

## Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

### Introduction

This EqIA is for:

The development of Family Hub Networks in Nottinghamshire

Details are set out:

To establish a number of Family Hub networks across Nottinghamshire targeting areas of greater disadvantage and multiple needs.

Officers undertaking the assessment:

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Assessment approved by:

Laurence Jones, Service Director  
Commissioning and Resources

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The Public Sector Equality Duty which is set out in the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The purpose of carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment is to assess the impact of a change to services or policy on people with protected characteristics and to demonstrate that the Council has considered the aims of the Equality Duty.

### Part A: Impact, consultation and proposed mitigation

#### 1 What are the potential impacts of proposal? *Has any initial consultation informed the identification of impacts?*

Consistent evidence demonstrates that one of the major obstacles to children in need flourishing lies in their disrupted home life. This suggests that interventions need to focus on strengthening family relationships and providing additional support for children outside the home environment. Services are therefore necessary to help parents overcome the problems they are facing, and to help improve the confidence, skills and wellbeing of children in need.

Having dedicated teams working closely with vulnerable families is an important part of effective family support. This should involve supporting and challenging families and backing this up with co-ordinated and responsive action. At the same time, it is important to offer children the additional support that they need, be this additional support with learning and communication skills, to help develop behaviour and social skills, or support to build confidence and discover new opportunities.

In line with Government priorities, Nottinghamshire County Council is proposing to establish a number of Family Hub Networks which provide universal and early help services to children, young people and families aged 0-19 (up to 25 for Care Leavers and young people with EHC Plans).

*"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. Family Hubs will 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".* (National Centre for Family Hubs 2021).

The National Centre for Family Hubs uses the following principles which have been adopted in Nottinghamshire:

- More accessible – through clearly branded and communicated hub buildings, virtual offers and outreach.
- 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).
- Relationship-centred – practice in a family hub builds on family strengths and looks to improve family relationships to address underlying issues.

The Children's Centre Service is delivered through a network of premises and properties across Nottinghamshire, with substantial amounts of work being delivered through outreach work including home visits. Most of these properties are owned by the council, and a small number are leased from external landlords.

The council proposes to change the use of some Children's Centre sites to become Family Hubs. This means widening their age range to meet the needs of more families. These will be delivered by a range of partners including the County Council as the main lead for the development of Family Hubs. There will not be a reduction in Children's Centre Services, and we will make better use of our physical assets by providing more help and support to families.

Family Hubs will be delivered as a network with a main hub which is a physical site (likely to be a Children's Centre) with spokes which will include schools, libraries, the voluntary sector, health centres etc. The aim will be for services to work better together to meet the needs of families and information sharing will be crucial.

There will be a universal virtual family hub – namely Notts Help Yourself or it's replacement, where families can search for and find services and information e.g. supporting sleep routines, finding childcare etc.

There will also be an Early Help virtual Family Hub – namely the Early Help Unit where parents/carers and stakeholders can make contact to make a referral to the most appropriate service or main Family Hub site.

When main Family Hub sites are identified (following data analysis), the council will carry out local consultation with families (including expectant parents) and young people to identify what they would like from the services available. An equalities impact assessment will be completed for each consultation exercise.

A Family Hub will:

- retain weekly midwifery clinics (albeit not Monday to Fridays) both antenatally and postnatally.
- increase the Children's Centre Service provision on site for families with preschool children
- include services for families with 5-19 year olds
- include services for children and young people with SEND
- be open Monday to Friday (including evenings and occasional weekends)
- work closely with the Youth Service to ensure that young people are part of the Family Hub model
- host a range of services who can improve outcomes for children and families.
- Provide a one stop shop of universal and early help services for families.
- Provide opportunities to 'hand over' from maternity services to Healthy Family Teams

The service will aim to mitigate any potential negative impact on service users with protected characteristics by carefully targeting services and working collaboratively to ensure the most vulnerable families have their needs met.

## 2 Protected Characteristics: Is there a potential positive or negative impact based on:

Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Pregnancy & maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Race including origin, colour or nationality	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact
Sexual orientation including gay, lesbian or bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral Impact

## 3 Where there are potential negative impacts for protected characteristics these should be detailed including consideration of the equality duty, proposals for how they could be mitigated (where possible) and meaningfully consulted on:

How do the potential impacts affect people with protected characteristics?  <i>What is the scale of the impact?</i>	How might negative impact be mitigated or explain why it is not possible	How will we consult

## Part B: Feedback and further mitigation

### 4 Summary of consultation feedback and further amendments to proposal / mitigation

Consultation from a recent exercise in Retford has identified the needs of local parents/carers and has collected feedback from young people (though a separate questionnaire). The findings are being used to shape service planning and delivery in Retford. Young People for example confirmed that they are supportive of Family Hubs but want to have separate access/facilities specifically for them so this will be built into our plans. Findings will be published in December 2021.

Further consultation will be required for the development of each Family Hub network.

Completed EqlAs should be sent to [equalities@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@nottsc.gov.uk) and will be published on the Council's website.