

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	11 September 2019
Title of Report:	Early Help and Targeted Support engagement – developing Family Hubs
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Craig McArdle (Interim Strategic Director of People)
Author:	Emma Crowther, Strategic Commissioning Manager
Contact Email:	Emma.crowther@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	EHTS/S
Key Decision:	Yes
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide background information on the proposed future design of Early Help and Targeted Support services in Plymouth for children and young people up to the age of 19. Please see the main body of the report for definitions of Early Help and Targeted Support.

An initial business case was approved by Cabinet in July 2019, to carry out engagement to inform the design of services, focused on the development of a network of Family Hubs for families with children and young people aged 0-19. This programme of engagement will take place between August and October 2019 and includes visits to every Children's Centre in Plymouth, conversations with families, communication with and visits to the services supporting families (both Plymouth City Council and commissioned services) and surveys for families and professionals.

We would like to engage with Scrutiny members as part of this process, to gather views on the proposal to create Family Hubs, provide the opportunity to ask questions and seek further information. The feedback from Scrutiny members will be taken into account along with all other views received during the engagement process, and will inform the final business case which will be considered by Cabinet in November 2019.

Recommendations and Reasons

To engage with Scrutiny members to provide information and seek feedback on proposals to create 0-19 Family Hubs in Plymouth.

Alternative options considered and rejected

An alternative option was to not include the views of Scrutiny members as part of the engagement process; this was rejected as the engagement seeks to involve as broad a range of stakeholders as

possible to inform the final business case and design of services. The views, expertise and challenge of Scrutiny members is valuable in informing the final business case.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Our Priorities	Delivery of the priorities through this project
<p>A Caring Council</p>	<p>Keep children, young people and adults protected - this proposal aligns with the work of the PSCB and findings of Serious Case Reviews in considering how to improve understanding of contextual safeguarding for children and young people; knowing their communities and local needs, and supporting professionals in their competence and resilience.</p> <p>Improved schools where pupils achieve better outcomes - the Family Hubs approach will wrap around all those working with a child and their family, with schools and educational settings as a fundamental part of this system. The aim is for schools to feel more supported in working with children and young people where their needs are emerging or more complex; in turn this will enable children to focus on their academic attainment.</p> <p>Focus on prevention and early intervention - the development of Family Hubs and an integrated Targeted Support offer will enable families needing help to be identified earlier and offered the right help at the right time.</p> <p>Best Start to Life - by identifying need earlier and intervening more effectively to build family resilience, we will support children to have a better start to life, including being better prepared to start their Early Years and school provision.</p> <p>People feel safe in Plymouth - the provision of Family Hubs will ensure that a network of “safe” buildings for families remains in the city, building on the legacy of Children’s Centres. These will be non-judgemental, friendly and welcoming places where families can seek help. The Family Hubs will work with locally registered “Safe Place” locations.</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities - the needs analysis identifies clearly the needs as well as assets across the city. This will help us to determine where resources need to be focused in order to address health inequalities.</p> <p>A welcoming city - Family Hubs will be communicated as available for all families with children and young people aged 0-19. We will ensure that any branding associated with the Family Hubs encourages families to feel welcome, whether they are experiencing difficulties or not.</p>

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The financial envelope for the future service is being considered as part of the development of the final business case. This includes consideration of where efficiencies could be made through changes to how buildings are used and different services brought together to work more efficiently.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

As part of the development of the proposal, we will consider the accessibility of any future Family Hubs and whether this impacts on the mode of travel our citizens are likely to need to use. It is our aim to create a network of community based provision which enables the majority of citizens to be able to walk to them if required, reducing the environmental impact of travelling by other means.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The proposal links to Child Poverty by ensuring that health and economic inequalities, needs and assets are recognised across Plymouth neighbourhoods. The proposed network of Family Hubs will ensure a community based resource is in place for families to access, supported by a multi-agency team of professionals.

As part of the development of the Family Hubs, links will be encouraged with community police officers to share information about any emerging community safety issues and ensure an appropriate response is in place to address this.

The changes to the delivery of Early Help and Targeted Support aim to have positive implications on the rest of the system of support for children, young people and families in Plymouth. The interfaces and interdependencies with other services are being considered as part of the development of the proposal.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Early Help and Targeted Support engagement – developing Family Hubs							
B	EHTS diagram - proposal							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Anna Coles, Interim Director of Integrated Commissioning											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Jean Kelly Date agreed: 28/08/2019											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Jemina Laing – approved verbally Date approved: 28/08/2019											

Appendix I – Early Help and Targeted Support engagement – developing Family Hubs

1. BACKGROUND

Demand for Children’s Services continues to rise nationally and locally, with increasingly complex presentations of need which are being seen in younger children, as well as teenagers. Social and economic strains on families mean we need to be innovative in how we engage and work with them, so they are supported to be able to stay together in their communities and overcome difficult times. We want to make sure we give each child the opportunity to have the best possible start to their lives, with support for the family in the right place and at the right time, when it is needed.

In Plymouth the expiry of a number of key commissioned contracts (Children’s Centres, Young Carers services) gives us an opportunity to look again at how services are provided to families and how effective they are, particularly those which try to intervene early, as soon as problems arise.

We still have some tricky issues in Plymouth which we need to work together to solve:

- Approximately 20% of the city’s children are living in poverty;
- The proportion of children known to be entitled to and claiming free school meals is 16.5% in primary schools (national average is 14.1%), with 13.9% in secondary schools (national average is 12.9%);
- 50% of children entering the Foundation Stage from areas of high social deprivation have speech and language difficulties;
- The percentage of school pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs is 4% above the national average;
- Hospital admissions for self-harm amongst 10-24 year olds has increased over 3 years.

2. WHAT IS EARLY HELP?

“Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person or their family, as soon as concerns emerge. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood, and applies to any concern that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own. Early Help is a strengths based approach where families are empowered to support themselves when future challenges are faced.”

Early Help Champions Definition of Early Help, revised June 2019

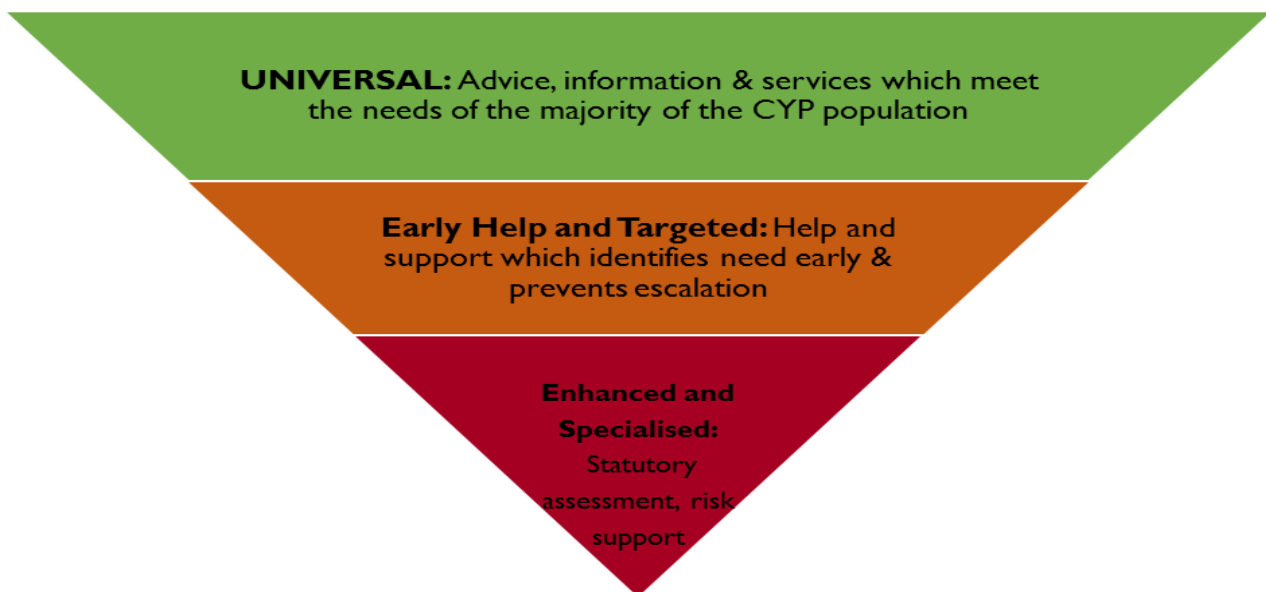
We know that if we can intervene early and support families as soon as they begin to experience difficulties, there is more chance of enabling them to overcome these, preventing the situation getting worse, and being better prepared for any future challenges. Early Help might involve support such as extra visits from a Health Visitor, attending parenting classes, joining support groups with other families, getting some extra support for the child at school, supporting the parents to manage their finances or accommodation. Good Early Help support will identify the areas the family want to improve and involve them in a plan to work on these.

3. WHAT IS TARGETED SUPPORT?

Targeted Support is provided when the needs of a family begin to escalate, and a more comprehensive response is needed. This might be because the family dynamic has changed and the family finds it harder to cope. We also know that at certain times children and young people can find life more difficult and as a result their behaviour may become more challenging – examples of this might be when a child moves to a different school including transition to secondary school, when taking exams, if a child experiences some kind of trauma, or physical or emotional ill-health.

A family receiving Targeted Support may be working with a range of professionals, maybe including a youth worker or family support worker, be receiving support about being a young carer or be visiting Camhs for therapeutic advice. For those with more complex needs and some criminal behaviour, the Youth Offending Team may be involved. Targeted Support services will be working to prevent the family needing the long term involvement of statutory services such as Children's Social Care.

The provision of Early Help and Targeted Support can be seen in the context of the diagram below which sets out the range of need in children and young people in Plymouth. Early Help and Targeted Support reaches down into universal provision to identify families with emerging needs and aims to prevent escalation into enhanced and specialist statutory services, such as Children's Social Care. Targeted Support also reaches up into enhanced and specialist services to enable children and young people to step down from statutory offers.



4. WHAT EARLY HELP AND TARGETED SUPPORT SERVICES DO WE ALREADY HAVE?

We have a range of services which support children and their families; some are commissioned, some are delivered by the local authority or other partners and some are provided by the voluntary and community sector.

Plymouth has a range of services in place which already work well with families with younger children; these are embedded in communities, trusted by families and have an in depth understanding of local needs. These include the city-wide network of Children's Centres, which deliver a range of provision from drop in groups to more intensive support for families with children aged 0-5 years.

There are a range of services for families with older children and young people, but this is more scattered across different services and agencies. There is also a lack of central coordination of services and a joined up understanding of need for families who have children who range between 0-19 years. So a family with a 3 year old and a fifteen year old will be able to access their local Children's Centre for their younger child, but will need to seek support elsewhere for their teenager.

Positively, Plymouth has a strong history in recent years of working collaboratively with partners to think creatively and overcome organisational boundaries to try new approaches. Recent successes include the development of Access, a multi-partner approach (Plymouth City Council, Livewell Southwest, University Hospitals Plymouth) to supporting families with children and young people with

additional needs. This work has developed a shared “front door”, and multi-disciplinary team approach to share information and consider who is most appropriate to work with the child or young person.

5. WHY ARE WE CONSIDERING MAKING CHANGES?

We don't think we have got the design of Early Help and Targeted Support right yet in Plymouth. We think we can make the most of our positive partnerships in the city to develop a better integrated system for children and young people in the city, to improve the experience and life chances of families.

We want to be able to work together to be able to identify families earlier who need additional support, to prevent their situation deteriorating. We are keen to learn from and build on what we already do well for example, the legacy of SureStart for families with children aged 0-5 years, and the innovative approaches taken in the creation of Access, for children and young people with additional needs.

We also want to learn from how the Wellbeing Hubs are being developed and how we can work together to join up a community based, visible network of support.

We know we haven't got this right yet because families and professionals have told us:

- The current Early Help and Targeted Support offer is fragmented and confusing, delivered by different providers in different buildings.
- The offer for families with children aged 0-5 years is distinct from those for families of older children and young people, which is not helpful when families have children with a range of ages and needs.
- The delivery of support is not always sequenced or coordinated effectively, so families may feel they are receiving services in a way that is overwhelming, risking duplication, or conversely feel they are left unsupported or passed between services.
- Professionals working with families describe not always knowing where to go for advice and discussions about sharing and managing risk, and navigating multiple referral pathways, referral forms or thresholds to access services.
- Schools are often unclear about what support is available from elsewhere to enable them to manage needs in a community setting.

We know we aren't yet getting involved early enough to be able to prevent escalation of need; indicators include the numbers of children and young people entering the care system, the rate of exclusions from schools, first time entrants to the criminal justice system and a cohort of children and young people escalating into crisis, at significant emotional and financial cost. As a result, the financial resource available is at risk of being diverted away from Early Help into managing more expensive crisis responses for smaller numbers of children, making it more difficult and further compounding the challenges of identifying and reducing need early.

We also know that other areas of the country are finding new ways to work with their families which is making a difference; for example North Yorkshire's “No Wrong Door” flexible and child-focussed approach has reduced the numbers of children experiencing crisis, reducing the numbers of children and young people coming into the care system by 15 per cent.

There is an opportunity to do something transformative to improve the experience and outcomes of children and young people by taking a whole family approach to Early Help and Targeted Support and supporting professionals to work together. There is a need to create friendly, bustling, safe spaces where families feel comfortable to engage, whether they have a toddler or a teen. Our city partners are keen to join us on this journey and work together to enable change. We carried out some

engagement with children, young people, families and professionals in autumn 2018 which told us that 82 per cent of families either strongly agreed or agreed with the idea of bringing services together to form Family Hubs. 76 per cent of professionals either strongly agreed or agreed.

6. WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE?

We are asking children, young people, families and professionals to consider how a 0-19 Family Hub model could work in Plymouth. We would create a visible city-wide network of welcoming Family Hub buildings, to be places where members of the public could go for support as soon as they need it. Professionals would work with families in the Hub buildings, or at their homes, or elsewhere in the community, wherever the family felt most comfortable.

We would then bring our services together, co-locating in designated Targeted Support buildings and working as one to provide Targeted Support. These would not be places where the public would visit, but would be places where professionals can work together to think about the needs of each family, who is the best person to support them at that time and how this would be carried out. The Targeted Support teams would then deploy into the community, to Family Hubs, family homes or other community spaces such as schools.

The Family Hub model has four key areas of work to support families:

Health & Development - Building on a Children's Centres' current role in early intervention, particularly early years where support has the biggest impact on long-term outcomes. Supporting the health and development of children aged 0-5 years will be integral to the offer, with services ideally provided on a universal basis where this is feasible.

Employment Support & Childcare - Building parents' confidence is a crucial element of effective employment support. Family hubs will deliver learning opportunities and support, as they represent a friendly, non-threatening environment. This aspirational culture can encompass broader provision to benefit children's outcomes, linking with local employers, Jobcentre Plus and provision of early education and childcare.

Relationship Support for Family Stability - The quality of the parental relationship can have a significant impact on children's development. Family hubs are well placed to deliver relationship support such as couple relationship counselling and courses and parenting support. The relationships approach should also be embedded across Family hub staff and partners including appropriate training to have the right kinds of conversations with parents. Voluntary sector organisations with a proven track record of best practice could be co-located or signposted to from family hubs.

Supporting Families with Complex Needs - The family hub model would offer valuable benefits, bringing together professionals and helping to embed shared approaches, particularly those on the edge of needing specialist support. Lessons will be learned from the FWAF programme, to support families before crisis point.

The case studies below give examples of how the proposed system could work, in drawing together services around the child and their family, and also providing resilience to the professionals working with them.

Family Case Study: Parent of a 12 year old seeking support with managing communication difficulties and social isolation. The family are anxious about their financial and housing situation, which is putting additional pressure on family dynamics

- Information on the family's needs are collated, including what the family would like to achieve via an Early Help Assessment Tool
- The family are considered appropriate for discussion by the Targeted Support team, with joint working with ACCESS to support the child's additional needs
- A support plan is put in place, involving the family
- Speech and language support is delivered via a Family Hub local to the family, a parenting course is offered, the parents are linked to their nearest Wellbeing Hub for advice on their financial and housing situation, the child's school is engaged to consider education support needs and whether an EHCP may be required. A youth worker is identified to link the child into age-appropriate youth groups and other social activities

Professional Case Study: The Parent Support Advisor at a primary school raises concerns about the escalating behaviour of a 7 year old, with a 2 year old sibling. School staff consider that the family is increasingly fragile, and the child is at risk of school exclusion due to aggression to fellow pupils.

- Information on the family's needs are collated, including what the family would like to achieve via an Early Help Assessment Tool
- The family are considered appropriate for discussion by the Targeted Support team, including the school
- The Targeted Support team offer services which include input from Education Welfare and Family Support workers to explore the family dynamics and reduce the risk of school exclusion
- Parents are offered access to a parenting programme and support groups including daytime activities with their younger child at their local Family Hub
- A referral to Camhs is considered and discussed with the family

7. WHAT DO WE NEED TO CONSIDER?

We are spending August-October gathering the views of children, young people, families, professionals and any other interested parties on various aspects of how a 0-19 Family Hub model could work in practice. This includes visits to services, direct conversations with families and professionals and

surveys for professionals and families. The links to the surveys are below and we would like to hear from as many people as possible:

<https://plymouth-consult.objective.co.uk/public/cyp/ehs/ehscypfquestionnaire>

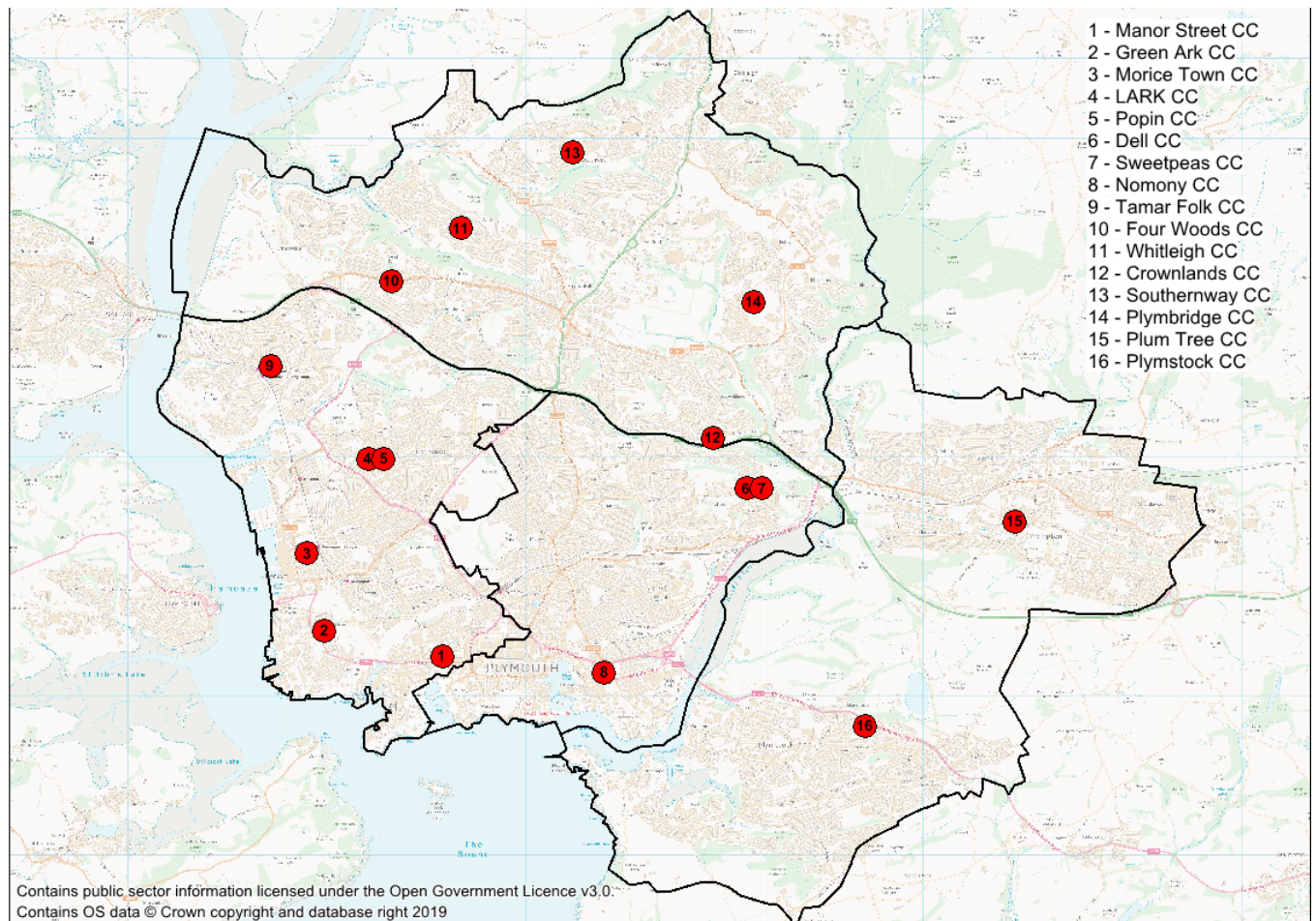
<https://plymouth-consult.objective.co.uk/public/cyp/ehs/ehspractitionerquestionnaire>

As part of the engagement process, we are considering the following questions:

Buildings:

- What buildings do we need to deliver the new service?
- Where do they need to be, taking into account the location of other community services, levels of deprivation and anticipated changes in demographics
- Are our existing buildings suitable?
- Do we need to consider building anything new?

As an example we currently have sixteen Children's Centres operating from fifteen buildings – see map below. We also provide services to children and young people from buildings such as youth centres.



Services:

- Which services do we need to bring together to work in a more joined up way?
- What skills do we need staff to have to support children, young people and families?

- Are there any implications we need to think about if we move staff and services from where they are based currently?

Organisational/contract structure

- How should we organise the new service to work most effectively?
- Do we want to change the balance of in-house and commissioned services if this means services can work together differently?
- Do we want one organisation to act as the lead for the service or have a range of organisations sharing responsibility?

Cost

- What would be the budget for the new service?
- How do we make sure this is sustainable for the years ahead?
- Have we considered any other possible funding, such as grants?
- By bringing services together is there the opportunity to work more efficiently?

8. NEXT STEPS

The views expressed in the engagement process will be used to inform the final business case, which is planned to be considered by Cabinet in November 2019.

If Cabinet approves the approach, any necessary procurement will begin in spring 2020, with the new service up and running in spring 2021.