

## Family Hubs Feasibility Study

To: Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Date: 13 July 2022

From: Nicola Curley, Director of Children's Services/Lisa Riddle  
Head of Service Early Help South

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: KD2022/079

Outcome: Committee are asked to consider recommendations from the DfE funded feasibility study into Family Hubs transformation across the County.

The potential outcome of this recommendation is countywide transformation towards a Family Hubs delivery model, providing access to services in line with guidance from the Anna Freud national centre.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to approve recommendation two from the feasibility study executive summary report and proceed towards implementation over the next two years.

Voting: Co-opted members of the Committee are eligible to vote on this item.

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# 1. Background

- 1.1 In 2021, Cambridgeshire successfully secured a DfE grant to undertake a feasibility study into transforming local services into a Family Hubs model of delivery.

A Family Hub is a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services. Family Hubs deliver these services from conception, through a child's early years, right up until a young person reaches the age of 19 or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

A concept first laid out by the Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP in [The best start for life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days - GOV.UK](#), the Family Hubs agenda is gathering pace nationally; the Anna Freud National Centre for Family Hubs was established in November 2021 to support development and the Government committed funding for 75 top tier local authorities in the Autumn spending review.

Cambridgeshire submitted a bid for £1 million to the National Transformation Fund and it is confirmed that they are on the long list of authorities who may receive funding. We anticipate the final decision in August 2022. If successful, the funding would allow the Service to proceed with a full model of transformation, including significant digital investment and related project support as laid out in the study. However, Cambridgeshire is not one of the 75 authority areas eligible for the funding from the spending review and we therefore seek agreement to proceed with funding some transformation (option two) as outlined in the study, should the bid not be successful.

- 1.2 The intended outcome of this report is to gain approval to commence a transition to a Family Hubs model of delivery, starting September 2022 through until the end of March 2024 based upon recommendation two in the Feasibility Study Report.

The impact of this will include greater access, connection and relationships for services and the public:

**ACCESS:** There is a clear and simple way for families with children of all ages to access help and support through a Family Hub building or joined up digital offer and a Family Hub approach.

**CONNECTION:** Services work together for families, with a universal 'front door', shared outcomes and effective governance. Professionals work together through co-location, data-sharing, and a common approach to their work. Families only tell their story once, the Service is more efficient, and families receive more effective support. Statutory services and voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners work together to get families the help they need.

**RELATIONSHIPS:** The Family Hub prioritises strengthening relationships and builds on family strengths. Relationships are at the heart of everything that is delivered in Family Hubs.

The financial impact of implementing recommendation two (if the funding bid to implement recommendation one is unsuccessful) totals £411k over two full years. However, wider system developments since the feasibility study took place mean the Service would need to invest a reduced amount of £289k over an 18-month period from this autumn to implement recommendation two (removing costs for workforce development now covered by the wider partnership and reducing staff time from two years to 18 months). Increased funding from the national Supporting Families programme is available to cover these costs, alongside existing service budget generated through external income. The transformation costs are time limited and do not require ongoing financial commitment outside of existing budgets.

## 2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The feasibility study recommendations outline three options relating to Family Hubs transformation – a fully funded model (option one), part funded (option two - recommended if the national bid is unsuccessful) or no change (option three).

We recommend adopting option two if the bid for national funding is unsuccessful. Our rationale for advising option two, rather than option one, is that the fully funded model incorporates a significant investment in digital platforms and project support that is not critical to implementation. Option one would go above and beyond the draft expectations set out by DfE for the local authorities eligible for spending review funding. The third option (no change) would have a detrimental impact upon support for families across the county as neighbouring authorities and the national agenda gathers pace in this area of work; for this reason option three is not recommended to Committee. By approving option two, the Council can begin the necessary transformation to enhance services/access to services in line with the national recommendations. There was significant support for transformation from partners and families who were consulted as part of the study and the recommendation is fully endorsed by the service and key strategic partners. The proposals also build upon existing work undertaken through Best Start in Life and Strong Families, Strong Communities strategies and related workstreams.

Funding is available from within the service through an uplift in income from the national Supporting Families programme and one-off funding generated from management of grant funded projects.

## 3. Alignment with corporate priorities

- 3.1 Environment and Sustainability  
There are no significant implications for this priority.

### 3.2 Health and Care

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Proposals in the Family Hubs study and recommendations support work with partners to establish the Integrated Care System to provide more seamless services to users, ensuring local democratic accountability, focusing on prevention and early help, to enable children and young people to have the best start in life and people to live healthy lives independently for longer

### 3.3 Places and Communities

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### 3.4 Children and Young People

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Recommendations from the feasibility study build upon work already started to provide the Best Start in Life for children, better align health and early help services in local communities and further strengthen partnership delivery – all underpinned by the Best Start in Life and Strong Families, Strong Communities strategies for the county.

### 3.5 Transport

There are no significant implications for this priority.

## 4. Significant Implications

### 4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Budget – as this is a one-off transformation cost, funding can be achieved in service from increased Supporting Families income over the next two financial years and income from external grant funding for management costs.
- Best practice – failing to begin transformation towards a Family Hubs model will be detrimental to Cambridgeshire as nationally pace gathers in support of the work.
- Our performance as an authority or partnership may be impacted by not beginning transformation work; this is particularly relevant as some neighbouring authorities have been confirmed as eligible for national funding (Peterborough and Norfolk) which could lead to mixed models of delivery for some families and partners.

### 4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

### 4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

A full Community (Equality) Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the transformation project, should recommendations be approved by committee.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

The feasibility study work included significant engagement with partners and families, leading to the recommendations within the report.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

Transformation to a Family Hubs model of delivery builds on our commitment to host services in local communities, shaped by what families tell us and supported by parent/young people panels as recommended by the national Family Hubs centre.

4.7 Public Health Implications

Public health colleagues have contributed to the feasibility study as part of the Best Start in Life partnership and fully support the development of Family Hubs and the recommendations in this paper.

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas:

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Neutral Status:

Explanation: No changes proposed to current use of buildings.

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Positive Status:

Explanation: Access to services would continue to be strengthened within local communities, reducing the need to travel longer distances.

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Neutral Status:

Explanation: The recommendations would not impact upon this priority area.

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Neutral Status:

Explanation: The recommendations would not impact upon this priority area.

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Neutral Status:

Explanation: The recommendations would not impact upon this priority area.

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Neutral Status:

Explanation: The recommendations would not impact upon this priority area.

#### 4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Positive Status:

Explanation: Family Hubs may provide a place for vulnerable people to access services that support with the impact of climate change.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement? n/a

Name of Officer:

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? n/a

Name of Legal Officer:

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Nicola Curley

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes

Name of Officer: Karen Newton

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? n/a

Name of Officer:

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Helen Freeman

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer? n/a

Name of Officer:

## 5. Source documents guidance

### 5.1 Source documents

The DfE funded Cambridgeshire Family Hubs feasibility study informed recommendations made in this report. The executive summary can be found at Appendix 1, and the full study can be accessed as detailed in section 5.2.

## 5.2 Location

Head of Service Early Help South  
Fawcett House  
Cambridge