

Council Report

Cabinet and Commissioners' Decision Making Meeting – 10 July 2017

Early Help Strategy: Phase Two, Whole Service Review

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

The Early Help Service is an essential component of Rotherham's Improvement Plan. It is designed to meet the needs of children, young people and families quickly, when they first emerge and to prevent the escalation of issues and the requirement for statutory intervention. Working Together (2015) sets out the statutory requirement for Early Help services whilst Ofsted findings suggest that effective, high-performing children's social care is always accompanied by a high quality Early Help offer.

In January 2016, a new Early Help Service was launched with locality teams made up of practitioners with a blend of complementary skills and the launch of a single point of access to the service, through the Early Help Request for Support and a single Early Help Assessment.

The council's aim is to continue to develop an Early Help Service that meets the needs of children, young people and families as soon as such needs are identified. This must be delivered in a way that feels relevant to Rotherham's families and is flexible enough to respond to needs as they emerge.

The re-design of the Early Help Service will also achieve £421k of savings in 2017/18, together with further savings in 2018/19, which will contribute to the Council's overall savings target.

The Early Help Whole Service Review will be undertaken in line with the vision and objectives set out in the Early Help Strategy. It is the realisation of phase two of the strategy which is to, 'refine the Early Help offer through further integration and service redesign with our partners and stakeholders.'

This report provides the vision; objectives and guiding principles of the Early Help Whole Service Review and set out the timeline for full consultation and implementation on 1st April 2018.

Recommendations

1. That the guiding principles for the Early Help Whole Service Review be approved.
2. That the associated timeline for the whole service review in order to achieve implementation by 1st April 2018 be approved.

List of Appendices Included:

None

Background Papers

Rotherham's Early Help Strategy 2016-2019
Ofsted Monitoring Visit letter; 13th March 2017
Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required:

No

Exempt from the Press and Public:

No

Early Help Strategy: Phase Two, Whole Service Review

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the guiding principles for the Early Help Whole Service Review be approved.
- 1.2 That the associated timeline for the whole service review in order to achieve implementation by 1st April 2018 be approved.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Early Help Service is an essential component of Rotherham's Improvement Plan. It is designed to meet the needs of children, young people and families quickly, when they first emerge, and to prevent the escalation of issues and the requirement for statutory intervention. Since the publication of the Graham Allen report in 2011 and the subsequent creation of the Early Intervention Foundation, a body of evidence has been pulled together to make the case for Early Intervention. The evidence shows that outcomes are better for children and young people if agencies intervene earlier; that working with the whole family is most effective and that the work yields cost benefits across public service, including adult social care; the criminal justice and welfare systems.
- 2.2 The statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), sets out the requirements for Early Help Services, stating, *'local areas should have a range of effective, evidence-based services in place to address assessed needs early. The Early Help on offer should draw upon the local assessment of need and the latest evidence of the effectiveness of early help and early intervention programmes. In addition to high quality support in universal services, specific local early help services will typically include family and parenting programmes, assistance with health issues and help for problems relating to drugs, alcohol and domestic violence. Services may also focus on improving family functioning and building the family's own capability to solve problems; this should be done within a structured, evidence-based framework involving regular review to ensure that real progress is being made'*.
- 2.3 The guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) makes it clear that all local agencies should work together to support children and families. As such, a strong Early Help offer will also be a key enabler for integrated working at neighbourhood level across all ages.
- 2.4 Ofsted findings suggest that effective, high-performing children's social care is always accompanied by a high quality Early Help offer and Rotherham's new Early Help offer was launched on the 18th January 2016. This followed a restructure in October 2015 when a new management team was established and a range of separate services and professional disciplines were brought together to form integrated, multi-disciplinary, early help locality teams.

2.5 In April 2016 Ofsted noted:

‘All staff spoken to, while feeling the pain of change, are incredibly committed, enthusiastic and excited about the changes. All have seen the integration of teams and the Ofsted process as a learning experience and opportunity to improve the lives of children in Rotherham, which was heart-warming’. There is evidence staff have been and continue to be consulted on the transformation programme and while anxious about their jobs and what it means for them, remain on the whole positive’.

2.6 In February 2017 Ofsted undertook a monitoring visit. The feedback, in relation to the progress and development of the Early Help service noted:

2.6.1 The implementation of multi-disciplinary locality teams is leading to improved coordination of early help support to families by the local authority.

2.6.2 There is much evidence of children’s circumstances improving as a result of the early help being provided.

2.6.3 There are also some positive examples of very timely intervention and support for families, who have an allocated worker within one of the locality teams.

2.7 The Rotherham Early Help Strategy 2016-2019 is an ambitious three-year plan for the Council and its partners. The vision for Early Help is:

“All agencies working together to ensure children, young people and families have their needs identified early so that they can receive swift access to targeted help and support.”

2.8 The strategy articulates the Early Help journey in three distinct phases.

2.8.1 Phase one is the creation of integrated Early Help teams and co-locating staff with partners in multi-agency Early Help hubs. It includes putting in place systems to monitor and track progress and quality and the right governance to ensure appropriate accountability and effective support and challenge across the system.

2.8.2 Phase two is whole service delivery redesign; developing new job roles and more efficient and effective ways of working to embed a shared responsibility across the partnership for meeting the needs of families earlier.

2.8.3 Phase three will ensure that the Early Help offer is sustainable. Partners will work together to explore the potential for all-age family integrated services and look at innovative ways to reshape existing buildings and centres into all age delivery points in localities and communities.

- 2.9 The development of Rotherham's Early Help offer and strategy is intrinsically linked to the delivery of a challenging three year savings target to contribute to the Council's overall savings target.
- 2.10 In 2016/17 Early Help Service made a saving of £501k. In 2017/18 a further saving of £421k has been agreed. The Whole Service review will identify further efficiencies in future.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Early Help Whole Service Review is needed to deliver a re-designed Early Help service offer that meets the needs of children, young people and families. This must be delivered in a way that feels relevant to Rotherham's families and is flexible enough to respond to needs as they emerge. The success of the Early Help offer will contribute directly to the improvement journey of Rotherham's Children's Services and a positive judgement from Ofsted.
- 3.2 Since October 2015 Requests for Support to the Early Help Service have been sent through a single point of access. This simplified process has made it easy for families and universal services who work with families to request targeted support for families who are vulnerable. It enables early intervention with a coordinated whole family offer that is designed to ensure that the need for higher tier services is avoided. There are currently more than 1500 families with an active Early Help Assessment.
- 3.3 To ensure that the service is fit for purpose in the future, and is able to respond to the needs of children, young people and families, there is a need to re-design the service.
- 3.4 The re-design will ensure that Early Help Practitioners have the right skill mix to respond to the needs of families, and that the workforce is well supported with appropriate management oversight. The re-design will also create opportunities for practitioners to develop and progress within the service.
- 3.5 The re-designed services will also deliver an Early Help workforce with skills to complement and support partners and stakeholders who share responsibility for meeting the needs of families earlier.
- 3.6 The Early Help offer is currently delivered through a mixed economy of outreach work, with staff based in locality offices on eight sites across the borough, and Youth Centres and Children's Centres. The Early Help offer must be delivered in a way that supports partnership and neighbourhood working, and is relevant to children, young people and families.
- 3.7 A full needs analysis will demonstrate where Early Help teams should be located to ensure that there are opportunities to work collaboratively with children's social care; schools and partners including: health; South Yorkshire Police and the voluntary and community sector.
- 3.8 The re-design process will also explore opportunities to deliver interventions that are responsive to need in negotiated spaces; relevant to the community and flexible enough to meet changing patterns of demand.

3.9 In summary, the guiding principles of the Early Help Whole Service Review are:

- To build on what's working well
- To embed whole family working (one family, one worker, one plan)
- To support integrated locality working
- To work restoratively with a culture of continuous improvement and excellence
- To deliver value for money
- To seek savings through reducing the management structure
- To ensure there are clear lines of responsibility and clear progression routes
- To invest in workforce development
- To enable flexible working with high quality and affordable delivery points.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

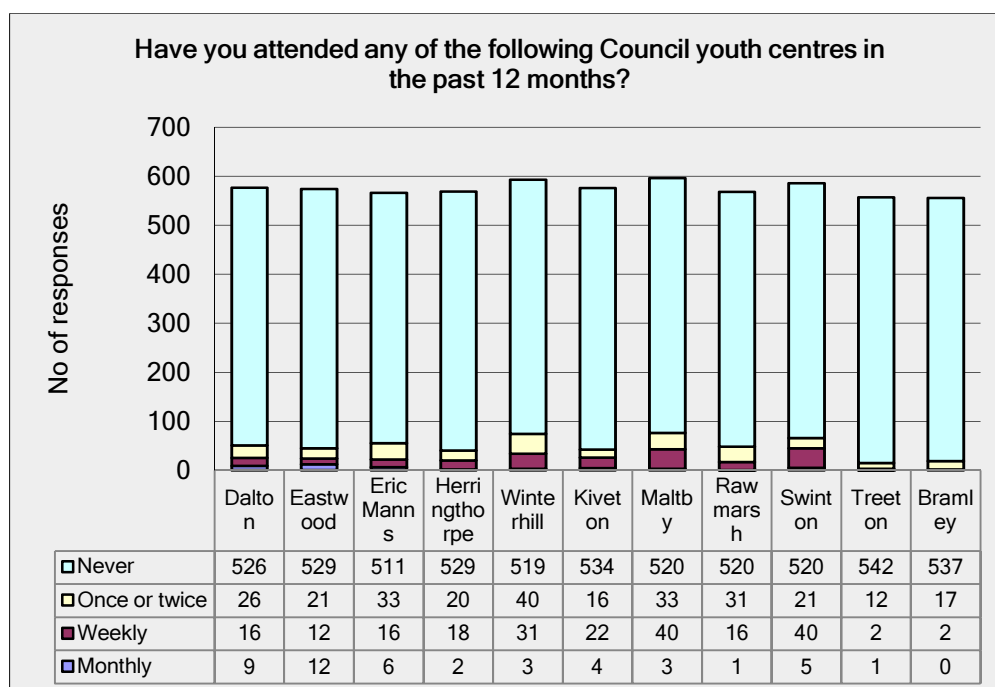
4.1 Option 1 would be to continue to deliver Early Help using the current operating model. Whilst the progress to date has been commended by Ofsted, this option would not achieve the desired contribution to the Council's savings, nor would it be flexible enough to meet the needs of children, young people and families. The response to the youth consultation in particular suggests that there is a need to modernise the delivery model to make it more relevant and responsive to the needs of children, young people and families.

4.2 Option 2 is to proceed with the Early Help Whole Service Review. It is proposed that, following the guiding principles set out in this report, a detailed proposal is developed that sets out the delivery model, the implications for the Early Help footprint in the borough and the staffing structure. This detailed proposal will precede full staff and public 90 day consultation.

5. Consultation

5.1 The consultation process and co-production of Rotherham's Early Help Service and offer has been ongoing since November 2015. In developing Rotherham's Early Help Strategy a significant consultation was undertaken with; children and young people; staff, Voluntary and Community Sector; the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership; Health and Wellbeing Board; Local Safeguarding Board; Early Help Steering Group; Early Help Review Board; Department for Communities & Local Government; Troubled Families Unit; Sheffield City Council; Department for Education; Ofsted; Practice Improvement Partner (Lincolnshire County Council) and all Rotherham Ward and Parish Councillors.

- 5.2 A public consultation took place in 2014 to understand demand in relation to the Council's Children's Centre offer. The findings of the consultation were considered by Cabinet on 18th June 2014. The major concern raised during this consultation was that additional travel would be required as a result of closing centre buildings and this might reduce the number of families accessing the Children's Centres. The report further noted that local authorities are not required to provide a Centre building in walking distance. However, they are required to provide access to services locally. There is a need to undertake a new public consultation due to the period of time that has passed since 2014, and also to ensure that the public understand the local offer in the context of the overall Early Help Service offer (that did not exist in 2014).
- 5.3 In March 2016, a Youth Service Consultation took place. 897 people responded to the consultation and findings were shared with the Early Help Steering Group. As can be seen below, the majority of young people who responded did not visit Council youth centres. However, more than 60% of young people felt that it was very important or important to keep Youth Centres in Rotherham. These findings indicate that the current youth offer isn't reaching enough young people, but that it is important services are re-designed in such a way that they are relevant and accessible.



- 5.4 Throughout November and December 2016, the Early Help Senior Leadership Team undertook a series of staff and partner engagement events, creating opportunities through 'structured conversations' to further shape the development of Early Help in Rotherham.
- 5.5 In March 2017 the extended Early Help Management Team attended a workshop on Phase Two of the Early Help Strategy and to inform the guiding principles of the proposed Whole Service Review.

5.6 Subject to commissioner and Members' approval formal consultation on the final proposals for the new service delivery model, service structure and job roles will commence in September 2017 and run for 90 days.

5.7 90 Day Consultation:

5.7.1 A robust staff and public 90 day consultation will involve meetings with all staff as well as formal communication via letter and the offer of individual support through Human Resources (HR) and Early Help managers. The consultation will involve the Trade Unions and will be delivered through a combination of public meetings, online surveys and use of existing forums, for example Children's Centre Advisory Panel. This consultation will seek the views of; parents, young people, Members, partners, stakeholders, professionals and members of the community.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 Subject to approval, the table below sets out a high level timeline with the implementation date for the new structure to be in place from April 2018.

1.	Cabinet Report (1)	10 th July 2017
3.	Detailed proposals developed	July – September 2017
4.	Cabinet Report (2)	11 th September 2017
5.	Staff / Public consultation (90 days)	12 th Sept – 12 th Dec 2017
6.	Cabinet Report (3)	19 th February 2018
7.	New structure implementation	1 st April 2018

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

7.1 The Early Help Service must achieve £421k of savings in 2017/18, together with further savings in 2018/19, which will be achieved through a Whole Service Review.

7.2 The Early Help service operates a stringent moratorium of non-essential spend and tight vacancy control. A challenging three year savings profile was set for the service and the first two year targets have been successfully achieved.

7.3 In 2016/17 the service achieved a savings target of £501k whilst eradicating an inherited budget pressure of £250k.

7.4 The 2017/18 savings target of £421k has already been met through prudent vacancy management and good financial planning.

7.5 In 2018/19 further savings will be achieved through delivery of the Early Help Strategy, phase two through a Whole Service Review.

7.6 Any delays to the timetable set out in this report would have an impact on the savings proposed. In order to achieve the full year affect the review must be operational by April 1st 2018.

7.7 In order to achieve the flexibility and creativity desired in the Early Help offer, it may be most effective to work with third party organisations, including partners and the voluntary and community sector to deliver evidence-based interventions. Where this need is identified the Early Help service will work through the appropriate commissioning and procurement channels.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 It is imperative that the proposed Whole Service Review leading to the development of the future Early Help Service Model should take into account the need to comply with the Council's statutory duties in this area. In particular this includes the duties under the Education Act 1996, around securing sufficient educational leisure time activities and facilities for the improvement of the well-being of young persons, and the duties under Childcare Act 2006 to ensure there are sufficient Children's Centres, so far as reasonably practicable, to meet local need.

8.2 Any future proposals to significantly change Early Help services as part of the Whole Service Review would first require a robust consultation exercise with staff, service users and other stakeholders. This is properly identified and catered for in the timeline set out in 6.1.

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 In December 2016 the Early Help Senior Leadership Team completed a further HR establishment and budget validation exercise.

9.2 In 2015/16 the Early Help staffing establishment was 270.06* FTE (Full Time Equivalents). *October 2015.

9.3 In 2016/17 the Early Help staffing establishment was 263.28 FTE.

9.4 In 2017/18 the Early Help staffing establishment was 236.23* FTE.

9.5 This equates to a reduction of 33.83 FTE since October 2015.

*Includes investments for Edge of Care; Family Group Conferencing; and Multi-Systemic Therapy.

9.6 The changes proposed in this phase of the Whole Service Review are likely to involve considerable change, both in relation to individual roles and their redesign and also in relation to staffing structures. If this is the case it will require a detailed consultation process with staff and Trade Unions.

9.7 Any staff who are at risk as a result of the changes will be given full support in terms of redeployment. Equally, staff will be supported in relation to the changing nature of their roles and the move to more generic duties and responsibilities.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The Early Help Service directly contributes to a number of the Council's key strategies and objectives:

10.1.1 The Rotherham Plan. A New Perspective 2025:

“Contributing to this is... refreshed Early Help programme, which involves partners working together to ensure children, young people and families have their needs identified early so that they can receive swift access to targeted help and support.”

10.1.2 A Child Centred Borough

Six principles that will enable children to thrive:

- *A focus on the rights and voice of the child*
- *keeping children safe and healthy*
- *Ensuring children reach their potential*
- *An inclusive borough*
- *Harnessing the resources of communities*
- *A sense of place.*

10.1.3 The Children and Young People’s Plan, 2016-2019.

The three main strategic outcomes to be achieved for children, young people and their families in Rotherham are:

- *Children and young people are healthy and safe from harm*
- *Children and young people start school ready to learn for life*
- *Children, young people and their families are ready for the world of work*

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 Rotherham Council is under a duty to promote equality and diversity in all the work it does and services it delivers. The Council will need to work with customers to co-produce an Equality Analysis when designing the new structure and operating model.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 Key partners, stakeholders and staff will be engaged with as part of the 90 day consultation process.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The Council will need to consider emerging risks, but these are likely to be specific to individuals. The overriding risks are not following statutory processes, the potential negative impact on performance and quality during the review period and implementation stage and reputational damage as a result of a reduction in buildings and services across the borough. Officers will work closely with HR and the communications team to mitigate any risks normally associated with a Whole Service Review and restructure through Legal, Financial and HR compliance.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

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Approvals Obtained from:-

Finance and Corporate Services:

Finance: Mick Wildman – Finance Manager **Date:** 24th April 2017

HR: Paul Fitzpatrick – HR Business Partner **Date:** 18th April 2017

Assistant Director of Legal Services:

Neil Concannon – Service Manager **Date:** 25th May 2017

Head of Procurement: Ian Murphy **Date:** 20th April 2017