

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 5th March 2018

Children's & Families System Transformation

Recommendation

1. That the Committee scrutinise this Children, Young People and Families Transformation Programme update report which outlines progress since July 2017.

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

2. The Select Committee is asked to scrutinise the following report which outlines the progress since the previous updates in July 2017.
3. Comments of the Select Committee will be reported to the Programme Management Group on 19th March 2018 and will inform the future planning, management and delivery of the programme.

Report

Background

4. The Children's and Families System Transformation Programme continues to address the challenges identified within the children's social care system and the broader children's system. A Cabinet Report in June 2017 (appendix A) and papers to this Committee in July 2017 (see Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity) highlighted that a new way of working had been developed with partners, which recognises the importance of system leadership, commissioning in partnership and empowering communities and families to help each other and themselves.
5. The recommendations in the Cabinet Report which were agreed on 21 June 2017 were:
 - a. Cabinet agree the principles that underpin the Children's and Families' Transformation Programme
 - b. Cabinet agree the proposed changes to the operating model and associated working practices
 - c. Cabinet agree to the implementation of system change

6. This paper details progress made to implement the proposed changes to the system, operating model and associated working practices.

Development of a Place Based Approach in Partnership

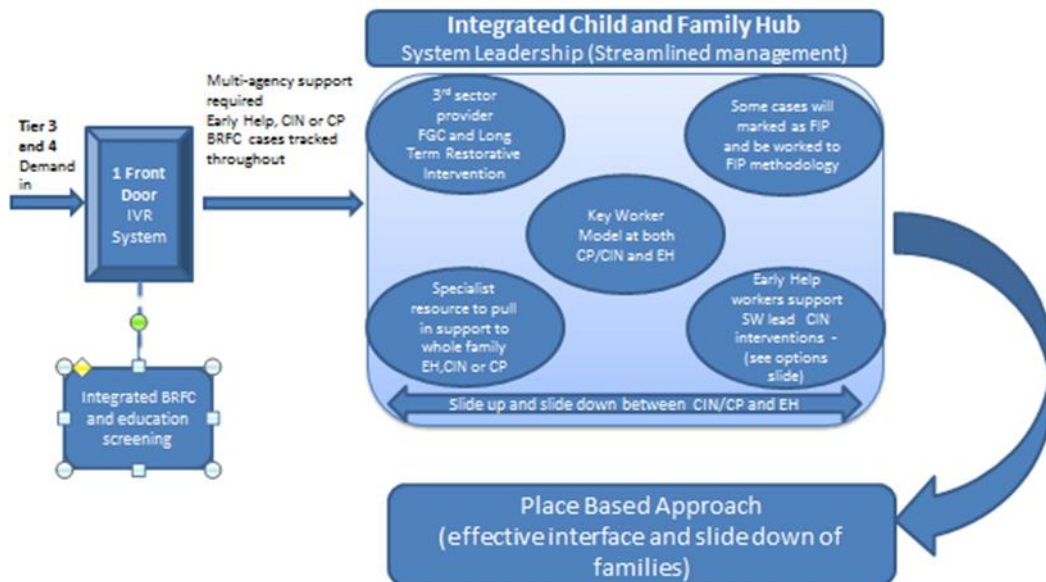
7. The partnership Place Based Approach (PBA) is “A collaborative approach using the right resources (multi-skilled teams, universal services, voluntary sector, communities etc.) at the right time to improve outcomes for children, young people, families, vulnerable people and communities in an identified locality”. This definition has been agreed with partners at the Family Strategic Partnership Board (FSPB)
8. A programme of local workshops based on agreed principles has been established. The aims have been to build upon existing local strengths, fill the gaps in local provision and consider how we can most effectively work in partnership with communities, the voluntary sector and locally commissioned providers to develop strong and stable families and communities. Work began in Tamworth and Newcastle and since June 2017 the approach has been rolled out to South Staffordshire, Moorlands, Cannock and East Staffordshire, with work very recently initiated in Stafford and Lichfield Districts.
9. The workshops and subsequent activity is focused upon: understanding and managing the current demand within each district in a more cohesive manner, which enables vulnerable children and families to receive the right support at the right time (this should be predominantly tier two support and community provision), ensuring appropriate data and intelligence is generated locally to target improvements in the PBA offer, linking local assets, increasing awareness and where appropriate developing an earliest help offer in the community to address needs. There is an emphasis on focusing on community first, services last, and addressing the root causes of issues through use of intelligence to target commissioning and improve the outcomes of Families, Children and young people within that District/Borough.
10. Learning is being taken from the original Children’s pilots, (a separate paper on these is also being discussed at this Select Committee) and where appropriate localities are building on these and using the experience to inform the development of the PBA.
11. Additionally work is underway to develop appropriate and sustainable governance both on a county and district/Borough level to ensure that there is a focus of activity, monitoring of performance and sharing of the learning and knowledge gained across Staffordshire.
12. Early progress from Tamworth and Newcastle evidences improved partnership working and a willingness to build on and improve current systems and processes. The current focus is upon developing daily vulnerability meetings, which aim to identify the underlying causes for vulnerable families, children and adults, and create action focussed solutions which address their needs in a timely manner. The focus is upon directing these families, children and adults into community provision where appropriate. The ambition is to have a local access

point in each district that can support families with lower level needs or sign post to alternative support as appropriate.

- Our approach to the PBA will also assist the police’s ambitions to roll out daily vulnerability meetings across the county, with a standard set of principles that will be supported by all relevant partners in each locality, and will additionally contribute to the support of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) cases locally.

Changes to the way the county council supports families with complex needs

- Proposals to change the way we support families and children with complex needs were described in the June 2017 Cabinet paper (appendix A, paras 52-65). The proposed changes will enable targeted intensive support to tackle the root causes of the problems experienced by a family with complex needs, which can improve their lives and reduce the likelihood of them needing specialist statutory services in the future. As a result, the county council hopes to improve the outcomes for these families whilst reducing the costs associated with these higher tier services.
- The new model of working, with an Integrated Children and Families Hub for each district, and with Early Help key workers, will lead to a joined up service that can tap into community strengths and respond to local needs. As outlined below there is a real need for a clear interface between this way of working and what is being developed within the PBA.



- Since July 2017 the practices and processes required to support the new model of working have been identified and designed: Based on feedback from our staff and partners the Early Help paper work has been streamlined and simplified. Processes required to mainstream the Building Resilient Families and Communities (BRFC) model of working have been produced; and a single point of access (“front door”) into a range of family support services has been designed

which will enable us to manage, and respond to our demand more dynamically and consistently.

17. These new practices will be piloted in the Tamworth district, starting in February 2018. The Tamworth district has been selected to ensure the new processes dovetail with the systems and processes that are being developed through the PBA. It is recognised that it is important to signpost families to offers within their communities. It is equally important that families experience an effective transition into or out of statutory services. As the pilot develops the new model of working will be rolled out across the county as appropriate.
18. Our aspiration is to bring specialist drug and alcohol, mental health, finance and housing expertise into the Integrated Child and Family Hubs. This will enable the team to effectively address the root cause without having to make numerous referrals or only deal with the presenting issue. Work is currently taking place to design and test the new model of working. This will be further supported by the development of the Family Group Conference approach, a well tried, tested and evidence based way of supporting communities to be strong and resilient.

Changes to commissioning

19. Proposals to change the way we support families and children through our commissioning approach were described in the June 2017 Cabinet paper (appendix A, paras 66-69). Our commissioning needs to be focused on supporting families to be strong and stable so that we can reduce the number who need specialist statutory services. We believe that some services and support will be most effective if we commission them across the whole county. In other instances, it will be more effective if our commissioning is designed to meet a local need and specific services/support which cover a smaller area. Work has taken place to identify the functions and capabilities required for this to happen effectively and efficiently, and since June 2017 the plans have progressed to bring commissioning and delivery together.
20. To support the new system a set of Commissioning Standards are currently being developed. These will be informed by the Children's JSNA and they will provide up to date analysis on commissioning/ contract arrangements, ensuring that we work to a collective set of principles which place outcome and opportunity at the heart of what we deliver. This will also outline our commissioning intentions across the partnership. These Commissioning Standards will be designed and be part of our practice by April 2018.
21. To support the PBA a new Family Support Contract has been commissioned and will begin in April 2018. This will support children and families in need, reduce demand and prevent the need for statutory services. The expectation is to align the Building Resilient Families and Communities (BRFC) model and its ways of working to ensure a whole family approach when providing support to families.
22. Alongside this, at the Schools Forum on 3rd October Head teachers considered options for the best use of the £1.448m Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from April 2018. The Forum agreed the most appropriate use of this resource would be for

the County Council to act as a broker, acting on behalf of the schools to offer earliest and early help provision through commissioning arrangements based on needs in each of the eight districts. This approach will provide a real opportunity for schools to shape provision for children and families across a district/borough. A progress report will be delivered Schools Forum to be held in the Summer Term 2018.

Support Function Development

23. To support the commissioning and delivery of work across the Families and Communities Directorate, a support function is required, which was described in the Cabinet paper in June 2017 (appendix A, paras 70-72). This function will:
 - a. initiate and support programmes of work that ensure appropriate data is collated and intelligence/insight gathered to improve, develop and quality assure our work.
 - b. ensure we are meeting our statutory responsibilities and are able to respond appropriately as part of the Ofsted inspection framework
 - c. inform future service planning, commissioning and delivery
 - d. call upon existing corporate functions where appropriate to ensure best use of resource and avoid duplication of activity.
24. Work has been completed to identify the core functions and roles required to deliver the new support function.

Reorganisation of Children's Services

25. As agreed by Cabinet in June 2017, we have begun a process of change to deliver the new operating model. A new organisational structure has been designed and new roles developed to ensure a resilient system which can operate effectively within the challenging social and financial environment. We are aiming to implement the new system during 2018.
26. We will continue to actively seek the views of colleagues and partners across the Children's and Families system to help shape and inform the new functions, practice and operating model.
27. Those who are affected by this change will be formally consulted as appropriate in partnership with Trade Unions.

Looked After Children

28. Alongside our focus on developing the PBA, and ensuring effective support for families with complex levels of need who require formal Early Help/ Child in Need/ Child Protection, we have also been driving forward with work to ensure that we have the most effective and efficient structure and processes to support children and families with the greatest levels of need. This includes working intensively with families to keep children safe at home, ensuring that they can return home when this is appropriate and that when in our care they are in safe, cost effective

placements which are able to deliver best outcomes and that they also receive high quality social work support, assessment and care planning

Conclusion and Next Steps

29. The children and families system transformation is a key piece of work for the County Council and has made significant progress since the last update in July 2017. Ahead of implementing the new organisational changes, the important changes to culture and practice which underpin the transformation have already started. A whole system approach to developing new ways of working internally and across the partnership is being embraced, critical for the sustainability of the future system. The following paragraphs provide examples of the new whole system approach to our work.
30. Partners have fully engaged with the PBA and this has led to a newly formed Staffordshire-wide multiagency partnership group, which will coordinate and lead on the implementation of Early Help, BRFC, MARAC and PBA.
31. The Family Support Contract is now aligned with the PBA and will start on 01.04.18. Work has been ongoing across the county with schools to broker the DSG money to support Early Help and to reduce demand coming into statutory services. The Healthy Child Programme, which is currently in its mobilisation phase with SSoTP will also go live in April.
32. The structure, systems and practice associated with the Integrated Children and Families Hub are now well advanced, along with our commissioning and support functions.
33. Our whole system approach working with the family has informed our submission to the MHCLG to earn autonomy for the BRFC programme. If successful this will provide much greater flexibility and sustainability in funding for the earliest help/Early Help offer across Staffordshire. Staffordshire has been successful in getting through the initial expression of interest stage – one of 19 authorities across the country through to the final stage. The final bid was submitted in February and we are awaiting the outcome, due mid-March. If Staffordshire is successful, the funding will commence from 01.04.18.
34. There is further work ongoing with a bid to the DfE to support the development of our regional adoption and permanency hub. This covers the four authorities of Staffordshire, Stoke-on Trent, Telford and Shropshire. If successful this will provide an integrated resource across four local authorities to deliver improved outcomes and efficiency for our Looked After Children.

Strategic Plan

35. The Children and Families System Transformation is a key outcome in the delivery plan and links to the Best Start strategic priority.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

- a. Children, Young People and Families Transformation Programme – Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 8th June 2016
- b. C,Y,P&Fs Transformation Programme – Overview of Programme Including the Vision Pilot – Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 8th July 2016
- c. Progress with the Children and Families Transformation Programme – Safe and Strong Select Committee – 12th December 2016
- d. Children and Families System Transformation Programme – 16th January 2017
- e. Children, Young People's and Families System Transformation – Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 13th July 2017
- f. Children and Families System Transformation (pilots) – Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 13th July 2017
- g. Children and Families System Transformation (pilots) – Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 5th March 2018

Community Impact

Appendices B and C are detailed Community Impact Assessments from the Cabinet paper in June 2017.

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Appendices/Background papers

Appendix A: Children and Families System Transformation - Cabinet Paper - 21st June 2017
Appendix B: Community Impact Assessment – 18th May 2017
Appendix C: Community Impact Assessment – Checklist and Executive Summary
13th June 2017