
**A NEW DELIVERY MODEL FOR FAMILY HELP AND SUPPORT IN
CARDIFF – DRAFT CABINET REPORT**

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to consider and review the Draft Cabinet Report (copy attached at **Appendix A**).

Background

2. The Committee is fully aware 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, raise educational attainment and aspirations of children, young people, and their parents, and minimising expenditure on safeguarding and care by strengthening families.
3. 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".

Issues

4. The current arrangements for early help are not reducing the number of referrals received by children's services. There is also growing pressure on Education, with increasing of children educated other than at school.

5. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) receives all children's safety and wellbeing, and presently over 50% of cases have no action taken.
6. Family support is provided in partnership with Tros Gynol Plant Cymru, however current funding levels only provide limited early intervention help. Parenting services and family information service are managed alongside flying start and are not aligned with Children's Services.
7. In addition 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.
8. The draft Cabinet report seeks to enable Cardiff Council to respond to the challenges and issues that it faces by considering a proposed future arrangement, which could 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.
9. 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; and
- Improve outcomes for families and children across a range of indicators including improved school attendance and prevention of the need for care.

Overview of the proposed new Family Help and Support model

10. 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. (Para 27 – 34)
- 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. (Para 35 – 38)
- 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. (Para 39 – 41)

11. The report explains that the proposed service will be council run, however the services will link closely to commissioned third sector services and will source external interventions as appropriate (Para 64 – 59).

Safeguarding, Care and Support

12. 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. This will reduce the number of referrals allowing the MASH to focus on those safeguarding cases which need a multiagency approach. (Para 62 – 66).

13. The report also sets out the Governance Arrangements for the work of the family Help and Support Service, which will be overseen by the improving outcomes for Children Board. In addition the operational arrangements will be overseen by Early Help Management Board chaired by the Director of Social Services and involving the Director of Education, and partners from Housing, Health and Police.(Para 60-61).

14. The report of the Corporate Director People and Communities recommends to the Cabinet that :

- i. To approve the future approach to Family Help and Support set out in this report.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.

Scope of Scrutiny

15. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to:

- Consider and review the contents of the draft cabinet report.
- Pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children and Families prior to the consideration of the Draft report by Cabinet.

Way Forward

16. Councillor Graham Hinchey (Cabinet Member for Children and Families), Sarah McGill (Corporate Director People and Communities), and Claire

Marchant (Director of Social Services) will present the report to the Committee, and will be available to answer any questions Members may have.

17. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

Legal Implications

18. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

19. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

Review the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with information provided at the meeting and provide

any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Corporate Director People and Communities prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

4 October 2018