



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 7 MARCH 2018

LEAD OFFICER: ANTHONY DURNO TEAM MANAGER SURREY FAMILY SERVICES (WOKING) (SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL)
SUE BARHAM STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL)

SUBJECT: EARLY HELP PRIORITIES FOR WOKING

AREA: WOKING (ALL DIVISIONS)

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Surrey County Council (SCC) has been working together with partners across the county and in Woking to transform the system of Early Help that supports children, young people and families who are in need. We need to do this to both improve outcomes for local families and also address more effectively a number of the demand pressures we are facing across the public sector in Surrey.

The Children and Young People's Partnership has the following overall vision: children and young people are happy, healthy, safe and confident in their future. In support of the overall vision, our shared ambition for Early Help is: "Surrey children get the right help at the right time. They are resilient and have safe nurturing relationships, which enable them to thrive and build the skills they need for adulthood."

To achieve this we have brought together partners who care about children and young people to form an Early Help Advisory Board (EHAB) for Woking.

By sharing our resources and integrating the support we provide to families we will reduce duplication and improve the reach and effectiveness of our work for families.

The EHAB for Woking is currently gathering the evidence of early help need to help prioritise the actions. When the priorities are finalised it will also consider setting up Local Family Partnerships in Woking based on evidential need.

The approach in Woking is also to look at opportunities to have greater joint working and to this end a joint Youth Work lead post is being developed/established to manage and coordinate the Youth Work offer of both SCC and Woking Borough Council. Additionally wider discussions are taking place regarding integrating the work of both county and borough Families Teams more fully.

This report provides local Members with an update on the new model that SCC and

partners have been developing for Early Help for the county overall and how this is progressing locally in Woking.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Woking Joint Committee is asked to:

- (i) Provide feedback on the latest Early Help developments in Woking including the emerging early help priorities for re-commissioning.
- (ii) Note that the Woking Early Help Advisory Board (EHAB) will reconsider Local Family Partnerships areas for Woking at a subsequent EHAB meeting.
- (iii) Endorse the Joint Committee representatives to the local Early Help Advisory Board, for the remainder of 2017/18 and 2018/19 subject to any changes to representatives on the Joint Committee that may arise in the new municipal year
- (iv) Note the joint work between SCC and Woking Borough Council regarding the proposed combined Youth Work lead post for Woking to ensure best use of resources and a coordinated approach across the Borough and wider discussions taking place between the authorities on fuller integration of Family Services Teams.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

We want Local Members to be informed about the proposals that we have been developing in partnership for the Early Help system in Surrey. We believe these proposals will help us realise better outcomes for children and young people within the early help resources we have available. We also know however that Early Help is most effective when it is planned and delivered locally, so we are seeking the advice of the Joint Committee to inform our identified local priorities.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from foundation years through to teenage years. We know that it is better to identify and respond to need and indications of risk for children and families early, before these become more difficult to reverse.
- 1.2 Whilst most children and young people in Surrey achieve good outcomes without the need for early help services, too many do not. Surrey was criticised in the 2014 Ofsted safeguarding inspection for its fragmented Early Help offer which left too many children waiting too long to receive the help they needed. The subsequent Department for Education Improvement Notice requires the county council to "*develop and implement a cohesive, collaborative Early Help offer delivered jointly by all partners*".
- 1.3 In response to this, to support better safeguarding decision-making and to ensure children receive the right help at the right time, Surrey established a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and four Early Help Co-ordination Hubs (EHCHs) in October 2016. As a result of the new arrangements more

than 1,000 children are now receiving Early Help following referral to the MASH or step-down from Children's Service's each month.

- 1.4 Feedback from Ofsted's latest monitoring visit on 31 October and 1 November 2017 highlighted that the Council has made improvements in Early Help, due to work to review early help services, analyse need, establish Early Help Hubs and co-locate early help staff with those from statutory Children's Services in the MASH. However, it also highlighted significant concerns that "thresholds are not yet appropriately or consistently applied" and "an increase in demand for early help support has resulted in delays in the early help coordination hubs progressing referrals for the allocation of services".
- 1.5 As Ofsted's feedback suggests, SCC in isolation does not have the capacity to meet all of the demands for Early Help in Surrey. It is only by transforming the way in which all partners work together that we can jointly achieve the scale of impact we need, both to improve outcomes for children and families, and reduce demand for statutory services across the public sector in Surrey.
- 1.6 In Surrey, our partnership Early Help transformation is already well underway. In 2016, SCC implemented a number of service changes to improve its offer of proactive, appropriate, timely and preventative Early Help for children referred into Surrey Children's Social Care. In early 2017, SCC launched Surrey Family Services, with the aim of bringing together professionals working across early years and children's centres, the Family Support Programme, the Youth Support Service and the Community Youth Work service, in joined-up district and borough area teams.
- 1.7 Partners have worked together to understand the early help needs of children and families locally, developed a shared vision for Early Help and designed a new model for the whole Early Help system to realise this ambitious vision for early help. There is collective agreement between many partners in Surrey that Local Family Partnerships are the model that will transform the early help system in Surrey and allow Surrey to realise its ambitious partnership vision. The premise of Local Family Partnerships are that they bring together a network of key stakeholders in a community who are involved in supporting the well-being and resilience of children and families. These include statutory, voluntary, faith and community organisations (including businesses) who either provide preventative activities for children and families or are responsible for targeted and specialist interventions to meet our statutory duties. All these organisations contribute to the Early Help offer and by binding them together at a local level we will provide a rich network of integrated provision to children and families in each Local Family Partnership. It is anticipated that each district and borough will be sub-divided into up to five Local Family Partnership areas, the locations of which will be locally determined, in response to the local needs of children and families. The Woking EHAB is considering this Model at this time.

- 1.11 The Early Help strategy is to alleviate the need to escalate into higher cost, higher need services. To this end the universal offer is crucial to enable families to thrive without the need for level 2 and above interventions, i.e. to succeed within the universal offer (ie the 'green circle'). Information which is easily accessible to Families to support them in their decision making and thus avoid the need for them to refer into the Early Help System is key. The Family Information Service (FIS) is such a resource, and as the EHAB recognises the importance of such, a FIS representative sits on the EHAB working with partners to see how FIS can be improved to ensure families can more effectively self-serve.
- 1.12 The board held a workshop as one of its meetings to consider potential Local Family Partnership (LFP) areas. The board consulted maps that highlighted Children Centre's and their reach areas, the Ward boundaries within Woking, the geographical positions of the Schools within Woking, demographic data for the borough and information from Health Services and Police colleagues. The EHAB concluded that LFP areas were not easily identifiable without additional Early Help data (from the MASH and EH Hub). Indeed it was acknowledged that once data is obtained, that there may be certain needs that may be better achieved with task and finish groups rather than setting geographical sub areas within the borough. The EHA Board concluded that the model of delivery is best set after the priority areas for action have been agreed.
- 1.13 The board has agreed an approach to build the priority list of actions as the needs in Woking become clearer. However the EHAB did discuss some initial emerging themes including the effect of Domestic Abuse on young people and their families. To this end the Board discussed this issue at its last meeting in January 2018 with the chair of the North West Domestic abuse Forum and lead officer from Woking Borough Council in order that there is one plan supported by the EHA Board. The Board is strongly in favour of having coordinated complimentary plans and actions wherever possible. It is not the intention of the EHA Board to set up parallel action plans to those that already exist, but rather work jointly with existing plans to enhance the offer.
- 1.14 The board are also to consider the Early Help need in relationship to wellbeing and mental health as this area is also being highlighted as a need and was also underlined in the case studies discussed at the board too.
- 1.15 The actions already being implemented include joining up local agencies and practitioners to ensure greater effectiveness, use of resources, knowledge and skills. As such the existing Woking Youth Practitioners Forum has now been transformed into the Early Help Practitioner forum. As a result members of the Forum have commented that they have a better understanding of who else works in the Borough; stronger and more trusting relationships are being developed; there is increased knowledge and awareness of what the 'local' offer is, and as a result members feel more confident in asking for help from other agencies.
- 1.16 As part of the County Councils restructuring of Surrey family Services it is proposed to have a joint SCC and Woking Borough Council post as Youth Work lead across the borough.

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- 1.17 Each school has recently had an early help nominated person linked to them to help with the liaison regarding early help.
- 1.18 The key challenge for the board at this time is the identification of the key issues that are making demands upon the Early Help system. It is anticipated this will be rectified fairly easily with the development of the MASH and Early Help structures and reporting systems.

Surrey County Council's role

- 1.19 SCC will align its resources to directly support this new partnership Early Help System in Surrey. Although a key aspect of the Local Family Partnership is that it allows for local flexibility, it is also important that there is countywide consistency in relation to key Early Help services provided by the County Council. In overall terms, this will be ensured through standard structures and processes for County Council services across Surrey, as well as developing transparent, needs-led approaches to allocate resources in districts and boroughs in response to the identified level of need. Some examples of the indicators that could be employed include the: level of deprivation; number of referrals to MASH; and number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 1.20 There are three main strands of the County Council's contribution to Early Help that form part of the Early Help transformation. These are:
 - a. Surrey Family Services;
 - b. Surrey's Children's Centres; and
 - c. Externally-commissioned contracts and grants for local services.
- 1.21 SCC's in-house delivery of Early Help comes primarily through Surrey Family Services. In May 2017 Family Services brought together a number of different teams and programmes including: Youth Support Service; Community Youth Work; Family Support Programme; Children's Centres; practitioners from the Early Years and Childcare Service; and the Early Help Co-ordination Hubs, which together coordinate and deliver a significant proportion of the Early Help across the county. Importantly, Family Services also has responsibility for young people identified as requiring a statutory Child in Need social work service and those over the age of eleven who require an Edge of Care service. As part of the new Early Help operating model, Family Services staffing will be restructured in the course of 2018 and a new locally integrated youth work offer will be developed with districts and borough, the voluntary sector and young people who use the services.
- 1.22 SCC also commissions Surrey's 58 children's centres, which are delivered by schools and voluntary sector providers. In the course of 2018 the County Council will work with current providers, wider stakeholders and the public to re-shape a new children's centre offer to commence in April 2019. In developing the new model, we are committed to working with our partners in schools and the voluntary sector, who have a track record of delivering high quality early years services, to design a model which fulfils the children's centre core purpose around health, well-being and early education.
- 1.23 Through a new model for children's centres, we will continue to support children to have the best start in life, whilst also integrating services delivered into the

wider 0-19 model. This may well involve developing greater flexibility of staffing at a Local Family Partnership and/or borough or district level to ensure services are resilient and resources are deployed where they are most needed. It is also envisaged that this new model of delivery will free providers from the requirements of children centre 'designation' as mandated in (now suspended) Department for Education guidance. Many local authorities already choosing this route to afford greater local flexibility to provide the services that are required to meet need. Through better integrating the children's centre offer with the work of other services, freeing providers to focus upon outcomes rather than process, and requiring children's centres to work together across a district/borough, the declining SCC revenue resource can go further in providing Early Help to meet the local needs of children and families.

- 1.24 Finally, SCC commissions a range of preventative and family support services from external partners, including jointly commissioned domestic abuse outreach services, primarily from the local voluntary sector. SCC's commissioning intentions for children are described in SCC's Child First Commissioning Plan 2017. The Early Help services will be recommissioned from April 2019 onwards as part of a joined-up pathway for families to meet local needs. The Early Help Commissioning Plan is currently being developed with partners, drawing on local priorities as identified by Early Help Advisory Boards with a view to publication in March 2018.

Working across Programmes: There are many interdependencies between the Early Help Transformation and other change programmes ongoing across the Children Schools and Families directorate. The work to enhance Surrey's Early Help offer is an important component of the Safeguarding Improvement Programme and has already seen considerable progress in the ability to step-up to and step-down from Children's Services social work intervention. Work is also ongoing to align Early Help and SEND Transformation Programmes to ensure SEND services are embedded in the Local Family Partnership model. A further significant opportunity exists through ensuring Local Family Partnerships properly integrate with the health sector particularly through alignment of the Early Help Transformation with the Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) for health.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 A summary local early help needs analysis for Woking, based on the data we have available, has been attached as Annex 1. This data informed local conversations about what is most important in Woking to identify locations of Local Family Partnerships and local early help priorities.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The Early Help Advisory Board has identified that the Local Family Partnerships in Woking will be reconsidered at a future meeting based on further detailed analysis of need and feedback from partners and young people.
- a. The geographic area will therefore initially be the whole Borough at this time, Local Family Partnerships have not been ruled out with the option of implementing Local Family Partnerships in the future.
- 3.2 In addition, they have identified the following key local early help priorities:

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- a. Domestic abuse and supporting the existing Domestic Abuse forum plan and its development.
 - b. Increasing knowledge and use of the Family Information Service
 - c. Gathering existing feedback and also undertaking pilot survey of young people to gather their feedback to inform future priorities.
 - d. Developing the local knowledge between practitioners locally including the transition of the youth practitioners' forum into the Early Help Practitioners forum.
 - e. Taking opportunities as they arise to develop further integrated working
- 3.3 The Joint Committee is invited to provide feedback to the Early Help Advisory Board in relation to the local priorities they have identified to date.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Between November 2016 and March 2017 Surrey County Council and the 11 District and Borough Councils led on Local Early Help Partnership Events, engaging over 1,000 practitioners and other stakeholders. These events resulted in a shared development of the vision for Early Help Transformation Programme and the Local Family Partnership model and agreement to establish local Early Help Advisory Boards, the boards Terms of reference has been attached as Annex 2. These local Early Help Advisory Boards help to ensure a locally led implementation of the Early Help model. Initial activities include deciding priorities for their area including potential locations of Local Family Partnerships.
- 4.2 The board held a workshop as one of its meetings to consider potential Local Family Partnership areas. It considered Children Centre reach areas, Ward boundaries, the geographical positions of the Schools, demographic data for the borough, and information from Health and Police colleagues. The board will reconsider the Local Family Partnership areas following further work on the needs to be addressed.
- 4.3 The Joint Committee has identified three committee members to sit on the Early Help Advisory Board, to provide member input into local discussions and a link back to the committee. The members identified are Cllr Colin Kemp, Cllr Ayesha Azad, Cllr Deborah Hughes. It is intended that, as per recommendation iii, that these members will continue in their role for the remainder of 2017/18, and for 2018/19, subject to any changes to representatives on the Joint Committee that may arise in the new municipal year.
- 4.4 At a county level, the Early Help Transformation Programme Board, chaired by the Lead Member for Children, brings together senior partnership stakeholders on a six-weekly basis to oversee and shape key decisions relating to the transformation plans.
- 4.5 In September and October 2017, a series of workshops were held to further develop the blueprint for the Local Family Partnership model.

- 4.6 The Early Help Case for Change was considered and endorsed by the Children and Education Select Committee on Friday 17 November 2017.
- 4.7 A Surrey Family Services staff consultation for County Council staff started in January 2018 to consider proposals for service restructure.
- 4.8 Further partner and user engagement and subsequent public consultation will be required in 2018 to implement changes to community services resulting from the new Early Help operating model.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no financial and value for money implications in relation to this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT:

- 6.1 Needs identification. It is anticipated that the needs that are demanding Early Help Services in Woking will be identifiable in the near future with the build-up of actual data. The risk at this time is that this data is either not available or is not sufficiently detailed to give a clear picture of the needs. The risk is therefore that the EHAB either does not agree on the priorities to take forward or agrees priorities without sufficient confidence that they are the correct priorities. The Board has agreed that taking no actions is not acceptable and therefore is mitigating this risk by agreeing to build the priority plan as evidence emerges and to prioritise known need areas e.g. Domestic Abuse, better use of Family Information Service and more effective use of existing staff and resources across the borough.
- 6.2 There is a continued risk that some partners across the Early Help System may not engage in the new delivery model. This has however been mitigated to a significant degree by the level of consultation that has taken place at a local level; by the establishment of a Local EHAB and also the transformation of the Youth Practitioners Forum into Early Help Forum. Ongoing continued communication with the local network will however be essential.
- 6.3 Sustainability of Local Family Partnerships – whilst this might be considered a risk at this stage, until the EHAB have decided on Local Family Partnership Areas for Woking and consequently the scope and scale of such LFP's it is not easy to quantify. The position will need to be considered as part of the EHAB's decisions around establishment of LFP's.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 Whilst still in their development phases, it is clear that both the EHA Board and EH Practitioners Forum have already resulted in more effective joint working across agencies. The continued development of this shared ambition with partners will only increase the effective Early Help offer in Woking including greater use of agencies resources leading to more local and effective services to the communities of Woking.

- 7.2 The Local Family Partnership model is about building the resilience and wellbeing of individual children and young people, and the families and communities that they are part of.

8. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 A programme Equality Impact Assessment is being developed which will include all the key areas of the programme and their potential impacts on residents and staff. Evidence will be gathered during key consultation periods with the staff and public which are planned for 2018:
- a. A Family Services staff consultation taking place in January 2018 will develop a key summary of impacts and actions relating to the impacts of the restructure. The initial EIA inputs to date based on early staff engagement and engagement with other stakeholders including the unions on the restructure can be seen in the attached first draft of the Programme EIA.
 - b. Once approval to commence work on the Children’s Centre project has begun an EIA will be developed to provide a key summary of the impacts and actions relating to the potential re-design of Children’s Centres.
 - c. An EIA has been drafted to support the re-commissioning of external Early Help services in Surrey.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Set out below.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report/
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	Set out below.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Set out below.
Public Health	Set out below.
Human Resource/Training and Development	Set out below.

9.1 Crime and Disorder implications

Through establishing new Local Family Partnerships in Woking, partners will work together better to prevent young people becoming involved in offending and anti-social behaviour and be able to provide holistic support to families where crime is an issue.

9.2 Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

Effective Early Help has the potential to reduce the negative outcomes and experiences that can lead to children coming into care and thereby has the potential to reduce the number of children in the Council's care.

9.3 Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

The new Early Help operating model supports all partners to achieve key improvements in safeguarding vulnerable children. As the parents of these children are also often known to Surrey Adult Services the programme is being developed with colleagues in Adult Services and will have additional benefits for vulnerable adults through the development of Local Family Partnerships.

Ongoing developments to ensure that the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Early Help Co-ordination Hub processes are integrated will have an improved impact on the timeliness and effectiveness of case management for vulnerable children and families. MASH and Early Help Co-ordination Hub processes have recently been reviewed to support quality, consistency of decision-making and provide more timely access to Early Help services. The programme has been developed to enhance the services available both to prevent children requiring statutory intervention where this can appropriately be achieved and to provide a robust Early Help network to support children stepping down from social work and other specialist services.

9.4 Public Health implications

The Early Help proposals have been developed with Public Health colleagues and support the County Council's Public Health prevention priorities for children and families.

9.5 Human Resource/Training and Development

The proposal to have a joint post between SCC and WBC for Youth work will require work on a new Job profile and agreement on the pay and reward structure as well as reporting and shared governance arrangements. The work to effect this is nearing completion with the intention for the recruitment to the post to commence in the near future.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 10.1 The Joint Committee is asked to note the overall proposals to develop the early help system in Surrey, as well as the summary of proposed changes to Surrey County Council's contribution to early help

The Joint Committee is asked to:

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- i) Provide feedback on the latest Early Help developments in Woking including the emerging early help priorities for re-commissioning.
- ii) Note that the Woking Early Help Advisory Board (EHAB) will reconsider Local Family Partnerships areas for Woking at a subsequent EHAB meeting.
- iii) Endorse the Joint Committee representatives to the local Early Help Advisory Board, for the remainder of 2017/18 and 2018/19 subject to any changes to representatives on the Joint Committee that may arise in the new municipal year
- iv) Note the joint work between SCC and Woking Borough Council regarding the proposed combined Youth Work lead post for Woking to ensure best use of resources and a coordinated approach across the Borough and wider discussions taking place between the authorities on fuller integration of Family Services Teams.

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 11.1 The Early Help Strategy will be presented to the County Council's Cabinet at the February meeting.
- 11.2 Feedback from the Joint Committee will be taken away by both County and Borough Lead Officers to be shared with the EHAB and commissioners across different public sector organisations.
- 11.3 Members are invited to participate in the public consultation running during February and March in relation to new proposals for Surrey County Council's external Early Help grants and contracts. This will inform what grants and contracts are re-tendered during 2018 for delivery from April 2019.
- 11.4 Members are invited to contribute to public consultation later in the year in relation to changes to other aspects of the early help system. In particular, a public consultation about proposals for changes to children's centres is planned for July, August and September 2018. The scope of this consultation may also be broadened out to include other aspects of early help provision.
- 11.5 Surrey Family Services will be launching its new staffing structure by October 2018 which will reflect new ways of working required within the Early Help system.
- 11.6 Members input and support in building the Local Family Partnership Networks will be valued throughout the first phase of implementation in 2018.
- 11.7 It is currently planned that the County Council's Cabinet will be asked to make a number of decisions relating to Early Help transformation in November 2018, with plans in place to implement any service changes by 1 April 2019.

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Consulted:

Early Help Advisory Boards

Members of the Early Help Transformation Board

Local partners and stakeholder

Surrey County Council Commissioners

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Borough/District Needs Assessment

Annex 2 – Early Help Advisory Board Terms of Reference.

Sources/background papers:

- Not applicable
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