

## **London Borough of Enfield**

Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny, 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2023

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**Subject:** Development of Family Hubs and Children Centres

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Abdullahi

**Executive Director:** Tony Theodoulou

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. This report provides a progress update on developing Family Hubs and children centre provision within the context of the DfE's Family Hubs and Start for Life programme of work. It outlines national policy context, and Council's approach to transforming service delivery to deliver on the ambition of Family Hubs and Start for Life Services.

### **Relevance to the Council Plan**

2. Developing Family Hubs contributes towards the following Enfield Council's Plan 2023/26 priorities:
  - Priority 2: Strong, healthy, and safe communities; and
  - Priority 3: Thriving children and young people
3. Family Hubs is also one of the priority areas of work contributing towards delivery of Council's Early Help for All strategy 2020 – 2024. The strategy sets a compelling vision to collaborate with our communities and partners to help everyone in Enfield to be resilient, overcome challenges and lead happy and fulfilling lives. It aims to achieve this vision through focusing on the following three key pillars of work, which underpins our approach to developing Family Hubs:
  - Provide clear information, advice, and support.
  - Empower communities.
  - Establish an effective early help system.

### **Background**

#### **National policy context for developing Family Hubs and Start for Life**

4. The government has committed to championing Family Hubs. Family Hubs are at the heart of the Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical days, published by the Department for Health and Social Care in March 2021. The Best Start for Life offer builds on the work of early years/children centres and is seen as a core part of the Family Hubs network and Supporting Families programme.

5. In October 2021, the DfE provided an opportunity for LAs to bid for funding through the Covid recovery grant to accelerate development and opening of Family Hubs. Enfield Council secured £46,000 and commissioned Mutual Ventures consultancy to develop a business case and a blueprint for Family Hubs in Enfield.
6. In April 2022, the DfE confirmed 75 top tier LAs that will be eligible to sign up for funding support to develop Family Hubs and Start for Life programme. The funding package is £301.75 million for the period 2022–2025. Enfield was one of 75 local authorities eligible for this funding. The programme's core objective is to improve the universal Start for Life offer and transform delivery of family services across local authorities. The roll out of the DfE funding was delayed due to the changes in the government. This delayed the sign-up process for the eligible Local Authorities to December 2022.
7. Family Hubs provide a central access point for integrated and co-located family services. Family Hubs are a way of joining up services locally to improve access to services, connecting families and professionals and putting relationships at the heart of family help. Family Hubs are expected to bring together services for families with children of all ages (0-19 or up to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities). Family Hubs can include buildings, a virtual offer and outreach. The DfE stipulates that Start for Life services must include:
  - midwifery;
  - health visiting;
  - safeguarding;
  - SEND support;
  - breastfeeding;
  - home learning environment; and
  - perinatal mental health support.

### **Key DfE funding expectations**

8. The DfE sets out a strict criterion how funding needs to be used, which is primarily focused on transformation of service delivery with ring fenced amounts for each start for life programme component.
9. In summary, local authorities are expected to deliver against all the following key programme components:
  - LAs must adhere to the DfE Family Hubs framework within the design and delivery of Family Hubs and agree to the minimum programme expectations across all programme areas of work and achieve those by March 2025 at the latest.
  - Create welcoming family hubs to support families with children across the age range 0-19 and up to 25 for children with SEND needs. This needs to include physical spaces as well as outreach and digital service delivery.
  - Develop a coherent joined-up 'Start for Life' offer available for all families. This must include midwifery, health visiting, infant-parent mental health support, infant-feeding advice, breastfeeding support, parenting support, home learning environment, safeguarding and SEND support. Publish start for life offer for every parent.

- Develop a skilled workforce, working in an integrated way to provide families with universal and targeted support with focus on creating capacity through new workforce models that incorporate a skill mix, closer working across professions and provision of clinical support for start for life service.
- Provide a strong local leadership and commitment across partners to prioritise early years and support for families with children of all ages. This must be supported by transparent local leadership structures with clear lines of accountabilities and governance.
- Strengthen continuity of care between professionals, facilitated by the appropriate person for the family, to ensure families receive a seamless offer of support and do not have to repeat their story. Focus should be on joined up working, clear referral pathways, a shared case management system, data sharing, co-location of staff and a consistent point of contact linked to family hubs.
- Enable co-production of Family Hubs through consultation with parents/carers, children and young people to co-design and improve services. This should be enabled by creating parent and carer panels.

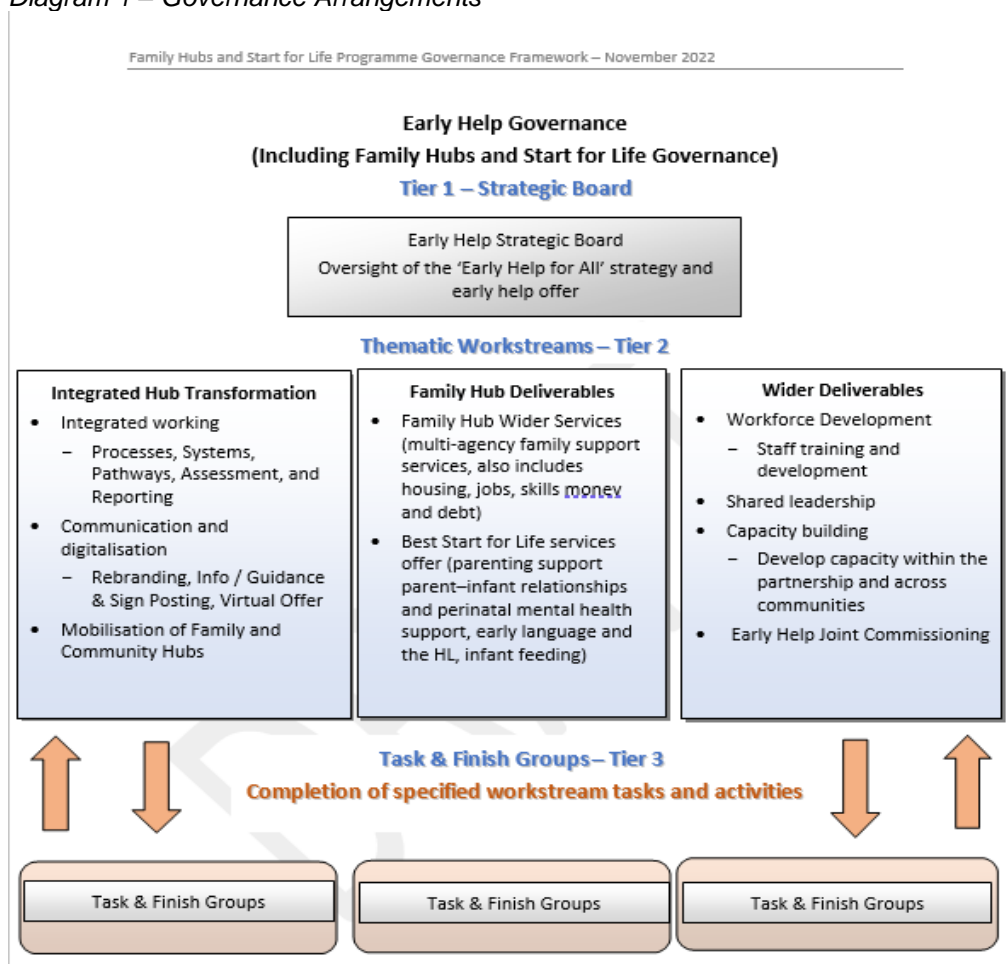
## **Local context**

10. Enfield's early help system is well established, with long standing effective partnership working arrangements in place with the NHS, schools, children centre provision, GPs, public health, and the voluntary and community sector, providing a strong platform to galvanise resources and joint working.
11. The Council's Early Help Strategy for All provides a good strategic fit to enable delivery of Family Hubs and Start for Life service transformation. Early Help for All strategy delivery has been supported by a strategic partnership board that has been in place since March 2021.
12. The Council has continued to deliver a strong early help offer to families alongside of the work of partners, which includes the work of change and challenge and parenting support services, commissioned children centre provision, early years, special education needs service, education psychology, public health commissioned services such as health visiting and school nursing, youth services and community hubs.
13. The provision of children centre is within the scope of developing family hubs. The children centre provision is currently commissioned and delivered by schools from five primary schools' sites (De Bohun, Eldon, Carterhatch, Raynham and Hazelwood). The current contract value is £937,575 per annum with a contract end date of March 2024. The physical and structural constraints of the current children centre provision would not enable a fully integrated 0-19 Family Hubs service offer.
14. This transformation funding provides a fantastic opportunity for the Council and partners to build on the maturing local early help system through galvanising shared resources, enhancing start for life offer, co-locating services together to provide early help to families with children at the right time in the right place in the areas with the most acute needs.

## **Main Considerations for the Panel – progress against developing Family Hubs and Start for Life services**

15. During 2022, Enfield Council has co-produced with support from the Mutual Ventures a blueprint for Family Hubs model. The blueprint was informed by a significant engagement with a wide range of partners such as Public Health, Parenting Support Service, Social Care, SEND Services, North Middlesex Hospital, Health Visiting Service, Midwifery, 0-19 Services, BEH Trust, Integrated Care Board, IAPT services, Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Services, Housing, commissioned Children Centre provision, Third Sector partners, school representatives, Early Years, and Community Hubs. The blueprint model was tested with service users' focus groups, which included parents, children, and young people. Both partners and service users have positively received the idea of Family Hubs and provided suggestions on services they need. In September 2022, a partnership stakeholder event was held and attended by 54 stakeholders. The event established a strong commitment from partners to our preferred approach to the development of family hubs, as well as partners' support for the DfE funding sign up.
16. Our blueprint highlights a preferred approach for developing family hubs as an evolution of the existing early help system across Enfield. This approach enables a leveraging of existing service assets and buildings adopting the following methodology:
  - A place-based approach of developing family hubs, informed by local population needs, prioritising the resources for the areas with greatest needs.
  - Creating a 'navigator' role to help families to access support from youth, community, and family hubs network. Family navigators will be a point of contact who is able to provide information and help families and young people navigate and access the early help system and support that is available, additionally signposting families and young people to specialist services should this be required.
  - Adopting a 'no wrong door' approach, providing a one stop shop for families and young people who are seeking help and support.
  - Building on the integration through a co-location of services through family hubs.
17. We are currently in the process of assets and partnership work mapping, the plan is to open the first family hub in Ponders End. Our approach proposes to develop fully DfE compliant family hub and start for life services offer alongside of universal plus and community service wherever possible. Universal plus offer may include reducing parental conflict, parenting programmes, DA support, public health services, housing support, substance misuse support, food pantry, welfare, and debt management support.
18. In December 2022, the Early Help Strategy Board ratified a revision of the current governance arrangements that is currently being implemented. The new governance format, see diagram 1, enables delivery of family hubs whilst driving early help system and start for life service transformation.

Diagram 1 – Governance Arrangements



19. In December 2022, Enfield Council successfully signed up for the DfE funding. Table 2 highlights an indicative funding for Enfield Council which is in the range of £4.12 – 4.32 million over the three fiscal years from 2022 to 2025. The DfE funding clearly specifies how funding needs to be spent, see table 3.

Table 2 – overall funding

2022-23	2023/24		2024-25		Total	
Total	Lower range	Upper Range	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
£1,047,000	£1,679,000	£1,789,000	£1,399,000	£1,485,000	£4,125,000	£4,321,000

Table 3: Distribution of the funding allocation across the programme's strands

Programme strand	%
Family hubs programme spend	19.5%
Family hubs capital spend	4.9%
Perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships	31.0%
Parenting support	16.3%
Infant feeding support	15.4%
Home learning environment services	9.8%
Publishing 'Start for Life' offers and Parent and Carer Panels	3.2%

20. In addition, Enfield Council was also successful in a bid to receive additional consultancy support from the Early Intervention Foundation that was made available to 15 local authorities to support system transformation.
21. In January 2023, the Council's proposed programme delivery for Family Hubs and Start for Life services was accepted by the DfE.
22. The Council's public health has developed a detailed local population needs analysis to inform development of family hubs and start for life services. This was positively commended by the Early Intervention Foundation.
23. Family Hubs and Start for Life service requires a large-scale system transformation. The proportion of the DfE funding is ring fenced for transformation infrastructure support. We have appointed Head of Family Hubs and Start for Life Transformation and are currently in the process of recruiting project management support.
24. A spatial requirement design meeting is taking place in March to consider the soft modifications required for the current Ponders End Youth Centre to enable a re-purposing into a fully-fledged 'family hub,' whilst retaining the full youth centre offer.
25. A clear target operating model is in the process of being developed and will be tested in in the first Family Hub.
26. Children and Family Services moved into the Children and Family Hub, at Thomas Hardy House at the end of December 2022. Planning is underway for the Thomas Hardy House facility to host a proportion of start for life service offer.
27. There is a follow up Early Help for All strategy partnership event scheduled in March 2023 to share the DfE delivery plan with focus on system and service delivery planning.
28. The thematic task and finish groups linked to the funded programme streams are currently being inaugurated.
29. Key high-level milestones within our DfE programme delivery plan are reflected within table 4.

*Table 4 – Programme Delivery*

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Task and finish group thematic workstreams fully mobilised with clear terms of reference and programme of work linked to the DfE funded programme elements.	March 2023
Maturity self-assessment submission	April 2023
Needs analysis fully completed	April/May 2023
Parent Carer panel established	April 2023
Business case for full integration of children centre provision within our emerging Family Hubs model agreed.	BC agreed May 2023

Milestone	Timeframe
	Full integration achieved by March 2024
Published Start for Life offer	April 2023
1 <sup>st</sup> Family Hubs in Ponders End soft launched	June 2023
Deliver all minimum DfE requirements/expectations	By March 2025

30. Stakeholder engagement in co-production of our family hubs model continues to be a priority for the next six months. There will be the following further stakeholder events: Early for All strategic board and partners event in March third sector engagement event in May and engagement with schools' community in June.

## Conclusions

31. The delayed roll out of the DfE funding programme has presented significant challenges for local authorities. The secured DfE funding represents a significant investment for Enfield Council and partners, which will enable positive enhancement for the start for life services that families with children will benefit from.

32. Our preferred approach to developing family hubs is underpinned by a pragmatism to maximise the use of Councils' and partners' assets and resources, whilst unlocking additional capacity to expand and improve our local early help system.

33. Enfield Council has undertaken a significant amount of work to progress the family hubs ambition in a truly brief time.

34. In summary, there is a clear road map to deliver Family Hubs and Start for Life Services. The new governance for Early Help for All strategy will be the bedrock to drive the transformation through a programme approach. This is an ambitious programme that will improve outcomes for children and families in the borough.

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