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**To:** Error! Unknown document property name.

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018

**Subject:** Coventry Parenting Strategy 2018-2023

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## **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present the Coventry Parenting Strategy 2018 – 2023 to the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Board (2), update members of the Board on progress made to strengthen parenting provision in the city and provide an opportunity for members of the Board to offer contributions and suggestions to strengthen the parenting offer in Coventry.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Board are requested to:

- 1) Review the information provided in the Coventry Parenting Strategy (Appendices 1-3)
- 2) Support the recommendations in the Parenting Strategy which have been brought together by partners across Coventry.
- 3) Contribute any comments or suggestions for further work to strengthen parenting provision in the city across partners.
- 4) Provide suggestions for the development and delivery of the implementation plan.

## **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 There is clear evidence that supporting parents and carers to develop effective parenting skills is an important part of maximising their children’s potential. As children and young people develop, families may face a number of challenges and the extent to which they are able to cope with these will differ from person to person. External factors such as unemployment, poor housing or poverty may negatively impact on a person’s ability to parent well. However, good mental wellbeing and high levels of resilience can work as protective forces in these situations. Having good parenting support available from the very beginning of parenting, the antenatal period, up to adolescence, is essential to ensure people are able to navigate life’s challenges and parent well at the same time.
- 3.2 In Coventry, the future for our young people is not as good as others across the West Midlands and the country as a whole, particularly for our more deprived children. As a Marmot city, those delivering support to families in Coventry are committed to tackling health inequalities, where increasing deprivation is associated with poorer health.
- 3.3 Coventry’s vision for parenting is to have “More Coventry Children and Young People grow up within supportive families and communities”. In order to deliver action to achieve this vision, a multiagency steering group has been established to develop a new Parenting Strategy for Coventry. In developing a Parenting Strategy, there will be a Coventry-wide approach to supporting parenting, where everyone working within this area including voluntary organisations, non statutory and statutory agencies understand, where their support fits into the overall parenting support system.

#### **4 Local needs**

- 4.1 Coventry's population is 352,911 and children and young people make up approximately 25.04% (88,372) of the population. Given the diversity in the city, the impact of cultural beliefs on parenting needs to be considered. Coventry has a growing percentage of residents of Black and Minority Ethnic Groups with 46.9% (21,470) of school children from a minority ethnic group. The Migrant Health Needs Assessment identifies that over 100 languages are spoken in Coventry and 9% of households do not have a single person within the home who speaks English as a first language.
- 4.2 Domestic abuse, mental health illness and substance misuse are issues for some Coventry parents, which significantly impacts on their children. Approximately 1 in 6 people in Coventry are estimated to be affected by a common mental health condition at any one time. This means many children will grow up with a parent who at some point will experience poor mental health.

#### **5 Consultation with Parents**

- 5.1 During September 2017, parents and the Coventry Parenting Steering Group designed a survey to capture the views of parents and carers in Coventry, to better understand their perspectives and what they would most value from parenting support. 364 responses were received and a full report of findings can be found in Appendix 3. The methods used to capture the views included; an online survey for members of the public and a paper based version of the survey, used in community settings such as Foleshill Women Training Centre. In addition, a consultation event was held in the Central Library to capture views of parents /carers.
- 5.2 The consultation with parents confirmed that access to parenting support needs to be strengthened; further awareness raising is required around the parenting provision. The findings show that the majority of parents received support that fully met their needs or moderately met their needs. The findings show that a high percentage of parents needed support before or after birth such as preparing for the birth of the baby (75%), breastfeeding (71%), how to care for the baby - e.g. safe sleeping, bathing and feeding (69%) and supporting child behaviour (52%). A smaller proportion of parents reported needing support in areas such as relationship support between adults (32%) and dealing with financial responsibilities (32%) .

#### **6 Mapping Parenting provision**

- 6.1 Through the Coventry Parenting Steering Group, a review of the current parenting provision in the city was completed. 21 agencies responded, highlighting 55 different parenting projects in the city. The current parenting support has shown that Coventry has a large number of evidence based parenting programmes and services on offer. There are also a number of locally grown programmes which help meet the diverse needs of the city.

#### **7 Parenting Strategy Key Recommendations**

- 7.1 Areas for improvements and key recommendations have been identified, bringing together the views of parents and stakeholders and the evidence. The approach taken is to strengthen these services within existing resources. The recommendations in the strategy are:
- To strengthen availability and accessibility of general information and advice to parents
  - To harness technology and the developing digital systems across agencies to strengthen the parenting offer
  - To ensure there is a systematic approach to ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the parenting offer across the whole system

- To ensure that this system-wide parenting offer is delivered in a way which progressively provides more support across the social gradient and level of need
- To ensure there is a clear focus on early help and prevention
- To improve cohesiveness of parenting support across Coventry
- To build parenting capacity in specific areas where gaps have been identified

## **8 Next steps**

- 8.1 In terms of next steps, multi-agency task and finish groups have been set up to take forward the first four recommendations, with the remaining recommendations acting as cross-cutting themes. Following on from the emerging actions identified in the strategy, a detailed delivery plan for each of the work streams will be developed through the multi-agency Task and Finish groups. Parenting will also be strengthened in the future through the Family Hubs: the new Family Health and Lifestyles service has an increased focus on the delivery of parenting support, especially through the Health Visitors in the early years and the monitoring of this contract will provide levers to ensure parenting capacity is strengthened; there is an opportunity to strengthen our parenting offer through the training and development of Family Hub Workers.
- 8.2 By bringing parents and partners together in developing this strategy, we have achieved a comprehensive vision and approach to improve outcomes for children and families through strengthening parenting across the city. Partners are committed and ready to take the next steps towards achieving our vision.

## **9 Governance arrangements**

- 9.1 The Parenting Strategy will be owned and monitored by the multi-agency Coventry Parenting Steering Group. The Steering Group, which reports to the Children and Young Peoples Partnership Board includes representatives from parents, statutory and non-statutory organisations including the voluntary sector. The strategy will be driven by the multiagency task and finish sub-groups.

### **Appendix 1**

Coventry Parenting Strategy 2018-2023

### **Appendix 2**

Coventry Parenting Strategy 2018 – 2023 (summary for parents and carers)

### **Appendix 3**

Parenting consultation documents (Hyperlinks from the parenting strategy)

Name: Sue Frossell

Job Title: Consultant in Public Health

Directorate: People Directorate

Contact Details: Email: [Sue.Frossell@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:Sue.Frossell@coventry.gov.uk)

Name: Harbir Nagra

Job Title: Programme Officer

Directorate: People Directorate

Contact Details: Email: [Harbir.Nagra@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:Harbir.Nagra@coventry.gov.uk)