

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Children and Families Advisory Panel
<b>Date:</b>	6 February 2023
<b>Title:</b>	Transforming Family Help
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Children and Families Advisory Panel with an overview of a new and significant project within children and families – the development and implementation of a new Family Help model. This transformation project is aligned with the outcome report from the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.
2. This new model will challenge our thinking as it looks to combine the delivery of services across levels of need in order to achieve the objectives of:
  - Improving outcomes for families by enabling and facilitating the opportunities for them to access services and support at a very local, community-based level
  - Reducing the risk of escalation of needs and risks and where there is escalation to reduce transition points to maximise engagement
  - Reducing demand upon statutory services as needs will be met at an earlier point of intervention
  - Developing teams of multi-agency roles and professionals to ensure the right worker with the right skills provides the right support at the right time
  - Increasing recruitment and retention of social workers through reduced caseloads and more creative ways of working across a mixed caseload.

## **Recommendation**

3. That the contents of this report are noted by the Children and Families Advisory Panel.

## **Executive Summary**

4. This report seeks to provide information in relation to the context and drivers behind the significant change project within children and families related to the creation of a new Family Help offer and delivery model. In addition, this report will describe, at a high level, the changes that are being planned for implementation through a series of pilots. This approach enables learning to be collated which in turn will influence and support the shaping of services moving forward.
5. Driven by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, Family Help seeks to enable families to access support and services at a local level, within their community, at as early a point as possible thus reducing the likelihood of an issue or need escalating. The concept is based on multi agency teams of professionals being able to provide the right support at the right time in a way that engages a family and reduces the potential for stigmatisation. There is a focus on reducing transition points for those families who do escalate and require additional support and interventions. Developing and implementing a new model is a major piece of transformation but getting it right will improve outcomes for families, reduce demand for statutory services and provide a blueprint for the future to be built upon as it evolves and responds to external factors.
6. The intended impact of the changes planned for development and implementation are based on putting the child clearly at the centre of their network, wrapping support and services around them in order to improve their outcomes and ensure their safeguarding. Services will continue to be built on the existing foundation of the Hampshire Approach and its strength based, relational approach to engaging and working with families.

## **Contextual information**

7. The report from the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, published in May 2022 and led by Josh MacAlister, marks a significant and important point in time for children's social care as it sets the direction for the future foundations of a new service delivery model. The report looks to ignite a 'revolution' in Family Help with a key recommendation being the creation of a new Family Help model whereby teams, with a mix of multi- agency practitioners and roles, deliver services to families at both levels 3 and 4, i.e. targeted early help and statutory social care. At the heart of this new model is recognition of the positive impact on engagement and outcomes for families

when relationships with professionals are consistent, timely and strengths based. There is an emphasis on local accessible services that seek to reduce stigma and encourage families to seek the help and support they need within their local communities. And once they are engaged this new model aims to reduce transition points to other workers for a family even when their circumstances, needs and risk levels change.

8. Initially, the expectation was that the government would publish their response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care report by the end of 2022, however, given the recent turbulence within government in recent months this has since been moved to 'early 2023'.

### **Relevant Background and information**

9. Given the scale of the Family Help redesign and implementation, Hampshire and IOW are adopting an approach that is both phased and iterative. Hampshire has also applied to the Department for Education (DFE) to be one of the twelve Family Help 'Pathfinders', a decision on this is expected in January 2023 and if successful will put Hampshire at the forefront of development alongside an opportunity for additional funding.
10. As this is a new case holding role there is a requirement for consistent and robust management oversight in order to ensure that there is monitoring of changes to risk and appropriate management action and response where required. In addition, there has been a communication to all local authorities as to OFSTED's expectations of social worker oversight where families are allocated to a differently qualified worker. In response Hampshire and IOW have enhanced some existing reporting processes alongside introducing new expectations and processes.
11. Within Hampshire there are 32 Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Teams (CAST) and eight Family Support Service teams. Therefore, this project will look to reshape and restructure teams both physically and in relation to how they undertake their work to deliver services. The Independent Review of Children's Social Care drives for teams to reduce their catchment down to child populations of 30-50k and to be developed with the requirement and expectations that they will align and compliment the work already in train in relation to establishing local community based Family Hubs which will be focused on delivering services and support to families across the spectrum of need, i.e. universal through to statutory services at level 4 through local voluntary and faith based organisations.
12. The early, current thinking is that Family Help phase 1.2 will roll out across all districts initially within Hampshire with the opportunity to pilot some very specific elements in specific districts. The expectation is that the roll out will

then be extended to the IOW at a point in the future yet to be agreed. Within the Independent Review of Children's Social Care report and accompanying recommendations there are several other projects and ways of working to be scoped and developed, some of which interlink with Family Help and some of which are wider. It may be that some of these elements are piloted in specific districts in order to test them out before expanding across additional districts, such as assessments, extra familial community plans and the role of the to be created Child Protection expert.

13. A central concept of a new Family Help model is that teams will be multi-agency in nature. Whilst social care teams work in partnership with a range of partners, both statutory and Third sector, there is work to do in order to bring them into any future Family Help model and team. As part of an earlier phase of Hampshire's transformation, specialist Intensive Worker Hubs were developed to deliver services and interventions in order to keep more children safely at home through both prevention and reunification. Within these teams there are Specialist CAMHS and parental Substance Misuse workers co-located and jointly working with families. The expansion of partner co-location to new Family Help teams is very much part of Hampshire's plan but within a later phase once the foundations and structures have been established and are strong enough to build on.
14. In terms of next steps and timescales the Independent Review of Children's Social Care report does lay out an expected timeline over a period of years allowing time for scoping and planning through to full implementation and business as usual. Ultimately there will need to be changes to core legislation in order to implement a number of changes within the report. However, in the interim local authorities are expected to start working on developing their Family Help model and other elements as best as possible within current legislation. However, as evidenced by this report, Hampshire is clearly already further along the path with the developments already introduced and implemented.

## **Finance**

15. A Cost of Change business case has already been signed off enabling each district to fund five CAST, an increase of one per district. Given this the current expectation is that the next iteration of the Family Help phase 1.2 model will be developed within the current agreed financial envelope. There is then potential for additional DFE funds if Hampshire is successful in its request for 'Pathfinder' status.

## **Performance**

16. As the Family Practitioner roles are just coming into post it is too early to report on their performance and impact. KPIs have been developed which will,

in due course, measure the impact on trends for social worker recruitment and retention, caseload numbers, staff satisfaction and sickness levels and the family journey through social care to evidence a reduction in the number of transitions for them thus strengthening working relationships.

## **Consultations and Equalities**

17. N/A

## **Climate Change Impact Assessment**

18. N/A

## **Conclusions**

19. Whilst the Independent Review of Children's Social Care sets the direction of change it is for Hampshire and the IOW to develop and implement new ways of working that compliment local environments and services. It is not yet known or understood the level of central prescription that will come from the DFE once the government response is published. However, with all this change and transformation comes a future of possibilities – the potential for going even further and ultimately bringing more, or all, social care teams and services into a Family Help model and structure.
20. Change on this considerable scale will undoubtedly bring challenges, both practical and practice based, hence staff helping to shape the future will be imperative. For families, the outcomes will be positive as they will be able to access locally based services, ideally in one place, much earlier in their time of need. And, where required, additional services will be provided through the relevant worker/professional stepping into and out of the family network as needed.
21. It is anticipated that within Hampshire the first iteration of Family Help phase 1.2 will be in place to be piloted as of May 2023.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes
<b>OR</b>	
<b>This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:</b>	

*NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.*

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

### 1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### 2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*