

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2021****Agenda item: 5****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND  
RESOURCES****IMPLEMENTING FAMILY HUBS IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the new Family Hubs Initiative, the funding streams available to the Council, and seeks support for the proposed next steps.
2. The report seeks approval of the outline proposals for inclusion in the Family Hub Implementation Fund application.
3. The report also seeks approval to create 3 new temporary Family Hub posts to sit within Early Childhood Services until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

**Information**

4. Central Government Departments are promoting the roll out of Family Hubs across England to address the early help needs of children, young people, and families. A Family Hub is a system-wide model of providing high-quality, whole-family, joined up family support services. Family Hubs deliver these family support services from pregnancy, through the child's early years and later childhood, and into early adulthood until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities)<sup>1</sup>. Several Government Departments have promoted the establishment of Family Hubs to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
5. Family Hubs aim to make a positive difference to parents, carers and their children, through providing a mix of physical and virtual spaces, as well as home visits for families to easily access non-judgemental support for the challenges they may be facing. They provide a universal front door to families, offering a one-stop shop of family support services across their social care, education, mental health and physical health needs.
6. Family Hub services have a range of objectives, varying from area to area, but will broadly speaking provide early help and intervention for families with the aim of improving education, health and public service outcomes for children, parents and carers of the

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<sup>1</sup> [National Centre for Family Hubs](#)

family. What is important is that a family experiences joined up services which are relevant to their local community and are easy to access when they need them. It is proposed that we transform our early help offer to children and families so that the Family Hub model is central to this with full implementation across Nottinghamshire by April 2023.

7. Family Hubs deliver services in a variety of ways and at a range of locations. Hubs are not necessarily about creating new buildings but focus on bringing services together and changing the way family help and support is delivered locally. In practice, this will be a mix of using current Children's Centre Service buildings and other local authority spaces and integrating provision into other public buildings such as libraries, schools and community spaces. A significant proportion of the Family Hub services can be delivered virtually by providing an interactive advice offer and development and self-help resources. Other services will be delivered in the homes of families themselves – outreach will form an integral part of Family Hubs, overcoming the access barriers many families experience in receiving the support they need.

### Family Hubs - a National Priority

8. The implementation of Family Hubs has been promoted across Government departments and programmes. Work was accelerated in 2021 with announcements of funding and the launch of a National Centre for Family Hubs which will help local authorities set up and deliver effective models of early help support. Officers have met with the National Centre several times, the Department for Education Family Hubs team, as well as the Early Intervention Foundation who have been commissioned to develop an outcomes framework to evaluate the impact of Family Hubs.
9. The National Family Hubs Implementation Toolkit asks local areas to use the following principles:
  - a) **More accessible** – through clearly branded and communicated hub buildings, virtual offers and outreach.
  - b) **Better connected** – family hubs drive progress on joining up professionals, services and providers (state, private, voluntary) – through co-location, data sharing, shared outcomes and governance. Moving from services organised for under-fives, to families with children of all ages, reduces fragmentation (even though an emphasis on early years and the 'Start for Life' offer will remain).
  - c) **Relationship-centred** – practice in a family hub builds on family strengths and looks to improve family relationships to address underlying issues.

### Funding Streams

10. The Department for Education awarded funding to seven local authorities to help them develop digital and data products to support the practical implementation of Family Hubs. This was only open to areas with established Family Hubs networks, so Nottinghamshire did not apply but will look to learn from these authorities.

11. The Family Hub Local Transformation Fund was launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> November for upper tier local authorities and will fund at least 12 local authorities. Local authorities can apply for up to £1 million transformation funding for two financial years (2022- 2024), comprising:
  - up to £833,000 available for programme expenditure per local authority
  - up to £167,000 available in capital expenditure per local authority.
12. Nottinghamshire is currently progressing an application to the Family Hubs Transformation Fund.
13. The Early Help Executive is a multi-agency sub-group of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and is responsible for the Nottinghamshire Early Help Strategy<sup>2</sup>. The Early Help Strategy sets out how Nottinghamshire will work towards the creation of Family Hubs over the coming years and a “Task and Finish” group has been set up to shape proposals. Partners who have already signed up to the joint delivery of Family Hubs in Nottinghamshire are included in **Appendix 1**. Progress regarding the implementation of Family Hubs will also be shared with the Best Start Partnership as Family Hubs are expected to be a key point of delivery for the Best Start for Life Offer<sup>3</sup>.
14. Work is underway to understand population need and to engage local families and stakeholders in the development of Family Hubs. It is proposed that each Family Hub development uses local data and evidence of need to shape what will be provided and how.
15. It is proposed that at least one Family Hub Network will be created in each district with all partners fully engaged. These Networks will include at least one main physical Family Hub with several spokes across a locality. These spokes will provide access to a range of services and interventions which could be age specific, including libraries, Young People’s Service, Citizens Advice, Job Centre Plus, Leisure Centres and schools. Spokes will be a mixture of virtual and physical access points including the existing arrangements for telephone advice and referral, local websites, and online resources. Partner agencies will also be able to use the main physical Family Hub for appointments and drop-in sessions, space permitting.
16. Committee has a report before them today with a proposal, following local consultation, to use the Retford Central Children’s Centre building create a Family Hub in the north of the county. If this proposal is agreed, Retford Family Hub Network will be used as a design site which will shape how wider developments are progressed across Nottinghamshire. To enable the Council and partners to learn from the Retford Family Hub Network, evaluation and monitoring would be built into the processes from an early stage.
17. It is proposed to establish three new temporary Family Hub Network posts until 31 March 2023 to support the implementation of the design site and the evaluation process. These temporary Family Hub Network posts will be funded using the Children’s Centre Service core budget and will be subject to job evaluation.

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<sup>2</sup> [Nottinghamshire Early Help Strategy 2021-2025](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The best start for life a vision for the 1 001 critical days.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

- a) 1 fte Family Hubs Development Manager (subject to job evaluation) to work across Nottinghamshire to help establish hubs in partnership with families and stakeholders.
  - b) 1 fte Family Hubs Data and Monitoring Officer (Hay Band A) to develop a shared outcomes framework, information sharing arrangements and Mosaic developments.
  - c) 1 fte Administrator (Scale 3) for the Retford Central pilot to help the Family Hub Network team with processes such as allocations meetings, team around the family meetings, reception, and other administrator duties.
18. The Council will apply for funding from Family Hub Local Transformation Fund for staffing and capital costs to development and roll out of the hub model, ICT costs to adapt other Council properties to enable hybrid working and co-location. Communications costs will also be requested to create branding and improve the universal virtual early help offer. The bid will also include funding to offer a training and development offer for the early help workforce element to ensure partners use consistent whole family working approaches.

### **Other Options Considered**

19. The creation of Family Hubs is recommended by the Government but is not a statutory requirement. Retaining service delivery with current arrangements has been considered however, it is widely understood locally that families need support as early as possible to reduce the demand of statutory social care services and there is a need to better support families with primary school children. Family Hubs focus on early help and provide opportunities to better integrate Council services and increase joint work with partners.
20. The intention to apply for the Family Hubs Implementation Fund is optional for local authorities, however Nottinghamshire is well placed to bid for funding because of the family hub work that has already taken place with partners. The Family Hub Implementation Toolkit has been published at an opportune time for Nottinghamshire to assist with planning.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

21. Family Hubs bring together family support services providing support early, when families need them. These include universal and targeted services, including access to the intensive support of a keyworker where appropriate.
22. Family Hubs can support all families, particularly in the first 1,001 days, but they are designed to be particularly accessible to families from lower socio-economic groups, families who have special educational needs or a disability, or those from minoritised groups who are experiencing exclusion.
23. The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) has estimated that the cost of late intervention is almost £17 billion a year, suggesting that providing family support early can lessen the demand for statutory intervention or acute services later on. Implementing successful Family Hub Networks will provide early interventions to reduce the burden on statutory and specialist services in the longer term.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

25. Some of the signs that children and young people may be at greater risk of involvement in crime are present from birth. Family Hubs will be able to respond appropriately to these signals of risk and when required provide additional support at the earliest opportunity.

### **Data Protection and Information Governance**

26. Information sharing and General Data Protection Regulation compliance will be central to Family Hub developments and implementations. Information sharing agreements, data protection impact assessments and Privacy Notices will therefore be progressed.

### **Financial Implications**

27. Temporary staffing, as below, which totals approximately £129,002 per annum is available within the Children's Centre Service core budget and would be used to fund the following temporary posts until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
- a) 1 fte Countywide Family Hub Development Manager (subject to job evaluation); approximately £60,018 including on-costs per annum
  - b) 1 fte Countywide Family Hub Data and Monitoring Officer (Band A); £42,779 including on-costs per annum
  - c) 1 fte Administrator for the Retford Central pilot (Grade 3); £26,205 including on-costs per annum.

### **Human Resources Implications**

28. The proposals within this paper do not change any existing roles within the Council and creates additional temporary roles to progress the implementation of Family Hubs.
29. Any operational changes to Early Help Services within the Council will be considered by the Committee once options and consultation have been undertaken.
30. If the bid to the Family Hubs Implementation Grant is successful, a further report will be presented to Committee to establish a number of temporary posts to develop Family Hub Networks in Nottinghamshire.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty implications**

31. The creation of Family Hub Networks across Nottinghamshire will not have a negative impact on anyone with protected characteristics. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been drafted and will be updated as plans progress.

## **Smarter Working Implications**

32. The development and delivery of Family Hubs will require increased use of virtual tools and ICT. This will include opportunities for remote working, hot desking, a mixture of hybrid meetings, and virtual groups and programmes.

## **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications**

33. Family Hub Networks will ensure that all delivery partners follow Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) procedures and policies, and NSCP training will be promoted and completed.

## **Implications for Service Users**

34. The successful delivery of Family Hubs will be beneficial for children, young people and families by being accessible, better connected and relationship centred so that needs can be identified and addressed early.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Committee

- 1) approves the transformation of the Council's early help offer to children and families so that the Family Hub model is central to this with full implementation across Nottinghamshire by April 2023.
- 2) approves the outline proposals for inclusion in the application to the Family Hub Implementation Fund included in **paragraph 18**.
- 3) approves the proposal to create new Family Hub Network posts at a value of £129,002 per annum until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to be funded through the Children's Centre Service core budget:
  - a) 1 fte Family Hubs Development Manager (subject to job evaluation)
  - b) 1 fte Family Hubs Data and Monitoring Officer (Band A)
  - c) 1 fte Administrator for Retford Family Hub Network (Grade 3).

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### **Constitutional Comments (LW 19/11/21)**

35. Children & Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

### **Financial Comments (CDS 19/11/21)**

36. The three proposed temporary posts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 detailed in **paragraph 27** would cost approximately £129,000 p.a. (subject to job evaluation and set at current grade maxima including oncosts) and could be contained within the existing Children's Centre Service core staffing budget of £7.8million.

### **HR Comments (BC 02/12/21)**

37. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. Posts will be recruited to in line with the Council's vacancy control and recruitment procedures.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Family Hubs Transformation Fund [Family hubs transformation fund - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/funding/family-hubs)

Nottinghamshire Early Help Strategy 2021-2025 [Document.ashx \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](#)

Nottinghamshire Best Start Strategy 2021-2025 [Giving Children the Best Start in Life | Nottinghamshire County Council](#)

Nottinghamshire Family Hubs Implementation Equalities Impact Assessment November 2021 [Completed Equality Impact Assessments \(EqiAs\) | Nottinghamshire County Council](#)

Nottinghamshire Early Help Strategy 2021-25 – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 [Early Help Strategy Committee Paper](#)

Proposed Consultation on the use of Retford Central Children's Centre – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 [Retford Central Consultation Report](#)

Nottinghamshire Best Start Strategy Progress Update – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 [Best Start Strategy Committee Paper](#)

Nottinghamshire Council Plan 2021-2031 [Supporting communities and families | The Nottinghamshire Plan: Healthy. Prosperous. Green.](#)

## **Electoral Divisions and Members Affected**

All.

C1527