

JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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| Date of Meeting | Thursday 24 th May 2018 |
| Report Subject | Flintshire Early Help Hub |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Social Services; and Cabinet Member for Education and Youth |
| Report Author | Chief Officer (Social Services) Chief Officer (Education and Youth) |
| Type of Report | Strategic |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Flintshire Public Service Board (PSB) commissioned the establishment of an Early Help Hub (herein the EH Hub). The aim of the EH Hub is to deliver more timely and appropriate early intervention and support to families with greater levels of need. The attached report provides an independent assessment of the story of the EH Hub so far; what we did, why we did it and what we have learned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | For Members to receive the report and provide comments and reflection |
| 2 | To support the ongoing work and commitment to the Early Help Hub as part of wider programme to support families experiencing trauma aligned to Adverse Childhood experiences (ACE's) |

REPORT DETAILS

| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE RECOMMENDATIONS |
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| 1.01 | The development of the EH Hub can be summarised into 3 distinct phases: |
| 1.02 | <p>Phase 1. Design</p> <p>A proposed model for the EH Hub was developed collaboratively across agencies. The model brings together resources to target support to families in most need. Existing resources have been complimented by additional capacity secured through the alignment of services commissioned through Families First.</p> |
| 1.03 | <p>Phase 2. Soft Launch</p> <p>Over the summer 2017 the EH Hub undertook a 'soft launch' to test proposed procedures and joint working arrangements. From mid July 2017 all families with two or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and whose needs would not be otherwise be met through statutory Children's Services, were offered bespoke information, guidance and support. A review of the soft launch was undertaken which identified positive outcomes as well as process that have now been refined and strengthened to form the final operating model for the EH Hub.</p> |
| 1.04 | <p>Phase 3. Implementation</p> <p>There has been a phased approach to the implementation of the EH Hub. Since November 2017 the EH Hub has accepted direct referrals from partner agencies and professionals. The final phase will be on the 8 June 2018 when the Children's Commissioner for Wales will support the public launch of the EH Hub. This will earmark the expansion of the EH Hub to provide direct public access to support for families experiencing 2 or more ACE's.</p> |
| 1.05 | The Early Help Hub is a success in terms of offering families advice and assistance when prior to the Early Help Hub the referrals would not have been actioned and there was a high risk of a repeat referral back into Children's Services with more complex need being defined. |
| 1.06 | Currently, approximately 94% of cases considered by the EH Hub come as referrals to the Children's Services Front Door, rather than as a direct referral to the EH Hub. In the period July 2017- January 2018, the EH Hub has considered 535 referrals (an average of 76 per month) |
| 1.07 | <p>Of these 535 families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80 families have been offered information• 274 families have been offered advice and support from a single agency• 100 families have been offered key worker support to intervene and coordinate multiagency inputs• 5 families are having a safeguarding response |

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| | with the remaining 76 families in process at the point of data collection (i.e. information-gathering and decision-making processes were in progress) |
| 1.08 | <p>As with any new initiative there have been challenges in developing and implementing the EH Hub which have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff capacity • Establishing a dedicated budget for staff to be co-located in the EH Hub on an ongoing basis • Senior management commitment not always translating into middle management operationalisation • Different understanding or roles and services aligned to the EH Hub • The time it takes for some EH Hub members to gather information • While all families have had an offer of support, sometimes this has taken longer than expected |
| 1.09 | Positively action has been taken during the course of the project to respond and manage these challenges. The soft launch was a key component in this function. |
| 1.10 | <p>What is evident is that success of the establishment and delivery of the Hub has been driven by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders with a strong commitment; • A strongly committed group of people across the multiagency partnership- where the voluntary and community sector sits as an equal partner with statutory colleagues- who persevered, while managing existing workloads, because of a shared drive and belief in wanting to help improve the life chances and wellbeing of Flintshire children, young people and families more vulnerable to escalating problems and to help reduce demand in the medium to longer term on public services; • Excellent multiagency governance arrangements chaired by senior officers from within the North Wales Police that, together with strategic advisory and project support capacity made available through the Flintshire Public Service Board, helped support excellent partnership working and ensured there was a focus on delivery; • Co-location and high-quality information sharing processes, with effective enabling infrastructure such as a common information management system and bespoke WASPI; • The foresight of relevant senior officers that lead and govern the local Families First programme to help nurture Early Help Hub development and progressively embed the Families First programme within the Early Help Hub which benefits families with evidence of two or more ACEs (and the Early Help Hub and the Families First programme); and Wider workforce communications and awareness raising activities. |

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| 1.11 | What have been impacts of the Early Help Hub so far? |
| 1.12 | <p>The independent assessment of the Early Help Hub identifies that objectives for reduced demand on high cost public services and improved outcomes such as reduced crime and antisocial behaviour, better health, educational attainment, financial literacy and more secure tenancies would not be expected to have occurred within just over nine months from the first operationalisation of the EH Hub. Nonetheless, interviews with staff provided a strong view that these objectives are already starting to be met to varying degrees with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater ability to identify potential vulnerability, enabling more preventative action to be taken, dealing with problems before these become entrenched and building family wellbeing and resilience. • Closer partnership working, clearer accountability and less duplication of effort (fully met in relation to closer partnership working, but too early yet to indicate with respect to clearer accountability and reduced duplication of effort.) • Where better information-sharing within the EH Hub identifies potential safeguarding concerns, these are actioned in line with relevant procedures. (fully met) • Better quality referrals to Children’s Services as measured by reduced child protection referrals and fewer NFAs (no further action) by Children’s Services and NW Police (partly met with some excellent work being spearheaded by the Community and Enterprise EH Hub member to help her Housing Solutions colleagues consider whether a referral is for the EH Hub or statutory Children’s Services and the start of direct EH Hub referrals from police officers and PCSOs as a result of the excellent work of the North Wales Police EH Hub member) • There are signs the EH Hub is contributing to reduced NFAs (down to 34% for October-December 2017) and early and tentative signs that the EHH is contributing to reduced re-referrals of cases to the Children’s Services Front Door. |
| 1.13 | <p>Now the EH Hub is established the intention is for agencies to continue to work together, through the Strategic Group, to provide a co-ordinated, and complimentary, approach to responding to the wider ACE agenda to support vulnerable families.</p> |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | <p>Currently all resource implications are being met through existing service budgets across agencies. However, without the support of the Family First Board and the willingness of Welsh Government to agree to the expenditure for projects the Early Help Hub would not have been as successful.</p> |

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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 3.01 | The EH Hub has been developed in close consultation with partner agencies. Agencies have been involved in the design and development of the EH Hub through an operational project group and a strategic overview group. |

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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 4.01 | Families First funding has been made available to secure key posts within the EH Hub including additional capacity for Team Around the Family (TAF), BCUHB and FLVC. This funding is time limited and cannot be guaranteed on a reoccurring basis. This risk will remain an item for management through the project group structure. |

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1 – The story of the Early Help Hub so far; what we did, why we did it and what we have learned. |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | <p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Craig Macleod, Senior Manager Telephone: 01352 701313 E-mail: craig.macleod@flintshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Contact Officer: Ann Roberts, Senior Manager - Integrated Youth Provision Telephone: 01352 704112 E-mail: ann.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk</p> |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | Public Services Board - Established under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the purpose of Public Services Boards (PSBs) is to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area by strengthening joint working across all public services in Wales. The Flintshire PSB is made up of senior leaders from a number of public and voluntary organisations. Together these organisations are responsible for developing and managing the Well-being Plan for Flintshire. |
| 7.02 | Adverse Childhood Experiences - ACE's are traumatic experiences that occur before the age of 18 and are remembered throughout adulthood. |

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| | These experiences range from suffering verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, to being raised in a household where domestic violence, alcohol abuse, parental separation or drug abuse is present. |
| 7.03 | Care and Inspectorate Wales (CIW) - CIW has the powers to review Local Authority social services at a local and national level, to inform the public whether services are up to standard, to promote improvement of services and to help safeguard the interests of vulnerable people who use services and their carers. |
| 7.04 | Families First Programme - The national programme providing a vehicle for delivering on the child poverty strategy (WG 2010). (£1.67 million approx.) |
| 7.05 | Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 - The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. |
| 7.06 | Team Around the Family - The Team around the Family offer advice, help and support to families with support needs. TAF bring together the support from people and/or organisations to help families. The support offered is aimed at building a family's resilience and coping mechanisms. |
| 7.07 | Flintshire Local Voluntary Council - FLVC is the umbrella and support organisation for over 1200 voluntary and community groups based in Flintshire. |