

16 February 2017

Early Help 0-19 Locality Delivery Model

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor Burley

Executive Summary:

This report provides an overview of the current Early Help offer and the proposed future 0-19 Locality Model including the delivery of youth provision. Early Help Services provide early intervention and prevention services for children and young people within their family context. The services are provided to children and young people 0-19 at the point of need. The proposed model of integrated delivery will align services better on a locality basis and improve how single agencies work with families in a more coherent and co-ordinated way.

Reason for Scrutiny:

An overview to inform the panel of the current and proposed Early Help 0-19 Locality model

To provide panel Members with opportunity to:

- scrutinise and challenge Children's Services arrangements for ensuring children, young people and families receive the right help at the earliest stage possible, and that it has a good impact on improving outcomes for children and young people;
- seek assurance that Partners are collaborating well in the development and delivery of high quality Early Help services and securing good outcomes for children, young people and families across Walsall.

Recommendations:

That:

The Panel scrutinise and challenge the content of the report, the proposed 0-19 Early Help 'whole family' locality delivery model and the outcomes of statutory consultation undertaken

The Panel scrutinises and challenges the proposals which include the alignment and integration of Children's Centres and Youth services and the co-location of Health Visiting services.

Background papers:

Cabinet Report - Redesign of Children's Centre Services and Sites as part of a 0 - 19 Early Help locality model and Children's Centre South Contract – 8 February 2017

Resource and legal considerations

The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient Children's Centres to meet local needs and is required to conduct consultation when planning any significant changes to Children Centre services.

Existing national statutory guidance supports the reconfiguration of Children's Centres to cover wider areas and to deliver services to families who need them most.

The ongoing uncertainty about the future scope of Children's Centres and the fact that statutory guidance and the related regulatory framework have been under review nationally now for over 12 months, with Ofsted inspections suspended since April 2016, has seen many Local Authorities review and reduce Children's Centres Services or align them with either 'Health Visiting' or wider family support to create an '0 - 19 Whole Family' approach.

The proposed changes contribute to the budget saving proposals of the Council, which, following a budget consultation period, will make decisions on in February 2017.

Citizen impact:

The effective delivery of a high quality Early help Offer has a direct impact on the welfare and well-being of Walsall's children and young people, improving their life chances and reducing the demand for specialist/crisis services or statutory social care intervention.

Environmental impact:

There is no direct environmental impact of this report.

Performance management:

The Early Help Steering Group and Walsall Safeguarding Children Board both actively monitor the performance of the Partnership on the effective delivery and the impact of Early Help Services across the Borough. The Children and Young People's Partnership receives regular reports to monitor and challenge performance and the Strategic Partnership Group help support the delivery of the Strategy.

Equality Implications:


All relevant equality implications and impact assessments have been assessed as part of the development of the 0-19 Locality Model. The Strategy supports many disadvantaged communities and families in Walsall.

Consultation:

The development of the Early Help 0-19 locality model has been subject to budget consultation and statutory consultation on change in Children Centre delivery between October and December 2016.

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Report

1. Early Help: an Explanation

- 1.1 Early Help is provided for children and young people at risk of harm who have not yet reached the 'significant harm' threshold and for whom preventative services would reduce the likelihood of that risk of harm escalating;
- 1.2 Early Help is multi agency integrated support – practical advice, support and direct casework to children , young people and their families to prevent an escalation of needs into acute and more costly services, that would be to the detriment of children and families welfare;
- 1.3 It requires collaboration from all agencies, including schools, and is a key area for assessment in Ofsted's Safeguarding Inspections of Children's Services;
- 1.4 Every Local Authority should have an Early Help Strategy to ensure that problems and difficulties for children and families are identified early and responded to effectively as soon as possible to manage and de-escalate the level of risk.

2. Key Drivers for the development of the Early Help 0-19 Locality Model

- 2.1 The Council's 'Early Help Strategy' (**Appendix 1**) identifies that it is the Council's shared responsibility with all partners and all single agencies, to work with children, young people and their families to keep them safe, build on strengths, reduce risk and prevent problems from escalating. The Strategy outlines the progress since the last publicised strategy in September 2015, gives an overview of data related to Early Help and sets out the Strategic priorities to ensure that the Early Help support for children, young people and families in the Borough is effective and builds on the strengths of existing provision. Over the last 12 months significant progress has been made to develop the Council's partnership response including investment from Schools Forum to develop locality working.
- 2.2 To inform thinking on proposed delivery models going forward, a comprehensive review of all open Early Help cases was undertaken in July 2016 which aimed to:
 - Develop a joint understanding of the children and families currently receiving Early Help; what is working for them and what is not and needs to change;
 - Ensure all cases are relevant and assessed at the right level to be supported by Children Centre Family Support teams;

- Get an overview of the interventions being delivered by staff and capture good practice to inform the Council's menu of services to be communicated to parents, social workers and partners; and
- Consider changes to structure and delivery processes that will enable support to be more effective.

2.3 Over a 4 week period, 791 children's cases that were supported through the 0-19 locality teams (including Children's centres) were reviewed and reflection with partners undertaken. The full report can be found at **Appendix 2**. The review has provided assurance that family support staff in Children's Centres are working at the right level with the right families and that high quality support is having good impact and preventing the need for statutory interventions.

This comprehensive exercise also identified areas for improvement related to a more joined up approach between different partners and by improving communications between professionals. The review identified that where families had children of different age ranges there could be a number of workers supporting the family, duplicating work which in some cases overwhelmed families, sometimes leading to disengagement.

2.4 The integration of direct delivered Targeted Youth Work activities and provision within the 0-19 Family Support locality Teams has been developed. Children's Services Targeted Youth Work has had a significant reduction in budget over the last year and therefore the remaining resources is focussing on those most vulnerable young people across the Borough and targeted programmes to reduce Anti Social Behaviour and improve young people's well-being. This works aligns closely with the aims and objectives of the Early Help Strategy.

3. Early Help 0-19 Locality Model – Current delivery

3.1 The Early Help Hub, integral to MASH, provides a single access point for advice, information sharing and brokering of support. This has strengthened the arrangements to co-ordinate, deliver and oversee Early Help support for children and families that do not meet the threshold for social work intervention.

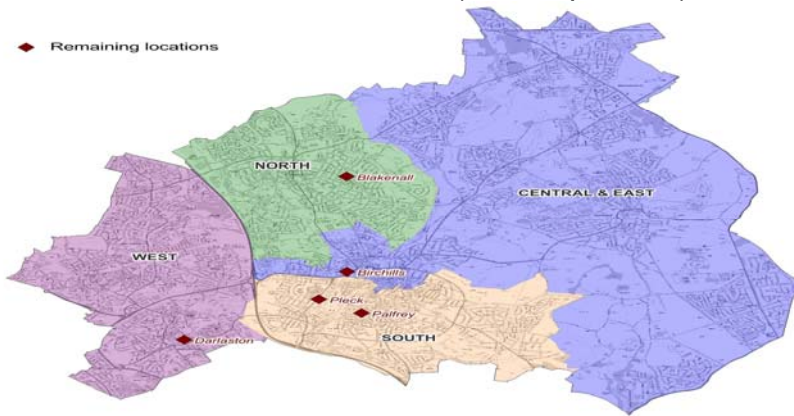
3.2 Walsall's Early Help partnership locality model, aligned to school clusters and driven by the investment of £750,000 by School Forum, has resulted in the establishment of four locality partnerships and associated locality panels.

The locality panels include representation from schools, education support, health, housing, police, social care and the voluntary sector. The panels work to plan services to address local need, share expertise to resolve complex cases and support professionals to identify and access the right support for families. To inform this work, locality profiles have been developed using our learning from the Troubled Families Programme to assist the Council's understanding of needs and challenges. This is used to proactively help with the identification of vulnerable families and the monitoring of impact, of interventions.

Through this partnership infrastructure we have delivered a coordinated and targeted programme to meet identified need which has benefitted our most

vulnerable children, young people and families. The programme has included Truancy Patrol, Summer Patrol, CAMHS interventions, parenting workshops, Holiday Kitchen, targeted play scheme and positive diversionary activities.

- 3.2 Walsall currently has 4 Children Centre areas with teams based at Palfrey, Birchills, Blakenall and Darlaston (see map below).



- 3.3 From April 2016, through a service redesign, we have based additional workers with the teams, with skills and experience of working with older children. This has enabled us to provide a Whole Family approach and has enabled us to better coordinate the interventions and services that we offer families. The positive impact this approach has made was recognised through the comprehensive review of Early Help in July 2016.
- 3.4 Work is underway to co-locate Health visitors in each of the four 0-19 teams as per requirement of the newly commissioned 0-5 healthy child programme. This will drive forward improved joint working between Family Support workers and health visitors.
- 3.5 In February 2017 work started with 'One Walsall' (previously known as Walsall Voluntary Action) to identify external funding opportunities and targeted VCS capacity building activities to build innovation in the delivery of Early help across the localities. 'One Walsall' are well engaged and working well with the Council on the Early Help locality delivery model.

4. Consultation on the Early Help 0-19 Locality Model

On 27 October 2016 Cabinet approved to commence a period of statutory and budget consultation, to seek views on plans to review current arrangements for Children's Centres and Youth Services to align and integrate services as part of the development of a Children's Services 'Early Help 0-19 locality model'.

The proposals outlined a new way of working aiming to achieve following benefits:

- Retain and integrate skills and expertise within a locality team to deliver a whole 'family approach' that sustains improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Build on locality working model that enables us to better understand local needs and provide local solutions.
- Retain activities and programmes targeted at young people in need of additional support.

- Improve the way we work and engage with partners to enable professionals to coordinate services and get the right help for families.
- Increased availability for 2 year old places and Early Learning opportunities for children.

5. Outcomes of the consultation and proposals going forward for Cabinet decision in February 2017:

- 5.1 Bring Children's Centre Services and youth services into 'Whole Family 0-19 Locality hubs', targeting those families most in need through a whole family approach and a clear menu of targeted activities and interventions.
- 5.2 Implement the newly defined 0-19 locality Reach areas as of April 2017 to include Children's Centres and youth services to better align with 0-19 partnership locality areas and school cluster arrangements so that professionals can work better together. Services will be delivered on a four locality model as shown in **Appendix 3**.
- 5.3 Changes in buildings to create 3 'hubs' with community and outreach: it is proposed that 3 'hub' buildings will remain in areas of greatest need with the majority of support being delivered in the community; 'a hub and spoke model'. As part of this we propose to change the use of the Birchills building to childcare and early learning because there is unmet need in the area for free entitlement to early learning.