

Health and Wellbeing Board

19 September 2023

Programme Report of Family Hubs and Start for Life programme in Walsall

For Information

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide members of the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update of the implementation of the Family Hub and Start for Life programme in Walsall.
- 1.2 Provide assurance to the HWBB in the delivery of the programme and its alignment to the Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its priorities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the HWBB accepts the report and continues to support the delivery of the Family Hub and Start for Life programme in Walsall.
- 2.2 That the HWBB notes the difficulties and the risk around the implementation Parent & Infant Relationship and Perinatal Mental Health strand due to capacity issues across Black Country mental health trust and is assured of the work that is being done to resolve this.
- 2.3 That the HWBB requests to receive periodic assurances on delivery of this programme as part of the reporting on progress on the Local health and Wellbeing Strategic priorities.

3. Report detail Context

- 3.1 In February 2023 the DfE confirmed that Walsall was successful in their application as one of the 75 Local Authorities who would receive the Family Hubs Start for Life funding of £3,869m from 2022-2025
- 3.2 Following confirmation of the funding a Programme Steering Group, chaired by the Director of Walsall Right for Children Early Help & Partnerships was established to take forward and develop the six action areas listed below.
 - 1. Seamless support for families: a coherent joined-up Start for Life offer available to all families.
 - 2. A welcoming hub for families: family hubs as a place for families to access Start for Life services.
 - 3. The information families need when they need it: designing digital, virtual and telephone offers around the needs of the family.
 - 4. An empowered Start for Life workforce: developing a modern, skilled workforce to meet the changing needs of families.
 - 5. Continually improving the Start for Life offer: improving data, evaluation, outcomes and proportionate inspection.

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6. Leadership for change: ensuring local and national accountability and building the economic case.
- 3.3 A comprehensive needs assessment has been developed to inform our implementation plan and ensure we can target additional resources in the areas of poorest outcomes.

Implementation of Family Hubs Programme in Walsall

- 3.4 A Programme Implementation plan has been developed and approved by the DfE. Quarterly assurance meetings are held with the regional DfE team to review the implementation plan and escalate any risks.
- 3.5 In line with the funding allocation the programme has been structured around the five core activities / services which are required to be developed and five enablers to support with the delivery of the programme (Appendix 1 – Family Hub Governance Structure)

Service Areas

1. Parenting Support
2. Parent – Infant Relationships and Perinatal Mental Health Support
3. Early Language and the Home Learning Environment
4. Infant feeding Support
5. Parent and Carer Panels

Enablers

1. Publishing the Start for Life Offer
2. Data & Performance
3. Digital
4. Workforce & OD
5. Comms & Branding

- 3.6 Each of the workstreams is lead by a key stakeholder:

Workstream	Workstream Lead	Organisation
Parenting Support	Georgina Atkins	Walsall Council
Parent & Infant Relationship and Perinatal Mental Health	Laura Parsons	Walsall Healthcare
Infant Feeding Support	Esther Higdon	Public Health
Early Years & Home Learning Environment Support	Julie Jones	Walsall Council
Parent Carer Panels / Publishing Start for Life	Julie Jones	Walsall Council

There is currently one risk that has been escalated to Regional DfE. The risk concerns the availability of Perinatal Mental Health capacity to drive forward this workstream. This is a consistent issue across the Black Country and is

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trying to be resolved through a Black Country LA coordinated approach and has been escalated locally to Walsall Together.

The quarterly review with the DfE has agreed a carryover amount for funding to help manage this issue.

See full progress overview against each Workstreams in appendix 2

3.7 A dedicated Transformation Team has been established to support the delivery of the programme.

3.8 A summary of the key milestones that have been delivered to date is set out within the table below:

Milestone	Date Delivered
Mobilise Project Team and deliver workshops to engage with key Stakeholders	31/12/2022
Submit delivery plan to the DfE	31/12/2022
Establish Programme Steering Group and Governance arrangements	31/01/2023
Formal Launch of Family Hubs (website)	01/04/2023
Develop Strategic Needs Assessment	30/04/2023
Co Production of Family Hub Branding	31/05/2023
Official Launch of Family Hubs at Localities	31/07/2023

Overview of Family Hubs programme delivery to date

3.9 Walsall's 4 Locality Family Hubs provide a welcoming space where children, young people aged 0-19 and up to 25 for those young people with additional needs and their families can go to get advice and support when they need it. Our Family Hubs are in the heart of local communities where services have come together providing one 'front door' access to get help and to talk to someone in a safe space about sensitive things that maybe worrying them.

3.10 Following organisations deliver services from our 4 locality Hubs: Midwives, Health Visitors, School Nurses, Speech & Language Early Help, Children's Social Care, DWP Housing and Police.

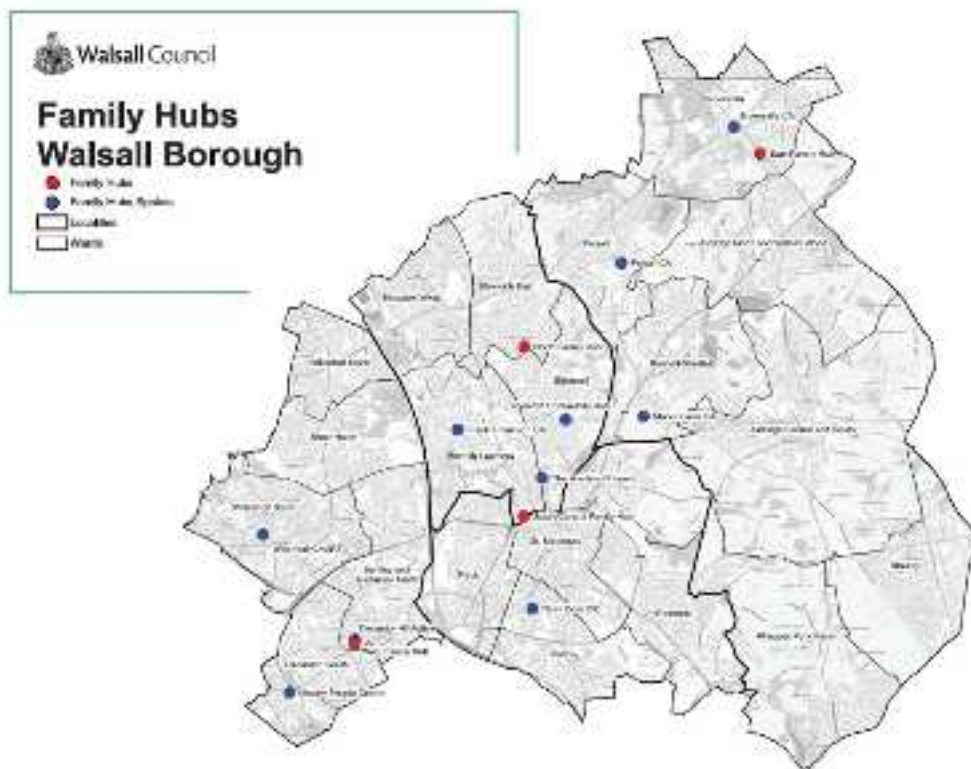
3.11 In addition to our 4 Locality family Hubs we deliver wider community-based support and services through 10 'Community Spokes' provided through our voluntary and community sector partners. Our 10 spokes will offer advice on a range of local community activities for families, children and young people, provide a space for local families to come together, for services to deliver group work or meet on a 121 basis with families, to provide sessions such as play and stay, baby weighing clinics, digital support services as well as providing foodbanks.

3.12 Services available within the Locality Family Hub from September 2023

- Speech and Language assessments and clinics
- Health visitor assessments and clinics
- Infant feeding support
- Immunisation drop in sessions
- School nursing assessments and support

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- Talking therapies
- Perinatal support
- Health in Pregnancy
- Asthma nurses
- Targeted stay and plays
- Saturday groups and sessions
- Fathers support



3.13 We have also integrated Family hub sign-posting as part of the 28 Walsall Connected sights. Ensuring consistent information and advice is provided. The family Hub team have also a regular presence at the Walsall Manor Hospital team to maximise opportunities to link parents with the Family hub programme.

3.14 In additional to physical spaces significant work has been done to develop our digital offer. We have launched our Walsall Family Hub website www.walsallfamilyhubs.co.uk which will provide one front door for advice and information including a service directory of all services available to parents who have children aged 0-19.

3.15 We have also commissioned a number of apps to help families to get the right support around giving their children the best start in life:

- Easy Peasy App (EasyPeasy is a smartphone app for parents of preschool aged children. It is designed to improve early child development through increasing positive parent-child interactions and learning at home. The app sends regular game ideas to parents that they can play with their children, combined with information on child development. The design of the app applies behavioural insights to help seed positive habits of play and interaction at home by sending tailored prompts, encouragement, and reminders to parents)

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- Baby Buddy App (Best Beginnings' free, advert free multi-award-winning, interactive pregnancy and parenting app, Baby Buddy, has been created to support parents, co-parents and caregivers, and to augment and enrich the work of frontline practitioners. Baby Buddy provides trusted, evidence-based information and self-care tools, based on the latest research and is endorsed by eight royal colleges, including the Royal College of Midwives and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Baby Buddy is the first parenting app to provide daily content for fathers and other non-birthing parents)
- DadPad (Dadpad is commissioned by Walsall Public Health Services and produced as an app and also written information aimed at engaging and supporting new fathers as they make the transition to parenthood. Through a supply of guides (DadPad) and digital application (DadPad app) new and prospective dads will understand how to access local support as well as be provided with national information specifically aimed at fathers eg safe sleep, how to cope if their baby cries, building a relationship with their baby. This supports perinatal services in engaging and upskilling new fathers in readiness for the postnatal period, and build familial relationships to help new babies thrive and co-parental relationships develop with their babies needs in mind. In Walsall it will be taken forward mainly through the Health in Pregnancy Service who aim to reach 15,000 men over 4 years)

Next steps

The progress report in appendix 2 sets out the key priorities for the next quarter.

4. Implications for Joint Working arrangements:

- 4.1 Government confirmed a funding package for Walsall between £3.774M and £3.937M over the next three financial years (till 24/25) to deliver the programme. The guidance sets out clearly the expected allocation of funding per programme strands. There has been a modest revision of the percentage allocations that have previously been demonstrated.
- 4.2 The Local Authority is the key accountable body for the grant, but there is a clear expectation the programme is developed and delivered in collaboration with partners with Health, Voluntary Sector and Education system. In Walsall we have secured a strong engagement in the development and delivery of Family Hubs from organisations across the Borough including Walsall Council Childrens Services, Public Health, Walsall Together, Community mental health, 0-19 Healthy Child programme (health visiting and school health), paediatric Service, LA Early Years team, Resilient Communities, Walsall Health Care Trust, Housing, Black Country Mental Health; Police and ICS This commitment demonstrates the future success that we all anticipate as being a part of this National work.

5. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:

- 5.1 The Family Hub and best start in Life will be delivering on all priorities as set out by Walsall Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 22-25:
 - **Children and young people:** Ensuring all children have the best possible start in life and support them in growing up safe from harm, happy and learning well is at the heart of the programmes vision

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- **Mental health and wellbeing:** supporting both the parents and children health and wellbeing is a core delivery expectation of the programme.
- **Digital:** the development of a digital inclusive offer will be key part of the programme to ensure that the information and services are easy to access by all.

5.2 Safeguarding: The Family Hubs approach will ensure that professionals work together, through co-location, data-sharing and a common approach to their work. Families will only have to tell their story once, the service is more efficient, with safeguarding at its core, and families get more effective support.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Family Hub Governance structure



governance.pptx

Appendix 2 – Progress report against each of the key workstreams



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Appendix 3 – Family Hub Launch Report



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Authors



Malcolm Moore - Family Hub Programme lead
Isabel Vanderheeren – Director early help and Partnership
Local Authority - Children Services



Isabel.vanderheeren@walsall.gov.uk