

**CITY OF CARDIFF COUNCIL  
CYNGOR DINAS CAERDYDD**

**CABINET MEETING: 11 OCTOBER 2018**

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**A new delivery model for Family Help and Support in Cardiff**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**

**AGENDA ITEM:**

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**PORTFOLIO:** Children & Families (Councillor Graham Hinchey)

**Reason for this Report**

1. To set out a new delivery model for integrated early help and prevention services for families, children and young people in line with the Council's Capital Ambition's commitment to having an enhanced Early Help provision.
2. To provide an update and more detail on the delivery of Early Help following the Cabinet Report in July 2017 on the Family First Programme: Arrangements for Recommissioning.

**Background**

**The Benefits of Prevention**

3. There is a widespread understanding that effective early help and family support can:
  - Reduce the number of children who experience poor outcomes through their childhood because they have experienced abuse, trauma, neglect or exploitation for longer than they needed to.
  - Raise educational attainment and aspirations of children, young people, and their parents, thereby enabling access to better employment opportunities in the longer term.
  - Minimising expenditure on safeguarding and care by strengthening families. With a limited number of available foster placements and residential placements now costing on average £3,800 per week, taking early action to prevent care placements can be cost effective.

## Early Help for Families: Strategic Context

4. Recent research on Adverse Childhood Experiences has demonstrated that the first few years in children's lives shape their future development, and influence how well children do at school, their on-going health and wellbeing and their achievements later in life. A strong focus on the first few years of children's lives leads to huge economic, educational, social and emotional benefits later on, both for individuals and for society as a whole
5. Research also suggests that it is important to intervene at the early stages of a problem, whatever the age of a child, to prevent issues from escalating.
6. Included in the Council's Delivering Capital Ambition Corporate Plan under the objective to make "Cardiff a great place to grow up" was the commitment to "Enhance Early Help by March 2022 to support children and families before their needs escalate to the point that they require statutory interventions by:
  - Agreeing a refreshed Early Help / Preventative Strategy" Further develop effective early help for families, so that fewer children need to be looked after by the Council".
7. This report aims to bring forward a key aspect of that commitment due to its significant importance.
8. The Rights of the Child is a guiding principle that underpins the early help agenda and this report aims to further recognise that all children have the right to be treated with dignity and fairness, to be protected, to develop to their full potential and to participate. In taking forward its commitment to the Rights of the Child, the Council has pledged to make Cardiff a Child Friendly City, where every child has the right to grow up in an environment where they feel safe and secure, have access to basic services and clean air and water, can play, learn and grow and where their voice is heard and matters. The proposed new Family Help and Support Service will be a key deliverable of the Child Friendly City.
9. The Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University have been commissioned to carry out a wide ranging review of current arrangements for early help and to identify good practice in the area of early intervention and prevention. The report will guide the incremental rollout of the integrated service and initial good practice review (appendix 1) has specifically informed the development of the family help and support model.

## Current Challenges and Issues

10. Children's social services are working with increasing numbers of referrals, undertaking an increasing number of assessments and the Council is responsible as Corporate Parent for the highest ever level of looked after children. Recent data indicates that in the first quarter of 2018/19, 1,745 children were supported with a Care and Support Plan in

Cardiff. The numbers of children in need open to Children's Services are on an upward trajectory, rising overall from 667 children in April 2016 to the current position of 864 August 2018.

11. It is clear that the current arrangements for early help are not reducing the number of referrals received by children's services. The first quarter of 2018/19 saw an increase of 16.3% compared when compared to the final period of the previous year.
12. There are also growing pressures on Education, with increasing numbers of children educated other than in school. In 2018 there were 348 pupils education other than at school (EOTAS), which is 30% increase on 2017 (268 pupils) and 70% increase from 2016 (205 pupils). There are schools across Cardiff's poorest communities where pupil attendance remains below the Cardiff Ambition target of 95% and there remains a high number of in-year transfers between schools linked to behaviour and relational issues.
13. There are numerous reasons for these increasing pressures including the effects of austerity and increasing complexity of the issues facing families. The impacts have been seen nationwide, however, some local authorities have progressed to develop a more holistic approach to preventative service integration and the learning from these authorities will help to inform Cardiff's approach.

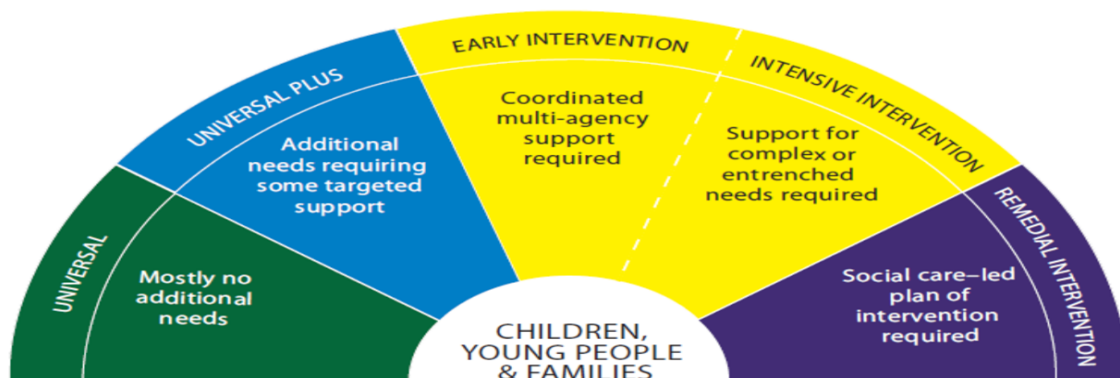
#### **Issues with Current arrangements**

14. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was introduced in 2016 and all concerns for children's safety and wellbeing are referred into the MASH. Fewer than 20% of referrals to the MASH progress to a Children's Services intervention. While some cases are referred for early intervention this number is low, just 15% or 3,292 children during 2017/18. In 51.8% of cases referred to the MASH, no action is taken.
15. Family Support is currently provided through a partnership arrangement between Tros Gynal Plant Cymru and Children's Services. The service operates a free-phone number for advice and information, co-ordinates a team around the family approach and offers intensive key working for the families stepping down from care. The current funding levels enable Tros Gynal to provide limited early intervention help. Of the 1,786 calls to the Tros Gynal Plant helpline in the first quarter of 2018/19 only 49 visits were carried out. 77 referrals were made to Team around the Family.
16. Parenting services are delivered and managed alongside the Flying Start infrastructure as is the Family Information Service which provides information about child care and activities. These services are not currently closely aligned with Children's Services' family support services.
17. There is currently no clear pathway for families who need help but do not require children's social care and there is a pressing need for a more coherent approach to early intervention and prevention services.

## Issues

### ***Proposed future arrangements***

18. There is an opportunity to bring together existing services and to further build on these to provide a comprehensive early help support service for families and children. This new model would meet the statutory requirement to provide Information Advice and Assistance for all families while providing more intensive support for those who need it on a “right help, right time” basis.
19. Aims of the service will be to:
- Provide a clear pathway into services
  - Provide timely information advice and assistance, reducing the need for ongoing support.
  - Enable families with emerging short-term problems to be better helped to manage these problems, build resilience and avoid the need for longer-term support.
  - Better support families with complex problems, to prevent the need for statutory intervention, taking a relationship based whole family approach.
  - Improve the range of services available for families who are involved with statutory safeguarding and care services to be able to secure the best possible long-term future and enable them to step down to support services as soon as this is safe.
  - Develop a shared understanding and language across the city, developing a “no wrong door” approach with all partners fully engaged in supporting families.
  - Improve outcomes for families and children across a range of indicators including improved school attendance and prevention of the need for care.
20. The service provided will be proportionate to the needs of the individual family or child. For some families simple signposting and advice will be sufficient, others will need a greater degree of intervention. The service will have a strengths based approach and will use proven techniques to help families build resilience and avoid the need for ongoing support. More intensive support will be provided where needed, to avoid future safeguarding issues.
21. A comprehensive range of services will be offered, helping families across the spectrum of need illustrated in the Welsh Government children’s services ‘windscreen’ below:



### Overview of the proposed new Family Help and Support model

22. The proposed new model, which is included in more detail in [appendix 2](#), contains a new approach to family help and support based on 3 new family support services:

- A **Family Gateway** service to respond to all referrals and enquiries and offer information and advice.
- A closely-linked **Family Help** service to respond promptly to families who need some short-term support, including a combination of signposting, practical assistance and help with parenting.
- A **Family Support** service which is able to work with families with more complex or severe problems and where there is a real risk that without intensive support, more significant intervention would be needed.

23. These Family Help and Family Support services will refer into a range of other services operated by both council and partners to ensure that the families and children receive the help they need. These services range from universally available help, such as money advice, to specialist therapeutic and health related services.

24. Partnership working is key to this model, with close working between statutory partners and voluntary sector being essential if the families and children in need are to be identified and their needs fully met.

25. The service will follow the best practice principles as below:

- **Strengthening Families**, encouraging resilience, repairing relationships within the family – using proven techniques e.g. motivational interviewing, restorative practices, family group conferences.
- **Whole Family Approach** – understanding the needs of the whole family, not just focusing on the mother

- **Relationship based approach** — working in partnership with families, listening, being respectful and empathetic – a trauma informed approach.
- **Right support at the right time** – less reliance on thresholds, flexible support. Tailored support developed with the family, clear plan/desired outcomes.
- **Developing a shared understanding and language across the city** – “no wrong door”
- **Understanding the impact of poverty** – routine use of advice and into work services to maximise income and resolve family income and housing issues.
- **Rights of the Child** – ensuring that the voice and the views of children are considered.

26. The services proposed are described in more detail below:

### ***The Family Support Gateway***

27. The Gateway will act as a single point of contact for all concerns relating to families, children and young people across the city. It will be accessible by professionals and the public, and it will meet all of the Council’s obligations for Information, Advice and Assistance under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

28. The Gateway will help families and professionals to navigate the system and provide a clear pathway into the services that they need. It will include a user-friendly website and telephone service to provide practical information, advice and assistance on issues such as:

- Child behaviour
- Common child health concerns
- Parenting support
- Child care
- School attendance
- Domestic violence
- Resettlement difficulties
- Isolation

29. It is recognised that families may need help with a wider range of problems and therefore the Gateway will also be able to provide advice on the help available with:

- Housing
- Mental health
- Substance misuse
- Debt / money issues
- Employment problems

30. The Gateway will work closely with a range of partners to ensure that cases can be referred effectively into appropriate services. For some key services the Gateway will be the sole route into provision.
31. Staff will be fully trained to undertake proportionate assessments drawing on the 'Signs of Safety' framework already in use across Cardiff. The service will have clear protocols in place to enable it to act as a responsible and effective front door and the staff will have sufficient information, training and experience to triage cases effectively with appropriate and effective supervision.
32. All professional referrals for early help or support will be received by the Gateway which will triage referrals and aim to find the most appropriate service to meet the needs of the family.
33. Safeguarding referrals will also be received by the Gateway and these will be assessed by qualified social workers. Where appropriate, referrals will be made to the MASH or safeguarding services.
34. The Gateway will be a significant improvement to current arrangements, providing a clear pathway into services. By signposting people more effectively to sources of assistance, it is anticipated that issues will be resolved at an early stage and reduce the demand for more intensive support services.

### ***Family Help Function***

35. Where a family requires more help than can be provided by the Gateway or where a full assessment of need is required, referral will be made to the new Family Help team. This team will work with the family to explore their issues and help them to develop their own action plan.
36. The level of intervention required will depend on the needs of the family however this could include establishing contact with other professionals involved, support to attend appointments as well as directly providing advice and support. The Family Help Advisor will normally continue as the key professional, supporting the family to achieve its plan over the period. The expectation is that for the majority of families help would end upon completion of the action plan period.
37. Family Help Advisors will be trained in Signs of Safety, safeguarding, parent-child attachment and restorative approaches and will be able to deliver parenting interventions. They will also be able to provide basic benefits, budgeting and housing advice and be very aware of the community services available to help further with these issues.
38. The amount of support provided will be tailored to the needs of the family with the greatest focus on those who, without help at this stage, would be very likely to require more intensive support or statutory intervention in future; families whose needs can be met by provision of information and advice alone will receive this via the Gateway.

### ***Family Support***

39. Where the family require more intensive support this will be provided by the Family Support Service, which will work with families with complex or severe issues where there is an imminent risk that without intensive support, they are likely to require further safeguarding intervention or care.
40. The Family Support Unit will be a multidisciplinary range of professionals co-located and working together to find the right solution for the family. The services offered will comprise a range of evidence based family interventions / programmes as well as practical help, signposting and advice. The right intervention for the family will be decided following discussion with a range of key professionals. The Family Support service will provide a sufficiently robust service to allow some children to step down from care.
41. Each family will have a key worker who will be able to directly deliver the intervention/programme, and who will liaise as needed with other professionals involved with the family. The service will use the Signs of Safety framework and will encourage a strengths-based approach to increase resilience however it is recognised that some of these families may require a longer period of support.

### ***Close working with partners***

42. The Family Help and Family Support Service will be city wide and will offer support to families with children at a range of different ages. However, there will be a strong emphasis on linking extensively with each of the local communities across Cardiff, building on the Ely / Caerau locality working pilot.
43. In particular the service will establish strong links with local primary and secondary schools, offering regular opportunities for liaison, case advice and joint working. Schools and all who work in them are an important part of any early help /family support system, their ongoing relationships and knowledge of families and children allow them to identify issues at an early stage. Schools are one of the highest referrers into the MASH but regrettably at present many referrals do not meet the threshold for early help. A partnership between the new Family Help and Support Service and the schools could facilitate access to preventative services, improve attendance and educational attainment. The new service will work closely with schools especially during the development period to ensure they can easily capture and report concerns relating to a child / young person's wellbeing and where appropriate access timely help and support.
44. Another key partner are South Wales Police who refer the highest number of cases into the MASH and are often the first responders to family crisis. Of the police referrals a large proportion are relating to



domestic abuse and the newly commissioned Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) service offers opportunities to improve the pathway for these cases, even where the risk has been identified as low / medium.

45. Health also refer a significant number of cases to the MASH, many of these are safeguarding issues, greater join up with the Early Help provision in Flying Start will improve links with Health Visitors and will improve joint working on a wider range of families.
46. Links to Youth Services and Youth Offending Services are also key, together with close working with the Adolescence Resource Centre and the proposed new City Centre Youth Hub.

### ***“No Wrong Door” Approach***

47. There are numerous third sector and statutory organisations, council services and housing providers that will be brought into the wider partnership to form a “No Wrong Door” approach to service delivery. Training will be provided to services at appropriate levels to allow them to fully take part in improving outcomes for children and build on the Child Friendly City objectives.

### ***Outcomes and Quality***

48. Monitoring of performance and key outcomes will be built into the service, to ensure that the impact of the services can be measured. An outcomes framework will be developed to capture key data at a population and individual family / child level.
49. Clear processes and quality monitoring will be embedded in the service from the start to ensure a consistent standard of service.
50. Systems will be fully reviewed to ensure that they capture the journey of families as they move through services and, where possible, share data across health, education and social services.

### ***Workforce Development***

51. To be able to fully respond to the needs of families, children and young people a fully skilled workforce will be required, trained in a variety of approaches that are proven to lead to better outcomes. By integrating the early help /family support work it will be possible to train across specialisms giving greater continuity for families. A full training programme will be set which covers a wide range of information and interventions including:
  - Childhood development
  - Trauma and the effects on early brain development
  - Restorative approaches
  - Motivational interviewing
  - Bonding and attachment

- Evidence based parenting programmes
- Counselling
- Safeguarding children / Signs of Safety.
- National Occupational Standards for working with parents
- Identifying and supporting children's language and communication skills

52. In addition training will include a wide range of advice and information that could be helpful to assist families to improve their financial or housing situation or address health issues.

53. This training would not be limited to those directly employed within the early help / family support services but will be extended to key workers who work with families, children and young people in other services and agencies to support a systematic change using the "no wrong door" approach.

### **Management and Resourcing**

54. It is proposed that the new Family Help and Support Service comprising of the Family Gateway, Family Help and Family Support Services will be Council run; this will provide the greatest flexibility and control in service provision, however the services will link closely to commissioned third sector services and will source external interventions as appropriate.

55. To achieve these new services a number of existing council and external commissioned services will be brought together including:

- Early Help Provision currently provided by Tros Gynnal Plant.
- Flying Start and the Parenting Services currently based in Education.
- Social worker input will also be required within the service with some posts transferring from the existing Support 4 Families Help and Support Service. Resource will transfer from the current Early Help service and also from the MASH, which will be receiving fewer, more appropriate referrals as a result of the change.

56. This will join up a range of early intervention, health and therapeutic services and create a truly integrated approach to early help and prevention services.

57. The new Gateway, Family Help and Support Service will be managed within the People and Communities Directorate. The Gateway and Family Help by the Assistant Director for Housing & Communities. The Housing & Communities service already provides the first point of contact and preventative services for Adults. The Family Support Service will be managed by the Assistant Director for Children Services and will be closely aligned to the MASH. In line with the statutory responsibility the Director for Social Services will provide the professional oversight of the whole service. While managed within People and Communities this will

be a service for the whole council and for partners, working collaboratively to help address a wide range of issues.

58. Approximately £1.27 million of Families First grant funding will be used to fund the services. As it is proposed that the new services will replace those currently offered by Tros Gynnal Plant, TUPE arrangements will apply.
59. Bringing together existing resources together with the Families First funding will help to offset most of the costs of the service however it is anticipated that some additional funding will be required if a comprehensive early help and prevention service is to be offered. Implementation of this model will require funding of £500,000 as part of the coming budget round. This service will be part of a set of integration proposals across the whole spectrum of need, aimed at improving the Council's offer in terms of early help. Every effort will be made to offset this contribution with grant funding where possible.

### **Governance Arrangements**

60. The work of the Family Help and Support Service will be overseen by the Improving Outcomes for Children Board. In addition an Early Help Management Board will be established to oversee the operational arrangements chaired by the Director of Social Services, involving the Director of Education and other key partners. This is in keeping with the statutory duties vested in the Director of Social Services under Part 8 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The duty requires the Director of Social Services to 'ensure that preventative services are provided or arranged specifically to address the care and support needs identified by the population assessment'.
61. The Early Help Management Board will comprise partners from housing, education, health, police and social services. It will provide leadership and oversight to the Family Help and Support Service. It will review service quality and performance information to allow the impact of the range of services to be understood, and take decisions within its delegated authorities, to use resources flexibly to address needs. The partnership structures allow the opportunity, over time, for other services, such as primary mental health services, to be integrated, or work in partnership with, the this model of early help and family support.

### **Safeguarding, Care and Support**

62. The Family Support function will work alongside and complement the existing Children's Services Safeguarding Care and Support services. Changes to the referral process will impact on the MASH service as they will no longer receive referrals directly from partner agencies.
63. This will reduce the number of referrals allowing the MASH to focus on those safeguarding cases which need a multiagency approach. This change presents an opportunity for the MASH to work in a more integrated way with Children's Service's intake teams in a multi-agency

safeguarding system. Almost half of referrals from MASH to children's do not result ongoing care and support. This highlights opportunities to make better use of capacity by reducing hand-offs between the two parts of the service.

64. The 'windscreen' of need presented earlier in this paper highlights, at the most acute end of the spectrum, the need for Children Services led targeted 'remedial' family support. This is required when risks to a child's safety and wellbeing are so high that if they are not managed intensively a child will become looked after. Services at the edge of care services have proved successful in preventing family breakdown in the most challenging of circumstances.
65. In 2016-17 the Adolescent Resource Centre (ARC) was established with the aim of reducing the numbers of adolescents being brought into public care. This has been a real success, reducing the number of adolescents becoming looked after by a third within the first year. The ARC team adopt a whole family approach that recognises that parents and carers must be supported to understand how their behaviour has impacted and influenced their children. By supporting the parents and carers directly, they are enabled to take responsibility for their children's behaviour and situation in a positive and constructive way and make the changes they need to achieve the family's goals. Meeting their needs will in turn ensure they can meet the needs of their children. In supporting families to achieve their goals, there is a wide range of support on offer including a trusted worker, parenting advice, practical support, activities to repair and rebuild relationships, evidence-based interventions, therapy and counselling. It is this existing infrastructure that the additional resources will be joined with, replicating the good practice. Learning from this good practice an aligned range of intensive family support is being developed for younger children at the edge of care.
66. This is crucial if the number of looked after children is to reduce in the short term.

## **Consultation**

67. IPC have provided independent advice and support to the work to strengthen early help and support. Over the summer of 2018 they have conducted a range of interviews within the Council and with partners to understand their views on current arrangements and the emerging model. Analysis of the interviews highlight strong support for the development of an early help hub and front door for children's services that is separate to the MASH. They also highlight the need for consensus that the model of early help and family support within this paper is helpful. Partners recognised the need for a casework service sitting below statutory children's services which has substance and capacity, for clarity around thresholds and step up step down from children's services. Partners fully supported implementation of effective, evidence-based family help and support from April 2019.

68. A multi-agency workshop session was held on 24th September 2018 that was facilitated by IPC. The event was well attended with over 45 representatives across a range of organisations. At the workshop the outline proposals were discussed for everybody to give their view on the strengths of the model, any concerns they have and how these could be overcome. There was a lot of positive support throughout the different groups at the workshop and agreement that it could have a very successful impact on the lives of many families in Cardiff. A summary report of those comments is attached in appendix 3.
69. Client consultation will be built into the new model to ensure that regular feedback is received from the families, children and young people on the services provided.

### **Next Steps**

70. This is a significant change requiring review of staffing, systems, processes and accommodation across several departments/organisations.
71. Should the future model be agreed staffing structures would then be developed and consultation would take place on these with partners and the staff affected. Detailed processes, quality assurance arrangements and workforce development plans will also be designed and fully discussed with partners.
72. The aim will be to have the core services in place by April 2019, however it is anticipated that the service will need to continue to develop after this date to achieve the full model described above.

### **Reason for Recommendations**

73. To agree a new approach to Family Help and Support, to improve Information, Advice and Assistance services and to further develop the help and support available to families.

### **Financial Implications**

74. The proposal for the future approach to Family Help and Support as set out in this report will include the bringing together of a number of existing Council and externally commissioned services and their budgets in order to provide a new delivery model for integrated early help and prevention services for families and children in line with the Council's Early Help Strategy. This will include approximately £1.27 million of Families First grant funding with some realignment of existing services including insourcing the early help provision currently provided by Tros Gynnal Plant. Any TUPE implications arising from this will need to be managed within legislative requirements and the budgets available to the new service.
75. In order to fully fund the new service, additional budget of £500,000 is anticipated to be required with effect from 1st April 2019 and this would

need to be provided as part of the Council's budget for 2019/20. A financial pressure bid will be submitted as part of the budget process, however in order for the new arrangements to be progressed sufficiently so that the core services can be in place by April 2019 it is recommended in this report that in line with the Council's Budgetary Framework, Cabinet commit expenditure in relation to future years of up to £500,000 for this purpose. This will continue to be reviewed as part of the budget process and the level of the commitment reduced where it is feasible to do so without negatively impacting on the new service.

76. The new approach to Family Help and Support will have a range of benefits including the potential to reduce the pressures and the high level of costs currently being experienced by Children's Services and will support potential budget savings in this area.

#### **Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate)**

77. The new delivery model set out in this report will meet the statutory requirement under section 17 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 under which the Local Authority must secure the provision of a service for providing people with information and advice relating to care and support and assistance in accessing care and support.
78. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached in Appendix 4.

#### **HR Implications**

79. There are significant HR implications of this proposal.
80. There are implications for current employees in the new delivery model that may affect current working arrangements. The trade unions and staff affected have been consulted on the proposal and this will continue should Cabinet decide to agree the proposal. Corporately agreed processes are in place to manage any staff changes and these will be applied in this case.
81. Also as the model includes the insourcing of services, there may be Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of employment) Regulations 2006 (as amended) (TUPE) implications. If this is the case, then this will be managed within legislative requirements and full consultation will take place with trade unions and affected employees from the outgoing provider.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. To approve the future approach to Family Help and Support set out in this report.
2. In line with the Council's Budgetary Framework, commit expenditure in relation to future years of up to £500,000 in order to meet the requirements of the new service as set out in this report.
3. To delegate authority to the Director of Social Services (in line with her statutory responsibility to ensure that preventative services address the care and support needs of the population) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Director of Education and Corporate Director Resources to take the necessary actions to implement the new Family Help and Support Service.

**Sarah McGill**  
**14<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

*The following appendices are attached:*

- Appendix 1: Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University
- Appendix 2: Family Help and Support Model
- Appendix 3: Summary of workshop comments
- Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment