

EARLY HELP STRATEGY, REVIEW AND RECOMMISSIONING

To: Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Date: 3 June 2014

From: Executive Director: Children, Families and Adult Services
Service Director: Enhanced and Preventative Services

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: N/a **Key decision:** No

Purpose: For the Committee to consider and steer the review of the County Council's early help services and the development of an Early Help Strategy for Cambridgeshire.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee;

- a) Consider and comment on the development of a partnership early help strategy, including the proposed initial principles that will inform the strategy and the summary of feedback from recent multi-agency workshops
- b) Consider and comment on early proposals for the future focus, structure and model of County Council Enhanced & Preventative Services
- c) Agree how the Committee would wish to be involved in the early help review and strategy.

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contact:</i>	
Name:	Sarah Ferguson	Name:	Cllr Joan Whitehead
Post:	Service Director: Enhanced and Preventative Services	Chairwoman:	Children and Young People Committee
Email:	Sarah.Ferguson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Joan.Whitehead@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 729099	Tel:	01223 699114

1. BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 'Early Help' refers to preventative and early intervention support provided to families which is aimed at stopping problems deepening, avoiding crises and ultimately reducing the demand for specialist and statutory intervention services. Early Help is central to the strategy of demand management within the Children, Families and Adult Services Directorate. The intention is to help families when problems are first emerging, to help them to thrive within their communities and reduce the demand for longer term and intensive support.
- 1.2 The financial position of the County Council and its partners, coupled with rising need and a growing population make it necessary to review our early help support arrangements and approach and seek different solutions with partners and communities. The particular risk is that many early help services are non-statutory and therefore more vulnerable at a time of considerable financial pressure. However, reducing early help services carries the risk of needs escalating, creating greater problems for families and subsequently increasing demand for higher cost, statutory services.
- 1.3 County Council early help services are led primarily (but not exclusively) within the Enhanced and Preventative Services Directorate and include the following;
 - Locality Teams - 14 multi-disciplinary teams based around clusters of schools with each team linking to one or more secondary schools and their cluster primaries. Locality Teams operate as the delivery arm for preventative work (parenting, behaviour, attendance and youth support) with children, young people (aged 0-19) and their families and act as a local hub for identifying need and supporting children and young people.
 - Children's Centres - which provide a single point of information and access to services for children aged 0-5 and their families, including health services, family support, family activities and information, early years education and childcare, employment and training advice
 - Special Educational Needs Specialist Services (SSS) comprised of: inclusion and learning support for children with Special Educational Needs including early years provision; Community Educational Psychology Service and services for children with sensory impairments. Services provide advice and training to schools and settings and direct interventions with children and young people to support children with SEND to access and progress in learning and overall development.
 - Youth Support Services - which includes alternative education, youth offending, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol services and domestic abuse, Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) and youth work.
 - The Family Intervention Partnership (FIP) - an intensive support programme for families with complex needs linked closely to the troubled families agenda. FIP provides a dedicated worker who provides practical help and coordinates support around the family for around 12-18 months.
- 1.4 In addition to these services, the wider early help system also includes teams across other Children, Families and Adults (CFA) Services directorates, health

services, voluntary and community groups, emergency services, schools and education settings, other local authorities and a host of other partners.

1.5 In the current financial and demand context we need to think differently about how early help can be delivered, in particular;

- Ensuring we maximise the effectiveness of our local and strategic partnerships, aligning our work across organisations to achieve the greatest impact
- Recognising that direct provision of services will reduce and that we need therefore to focus on building the capacity within families and local communities, helping people help themselves and others.

1.6 This paper therefore provides an overview of two strongly linked areas of work;

1. The development of a new approach to early help, alongside partners and communities, leading to the agreement of partnership Early Help Strategy for Cambridgeshire
2. An internal review of early help within the County Council's Enhanced & Preventative Services aimed at delivering the best possible support whilst achieving the savings requirement set within the County Council's business plan.

2. DEVELOPING A NEW APPROACH TO EARLY HELP – ALONGSIDE FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERS

2.1 We have begun work with partner organisations across the early help system to explore how we can work more effectively together alongside families and communities. In leading this work we are advocating a different approach which places less emphasis on public agencies stepping in to provide services and greater emphasis on identifying the strengths and capacity in each family and each community using these as the basis for change. This approach is predicated on an assumption that most children do well in the protective environment of their families, communities and schools. It should be our role, with partners, to facilitate good local support networks and create communities which are making good connections with and for families.

2.2 Illustrative examples of this kind of community rather than service-led early help include;

- Linking new parents, young parents or those who are struggling, to support groups run by other local parents who have the confidence and time to help
- Time banking schemes bringing the capacity, skills and time of local people together
- Work in Somersham where local Councillor leadership has helped develop a network of local voluntary and community sector groups and got these working alongside public services as an integral part of the help for local people

- A recently established community shop in Huntingdon run by local residents providing low-price household items and free clothing parcels for families in need
- Networks of families of children with special educational needs or disabilities running trips and events as well as sharing experiences and coping strategies
- The huge variety of voluntary sector organisations tackling issues as wide ranging as social isolation, family debt management, adolescent behaviour difficulties, substance misuse, depression and anxiety

2.3 Maximising the contribution of community and voluntary sector led support can help us to partially mitigate the impact of cuts to public services. However community-led support still has resource implications. Helping local people and organisations to start up, attract funding, find premises, overcome practical barriers, develop communications and identify volunteers and those in need of help will often require significant capacity. We aim to develop our approach to supporting and sustaining these community-led models in partnership with others.

2.4 At the family level our approach will increasingly need to be focused on building the strengths and capacity within families to meet their own needs rather than establishing a dependence on services at an early stage. The focus on families rather than individuals is important. It recognises that the needs of people within families are almost always inter-related and in this context our responses need to be ‘whole family’ rather than narrowly focussed on one family member or a particular presenting issue.

2.5 The strategy sets a new direction of travel for the wider partnership, in which it is recognising the reality that there will be less money to provide services. Taking an approach which builds first on creating a protective environment for children is a first step towards early help.

An initial discussion document has been developed setting out some of this thinking in more detail. This paper is attached as an appendix including a draft model for Early Help (page 17, Appendix 1).

2.6 During April and May 2014, a series of early help stakeholder meetings have been held across the County. Over 290 staff from a wide range of services and organisations have come together to start to engage with the debate. Ideas emerging from these discussions have aligned well with our thinking and the sessions have generated a great many positive ideas to enhance services, work differently and join arrangements up.

2.7 Key themes from the workshops are below, along with examples of specific ideas or feedback from partners. A summary of messages emerging from the events is attached as Appendix 2.

Supporting community and voluntary sector development, including;

- Promoting a network of community navigators and mentors for children and families (learning from the adults model)
- Opening up children’s centres and other hubs for volunteer-led support
- Employing a dedicated fundraiser / support officer to help local groups access/bid for funding

Communication and information sharing, including;

- Giving local people and local organisations a single, live information source to find out and share what's happening locally and to see the full range of support available from all sectors

Empowering, engaging and listening to families and young people including;

- Learning more from voluntary organisations about different ways of delivering services
- Developing community mentors and breaking down red tape barriers to community initiative

Taking a whole-family approach across organisations, including;

- Joint commissioning and alignment of services, in particular aligning health and adult services into localities.
- Schools or the local authority running joint programmes for parents and young people – teaching children and simultaneously building the ability of parents to support their child's learning
- Enhancing the awareness and information flows between adults services about the needs of children, helping adults-focussed teams consider and identify vulnerable children and join up support

Earlier intervention, including

- The development of risk indicator tools to identify children at risk of not making good progress at primary age (currently used later for 14-19 year olds)

Focusing on Transition points including;

- The transition between early years and primary school, ensuring information flows back and forth between early years settings and schools

Workforce development, including;

- Sharing and pooling the expertise from across organisations, promoting peer support and mentoring.
- Empowering staff with small flexible budgets to support families
- Developing staff skills and knowledge to enable greater flexibility to work across a wider range of family needs, particularly early support around mental health issues

2.8 The feedback from these workshops will inform the development of an early help strategy through the governance of the Children's Trust partnership. The discussion paper will be presented to Children's Trust and the Health and Well Being Board in the summer, seeking final sign off by November 2014.

2.9 The strategy needs to express a fundamental shift in how we view our approach to preventative work. This will focus less on what we provide as public services and more on how we collectively create the right protective environment in which children and families can do well. Our preventative approach needs to continue to build a consistent approach to the way we work with families, how we assess early need and share information across agencies.

3. REVIEWING EARLY HELP WITHIN ENHANCED AND PREVENTATIVE SERVICES

3.1 The County Council business plan requires the base budget of £19m for Enhanced and Preventative Services to be reduced by just under £6m between 2014 and 2016. Some of these savings have already been realised through the reconfiguration work on Children's Centres. Therefore, alongside the partnership work described above, an internal review of the County Council early help services has started. A savings target of this scale requires the review to be a fundamental reconsideration of the Directorate's role, priorities, focus, arrangements and structures, building on the conversations we are having with many different partners. The further budget reductions will have an impact on front line services.

3.2 A proposed vision statement for Enhanced and Preventative Services is being developed, describing the overall intention as;

"To help build resilient families and communities, supported effectively by universal and community-based services, whilst offering targeted support for those who most need it in order to achieve."

3.3 This focus on building 'resilience' represents a shift in role for Enhanced and Preventative Services. Resilient families are those with the skills and confidence to effectively support their children's development and manage challenges without the need for public sector intervention. For communities resilience is about networks of support between families which allow people to help each other before needs reach the threshold for public provision. This revised vision therefore re-frames a core role for services in building protective factors around individuals and communities.

3.4 Although the overall direction is to reduce reliance on services, where children and families do need direct support we need to identify this as early as possible and work with universal providers and others to offer effective, targeted and need-based services. This offer can only be available to a reduced number of families in future, and in this context it is more important than ever that we target this support to those least likely to do well without it.

3.5 We will pay particular attention to children and families where: children have Special Educational Needs or disabilities; there are mental health issues in the home; there is a risk that children could underachieve due to socio-economic factors; domestic abuse or substance misuse is present in the household and families are facing multiple problems.

3.6 However not all children and families in these circumstances will have poor outcomes. Our assessments need to identify those where there is an absence of protective factors such as a parenting capacity, good mental health, a wider kinship group, peer networks and financial stability. We will need to determine whether children's outcomes are at risk without intervention, before committing ourselves to offering service support.

3.7 A draft informal consultation paper (Appendix 3) sets out key themes for the re-shaping of Enhanced and Preventative Services in future. This will be

followed by a formal consultation in the autumn setting out structures, job roles and savings areas in full. The draft consultation paper is attached as an appendix for the Committee's comments. Key points include;

- An overall reduction in staff numbers across Enhanced and Preventative Services and a reduction in the number of different job roles, creating a simpler structure and an expectation that roles are more flexible. Staff numbers in different teams will not be determined until the outcome of the informal consultation.
- Redeploying some resource to focus on community based activity, working with partners to develop a community 'offer'. This would include developing community-led peer support.
- Retaining and evolving locality teams, although seeing a likely reduction in the total number of locality teams. Locality Managers acting more explicitly to broker additional support from specialist staff, using those specialisms to build skills and competence in the workforce around the issues listed in paragraph 3.5.
- A closer and explicit link between area/district wide Specialist SEN Service teams and Locality teams that will strengthen the flow of expertise to more generic services, and ensure a more timely and seamless access to specialist services when it is considered direct intervention is needed.

4. NEXT STEPS & PROGRAMME TIMELINE

- 4.1 The partnership strategy work and the internal review and restructuring are being progressed as a joint programme of work in the coming months. As plans become more concrete there will be further updates to and oversight from the Children and Young People Committee.
- 4.2 The development of the early help strategy and discussions with partners will be taken forward through the Governance of the Children's Trust. The proposals will also be consulted on through the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Health and Wellbeing Board, a reference group of local schools and a range of other partnership fora.
- 4.3 The next step of the internal review will be to incorporate Committee feedback and issue the informal consultation paper to staff and stakeholders. Responses will inform the development of specific proposals, including staffing structure and budget implications to be set out in the formal consultation in November 2014. The implementation period for the savings will span from April 2015 – April 2016, as indicated in the current Business Plan.
- 4.4 The consultation process on these full proposals will include a programme of staff consultation, and local Member engagement. More information about the consultation process with Members will be explored through Spokes meetings.

4.5 Timescales in the overall programme timeline are set out below.

Thursday 23 May	Draft informal consultation circulated to staff
Friday 6 June	Publish final informal consultation document
6 June – 4 July 2014	Informal staff consultation / Engagement with Children and Families starts
July – September 2014	Draft Early Help Strategy presented to Children's Trust Board , LSCB and Health and Wellbeing Board
18 November 2014	Final proposals presented to CYP Committee and agreement sought to proceed with Formal Consultation
November 2014	Publish formal consultation paper to staff
Nov 2014 – Jan 2015	Formal consultation
26 November	Children's Trust Board for approval of Early Help Partnership Strategy
March 2015	Formal consultation results published
March 2015 – June 2015	Implementation process begins - selection process for new/amended posts; HR support programme in place
April 2015 - April 2016.	Full Implementation – new structure and arrangements take effect

5. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 **Developing the local economy for the benefit of all** – The early help offer is strongly linked to our Child Poverty Strategy (being refreshed in summer 2014) and multi-agency efforts to support families to overcome deprivation, find work, manage debt and address other economic issues. Additionally there are links to the Accelerating Achievement Strategy which aims to help children from deprived economic backgrounds to succeed in education.
- 5.2 **Helping people live healthy and independent lives** – supporting independent and healthy communities less reliant on public services is a central goal of early help. The approach to this is described throughout the paper, in particular in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5.

- 5.3 **Supporting and protecting vulnerable people** – the proposals retain a strong focus on preventative support for the most vulnerable groups in our communities and early involvement to prevent problems getting worse. The key priority groups and approach to targeting are set out at paragraph 3.5. However we must also recognise that these proposals represent a significant reduction in the budget for early help and that this will impact on our ability to provide protection and improve outcomes.

6. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 **Resource Implications** - The overall level of resource to deliver direct County Council early help services is being significantly reduced. The revised teams will aim to deliver the greatest possible impact for children and families within this smaller available budget. The resource reductions will have an impact on the amount of early intervention and preventative support provided and will need to be targeted to minimise any increased demand for specialist, acute and intensive services such as Children's Social Care Services.
- 6.2 **Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications** - The proposals at this stage have not identified any areas where the County Council will be unable to meet statutory requirements, but we should recognise that the overall reductions will put pressure on our performance in statutory service areas and require us to deliver differently. Early Help services have statutory duties to make a full children's centre offer, promote school attendance, safeguard vulnerable children, support educational inclusion and help young people into further learning and work amongst others. For example, budget reductions could impact on the outcome of Ofsted inspections of our Children's Centres or the numbers of young people who are Not in Education Employment and Training (NEET). Full details of relevant duties would be available to the Committee members on request.
- 6.3 **Equality and Diversity Implications** - There are no significant implications identified at this stage; formal consultation will include a full equality and community impact assessment. An initial community impact assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 3.
- 6.4 **Engagement and Consultation Implications** - Significant engagement and consultation activity has taken place to develop current proposals and further activity is planned as work progresses. This is outlined in paragraphs 2.6, 2.7 and 4.2- 4.5.
- 6.5 **Localism and Local Member Involvement** - The strategic direction and specific proposals in this paper are closely aligned with the localism agenda and the empowerment of communities to do more for themselves. It recognises the vital role that local people, community groups and voluntary and community sector organisations play in providing preventative support and commits the local authority to a role which seeks to maximise, facilitate and stimulate the contributions from these groups. The strategy will include a specific investment in capacity to play this community leadership role, exploring opportunities to link the community work done by different organisations together.

The role of the Locality Manager is central to the vision for future Locality Teams. They will act as the facilitator of community resources in partnership

with others, brokering an integrated offer across early intervention and specialist support, commissioning specialist services where needed to deliver workforce development and direct intervention. The model will be supported by the principle of delegated decision making to the most local practical level.

The strategy also envisages a vital role for local members as community leaders, engaging with local people, hearing their priorities, aspirations and needs and providing the link back to both public services and community-based support.

- 6.6 **Public Health Implications** - Public Health support is a vital component of early help, including in particular community health and mental health teams, drug and alcohol services, the role of GPs and other universal health teams. Public Health will be fully engaged in the development of the partnership strategy and opportunities to align working arrangements, for example between health visiting teams and Children's Centre staff, will be explored.

Source Documents	Location
Early Help Discussion Paper April 2014	http://camweb2/Document%20Library/CYPS/cenhanprevs/Early%20help%20for%20families.pdf
Early Help Partnership Workshops Summary Report	Amanda Phillips Amanda.phillips@cambridgeshire.gov.uk 01480 373509
Community Impact Assessment	Amanda Phillips Amanda.phillips@cambridgeshire.gov.uk 01480 373509
Informal Consultation on the Recommissioning of Early Help Services	Amanda Phillips Amanda.phillips@cambridgeshire.gov.uk 01480 373509