

Early Help Review Update

Report already considered by:

- *Sheffield Early Help Review Steering Group*
- *Sheffield People Portfolio Leadership Team*
- *Lead Member for Children and Families*

Key Messages

Forum members are asked to note and endorse the content of the report including the scope and timescale for the review.

1. Introduction/background

- 1.1 The Lead Member for Children's Services agreed to a Review of Early Help. The aim of the review is to articulate an ambition for locality based early intervention services to children and families across Sheffield. This review commenced on 27th February 2020. Progress has been impacted by Covid-19. The Steering Group, with senior managers across the people portfolio, re-commenced on the 9th June 2020. The Steering Group has since met monthly in line with the governance framework. In addition, all members of the workstreams attended a virtual meeting to review progress against the proposals across the scope of the review in October.
- 1.2 Sheffield City Council is committed to providing early help to children, young people and families. Significant investment and support has resulted in multi-agency working to identify children and families who may need early help and a wide early help offer being available, however:
 - Despite our investment in Early Help, increasing poverty and emergent risk have resulted in increasing demand and complexity.
 - There isn't a consistent and fair approach across the city for all children, young people and their families.
 - Sometimes families are not able to access early help or have to wait too long.
 - Our 'reach' is not wide enough for all the children, young people and families that need help and support so demand for acute and reactive services continues to increase.
 - Partners tell us it can be difficult to navigate our early help system, they aren't always clear how to access services and sometimes there is duplication which is inefficient and means families have to tell their story more than once.
 - Our families have increasingly complex needs which cannot be addressed through a single agency or single-issue response.
 - Our workforce tells us the current offer is difficult to navigate, there are multiple processes to identify need and numerous pathways depending on need identified.

- There is a disproportionate resource allocated to identification and assessment which means there are not enough 'case holding' workers to undertake the keyworker role for families.

1.3 The Building Successful Families: Early Help System Guide has both acknowledged the integration challenge presented by the distinct statutory duties supported through our Early Help Offer and highlighted the maturity of the local strategic partnership responsible for the Early Help System. The development of the system guide has informed the strategic planning and prioritisation for the Early Help Review. It is hoped that this will provide the opportunity to show Sheffield as an exemplar for Early Help delivery through the Troubled Families programme.

1.4 The Early Help review aims to:

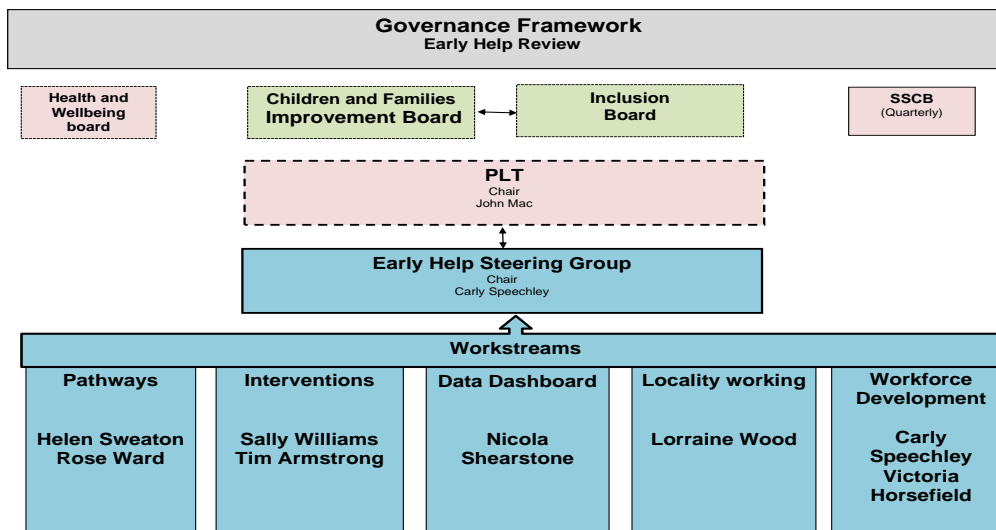
- Develop **one** integrated and coordinated offer of early help services delivered in localities which is strengths-based and whole family.
- Streamline pathways into the offer based on data and referral information.
- Increase case holding capacity whilst maintaining specialist function.
- Ensure co-location where possible.

1.5 The Steering Group agreed a two-phased approach to the review:

- Phase One will articulate a coherent Sheffield City Council Early Help Offer.
- Phase Two will articulate a coordinated partnership Early Help Offer for the City.

1.6 Governance for Phase One

Diagram of the Governance Framework:



1.7 The steering group agreed the co-produced vision articulated in the Inclusion Strategy encompasses our vision for early help across the City. The vision and ambition for the review were agreed at the September meeting of the Steering Group.

Our vision

- Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children receive the right support at the right time so that they live a happy and fulfilled life.

Ambition

- To have a clear pathway into one integrated early help offer that has been co-produced with all stakeholders including; children, young people, families, staff, practitioners, and partners.

1.8 A timeframe for the review has been agreed with the following milestones:

Time	Milestone
Sept- Jan	Needs Analysis
Feb	Proposals for One integrated and coordinated offer of early help services delivered in localities developed for consultation
March	Endorsement and Agreement
April	Process undertaken to align workforce to offer
July	Launch of One integrated and coordinated offer of early help services delivered in localities

1.9 The pace of the Early Help review has slowed recently due to the impact of the new Covid-19 restrictions and the need to ensure that critical services to children and families are in place and staff are protected. In addition, we have reflected on the feedback from engagement activities with the service and will be moving forward more slowly to enable us to engage with the workforce more thoroughly.

2. Early Help Workstreams

- 2.1 Five workstreams are focussing on different sections of the review including, data, pathways, interventions, workforce development and locality working. All workstreams commenced activity in July 2020.
- 2.2 The data workstream has identified Education, Health and Local Authority are the key sources of data. In general, data is collected, recorded and reports are generated in silos. The lack of data from health creates barriers, especially for early years. Data is not used for effective predictive analysis. This workstream will be developing proposals to encourage compatibility between systems and improve the use of data.
- 2.3 The pathways workstream has identified more than 20 separate pathways and 69 referral documents (some are old versions of the same document). Around 20 panels operate to identify need or allocate resource. The five main management information systems are all separate and don't talk to each other. This workstream is developing proposals to streamline and link the pathways and reduce the number of forms.

- 2.4 The interventions workstream has identified that more than 80 early help interventions are currently delivered by our workforce. Despite the data evidencing lots of activity, it is difficult to define a clear offer and the impact from it. In addition, a large number of services are commissioned by Sheffield City Council to provide early help in communities. This workstream is developing proposals for an integrated Early Help Offer.
- 2.5 The localities workstream has identified that 52 community buildings/spaces let by housing are used for early help. We have seven well used family centres and six outreach buildings. Practitioners have developed networks with other practitioners in the local area, however these are not consistent across the City or coordinated. This workstream is developing proposals to describe how early help services will link together and work in localities.
- 2.6 The workforce workstream has identified there are 371 people delivering early help in Sheffield City Council People Portfolio. There are 71 different role and grade combinations. Caseload information is spread across different systems and is not comparable. The Keyworker role appears to be predominantly with the intervention workers in MAST. This workstream is managing engagement with unions and developing workforce principles and a workforce model

3. Finance

- 3.1 Preliminary budget information indicates that Sheffield City Council spends in excess of £15 million on Early Help.

4. Communication and Engagement

- 4.1 Communications and Engagement is led by the Workforce Workstream. Each steering group member has committed to engage through a variety of communication methods, with their workforce – all communications will be in line with the current public health guidance on social distancing. Engagement with all relevant staff and unions is ongoing. Planning is underway to ensure appropriate engagement with partners and children and families.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 No recommendations - this report is for information only