

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE (EPSOM & EWELL)



DATE: 12th March 2018

LEAD OFFICER: Richard Leary

SUBJECT: Early Help Priorities for Epsom & Ewell

DIVISION: All Epsom and Ewell Wards

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Surrey County Council has been working together with partners across the County and in Epsom and Ewell 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 this vision, 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. This is based on an understanding that it is better to identify and respond to need and signals of risk for children and families before these become more difficult to reverse.

To achieve this we are bringing together all partners who care about children and young people in local communities to provide the best possible support, through new Local Family Partnerships (LFPs). 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.

This report provides local Members with an update on the new model that Surrey County Council and partners have been developing for early help for the county overall and how this is progressing locally in Epsom and Ewell.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Epsom & Ewell) is asked to:

- (i) Provide feedback on the latest early help developments in Epsom and Ewell, including proposed early help priorities for re-commissioning and the location of Local Family Partnerships.
- (ii) Endorse the Local Committee representatives to the local Early Help Advisory Board, for the remainder of 2017/18 and 2018/19.

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 Local 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, Surrey County Council 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 we and other partners, who value Surrey's children as much as we do, work together that we can 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, Surrey County Council 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, the Council 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 teams.

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- 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 – Local Family Partnerships. There is collective agreement between many partners 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.
- 1.8 Local Family Partnerships 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.



- 1.9 The figure above is a visual representation of the sources of support for families that exist within communities and therefore Local Family Partnerships. The central (blue circle) represents targeted interventions, which tend to focus on particular individuals or families, and the outer (green) circle represents organisations that contribute to universal support in a community. The County Council has responsibility for ensuring that a cohesive and co-ordinated Early Help offer is in place with partners who make up the 'blue circle' of targeted Early Help. The 'green circle' is led by District and Borough Councils and is fundamentally about a place-based approach to ensuring that the local environment, infrastructure and services are conducive to family well-being. In this model strong partnerships are required at a local level between universal services, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the local authorities. The particular opportunity within Local Family Partnerships will be through

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developing effective local relationships between services that will enable the easy movement between targeted support for children and families at times of particular need and back into the 'green circle' of preventative support (and vice versa as required).

- 1.10 Working through the Early Help Advisory Board in Epsom and Ewell (terms of reference included in Annex 2), we have identified the locations of Local Family Partnerships and a number of key local priorities that will inform the future development of the local early help system. These priorities will specifically feed into the external re-commissioning of early help services that is currently underway, to award new grants and contracts to local providers from April 2019.
- 1.11 The Early Help offer is steadily developing within our Borough. Partners are more aware of each other than before, and have easier access to what people can offer our residents and communities. The introduction of a single Borough Allocation Panel enables fast and appropriate allocation of the more complex families that have been referred through the MASH or Early Help Hub. These Panels have been well attended by partners and there is an energy and willingness to offer support in as practicable way as possible. Examples of recent Early Help work within the Borough can be found in Annex 4.

We anticipate that once established, the Local Family Partnership groups will reduce the number of referrals reaching the central MASH/EH Hub as issues not requiring a safeguarding response will be identified earlier, and support will be sourced more locally without the need for referring to a central point. This will enable a more timely response, and allow safeguarding resources to be focused on those most at risk of coming to harm.

Surrey County Council's role

- 1.12 Surrey County Council 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.
- 1.13 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.
- 1.14 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 to align to the Local Family Partnership model in the course of 2018 and a new locally integrated youth work offer will be developed with districts and boroughs, the voluntary sector, and young people who use the services.

- 1.15 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.
- 1.16 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 Local Family Partnership 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's 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.
- 1.17 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.
- 1.18 **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 Epsom and Ewell, based on the data we have available, has been attached as Annex 1. This data informed local conversations about what is most important in Epsom and Ewell 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 Epsom and Ewell will cover the following areas:

- a. The Early Help Advisory Board has approved two Local Family Partnerships to be established – Epsom and Ewell North, and Epsom and Ewell South, the exact boundaries are still to be finalised, but it was agreed that we would consider the Watersedge and Longmead neighbourhoods for the initial focus of activity and then expand the scope to include all communities within those reach areas.

Cllr Dallen has offered to be an initial host for both LFP's, working alongside Cllr Mason supporting the Epsom and Ewell North group. Work is currently being undertaken to identify potential partners and organise the first meetings.

- 3.2 In addition, they have identified the following key local early help priorities:

- a. Please refer to Annex 3. for details of the Epsom and Ewell Early Help Plan, Key Outcomes, and Priorities for Development.

- b. A brief list of priorities would contain:

*Establish the Local Family Partnerships to develop neighbourhood focus and priorities:

- Jointly “own” the needs of the areas.
- Jointly “own” our families.
- Develop the joined up approach to parenting support/provision.

*Develop and promote voluntary accessed mental health support for teenagers and adults – Haven Provisions.

*Develop a strategy and practice regarding Youth Crime/ASB/Weapons – initial focus will be carrying of weapons.

*Engage with community and faith partners to examine the specific need of positive activities for primary age children.

*Deliver a local information campaign to reduce the risk of families being negatively impacted by benefit changes.

*Develop “safe routes” in to services via the community sector.

- 3.3 The Local Committee is invited to provide feedback to the Early Help Advisory Board in relation to the local priorities they have identified.

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. 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 locations of local family partnerships.
- 4.2 There have been two stakeholder events take place in the Borough, the first in November 16 and the second in Feb of 2017. These were the precursor to developing a sense of direction for the Borough as relates to our Early Help plan moving forward. A number of partners were engaged with in order to develop the draft Early Help Plan which was discussed and developed at the first Early Help Advisory Board in November of 2017. A second Advisory Board took place in Jan 18 which focused on establishing our vision for success and has begun the process of agreeing key milestones and success indicators.
- 4.3 The Local Committee was not able to formally nominate two committee members to sit on the Early Help Advisory Board, to provide member input into local discussions and a link back to the committee (this was due to a technicality). An informal approach was made to the Chair who agreed with a proposal to approach members who had most recently attended many of the Youth Task Group Meetings as an interim arrangement. The members identified were Jan Mason, Neil Dallen and Lucy Dallen. It is hoped that these members will continue in their role for the remainder of 2017/18, and for 2018/19.
- 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. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:
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- 6.1 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.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 It is intended that the communities who will first benefit from the development of the Local Family Partnerships will experience:
- 1) people having an improved knowledge of what support is available in the community.
 - 2) being able to access support in an easier and more timely manner. Ultimately we would intend that any needs that don't require a safeguarding response could be identified and effectively responded to within those Local Family Partnership groups.
 - 3) residents and those who access support will have a voice that informs how services are co-ordinated and developed. It is an explicit intention that service users and community activists are central to the process of testing assumptions made by the professionals network, and are key to recognising local need and evaluating impact within the community.
- 7.2 The Local Family Partnership model is about building the resilience and wellbeing of individual children and young people, the family, and communities that they are part of.

8. 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	Set out below.

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vulnerable children and adults	
Public Health	Set out below.

8.1 Crime and Disorder implications

Through establishing new Local Family Partnerships in Epsom and Ewell, 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.

8.2 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.

8.3 Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

The new Early Help operating model supports the Council 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.

8.4 Public Health implications

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

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 The Local 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

9.2 **The Local Committee (Epsom & Ewell) is asked to:**

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- a. Provide feedback on the latest early help developments in Epsom and Ewell, including proposed early help priorities for re-commissioning and the location of Local Family Partnerships
- b. Endorse the Local Committee representatives to the local Early Help Advisory Board, for the remainder of 2017/18 and 2018/19

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 Members input and support in building the Local Family Partnership Networks will be valued throughout the first phase of implementation in 2018.
- 10.4 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 Needs Assessment.
Annex 2 – Early Help Advisory Board Terms of Reference.
Annex 3 – Early Help Priorities and Plan.
Annex 4 – Examples of Early Help Work.

Sources/background papers:

Not applicable
