

EXECUTIVE

16th June 2022

Report Title	Family Hubs
Report Author	AnnMarie Dodds - Executive Director of Children's Services
Lead Member	Cllr Scott Edwards, Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To brief the Executive on the challenges, opportunities and options arising from the announcement of North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) as eligible to be part of the Family Hubs programme.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This paper sets out proposals to develop a Family Hubs model in line with key objectives developed as part of the Government's three-year Family Hubs and Start for Life programme.
- 2.2 The objective of the programme is to improve whole family service delivery, address disproportionality and inequalities as well as drive improved health and education outcomes.

- 2.3 NNC has been identified as one of the 75 LA's nationally who will be designated as a 'Family Hub Development' authority and will have access to additional Government funding to reshape services and improve access to services and support as well as measure impact.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:
- a) Agree that Council adopts a Family Hubs model for North Northamptonshire
 - b) Notes that the Family Hubs model will be based upon local need and be developed in co-production with children, parents, carers and the wider community partnership.
 - c) Delegate authority to the Executive Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services to establish a Partnership Board to oversee the development of the Family Hubs model
- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation: The development of a Family Hub Model will help to deliver the Council's strategic ambitions. Early intervention can improve children's wellbeing, educational attainment and life chances, reduce family poverty, improve mental health and reduce negative outcomes such as unemployment which carry significant cost to the public purse.
- 3.3 Alternative Options Considered: That we do nothing and do not develop Family Hubs in NNC. This is not recommended because NNC would lose the opportunity to enhance and co-ordinate services for families. Furthermore, they would lose the opportunity to attract additional investment into the local area.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 In October 2021, as part of the Government's Spending Review, the Government announced £301.75m to transform Start for Life and Family Hub services in 75 upper tier local authorities across England. The programme will fund a network of Family Hubs, Start for Life and family help services, including breastfeeding services, parenting programmes and parent-infant mental health support.
- 4.2 The intention is that over a three-year period, better ways of working and sharing information will be developed, led by the local authority. The Family Hubs programme has earmarked the following national programme sums for the rest of the Spending Review period:

- £81.75m to create a family hubs network. While this seems a significant sum, the apportionment to each pre-selected council can only facilitate the rethinking of use of budgets across partners working with families.
 - The allocated funding will also target some key parental areas of need – including:
 - £100m for infant-parent mental health support breast-feeding support
 - £10m to publish the Start for Life offer
 - £50m for Breast Feeding Support
 - £50m for parenting programmes
 - £10m for workforce development opportunities
- 4.3 In addition, £24m has been allocated for Home Learning Environment (HLE) recovery programmes.
- 4.4 The objective of the programme is to improve whole family service delivery, address disproportionality and inequalities as well as drive improved health and education outcomes.
- 4.5 Research shows that effective early intervention can improve children’s wellbeing, educational attainment and life chances, reduce family poverty, improve mental health and reduce negative outcomes such as unemployment which carry significant cost to the public purse.
- 4.6 The Council has been identified as one of the 75 Local Authorities' nationally who will be designated as a ‘Family Hub Development’ authority and will have access to additional Government funding to reshape services and improve access to services and support as well as measure impact.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1. It is expected that Family Hubs will enhance integrated working by enabling easier access to support, better outcomes for families, more effective service delivery and smarter use of budgets. They are a way of joining up locally to improve access to services, the connections between families, professionals, services providers, and putting relationships at the heart of family help.
- 5.2 The national Family Hubs programme will provide best practice and related guidance to each Council, to help them identify the best model for individual areas. The Council’s Family Hub model will however need to deliver on 6 key action areas:

Ensuring families have access to the services they need:

1. Seamless support for families
2. A welcoming hub for families
3. Information that families need when they need it

Ensuring the Start for Life system is working together to give families the support they need:

1. An empowered Start for Life Workforce
 2. Continually improving the Start for Life offer
 3. Leadership for change – to ensure local and national accountability and build the economic case
- 5.3 Whilst these six key objectives must be met, the definition and understanding of what a Family Hub is for North Northamptonshire Council will be developed over the coming months. This provides an opportunity for North Northamptonshire Council to deliver on its key strategic ambitions and align the Council's 0-25 offer with the development of the Family Hub programme.
- 5.4 During development of the Council's Family Hubs model, the Council will work closely with the national Family Hubs team. This proactive engagement will help to shape the development of the programme and allow the implementation of clear milestones and deliverables.
- 5.5 Whilst the Council will receive funding as outlined above, the Council also previously bid for £1m Transformation Fund 1 (TF1) to assist with the costs of creating a Family Hubs model. Unfortunately, the Council was informed on 18th May 2022 that this had not been successful however in order to deliver its Family Hubs programme the Council will continue to submit further applications against the above opportunities.
- 5.6 The position of the national programme is to further develop the approach over the coming months, including consideration of a phased rollout of the Family Hubs approach. It is assumed that there will be learning from each successive hub and therefore, the effort required to establish new hubs will diminish over the programme. For instance, work to establish Common Assessments, referral pathways and protocols for accessing a virtual offer will be relevant to each Hub.
- 5.7 One of the underlying principles to the national programme is the need to consult and engage with children, parents, carers and the wider community partnership. In line with the national programme, the Council will follow co-production principles such as educating, informing, consulting, engaging and co-design. Through this approach the Council will collaboratively develop options using available intelligence, leading webinars and face to face consultation to capture views, as well as use local data sets and needs analysis to ensure the options developed are needs led.
- 5.8 To develop the proposals, a review of the existing commissioning and funding distribution of children centres, early childhood services provision and early help services will need to be undertaken to identify the key drivers for change and the opportunities to embed a fair and equitable offer.
- 5.9 It is proposed that a refreshed Partnership Board is established to oversee the development of the Family Hubs Model. This will be advised by a range of task and finish groups which will feed into it.

- 5.10 The outcomes of this process will be brought back to Executive/Council for approval in line with required government processes.
- 5.11 As part of the development of the Family Hub approach and proposals across the Council, a full EQIA will need to be completed alongside consultation with children, parents, carers and partners.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Establishment of a Partnership Board and commencement of work on the Family Hubs model. Updates on the national programme as it impacts on North Northamptonshire will be presented to the Executive Advisory Panel Education, Employment and Skills on 30th June 2022.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1. There may be opportunities to identify efficiencies and budget pooling through the co-location and integration of service commissioning and delivery. This can be further defined during the consultation and engagement process. This approach will be monitored within the governance and oversight of the programme and financial implications and modelling provided as part of the proposals.
- 7.1.2. The evaluation of the programme intends to establish whether this approach has longer term beneficial impact on children and families, and in turn reduces demands on social care, health and related services. This will benefit the public sector in reducing the cost pressures on high cost 'late' intervention.
- 7.1.3. Aligned to the strategic vision, we will mobilise a cross-organisational transformation and change programme to evolve our offer of prevention and realise the vision. With options to consolidate the re-purposing of our existing early help and early intervention offer to ensure that the wider integration and co-location of services provides best value for money, enables development of a system that is sustainable long term, drives the best outcomes and impact for children & young people and supports an invest to save model.

7.2 Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1 Under s5D Childcare Act 2006 any significant change made in services through a children's centre or anything which results in a children's centre ceasing to be a children's centre needs to be subject to such consultation as the local authority consider appropriate. Under 5A of that Act the Local Authority also needs to ensure that it has undertaken a sufficiency assessment to ensure that arrangements for provision of children's centres are sufficient to meet local need.

7.2.2 Given the transformation of children's centres into family hubs is being led by central government it is possible that the existing legislation will be amended to facilitate this transformation, although until such legislation is passed the provisions of the Childcare Act remain applicable.

7.2.3 Once a full options appraisal is completed and proposals are put together, further legal advice and clarification on each option and proposal will be required.

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1 Within the NCC corporate plan and the vision, values and key commitments there are a number of priorities that align with the development of the Family Hub model, these include:

- Active, fulfilled lives
- Better, Brighter Futures
- Connected Communities
- Modern Public Services

7.3.2 Other plans and strategies include:

- Early Help Strategy
- Children and Young Peoples Plan
- SEND and Inclusion Plan
- Early Childhood Services
- Integrated Care Systems

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 The pace in which we are expected to mobilise against the transformation grant criteria means that the key areas of work and decision making will need to move at pace.

7.4.2 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 There will be a clear consultation, communication and engagement plan developed as part of the options that are put together.

7.5.2 The legal consultation process required will subject to the options and proposals that are put forward within the Family Hub development.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 Executive Advisory Panel considered Family Hubs on 4th May 2022 and was supportive of the proposals.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 Not considered at this stage

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 NNC are committed to embedding Social Value (SV) and will contain a requirement to demonstrate social value including development training and work opportunities and providing a holistic offer of support for parents / carers being closer to the job market etc. We will also try to ensure the workforce is representative of the communities it serves.

7.8.2 An updated EQIA will be completed during the development of options and proposals.

7.9 Climate Impact

7.9.1 The Council, having declared a climate change emergency in June 2021, is committed to reducing its climate impact both within its own Council buildings and in working with businesses and the wider community to achieve net zero energy emissions.

7.9.2 The importance of both place-based services and people being able to access universal services through outreach as well as a strong virtual offer of support will be important considerations as Family Hubs are developed. This will help to reduce the carbon footprint. The Hubs will also provide places for professionals to deliver locally based services from and thereby reducing travel across the County. The virtual offer will be developed to support those that find services hard to access.

7.10 Community Impact

7.10.1 This will become clearer and be addressed through the options and proposals. We see Family Hubs as a really positive approach to developing community-based partnerships and services that are accessible either virtually or physically by all.

7.10.2 Through the integration and co-location of services children and families should feel that they can access the right help at the right time and will provide wider support for the whole family.

7.11 **Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.11.1 No Impact

8. Background Papers

8.1 None