

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 24 October 2023

Strategic Vision for Early Years

Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

Considers and comments on the proposals that Cabinet should:

- a. Endorse the strategic vision for the early years' service and acknowledge the contribution this will make to Staffordshire's Strategic Plan.
- b. Endorse the principles for the proposed reorganisation of the Early Years Service delivery model detailed within this report and agree support for Officers to further develop this model with staff and stakeholders.
- c. Delegate authority to the Director for Children's Services in consultation with the lead member for Children and Young People and lead member for Education and SEND to approve the final staffing structure for the service.
- d. Endorse the planned budget profile for the Early Years Service and investment in new areas of delivery.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. This report provides an update on National and local changes that are planned or have changed the way we work in Staffordshire. It seeks to explain how these changes require a new approach and as such proposes to review the structure of the Early Years Service within Staffordshire County Council following the transfer of the team from Entrust.
2. The proposal will improve outcomes for children and families through a more efficient, joined up and holistic services for our youngest children and their families so that they can:

- a. maximise their take up of provision
 - b. have timely access to high quality early education and childcare provision
3. We will do this by ensuring that the team design and delivery is integrated into the Family Hub model so that we continue to build on this as the integrated access to Early Help services and support.
 4. The Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the Strategic Vision for Early Years.
 5. The Strategic Vision is due to be considered by Cabinet at their meeting of 15 November. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments and feedback will be shared with Cabinet prior to their decision on the recommendations within the report (attached).

Report

Background

6. We are a hugely ambitious county. We know that investing in the child's earliest years can pave the way for their future. A good start in life is likely to lead to better outcomes into adulthood. In recent years developments nationally have focussed on supporting parents with affordable childcare to enable more people to work, yet this is also an opportunity to ensure that children in their earliest years have access to high quality play and learning experiences that pave the way for later life. The attached Cabinet paper sets out how we plan to achieve this.

Link to Strategic Plan

7. See attached Cabinet Report.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

8. See attached Cabinet Report.

Community Impact

9. See attached Cabinet Report.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Cabinet Report

Appendix 2 - Early Education Entitlements and Funding Update: March 2023: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-education-entitlements-and-funding/early-education-entitlements-and-funding-update-march-2023>

Appendix 3 - Chancellor unveils a Budget for growth
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-unveils-a-budget-for-growth>

Appendix 4 - Early Years Funding – Extension of the Entitlements
<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/early-years-funding-extension-of-the-entitlements/>

Appendix 5 - [Main findings: Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 March 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 6 - [Education recovery in early years providers: summer 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 7 - [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Appendix 8 - The Best Start in Life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days](#)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-best-start-for-life-a-vision-for-the-1001-critical-days>

[Appendix 9 - Setting Closures in Staffordshire](#)

[Appendix 10 - Recruitment and Retention Challenges in Staffordshire](#)

[Appendix 11 - http://www.comms2point0unawards.co.uk/the-winners](http://www.comms2point0unawards.co.uk/the-winners)

Appendix 12 - <https://www.cypnow.co.uk/best%20practice/article/digital-campaign-boosts-language-outcomes>

[Appendix 13 - Extended Entitlements roll out dates](#)

[Community Impact Assessment](#)

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