
To: The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)
Date: 4 October 2018

Subject: Partnership Working in Children's Services

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To provide an update on the partnership working within Coventry's Early Help offer that includes the family hub model.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:

- 1) Consider the content of the report
- 2) Identify any further recommendations for the Cabinet Member

3 Information/Background

3.1 Coventry's Early Help Offer – Background

- 3.1.1 The Coventry Early Help Strategy (2016) set out the vision for early help work in Coventry and outlined principles of practice and cooperation between all partners providing services to children and families. The Strategy is currently being refreshed to reflect the commitment and responsibility of all partners to deliver an effective Early Help offer to children and their families which is responsive and focusses on building resilience as well as providing the right help at the right time. The Strategy will also highlight other new developments: introduction of a new Early Help Assessment, adopting the Signs of Safety approach, Right Help Right Time Guidance and the Troubled Families outcomes framework.

- 3.1.2 There are two key drivers for new ways of working and service delivery:

- A clear evidence base that the development of increasingly close working relationships and practices between professionals, families, agencies and community groups deliver improved experiences for families and better outcomes for children.
- The reduction in public service finances requires different ways of working with partners, families and communities eliminating duplication and providing economy of scale and enhanced value.

3.2 Coventry's Family Hub Model

3.2.1 In November 2017 the Family Hub model in Coventry became operational. The next phase for the Early Help offer is developing the Hubs further, which is building on existing partnerships and enhancing the delivery of help and support to families in their local communities. Strengthening the Early Help partnership is fundamental to establish a seamless service to families and improving children and young people's outcomes.

3.2.2 As featured in the Early Help Strategy, there is a multi-agency commitment to deliver the right help at the right time to families, children, young people and communities. Early Help in Coventry continues to be delivered through an integrated approach across agencies, the Family Hub model's sees extension of existing partnership working collaboratively to deliver a whole family approach. The work of the Family Hub continues to target and address the needs of the most disadvantaged children (0-19) early help offer, who are identified through direct contact, self-referral, step down and diversion process from children's social care or via requests for support from a range of professionals and services. Families access help either through a request for support or by attending the Family Hub locally. Early help can be delivered in the Family Hub, a local community venue or in the family home depending on the needs of the family. An activity timetable for each Hub area is widely publicised within the local communities, which includes services delivered by partners, and is available on the City Council website and activities are promoted through social media. Each family hub has an active Facebook page.

3.2.3 The Early Help offer is made up of a range of services delivered by partners that include: family hub practitioners, targeted youth support workers, primary mental health workers, health visitors, midwives, school nurses, police officers, NHS community organisations, advice services (e.g Law Centre and Coventry Independent Advice Service) Housing, benefits advice, Primary and Secondary schools, specialist mental health services and social workers. Many of these services are delivered from the Family Hub sites.

3.3 Examples of Early Help Partnership working

3.3.1 **Family Matters:** All family Hubs hold interagency case discussions on a weekly basis (Family Matters Meetings) to identify families that need early help from a range of agencies and to deliver the right help at the right time through partnership working where required. Attendance varies across hubs including health services (health visiting, midwifery, school nursing), police, housing providers.

3.3.2 **Direct delivery of services:** Partners from health services (e.g health visitors, midwifery, One Body One Live (OBOL), Healthy Lifestyles), adult learning (e.g. English to Speakers other Languages, Family learning, Workers Educational Association and legal/advice services (e.g. Coventry Independent Advice Service) deliver direct services from the Hubs in the form of clinics, surgeries, groups and 1:1 appointments. The Early Help Partnership co-ordinators continue to facilitate new initiatives to take place in the family hubs such as “Cuppa with your Copper”.

Many partners (statutory and voluntary sector) have contributed to a range of events and activities in the Family Hubs such as the naming/opening events and in the delivery of the summer holiday programmes. Notably there was a range of programmes funded by “Feeding Britain” this summer that targeted support to vulnerable children and their families which were delivered through partnerships with Ignite, local supermarkets, schools, churches and faith communities.

3.3.3 **Partnership training:** A range of partners have been engaged in delivering training to Family Hubs to enhance the skills and interventions that can be offered from the Hubs including the Primary Mental Health services who provide supervision and consultation services on a monthly basis to practitioners working in the hubs), Integrated Sexual Health Services and Change Grow Live (CGL).

3.3.4 **Developing partnerships:** A number of strategic partnership interactions have taken place between the Early Help Managers and a range of services, including the Homeless Prevention Team, Fire Service, South Warwickshire (NHS) Foundation Trust (SWFT), to develop partnership working arrangements and enhance opportunities to work together to deliver services and improve the outcomes for children, young people, and their families in the local community.

3.3.5 **Family Hubs** have also been developing their partnership with the local communities, by attending local stakeholder meetings, providing volunteering opportunities, and some services are being developed and delivered by local residents, such as the Homework Club at Wood Side Family Hub.

3.3.6 **The MASH model** has contributed to development of our partnership working. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is comprised of staffing who represent Children’s Services, Police, Health, Education, Probation, Youth Offending and Offender Manager

Services. All these agencies are located in the same room and working arrangements continue to be effective.

3.3.7 Multi Agency partners continue to engage with services within their respective disciplines within the community and this is fed back into the MASH. MASH Team Managers have now begun to engage with the Family Matters Meetings that take place in the Hubs, to enable stronger connection to the Early Help offer.

3.4 **Next Steps**

- i. Family Hubs and the Early Help offer will continue to develop to ensure they meet the needs of children, young people, families and communities in Coventry.
- ii. An Early Help Development Plan is being finalised, this will support our developments as a partnership as well as the services provided.
- iii. Governance of the Early Help offer (locality Early Help Advisory Groups) and of the Family Hubs (Friends of....) will be established to include partners across the statutory, voluntary and business sector and community members.
- iv. Widen the engagement and contribution of Early Help partners in Family Matters and delivery of Early Help to more families in alignment with Right Help Right Time
- v. Consolidate the delivery of targeted Early Help to “Troubled Families” identified in need of Early Help by a range of partners and increase in claims across partnership of Payment by Results
- vi. Maturity of early partnership arrangements moving from co-ordination to integrated working practices

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