

**6 January 2021****Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND RESOURCES****GIVING CHILDREN THE BEST START: NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BEST START  
STRATEGY 2021 - 2025****Purpose of the Report**

1. The report invites the Board to consider the draft Best Start Strategy 2021 - 2025, attached as **Appendix 1**, and recommend it to Policy Committee for final approval.
2. To agree to receive annual updates on the Best Start Strategy for the Health and Wellbeing Board.

**Information**

3. The Health and Wellbeing Board endorsed the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy in December 2017. The strategy contains four strategic ambitions including giving children a good start in life. This ambition is also reflected in the Council Plan 'Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future' which includes the priority to make Nottinghamshire a great place to bring up a family so that children get the best possible start in life.
4. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy aims to improve the life chances of all children in Nottinghamshire as there is overwhelming evidence that making healthier decisions early, from pregnancy, can influence someone's physical and emotional health and economic outcomes throughout their life.
5. In February 2020, a Health and Wellbeing Board workshop was held focusing on giving children the best start in life. The workshop was attended by a range of stakeholders including Elected Members, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Community and Acute Health Services as well as representatives from organisations working with children and families. The workshop has helped to inform the draft Best Start Strategy.

**Best Start Strategy**

6. Giving a child the 'best start' begins before birth, with good pre-conception and maternity care. Pregnancy and the early years offer a unique opportunity to shape the lives of children: if a child receives appropriate support during their early years, they have a real chance of

maximising their potential. The Strategy therefore focuses on pre-conception, antenatal, postnatal stages and support for families until a child reaches statutory school age.

7. The Strategy has been developed mainly using two Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) focusing on the first 1,001 Days, and Early Years and School Readiness. Both JSNA chapters include a review of research, evidence-based practice, local data and needs as well as mapping service provision. Both JSNA chapters were reviewed by Children and Young People's Committee in December 2019.
8. The Best Start Board workshop confirmed the following priorities for inclusion in the Best Start Strategy:
  - a) prospective parents are well prepared for parenthood
  - b) mothers and babies have positive pregnancy outcomes
  - c) babies and parents/carers have good early relationships
  - d) parents are engaged and participate in home learning from birth
  - e) parents experiencing emotional, mental health and wellbeing challenges are identified early and supported
  - f) children and parents have good health outcomes
  - g) children and parents are supported with early language, speech and communication
  - h) children are ready for nursery and school and demonstrate a good level of overall development
  - i) children have access to high quality early years provision
  - j) parents are in secure employment.
9. The draft Best Start Strategy is attached as **Appendix 1**.
10. The Strategy will also focus on the impact of Covid-19 on maternal health, babies born during lock down, emotional health and wellbeing and access to services and childcare.

### **Nottinghamshire Best Start Board**

11. The Strategy will be overseen by the new Best Start Board which will report to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Best Start Board will also work closely with the Children and Young People's Committee. The governance structure is included within the Terms of Reference in **Appendix 2**.
12. Membership will comprise senior management representatives from organisations working with expectant parents, and families with pre-school children as listed in the Terms of Reference.
13. Members will be expected to champion and deliver effective and meaningful multi-agency planning and service delivery to give every child in Nottinghamshire the best start in life.
14. A number of pre-existing and new partnership groups will report to the Best Start Board so that service commissioning, planning and delivery can be co-ordinated across Nottinghamshire.
15. The Board will oversee the Strategy and be responsible for regular reports and updates to both the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children and Young People's Committee.

16. It is proposed that the Health and Wellbeing Board receives annual updates from the Best Start Board. Update reports will also be added to the Children and Young People's Committee work plan every six months.

### **Other Options Considered**

17. No other options have been considered.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

18. Work to enable children to have the best start in life spans a wide range of services and social issues. There has been no co-ordinated partnership strategy which brings together all key partners and activities which focus on antenatal and postnatal care, children's development and support for families with pre-school children.
19. The Best Start Board will provide a cross-cutting solution to a complex set of problems and risks which face children and families. For this reason, the Strategy and Board will build links between many different parts of the system to provide joined-up and holistic services.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

20. 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**

21. By using evidence-based practice to target and engage children at risk of poor outcomes, it is anticipated that longer term outcomes for children involved in offending behaviour will reduce.

### **Financial Implications**

22. Partners in the delivery of the Best Start Strategy will use their own resources to help shape and improve services and interventions for pre-school children and their families.

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

23. Safeguarding children and families will continue to be a key priority within the Best Start Strategy and for all partners represented at the Best Start Board.

## **Implications for Service Users**

24. Successful delivery of the Best Start Strategy will improve a range of outcomes for children and families including emotional health and wellbeing, healthy pregnancy, school readiness, speech and language to name but a few.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board:

- 1) considers the draft Best Start Strategy, attached as **Appendix 1**, and recommends it to Policy Committee for final approval.
- 2) agrees to receive annual updates on the Best Start Strategy.

**Laurence Jones**  
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## **Constitutional Comments (LW 03/12/20)**

25. The Health and Wellbeing Board is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

## **Financial Comments (SAS 09/12/20)**

26. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **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.

[Second Nottinghamshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – report to Health and Wellbeing Board on 6th December 2017](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Chapter – 1,001 Days, Conception to Age 2 – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 16th December 2019](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Chapter – Early Years and School Readiness – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 16th December 2019](#)

[Giving children the best start: Nottinghamshire Best Start Strategy 2021 – 2025 – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 30th November 2020](#)

### **Electoral Divisions and Members Affected**

All.

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