



# Doncaster Council

To the Chair and Members of the  
Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## Demand Management – Local Solutions

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Nuala Fennelly	Hexthorpe & Balby North & Conisbrough Wards	Yes

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the panel with a briefing on the prototype Local Solutions Model for accessing Early Help in the Community. This report will set out the model, functions and partnership approach to addressing needs at the earliest opportunity through strength-based practice.
2. The prototype was established following findings from the report Reducing demand at the Front Door to social care by the Innovation Unit, December 2018, which outlined the need for Early Help to be rooted in place, community-led and strengths based (see Appendix 1).

## EXEMPT REPORT

3. There are no exemptions

## RECOMMENDATIONS

4. The Panel is asked to give consideration to and comment on the prototype Local Solutions Model for accessing Early Help in the Community.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

5. There is no current community-based multi-agency operating model where needs can be explored with the individual/family or their practitioner. This means that some families do not access help at the earliest stage and their needs become more complex and embedded, therefore requiring significant resources to address; or, escalate directly into children's social Care. The current model for Early Help is process-driven and can result in a timeframe of forty five days before intervention takes place, often resulting in families disengaging and going into crisis.

6. The Local Solutions model of community-led help will enable emergent needs to be swiftly understood and addressed through support, information advice, guidance and community connectivity. The Local Solutions model will bring about a new way of working built on strong multi-agency partnerships and the strength-based approach, which will enable a consistent approach and the sharing of, skills, knowledge and expertise. The model offers a person-centred holistic approach, with more focus on wellbeing and prevention. The approach is proactive not reactive; community needs are identified as incidents happen and are swiftly known about because services are rooted in the community. Community needs inform planning: resources are placed where they are most needed. Individuals and families only tell their story once because there is “no wrong door”. Signposting and connecting up to the community will be a key focus enabling conversation before crisis.

## **BACK GROUND –THE CURRENT PICTURE**

### **Early Help:**

7. From Jul-18 to Jun-19 there were 6,455 enquiries into Early Help. The screening outcome for these enquiries were as follows:

<b>Screening: Outcome</b>	<b>Doncaster</b>		<b>Denaby</b>		<b>Hexthorpe</b>	
	No. of enquiries	%	No. of enquiries	%	No. of enquiries	%
Continue with Universal Services	3,042	47.1%	62	38.5%	68	65.4%
Information and Advice	34	0.5%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%
Link to existing Early Help Case	830	12.9%	22	13.7%	2	1.9%
Progress to Early Help Pathway	2,200	34.1%	64	39.8%	28	26.9%
Screening to be completed	56	0.9%	1	0.6%	1	1.0%
Transfer to Children's Social Care	289	4.5%	11	6.8%	5	4.8%
Unknown	4	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,455</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the table above the enquiries for Doncaster overall, the Local Solutions Group could take up is:

47% of continue with universal services and .5% of Information and Advice. **This would result in a 47.5% reduction of enquires received to the Early Help Hub.**

**Of the 34.1% progress to early help pathway the local Solutions community, based model would seek to reduce this figure by early identification of need and address at universal level.**

From the table above for Denaby - continue with universal services 38.5% and .6% Information and Advice .**This would result in a reduction a total of 39.1% of enquires received to the Early Help Hub.** Of the 39.8% progress to early help pathway the local Solutions community, based model would seek to reduce this figure by early identification of need and address at universal level.

From the table above for Hexthorpe- continue with universal services 65.4% this **would result in a reduction 65.4% of enquires received to the Early Help Hub.** Of the 26.9% progress to early help pathway the local Solutions community, based model would seek to reduce this figure by early identification of need and address at universal level.

During the same period 2,061 cases were allocated within Early Help, the re-referral rates for these cases were:

	Doncaster		Denaby		Hexthorpe	
Allocations	2,061		54		28	
Re-referrals (previously 'CLOSED' in the last 12 months)	365	17.7%	9	16.7%	3	10.7%
Re-referrals (previously 'ALLOCATED' in the last 12 months)	183	8.9%	5	9.3%	1	3.6%

#### Children's Social Care:

8. From Aug-18 to Jul-19 there were 4,567 referrals into Children's Social Care. The step outcome for these referrals were as follows:

Step Outcome	Doncaster		Denaby		Hexthorpe	
	No. of enquiries	%	No. of enquiries	%	No. of enquiries	%
C&F Assessment	4385	96.0%	135	95.1%	103	97.2%
CP Transfer from OLA	38	0.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No Further Action	24	0.5%	2	1.4%	0	0.0%
Not recorded	3	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
OT Assessment	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Information & Advice	63	1.4%	2	1.4%	3	2.8%
Referral to Other Agency	9	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Transfer to Early Help	39	0.9%	3	2.1%	0	0.0%
Update Pathway Plan	5	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,567</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the table above enquiries for Doncaster overall, the Local Solutions Group could take up:

.5% No Further Action and 1.4% of Information and Advice, which would result in a **reduction of 1.9% of referrals into children's social care**

From the table above for Denaby 1.4% No Further Action and 1.4% Information and Advice at total of **2.8% reduction of referrals into children's social care**

From the table above for Hexthorpe a total **reduction of 2.8% Information and Advice of referrals to children's social care**

From this time (Aug-18 to Jul-19) of the 4,567 referrals 1,217 (26.6%) were re-referrals

	Doncaster	Denaby	Hexthorpe
Referrals	4,567	142	106
Re-referrals	1,217	63	22
	26.6%	44.4%	20.8%

9. The vision is that the new model will reduce the amount of enquiries to the Early Help Hub and Children's Social Care that result in no further action. Clear communication of the model to residents and partners at local level with strategic buy in from senior leaders will achieve the intended outcome.

#### **'Reducing demand at the Front Door' Innovation Unit report December 2018**

Key Findings:

- People across the system are working hard but not together
- Practice can be risk averse and defensive
- Process is getting in the way of what matters to families
- The structure of the system is exacerbating these problems

10. Framework design:

Based on these insights, senior leaders in DCST and DMBC agreed that the focus in the 'design phase' of this work needed to be Early Help in specific local areas, with a focus on building better relationships between professionals, communities and families. The work has focused on two local areas (Denaby and Hexthorpe )with a range of research and design activities undertaken to develop ideas on what a different approach to working together, with families and in a local place ,would look like

11. Overview of the framework:

The framework presents a high-level vision for demand management, built around community; strengths based practice and relationships. It describes three key operational features needed for families, communities and practitioners to work together more effectively, and three enabling features that must be present to allow them to do this. The three key operational features needed to make services work more effectively focus on:

- Being rooted in local communities
- Supporting whole families to achieve their goals
- Ensuring professionals are meaningfully connected

**12.Creating energy for change:**

A key impact of this work is that two local groups have been energised and excited by the opportunity and creation for change. These ambitious frontline workers and managers, and those in the wider working groups, are motivated and have been eager to put their ideas into practice to create a new approach. There is current testing of the prototype in Denaby and Hexthorpe where a core multi-agency team operates as the Local Solutions Group. The group share place based conversations to understand the environment where families are thriving or struggling; cased based conversations are shared to enable swift access to Early Help.

**13.The model operates an interface between communities, universal services, Early Help and the Front Door to Children’s Social Care (see Appendix 2 ).** Doncaster is committed to ensuring that families receive the right support at the right time and that is proportionate to their presenting needs. Doncaster is comprised of a number of communities that are rooted in place.

**14.Community Help is being developed through the Local Solutions Group to strengthen these communities and to promote “professional connectivity”.** The principle of Community Help is “Family First” where families should support each other and support themselves. However, the community is there to strengthen families and build resilience so that communities help each other. Services are to be required **only** when the family or their community cannot meet the needs.

**15. *The Strength- Based Practice Model –supporting the continuum of need***

Good relationships are crucial to success in working together with families and practitioners. The new way of working puts relationships at the heart of the approach, forging good relationships with practitioners, professionals and with the families “rooted in the place”.

**16.The new model for Early Help is strength- based practice, particulalry ‘Three Conversations’ which enables the practitioner to asses the level of intervention required through a conversation. The conversation can be shared, with consent, with the Local Solutions Group (LSG) to consider what is available locally and how needs can be met (see Appendix 3 ).**

New ways of thinking and practicing means:

- Think family,
- Get the whole picture,
- Make a plan that works for everyone,
- Check it is working for the whole family,

**17.There is commitment across the partnership to a whole-family approach.** Working holistically means that the root causes of need or complicating factors become known and addressed within the plan; thus enabling services to be coordinated. A workforce change programme will ensure the skills are in place so that services are operating ‘on the ground’,

New approach to assessment:

Conversations and assessment are designed on the strengths based Signs of Safety approach:

- What are you worried about?
- What is working well?
- What do you need right now to make things better?

18. The assessment is an extension of the initial conversation and is recorded as a Family Plan which allows the assessment/plan to stay open while interventions are taking place. The length and detail of the assessment/plan will increase in response to the family's needs and ,as such the, same assessment/ plan can be used through Levels 1,2, and 3.

19. The Family Plan will have the whole family at its heart: looking to meet needs within the community at the earliest opportunity and **only** accessing centralised services if that is the best option.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- To mobilise resources required to adopt the model following evaluation of the two prototypes in Denaby and Hexthorpe.
- To consider the roll out of the Local Solutions Group across South and Central areas and gain further evaluation to evidence roll out across the North and East.
- 

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

20. To support the development of asset based community approach to strengthen communities:

- To become resilient and reduce the need for services outside of the community reducing;
- To reduce demand on children's social care and the public purse.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

Outcomes	Implications
<b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li><li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li><li>• Inward Investment</li></ul>	
<b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To support families to become resilient within their own community.</li><li>• Connecting residents to</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	<p>local opportunity's reducing social isolation and increasing physical activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in true partnership to understand the needs of communities and identify gaps to inform resources planning.</li> <li>• Strengthen community and third sector groups through access to financial resources.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents will benefit, as community issues are resolved.</li> <li>• Access to support at the earliest opportunity when individuals, families and practitioners start to become worried.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the demand on Children's Social Care and more costly acute services.</li> <li>• Earlier identification of need before crisis. Operating within partnership resources.</li> <li>• Strengths based approach to build strong communities and true integration at a locality level.</li> </ul>

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

21. Lack of partnership commitment to Local Solutions Group will affect the operating model; information will not be appropriately shared and will impact negatively on the understanding of need and identification of the most appropriate intervention. This in turn will fail to reduce demand on Front Door Children's Social Care. Children and their Family's needs will not be fully understand, causing escalation of need, costly crisis point intervention and increased risk.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 21/08/19]**

22. It is recommended that the project team engage with the Legal department in order to fully understand any legal implications arising from this project

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials DB Date 22/08/19]**

23. Lack of partnership commitment to Local Solutions Group will affect the operating model; information will not be appropriately shared and will impact negatively on the understanding of need and identification of the most appropriate intervention. This in turn will fail to reduce demand on Front Door Children's Social Care. Children and their Family's needs will not be fully understand, causing escalation of need, costly crisis point intervention and increased risk.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials JC Date 22/08/19]**

24. At this time there are no specific HR implications.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 22/08/19]**

25. Further clarity on the system requirements to support the Local Solutions Model (e.g. on line referral form, consent and recording process in Liquid Logic/Mosaic) is needed to fully consider the technology implications.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RS Date 22/08/19]**

26. Local solutions describes a new approach that could improve the experience of families seeking support and this more responsive strengths based approach could lead to reductions in demand on other parts of the early help system.

27. The paper provides a high level summary of the practice based changes and gives some indication of the current demand in the early help system.

28. Decision makers may want more detail on how the 3 operational features and 3 enabling features outlined in the original report have been achieved. Decision makers will also want to consider whether other process or outcome indicators should be tracked or reported on for the prototypes (as success criteria) before considering further role out.

29. At the time of these health implications there was no financial information available to assess the cost effectiveness of the approach and no assessment of any future additional impacts on universal services or cost savings in other areas.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials DL Date 21/08/19]**

30. Improved outcomes in all phases will ensure that all children' and their family's needs are met; this will increase and strengthen the Early Help Offer and support our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

31. The Council's responsibility to ensure accessible, good quality Early Help as set out in Working Together 2018; and driven through Doncaster Early Help Strategy is enhanced by the Local Solutions Model. The model fosters good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic and ensures fair access to early help for all Doncaster children, young people and their families.

### **CONSULTATION**

32. Not applicable to report.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

33. See appendices:

- Reducing the demand on the Front door of Children's social care December 2019
- Three conversations model
- Local Solutions Process Map

### **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

Dawn Lawrence  
Early Help Pathway Manager 01302 734946    [dawn.lawrence@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.lawrence@doncaster.gov.uk)

Riana Nelson  
Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills