in this report.
- vi) The authority has undertaken a review of Children's Centre provision across the County – the outcome of this review may lead to a reduction in expenditure
- vii) Further health-related resources may become available with the transfer of the health visitor function – in the event that there is scope for integrating aspects of health-visitor services with the current outreach work undertaken by children's centres, it may be feasible to identify a net contribution from transferred funds that can be attributed to the early-help budget.

11. Our approach in the consultancy project has been to avoid trying to second-guess the work of local authority officers around these 'top-down' cost-reduction and income-generation efforts, but rather to concentrate on identifying ways in which the authority might be able to work with schools to develop locality-based prototypes that will yield some 'bottom-up' proposals. Nevertheless, there is value in forming an assessment of whether the combined effect of the initiatives listed in para 10 makes a sufficient contribution to the early-help funding shortfall, or whether they leave too much for bottom-up prototypes to generate. Even with an optimistic set of financial

assumptions, the initiatives listed above are unlikely to cover more than a little over half of the c£10m funding gap.

12. In the light of this assessment, the Council might want to consider the case for further 'top-down' reductions in net expenditure. Two components of the early-help budget that may offer scope for further reductions are:

- children's centre expenditure – either through a more radical review of the current network, or by considering some form of asset transfer (to allow services to be managed by voluntary or community organisations)
- the domiciliary care and family support centre provision – these services have not been highlighted in discussions with schools, although scope for further change (above and beyond that identified through the recent Council review) may not be significant.

Bottom-up efforts

13. While top-down initiatives are helpful for closing the gap between available Council funding for early-help services and the current costs of these services, they are less helpful for exploring whether there are new models through which the Council and schools can work together on the design, delivery, governance and financing of early-help services so that value for children is preserved and even enhanced. Such new models of joint work can only be built on a bottom-up basis; and the starting point for their construction is a) the perspective of schools on the current set of early- help services, and b) schools' readiness, willingness and ability to become involved with initiatives to change those services.

14. The consultancy team has run workshops in four localities across the county: Chesterfield, Heanor, Hope Valley and Kirk Hallam. Each workshop has identified:

- views about the extent and quality of Derbyshire's early-help offer;
- some school-based funding and delivery of their own early-help services – which are not necessarily aligned with those of the authority;
- a willingness to be involved in some sort of prototype that would seek to change aspects of the current service;
- a desire to collaborate with other schools (at the level of the local school cluster) in the design and delivery of these prototypes.

15. In offering high-level summaries of the discussions at each workshop, we would highlight:

- In Whittington Green: a positive opinion from schools about the local management of the MAT (though with some concerns about the extent and quality of some of the services it provides) and the Children's Centre; a desire to secure a consistent pattern of school-based resourcing across the cluster and to co-ordinate the efforts of these resources with those of caseworkers in the MAT; a belief that such approaches might be able to deliver more effective early intervention; and an interest in becoming involved with the full suite of services – around children's centres, family support and youth work – perceived to be of relevance to schools.
- In Hope Valley: strong concerns about the visibility and accessibility of MAT services; a sense that youth services were not really of relevance for their sparsely populated area, and some questions about the relevance of the children's centre offer; and a belief that they could achieve a better service for themselves, independently of the MAT, if the cluster was given direct control over the budget for early-help services.
- In Heanor: a clear belief that the group of schools working together with far greater control over MAT resources can tackle problems much more effectively, not least by addressing a mismatch between their concept of their area and the way that MATs and localities are organized.
- In Kirk Hallam: broad satisfaction with the family support casework function delivered by the MAT; a sense that closer working arrangements between MAT and school-based resources - along with more extensive and timely sharing of information – could generate more efficient and effective outcomes; a willingness to explore the improvements that might result from greater cluster involvement in the management of children's centres (and associated outreach activities), and also of youth services; and some ideas for the governance structures that would oversee this new configuration of services.

16. Each of the localities highlighted above has the potential to run a **prototype** - in which the Authority and participating schools could experiment with different approaches to the design, organisation, management and financing of early-help services. With four prototypes, it should be possible to have two spanning the full range of early-help services and the other two focusing only on a sub-set of the services; and, as a different way of sub-dividing the prototypes, it may be possible to contrast 'co-produced' approaches (in which MAT staff and school-based staff would work closely together) with 'devolved' approaches (in which schools would be given a budget allocation and a set of service standards and offered the chance to buy back the service from the MAT or employ staff directly within the cluster). Of the four clusters: Whittington Green and Kirk Hallam both feel suited to a co-produced approach across the full range of services; Heanor would also have a co-produced character, but be focused on a limited sub-set of the

services; and Hope Valley would be a suitable place to explore a devolved model, but only across a limited range of the services.

17. Within these overall categories, prototypes would be expected to construct hypotheses about how they might improve the efficiency and/or effectiveness of early help services and identify features that allow the testing of these hypotheses. For the 'coproduced' prototypes, these hypotheses would involve joint and co-ordinated effort between the MAT and the school-based staff; for the devolved prototypes, the school clusters would develop the hypotheses. An example of this sort of experimental design – developed for the Whittington Green cluster following its workshop in March is attached as an appendix to this report.
18. Each prototype would need:
 - a. A designated budget within which to work – this could be established by bringing together school-level funds with the share of the relevant MAT locality budget that pertained to the cluster participating in the prototype (the MAT manager, liaising with CAYA finance staff, would need to estimate this split). The MAT contribution to each prototype would need to scale down over time, reflecting CAYA decisions on the overall MAT budget for 15/16 and 16/17 – and, depending on the length of the prototypes, potentially in 17/18.
 - b. An explicit focus (i.e. all services or a sub-set) and approach (i.e. co-produced or devolved) – and within this, a clear set of hypotheses to be tested.
 - c. An agreed duration – for the prototypes to have time to make an impact, they need to run for at least eighteen months (and ideally longer).
 - d. An identified set of constraints (which, ideally, would be kept to a minimum, to provide maximum scope for experimentation) – these might include the specification of standards and processes with which the prototypes would need to comply; the highlighting of any non-negotiable aspects of the services run under the prototype; and the requirement that no irreversible changes should be made during the period of the prototype.
 - e. A sufficiently powerful set of incentives – to encourage schools to make investments and/or generate opportunities for cost reduction, the authority might want to offer schools a benefit-share arrangement (in which, say, schools were allowed to retain half the savings they identified over the life of the prototype).
 - f. The opportunity to explore the availability of resources from outside the Council and the participating schools – it is apparent from early discussions within the Council that there may be scope to secure funding from other statutory services (notably health), national sources (for example, the DfE children's services innovation programme, and perhaps also the portfolio of work overseen by the Early Intervention Foundation) and voluntary efforts from the clusters' local communities.

- g. A commitment to generating insight – all participants need to be willing to identify lessons for the authority and its community of schools about what can be done to maintain or enhance value for young people within the financially constrained circumstances in which Derbyshire finds itself.
19. Each prototype would need to be monitored and evaluated against a scorecard of measures. We envisage that this scorecard should encompass five different categories:
- Stakeholder satisfaction ratings
 - Outcomes for children
 - Outcomes for parents / guardians
 - Cost / VfM
 - Innovation metrics (partnership etc)

Key stakeholders would include head-teachers and parents.

Key outcomes for children should cover both safety and child wellbeing, in line with the framework being developed for the integration of safeguarding and early help services for Derbyshire. We recommend that the metrics include such categories as access to other services (where appropriate), and confidence and self-esteem.

Key outcomes for parents would also benefit from containing a wellbeing metric (on social and emotional support), and access to other services, compared to the current MAT KPIs, which are shown in box 1 below.

Was the role of the MAT explained to you before a request for support was made?
Did you get the support when you needed it the most?
When you asked for support do you think you received it quickly?
Do you feel you were treated with courtesy and respect?
Do you feel you were listened to?
Do you feel it was made clear to you about the support you would be provided?
How many people did you have to explain your situation to before you got the support you needed?
Has the support/services provided by the MAT had a positive impact on: (a) Your life; (b) Your children; (c) Your confidence as parents (d) Safety of your child
How would you rate the overall experience of working with the MAT?
Do you think the MAT could have done anything more to help you?

Cost / VfM metrics are difficult to design, and so an iterative process will be required, however a first draft would entail movement towards the following overview of needs and expenditure on early help.

Table: Template for Cost / VfM metric

	Numbers of children	Unit cost
Child protection register		
Looked-after child		
Children in need		
- of which being supported		
- of which not being supported		
Vulnerable children		
- of which being supported		
- of which not being supported		
All children		

Innovation metrics are perhaps equally difficult to design; a first cut of potential questions for staff within the MAT and its key stakeholders would be:

- Whether the vision of the reform is clear
- Whether the vision of the reform is agreed-upon
- Whether lines of accountability are clear
- Whether partnership with stakeholders is working well
- Whether ideas for service delivery improvements from all stakeholders are taken seriously

Making it happen

20. If the authority is interested in developing a set of cluster-based prototypes, it will need to set in train a series of key events and decisions:

- Each candidate cluster will need to hold a prototype design workshop at which participants will need to agree their prototype's scope and hypotheses, approaches to the organisation and management of the services within the prototype, approach to prototype governance, methods by which the prototype will be held to account (building on the measurement framework outlined in para 18 above – and ensuring there is a clear memorandum of understanding between the Council and the prototypes around the delegation to prototypes of responsibilities as well as resources), and the creation of a risks and issues register.
- The Council will need to identify:
 - The relevant share of the MAT budget pertaining to the prototype cluster,
 - Any constraints and non-negotiables (see para 17 above)
 - The ways in which the prototypes will engage with existing authority processes and functions (e.g. around referrals, case management, child-protection services, etc.).
- The Council, in liaison with schools forum, will need to identify a body to approve prototype proposals and then overseeing their implementation – this may be a newly constituted steering group for the initiative (comprising

reps from the Council and Schools Forum – and, once proposals, have been agreed, representatives from participating clusters)

21. If the Authority wishes to institute prototypes from the start of the autumn terms, it will need to complete these steps between June and the beginning of August (to allow a month between approval and go-live).
22. While the development of prototypes can be facilitated and aided by consultants, the oversight and management of the prototypes will need to be undertaken from within the mainstream of CAYA's management structure. In addition to the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the project (Kathryn Boulton), it is recommended that CAYA designates an experienced officer as programme manager for the initiative – and charges that person with responsibility for taking forward the recommendations in this report.
23. Decisions required:
 - a) note the 'top-down' cost-reduction and income-generation proposals listed in para 10, and give a steer as to whether the Council might wish to pursue further top-down responses to the financial challenges facing its portfolio of early-help services
 - b) consider whether to invite a number of clusters to develop proposals for prototypes around new approaches to the organisation and delivery of early-help services – and, if so, agree which clusters should be invited to undertake this work (in particular, agree or amend the proposed list of four clusters highlighted in paras 14 and 15)
 - c) comment on the suggested approach to prototype monitoring and evaluation (as outlined in para 19)
 - d) agree the process and timetable for prototype design laid out on para 20 and 21
 - e) give steers on the constitution of a body that can provide overall governance for the prototype initiatives – and, in particular, offer initial reactions on how the Council and Schools Forum might be presented on the body (para 20)
 - f) confirm the SRO for the programme of prototypes (para 22)
 - g) within the newly integrated CAYA management structure for the early-help services, identify an officer to serve as programme manager for the proposed set of prototypes (para 22).

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Date of report: 22/5/15.

Derbyshire 'wicked issue'/RREHO project

Early thoughts on the possible shape of a
prototype in Whittington Green – DRAFT, FOR
DISCUSSION

Notes prepared following cluster workshop on 29/4/15

Possible shape of a prototype (1)

FEATURE	WHAT THE FEATURE ALLOWS US TO TEST	ISSUES TO RESOLVE
1. Helen's MAT team to identify the proportion of its budget and resources that relates to the WG cluster – and to focus these resources on cases across WG cluster school rolls rather than across a defined geographical area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to DCC to disaggregate MAT area budgets along cluster lines • Ability of MAT management to target disaggregated resource on the school roll population across WG cluster schools (rather than the current locality focus) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to do this for the prototype – with particular focus on the management overhead • How to construct a formula for scaling across the county
2. WG cluster schools to receive info from DCC about the full range of MAT services (along the lines of a 'catalogue') – and have further discussions with DCC about the relative priority of these services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction of schools to the value offered by the full range of MAT services (not all of which will be known to schools) • Ability of DCC to identify services/activities with a lower priority from the perspective of schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to present the information • How to seek reactions from schools • What action (if any) to take in response to school reactions as part of the prototype
3. MAT to identify two dedicated case workers to focus on WG cluster pupils – and to explore the feasibility of part of this resource to have priority focus on year 6-7 transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability of DCC to refocus MAT staff in accordance with school priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to free up a MAT case worker from existing duties to focus on year 6-7 transitions
4. Each school to identify a resource for family support work ('every school to have an Emma') – this resource could be a f/t, p/t or shared member of staff, or funds to contribute to such a resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability of schools to commit resources for school-based early-identification and early - intervention activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How each school will find the funds for this
5. WG cluster to identify a family resource worker – perhaps Hayley? - to act as lynchpin between school FRWs and MAT case works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability of schools to jointly fund a cluster-wide resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time commitment for the worker • Approach to funding • Approach to workload management

Possible shape of a prototype (2)

FEATURE	WHAT THE FEATURE ALLOWS US TO TEST	ISSUES TO RESOLVE
6. Improved liaison (incl co-location of MAT caseworkers and cluster staff), communication and information sharing (including input from children's centre staff and NHS field staff such as health visitors and school nurses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether closer working arrangements (incl co-location) improve communication Whether better communication allows more extensive and earlier identification of children needing early help – and whether this identification enables more effective/efficient working (see feature 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What protocols should/can be established to improve liaison and communication How to integrate health visitor resources into the prototype (also an issue for feature 8)
7. Earlier identification of children needing help – and proportionate action at school and cluster level before the involvement of MAT caseworkers - to reduce the number and resource-intensiveness of more significant cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the number and intensiveness of more significant cases recues Whether this reduction allows a freeing up of MAT/wider children's services resource(i.e. whether there is a financial case for early intervention) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to design a research trial that supports the testing of these hypotheses
8. Involvement of children's centre resources in prototype – to focus on higher contact rates with hard to reach population, on working to new standards of school readiness, and on greater presence of CC staff in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How CC resources can contribute to features 6 and 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How schools can shape new readiness standards How to adjust organisation and deployment of CC resources
9. Greater community involvement in the early-help agenda – ideally in the form of volunteer resources than can help with the delivery of programmes and certain types of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether DCC/cluster efforts leads to more community involvement with the early help agenda Whether this additional community involvement frees up DCC/school resources currently engaged in the delivery of early-help services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can DCC make additional investment resources available to fund community development work?
10. Management and governance arrangements fit for the purpose of steering and overseeing the above without the formal creation of a shadow 'joint venture' and a single board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether a model of alignment and co-ordination, rather than more formal co-management, will be sufficient to deliver benefits Whether the sue of cluster meetings, with MAT management in attendance, will be sufficient to provide oversight and accountability – and to resolve operational problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What protocols will be needed to help staff work together and take direction from the cluster governance structure