

**To the Chair and Members of the
HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**REPORT ON THE PROPOSED MULTIAGENCY EARLY HELP STRATEGY AND
MODEL, AND ON FUTURE OPTIONS FOR CYPS ASSETS – CHILDREN CENTRES
AND YOUTH CENTRES**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 The HWB has previously received a report on the need to improve early help support and intervention, and the steps that were being taken to address this. Since the previous report, the work has progressed significantly and it is anticipated that a report will be going to the Council's Cabinet on 16th July to recommend options for consultation. This report summarises the current position.
- 2 As members of the HWB know, the Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership is looking to develop a multiagency early help strategy and delivery model, which will ensure a consistent, high quality, partnership early help response for children, young people and families. Investment in early help services will allow us to identify emerging need and to intervene earlier, reducing demand to statutory social care services. This will not only reduce the overall cost of provision but also, crucially, improve outcomes for children, young people and families in Doncaster.
- 3 There is a clear link between the changes to early help provision and the future of children centres and youth provision and centres across the borough. The work to develop early help and the development of options to reduce the number of centres are therefore being brought forward at the same time so they can be considered together.
- 4 Over the next 12 months we will develop the shared strategy, common approach and model in more detail, within the Council, with our partners and with children, young people, families and communities in the borough. We will finalise the detailed operational arrangements with the Trust and monitor closely the impact on the MTFs savings targets. Our ambition is to enable every Doncaster child to reach their full potential. We know that many already achieve a great deal but we need to 'narrow the gap', by improving the outcomes of those that currently achieve less well. We see Early Help as an approach to supporting families whenever they are in need, this applies to children and young people up to the age of 19 and in some cases up to 25 years old.
- 5 The key aims are to:
 - Better understand those families where children may be at risk of not reaching their full potential and sharing the concerns and ownership of the solutions (earlier identification)
 - Build a relationship with families as early as possible and work with them to create a family environment that provides children with the best possible life chances and prevents problems from escalating (earlier help)

- Reduce the number of families requiring interventions from statutory social care services, for example improving support for children on 'the edge of care'
 - Build resilience within families and communities, enabling them to support themselves within their local environment
- 6 To support the delivery of the proposed early help model and to comply with the corporate asset review a number of changes will be proposed to the delivery of services through CYPS assets. The recommendations emerging from the asset review will be aimed at ensuring that there is a strong infrastructure from which to deliver effective early help services within each locality area. It will be proposed that the current children's centre boundaries are de-designated and a model of delivering children's centre services is developed across the four locality areas, building up from the sixteen collaborative areas. The review will also make recommendations with regards the arrangements for delivering youth services, as part of the integrated delivery model through the four areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 The purpose of this report is to:
- Update the HWB on progress in improving early help and to seek feedback from the Board on the proposed early help strategy and model

BACKGROUND

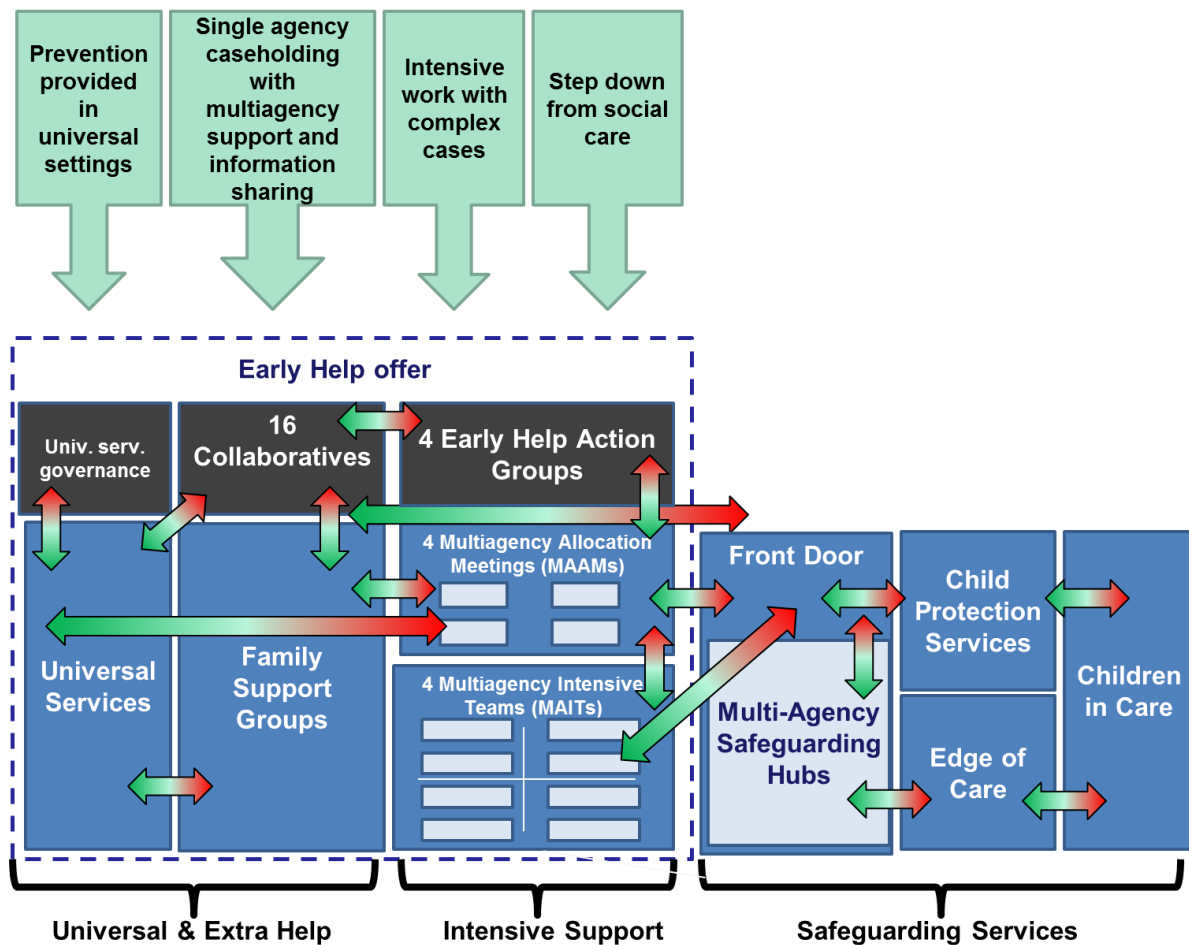
- 8 Early help has been a priority for the Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership since 2013, with an overall focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and families. The Partnership has had a specific focus on creating Stronger Families, taking a multiagency approach to meeting need and building skills and resilience. There are various examples of effective multiagency working in Doncaster, through the aforementioned Stronger Families Programme as well as initiatives such as the 'One Team Working' programme, a major strategic partnership for creating integrating council and health services in Doncaster.
- 9 There are a number of local and national drivers which resulted in the partnership focus on early help. At the local level both the OFSTED inspection in 2012 and the Lord Carlisle Review highlighted the importance of well-coordinated multiagency action to prevent escalation of problems for children, young people and families. Early identification and provision of help is a key feature of the new Ofsted inspection framework for safeguarding and services to children in care.
- 10 Investment in early help and meeting needs earlier, through lower cost provision is one of the ways CYPS will meet its savings targets.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11 There were two main options considered with regards to the new early help strategy and model:
1. Duplicate an early help strategy and model which has already been

implemented elsewhere and held up as an example of best practice

2. Develop a bespoke solution for Doncaster, based on local factors and influenced by a range of best practice models that have been developed elsewhere
- 12 The recommended option is number 2, developing a bespoke solution for Doncaster. We are proposing a partnership approach on an area based model. It will offer a range of single and multiagency services from the preventative universal end to the most intensive work with complex families and step down cases from social care. This is highlighted in the diagram below:



- 13 The detail of how this model will work with children and families and with partner agencies is set out in more detail in the 'Multiagency Early Help Strategy and Delivery Model'. There is a multi-agency implementation group in place chaired by the A.D. children and families. The main elements of the model are:

Universal services (including education, childcare, parenting provision, advice services, play services, health visiting, school nursing, GP provision, policing and, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations). These organisations will deliver more targeted services where possible to meet needs at the earliest stage, for example school nurses delivering low level emotional health and wellbeing services where necessary. They will also work with the lowest levels of need within the Stronger Families cohort.

Locality collaboratives will ensure families get support at the earliest possible opportunity. Universal services will play an important role in spotting and reacting to early signs of issues within families and also emerging trends and issues within localities. Facilities used as a base for universal services will also provide local settings for targeted interventions, for example parenting programmes being delivered through schools or Youth Centres working with Looked After Children.

Extra Help services will deliver targeted interventions to families with emerging needs and will generally be led by a single agency, lead professional or individual who has a strong relationship with the family. The lead professional's role is to act as a single point of contact, advocate for the family and to take ownership for all agencies meeting their needs by leading Team Around the Family meetings and co-ordinating work from across the partnership. In the event that needs escalate and require a response from the intensive support teams, the lead professional will be responsible for completing a family early help assessment and referring the case to the Multiagency Allocation Meeting (MAAM). These staff will work with medium levels of need within the Stronger Families cohort.

The Family Support Groups will act as a forum for professionals to share information, concerns and seek advice about how best to manage cases, and tackle non-engagement. The Family Support Groups will also act as a forum for practitioners to discuss risk and cases where there is potential for escalation to the intensive support services. These groups will link to the locality collaboratives.

The Intensive Help Service will offer intensive multiagency interventions with the highest and most complex need families and will be delivered by the Multiagency Intensive Teams (MAITs). Staff within the Intensive Help Service will seek to build resilience within families through intensive interventions to stabilise and deescalate need in families as well as providing shorter term crisis intervention, especially for families where the child is on the edge of care. This work will include the most complex cases within the Stronger Families cohort and services will be commissioned from these teams to provide this.

For this model to be successful it is important that there are strong links between different parts of the system. The model has been designed with a layer of practitioner support at the universal, extra help and intensive support levels, overseen by strategic management arrangements which will help resolve blockages, monitor performance information and spot trends of emerging needs, which will be used to inform service priorities and commissioning needs.

In ensuring strong links between different parts of the system it is important that artificial barriers and blockages are not created. Effective early help is dependent on children and families being able to access advice and help as soon as needs emerge to prevent escalation. It is crucial that escalated, stepped down and new cases are able to access the most appropriate advice and services quickly so that risk can be managed and families are supported effectively. This will give families and partners confidence in the system and ensure that risk is managed at the most appropriate level.

- 14 Work is also underway to consider the options for the children and youth centres. Three main options are being explored with regards to **children's centres**:

1. Designate four super-centres based on the area locality boundaries. This option would create four large children's centres with individual designation. They would each be Ofsted inspected separately and be given an individual grade and report. These would be the North Locality Children's Centre, East Locality Children's Centre, Central Locality Children's Centre and South Locality Children's Centre. The services would be delivered through a hub and spoke model.
 2. Designate individual children's centres in to clusters based on the four area locality boundaries. This option would create four large children's centre clusters, one for each of the four locality areas. The four clusters would be made up of individually designated children's centres, which would align with the boundaries of the collaborative areas. For example North Locality Children's Centre Cluster would be made up of four designated children's centres: Collaborative One Children's Centre, Collaborative Two Children's Centre, Collaborative Three Children's Centre and Collaborative Sixteen Children's Centre.
 3. Designate individual children's centres. This option would be a similar model to the current arrangements, with individually designated children's centres. The boundaries of the current model would be changed to align with the collaborative areas to create sixteen individual centres. These could continue to be managed through the locality area model, but would require a designated lead for each centre for Ofsted requirements.
- 15 In relation to the youth service, an initial review of the delivery of youth services was progressed earlier this year aimed at clarifying the current service model, which covers both targeted provision to meet identified specific needs, and open access universal services provided in the youth centres. This has assisted with the disaggregation of the youth service, with the targeted element moving to the Children's Trust and the universal provision remaining with the council. Further work is required to determine future delivery options to best meet local need. Implementation of the Early Help strategy and staffing restructure will mean a reduction in the 'universal' offer and more targeted services to meet identified needs. We are now progressing a further review which will build on the previous work and will consider options for youth provision to be commissioned from private or third sector partners in the future.
- 16 There are 2 options being explored with regards to **youth assets**:
1. Hub and Spoke Delivery Model in the Locality Area. The preferred model for children's centre services is to designate the four locality areas as individual centres. It is proposed that youth services are also planned and delivered aligned to these boundaries.
 2. Collaborative Area Model, aligning youth service delivery to the sixteen collaborative boundaries. This would have the advantage of giving more focus on the needs of individual communities and support the more effective targeting of services in these communities.
- 17 As various aspects of multiagency working are already underway, it is important to build on existing good practice, such as the co-location of health and council staff in children's centres. The new early help model looks at how this can be

built upon and improved to ensure robust, high quality delivery throughout the borough.

CONSULTATION

- 18 The report on early help and assets will go to Cabinet on 16th July with recommendations on options to consult on. It is proposed to undertake two separate consultations. One will focus on the strategy and model while the other will concentrate on the proposed changes to CYPS assets.
- 19 The early help strategy and model was developed with significant input from partners, through forums such as the Early Help Steering Group, collaboratives meetings and specific workshops looking at DMBC's relationship with the VCS. As a result the model has evolved with partners and already includes significant input and thinking from a range of organisations. To ensure the success of the strategy and model we are planning a period of structured consultation on the existing proposals, including engagement with some stakeholders we have not yet engaged with, such as local G.P.s.
- 20 During the consultation period we will be able to develop more detail about what the detail of the model, for example the number of people who will be in the MAITs, the agencies they will come from and the buildings they will be based in.
- 21 A key element of consultation will be engagement with children, young people and families. For early help to be a success in Doncaster we must ensure it is accessible to and designed around the citizens who will use it. Listening to and understanding the views of children and families will provide insight about what will make the new early help approach effective and allow us to adopt our approach in line with this. We plan to test our overall approach and design as well as more nuanced elements of the model such as language with children and families to ensure it encourages engagement and will help meet needs.
- 22 Under the Childcare Act 2006 local authorities have a legal duty to plan services with health commissioners and Jobcentre Plus to secure sufficient early childhood services made available in an integrated way in communities. Any proposal to make significant changes to the children's centre infrastructure requires authorisation from the Secretary of State for the Department for Education (DfE) following full consultation with communities and statutory partners.
- 23 The Local Authority together with statutory partners will be required to satisfy the Secretary of State that there are appropriate arrangements in place to provide early childhood services delivered in an integrated way to the families served by the centre that is closing or being reviewed. DfE would need to be notified of the de-designation and redevelopment of the children's centre model and this will need to be recorded on the national database to ensure Ofsted are aware of these changes.
- 24 Consultation with residents, service users, partners and staff will need to be undertaken in line with the requirements set out in the Sure Start Statutory Guidance (April 2013). A detailed action plan for consultation is required, to ensure changes are made which reflect the needs of partners, the people that use them and the communities they are part of. This should be reflective of both

children's centre services and youth provision, and the same rationale for consultation and engagement should be applied to both.

- 25 Meetings with partners have started in relation to the proposals set out. The next step is to review the proposals in line with partners' feedback and present the proposals to the collaboratives for their input. Once changes are agreed in principle consultation with service users and communities should commence, as should discussion with DfE about the model being developed.

Eleanor Brazil
Director, Children and Young People's Service