

**REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER, COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HEALTHY FAMILIES PROGRAMME**

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1) To respond to the recommendations from Overview Committee in relation to the delivery of the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme.
- 2) To note that a Key Decision on the short-term future delivery of the current Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme (HFP) contract will be taken by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities.

**Information**

1. The Council is committed to ensuring children and families have the best possible start in life, as a key building block for a healthy and prosperous Nottinghamshire. Giving children the best start in life is a fundamental part of improving health and reducing inequalities. Nottinghamshire's Best Start Strategy (2021-2025) sets out key steps towards a vision for every child in Nottinghamshire to have a good start in life. It is a priority in the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2026) and supports the delivery of several ambitions in the Council's Nottinghamshire Plan (2021-2031).
2. On 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Cabinet received a [report](#) about the future arrangements for the Nottinghamshire HFP titled 'Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme: 2024 and beyond'. As set out in 9<sup>th</sup> March [report](#), the Nottinghamshire HFP is a public health nursing service that supports families to provide their children with the best start in life through a range of nursing and health interventions. The service promotes early intervention by identifying and delivering targeted support to families in need. Critical to identifying opportunities to support families is the programme of health and development reviews by public health nurses. As nursing professionals involved with the families, they are able to provide guidance which is relevant and effective in supporting child development, parenting and healthy choices.
3. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023, following a call-in process, Cabinet received a further [report](#) about the future arrangements for the Nottinghamshire HFP. This report set out additional work undertaken regarding service delivery options and intended engagement with a proposed joint scrutiny working group, reporting to Overview Committee. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 Cabinet agreed to:

- (i) Progress the design and development of a new contract for delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP for a period of up to nine years and based on the indicative costs detailed in the financial implications section of the report via a co-operation arrangement between the Council and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) subject to the satisfactory and affordable outcome of further negotiation and service design and development activity and following consideration by Cabinet of any recommendations which may be made by the Overview Committee,
- (ii) The extension of the current contract to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

### **Statutory responsibilities**

4. Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility, under the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, to provide public health nursing services to their local population of children, young people, and families, including the Healthy Child Programme and the National Child Measurement Programme, which weighs and measures children in school. More specifically, as part of the Healthy Child Programme, five universal health visitor reviews, from late pregnancy to age 2.5 years, are mandated for delivery.

### **The joint scrutiny process**

5. In April 2023 Overview Committee was requested by Cabinet to establish a joint scrutiny working group comprising of key members of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee, the Children and Families Select Committee and the Health Scrutiny Committee, and the following key lines of enquiry were agreed:
  - What will be the impact of the newly recommissioned service on outcomes for children and families (including how the service design will support the Best Start strategy objectives)?
  - What flexibility will there be within the contract to facilitate continual transformation and alignment with the Council's Early Help offer?
  - How has engagement with stakeholders, children and families been used to shape how the service will be delivered?
  - How will the Council's ambition for place-based working and partnership working with relevant services to support children's outcomes be supported by the re-commissioned Nottinghamshire HFP?
6. Over the last nine months, a programme of service design and development activity has been undertaken in partnership with colleagues from NHFT and the wider system, to shape a revised service model for the Nottinghamshire HFP. As part of this process a range of engagement activity has been carried out with stakeholders including children, young people, and their parents/carers. This was followed by formal consultation with families, parents, carers, young people, and those working with families on the proposed model. Members of the joint scrutiny review group received detail on this activity via written evidence, presentation, and informal meetings.
7. The joint scrutiny working group was established by Overview Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and met twice in November 2023 to examine the design of the new Nottinghamshire HFP and inform a series of recommendations to be considered as part of the development of the Nottinghamshire HFP for 2024 and beyond.

8. The recommendations made by Overview Committee in relation to the Nottinghamshire HFP are helpful and are welcomed. It is recommended that Cabinet accepts in principle the recommendations made by the joint scrutiny working group as approved by Overview Committee. **Appendix One** sets out the recommendations and describes how each recommendation will be implemented in the future long-term service delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP.

### **Current position and future delivery of the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme contract**

9. There have been further developments with NHFT since the recommendations from Overview Committee were produced that need to be considered urgently. On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024, the Council was informed that a 'rapid review' under Section 48 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, had been announced by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care into mental healthcare at NHFT. That review will be undertaken by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and will run alongside the Independent Mental Health Homicide Review ordered by NHS England to examine the case of Valdo Calocane.
10. The initial outcome of the Section 48 review is due to be reported to the Secretary of State in late March 2024, and it is possible that further actions will then be taken by the CQC or the Secretary of State. The Council has concerns about the possible impact of this on NHFT and the delivery of the HFP. It is therefore proposed to pause and reflect on the current plan to enter into a new contract for the Nottinghamshire HFP via a co-operation agreement with NHFT from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024.
11. Continuing with the current course of action by entering into a new long-term contract in October 2024, with a service provider that is currently undergoing significant scrutiny, presents a potential risk to the quality of HFP service delivered and the subsequent outcomes for children and families in Nottinghamshire. It is therefore necessary for the Council to urgently agree a course of action to ensure continued high quality service delivery in the short term.
12. It remains essential that the Council fulfils its statutory responsibility, under the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, to provide the Healthy Child Programme and the National Child Measurement Programme to its residents. This is delivered locally through the Nottinghamshire HFP. The early intervention and prevention role that the Nottinghamshire HFP plays is vital in ensuring that children, young people, and families in need of additional support are identified. The service also plays a significant role in identifying children and young people who are at risk of harm.
13. In order to ensure the short-term delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP beyond 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024, the provider of the Nottinghamshire HFP is in a position to continue the current cost-effective service that can integrate with the wider early help system and continue to improve health and well-being outcomes for Nottinghamshire's children, young people, and families.
14. This report proposes to delegate the decision regarding the approach to the short-term future delivery of the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme to the Cabinet Member for Public

Health and Communities. The Cabinet Member will consider the available service delivery options and proposed next steps for delivery including a possible extension to the current contract.

15. Given the need to address the short-term position in the manner set out above, the joint scrutiny group and Overview Committee members will be briefed about the impact of this short-term position and how the work done by Scrutiny will be included in any service delivery mechanism that underpins the longer-term future of this service.

## **Other Options Considered**

16. The option to reject the recommendations of Overview Committee was not considered in any detail as the Scrutiny process and the recommendations that emerged are welcomed.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

17. Accepting the recommendations from Overview Committee helps ensure that the Council secures positive outcomes for children, young people, and families in Nottinghamshire through the long-term service delivery arrangements for the Nottinghamshire HFP.
18. By pausing, reflecting, and delegating a decision to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities on the short-term delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP, this enables the Council to:
  - ensure it is able to fulfil its statutory duty to provide the Healthy Child Programme and National Childhood Measurement Programme to its resident population,
  - make an informed decision regarding the options for future service delivery following the outcome of the planned CQC 'rapid review' Section 48 inspection of adult mental health services and other reviews within NHFT.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

19. 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.

## **Financial Implications**

20. There are no direct financial implications arising from the response to the recommendations of Overview Committee. Financial implications will be considered as part of future decision making for the delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP.

## **Data Protection and Information Governance**

21. The Council does not process personal data in relation to the delivery of the Nottinghamshire HFP. NHFT share fully anonymised information with the Council for performance monitoring, evaluation, and data analysis purposes as per the terms of the contract. The response to recommendations set out in this report will have no effect on these arrangements.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty implications**

22. When making decisions, decision makers must consider the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act of 2010. This requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; and
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

23. Consideration of equalities issues in relation to a service is intended to set out the actual or potential positive and/or negative outcomes and impacts currently identified for relevant groups and/or individuals, and consider what, if any, action should be taken.

24. The equality implications of the proposals set out in this report to implement the Overview Committee recommendations, have been considered and no adverse implications identified in relation to those particular decisions.

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

25. The Nottinghamshire HFP plays an important role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of unborn babies, children, and young people. These responsibilities are clearly defined in the service specification within the contract between the Council and NHFT.

### **Implications for Residents**

26. The recommendations from Overview Committee will continue to support improved service delivery outcomes for children, young people, and families through the Nottinghamshire HFP.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1) Notes and welcomes the recommendations made by Overview Committee in relation to the Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme and approves the proposed actions in response to those recommendations in order to help secure positive outcomes for children, young people, and families in Nottinghamshire.
- 2) Notes the further intended briefing for Scrutiny members to update them on the current position in light of recent developments.
- 3) Delegates the decision on the short-term future of the current Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme contract to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health

following discussions with the appropriate Corporate Director and the Group Manager for Legal Services or their nominee/s.

**COUNCILLOR SCOTT CARLTON  
CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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**Constitutional Comments (SF 13/03/2024)**

Cabinet has the authority to consider the report and determine the recommendations within it, since they are matters within the Terms of Reference of the Cabinet (Constitution Section 5, Part 2).

**Financial Comments (MM 15/03/2024)**

There are no direct financial implications arising 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.

- Report to Cabinet – Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme 2024 and beyond dated 9 March 2023 ([published](#)), which had as background papers the following:
  - Healthy Child Programme 0 to 19: health visitor and school nurse commissioning (commissioner guidance), Public Health England, 2016 (updated March 2021), available [here](#).
  - Nottinghamshire’s Best Start Strategy, 2015-25, available [here](#).
  - The Best Start for Life, a vision for the critical 1,001 days, HM Government, 2021, available [here](#).
- Report to Cabinet - Outcome of Call-in decision – Nottinghamshire Healthy families Programme – 2024 and beyond dated 20 April 2024 ([published](#))
- Report to Cabinet - Nottinghamshire Healthy Families Programme 2024 and beyond – consideration of call-in outcome dated 20 April 2023 ([published](#)).
- Report to Cabinet – Nottinghamshire Healthy families Programme – 2024 and beyond dated 22 June 2023 ([published](#))
- Report to Overview Committee – Outcomes of the Joint Scrutiny Review of the Re-commissioned Healthy Families Programme dated 25 January 2024 ([published](#))

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All