



# Northumberland County Council

## **CABINET**

**17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

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### **Family Hubs Development Update Report**

Report of Graham Reiter and Audrey Kingham, Joint Interim Directors of Children's Services.

Cabinet Member: Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson, Lead Member for Children's Services

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide an update in relation to the development of the Family Hubs offer in Northumberland.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Agree that this is a key priority in terms of the delivery of services for children and families in Northumberland and note that it is a significant element of the council Inequalities plan.
2. Support the ongoing developments in relation to further integration of services for older young people.
3. Support the ongoing requirements for system transformation in relation to governance, data sharing and gathering, workforce, communications and participation.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the Enjoying, Connecting, Living and Learning priority in the NCC Corporate Plan 21-24.

#### **Key Issues**

1. Northumberland has been selected as one of the 75 Local Authorities who can receive additional funding to develop the Family Hub offer. The overall

amount potentially available for Northumberland between Autumn 2022 and March 2025 is indicated to be between £3.354m - £3.479m.

2. We have been working on developing the Family Hub model in Northumberland for some time, building on the already established Early Help Locality Model across the county. This has been supported by the change in partnership arrangements for the Public Health 0-19 Service.
3. There are clear expectations of what services need to be put in place which are detailed in the report. We have outlined how we will achieve this through our sign up application and how we will 'go further faster' in our trailblazer application. We have received confirmation that we have been successful in our sign up application and are awaiting confirmation of the status of our trailblazer application.
4. There is a need to further develop capacity to support this work, which will utilise existing project and support capacity and be enhanced through the incoming grant funding. There is also a need to further develop the cross departmental and multi-agency data sharing to meet the funding requirements. We have started to recruit to the project team which will support the developments.
5. As part of the developments more services are co-locating and delivering from Family Hub buildings and to develop a more integrated service for older young people it has been agreed that the management arrangements for the Youth Service will move to sit within the Family Hubs.
6. We have ended the commissioning arrangements with Action for Children and Barnardo's for the Central and South East locality early help services and have successfully TUPE'd in 57 staff.

#### 4. **Background**

The development of Family Hubs is a national DfE / DHSC agenda which is based upon the Best Start for Life report.

“Family Hubs are centres which, as part of integrated family services ensure families with children and young people aged 0-19 receive early help to overcome a range of difficulties and build stronger relationships. Effective early intervention can improve children’s wellbeing, educational attainment, and life chances, reduce family poverty, improve mental health and lead to lower crime, unemployment and other negative outcomes which carry significant cost to the public purse. These centres enhance integrated working by enabling easier access to support, better outcomes for families, more effective service delivery and smarter use of budgets.”

Funding of £301m has been committed by Central Government up to March 2025 to support 75 upper tier local authorities to develop the family hub model in their areas.

Previous papers have been taken through Family and Children’s Scrutiny (FACS) Committee to gain agreement to end the commissioning arrangements with Action for Children and Barnardo’s in our South East and Central Early Help localities and to change the management arrangements for the Youth Service so it aligns with the Family Hub locality developments. Informal Cabinet and FACS were in agreement for Northumberland to proceed with the DfE sign up process as one of the selected 75 Local Authorities for additional funding to support the development. The overall amount potentially available for Northumberland between Autumn 2022 and March 2025 is indicated to be between £3.354m - £3.479m. Agreement was given and the formal sign up by the required postholders was given.

#### **Northumberland Current Position**

As stated above the sign up process was completed and our sign up application was submitted along with an application to be a ‘trailblazer’ at the end of September 2022.

As set out in the previous FACS report the sign up process from the DfE sets out a minimum set of service expectations to be achieved by March 2025 in the key service areas of:

- Parenting support.
- Parent–infant relationships and perinatal mental health support.
- Early language and the Home Learning Environment.
- Infant feeding.

In addition there are a number of other transformational areas where we are expected to show progress on a multi-agency basis in relation specifically to culture, communications, participation, governance, workforce and data sharing and gathering.

Trailblazers will be a group of up to 15 Local Authorities who lead the way in delivering the programme, making the fastest and most ambitious improvements to services for families and establishing best practices to benefit all areas.

In particular, they will be expected to go further and faster in year one in delivering new or improved services for at least one of the areas funded by the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme.

We have applied to be a trailblazer as the multi-agency partnership feels we have strengths in our current delivery across the four areas, recognise we could go further quickly and can support other local authorities in their journey to become Family Hubs.

We have received confirmation that our sign up process has been successful and we are still awaiting to hear about our trailblazer application.

We have signed and returned the memorandum of understanding to the DfE.

### **Developments since sign up application was made**

- The commissioning arrangements with Barnardo's and Action for Children came to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 57 staff were TUPE'd into NCC.
- There was a 'soft launch' of the Family Hubs in the week beginning 26<sup>th</sup> September when all the Family Hub (previously Children's Centres) buildings undertook a range of activities with families to promote the changes being developed.
- A new logo has been launched for Family Hubs in Northumberland following consultation with parents. This will be used to replace the current signage on buildings and will be used by all partners to promote the Family Hubs and demonstrate the integrated approach to delivery for families.
- A new framework of workgroups has been developed to support the project delivery with all partners required being identified for each area and asked to nominate appropriate representatives.
- Further work has been undertaken and is ongoing in relation to the integration of services and the governance arrangements going forward.
- Recruitment has started for the project team to support the development of the four key areas and the overall transformation agenda.
- There is work progressing to align the management of the Youth Service with the Family Hub localities to support better integration for older young people and develop the model further.
- We have expressed an interest, as part of the sign-up process, in research exploring early awareness and take up of family hub services by building on our successful partnership working with the Registrars service since 2016 in providing birth registration opportunities in all our locality Family Hub areas.
- We are working on an overall communications plan to keep families and partners updated. This includes joining the Family Hub website up with the

Local Offer website to provide a digital 'one stop shop' for families seeking information about services and support.

## Implications

<b>Policy</b>	This is part of the national Best Start in Life policy and locally is key to children and families getting the right support at the right time.
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	This is bringing significant national funding to Northumberland and will build on the effective work that is already in place in relation to early help and Family Hub developments.
<b>Legal</b>	The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 confirm that the matters within this report are not functions reserved to Full Council
<b>Procurement</b>	There may be some procurement implications going forward depending on whether it is decided to commission any of the work required but at this stage that is not decided.
<b>Human Resources</b>	There are a number of new posts to be recruited to on a fixed term basis until the end of the funding; some of these may be through an internal secondment process.
<b>Property:</b>	As part of the developments we are looking to maximise the use of and co-location of services in Children's Centre buildings wherever possible and appropriate.
<b>Equalities:</b> (Impact Assessment attached)  Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	N/A
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b>	These developments will support the preventative approach in relation to youth offending.
<b>Customer Considerations:</b>	This will support children and families being able to access the right support in one place.
<b>Carbon Reduction:</b>	N/A
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	The developments will support the improved health and wellbeing of children and families.
<b>Wards:</b>	All wards

## **Background Papers**

Previous reports:

- [Family Hubs – April 2022](#)
- [Ending of the contracts for Children’s Centres – May 2022](#)
- [Family Hubs Development – September 2022](#)
- [Move of Management of the Youth Service – September 2022](#)

### [Northumberland Family Hub Delivery Plan](#)

## **Report Sign Off**

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Suki Binjal
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	Jan Willis
Relevant Executive Director	Graham Reiter
Interim Deputy Chief Executive	Rick O’Farrell
Portfolio Holder(s)	Guy Renner-Thompson

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### **Author and Contact Details**

Mary Connor, Head of Service Children’s Social Care  
[mary.connor@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:mary.connor@northumberland.gov.uk)