

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Date: 24th January 2023
Report for: Information
Report of: Jill McGregor – Corporate Director Children Services

Report Title

Development of Family Help.

Summary

Purpose of the Report

This report and accompanying presentation provides an over view of how our ambition for Family Help is being progressed across Trafford.

Introduction

The Investors in Children (IIC) report presented to Executive dated 27.01.20, set out a three year programme of investment in Services for Children with the specific aims of responding to local and national demand led pressures, building the budget on a sustainable basis and thereby enabling practical financial planning. The Local Authority currently provides Early Help Services through funding of approximately £2.5 million and approximately a further £0.5 million in commissioned services.

The Children's Service started their journey to redesigning their service in 2020, Phase 1 was completed during 2021 and the Redesign Team, together with the Service are working on Phase 2.

At the outset of the Children's Services re-design it was proposed that a number of service areas will be re-shaped during the second phase responding to both local and national drivers with a strong emphasis on Family Help.

In the Independent Review of Children's Social Care 2022, Josh McAllister states :

'All families need help from time to time, sometimes this help comes from family, friends or the state – support should be offered without stigma and recognition that many families struggle with challenges of adversity and poverty'

In Trafford we are committed to providing :

'The right help at the right time from the right professional'

We recognise that Family Help can only be delivered through strong partnership working and we are working closely with agencies in the development of this offer, including statutory partners and the community and voluntary sector.

There are three main elements to the Family Help offer, Family Hubs, Trafford Team Together and Family Support.

Family Hubs

Family Hubs are national initiative, Trafford did bid for DfE funding to support the implementation but unfortunately were unsuccessful, however, it is recognised by the partnership that Family Hubs are the right forward and there is commitment to developing these from existing resources with the potential for further bids if more funding becomes available.

We are currently working with the Innovation Unit to develop our Family Hubs offer and two multi – agency workshops have been held to develop the offer.

The aim of Family Hubs is to :

'...provide families with a single access point to integrated family support services for early help with social, emotional, physical and financial needs. Each family hub is bespoke to its local community while incorporating three key delivery principles: Access, Connection, Relationships' (Anna Freud, National Centre for Family Hubs)

Trafford Team Together

Trafford Team Together (TTT), is a system enabling approach to meet the needs of any child (and their family) living in Trafford and /or attending a Trafford educational setting, it is currently operating in a number of schools in Stretford and Partington, and a plan is underway to roll out across Trafford. The key principle is to deliver the right help at the right time. This relies on each agencies approaching every encounter with a child and family through a holistic lens, exploring peripheral as well as clearly presenting issues regarding the child, family and environment in which the child is living. It puts the family at the heart of the process ensuring they remain the priority at all times, empowering families to take control of their own support.

Intensive Family Support

Intensive family support (IFS)is a multi-agency, whole family approach to working with children and families who need more targeted help and support to help them cope with significant stressors or problems that impact on family's ability to nurture their children and improve outcomes.

IFS workers co-ordinate the multi-agency team. They undertake direct work with the children and their parents, offering practical assistance where it is needed, to enable them and equip them with new strategies and tools to implement positive change.

National policy and direction of travel is a blended offer of support that does not distinguish between Early Help and Child in Need intervention and supports a potential opportunity to redesign of Family Support building on the findings of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and Family Safeguarding Model.

There is an opportunity to broaden skill set of practitioners to include specialist adult workers, bringing together Multi – Disciplinary Teams to address 'trio of vulnerabilities' around domestic abuse, Substance misuse and mental health, as well as a stronger focus on child and adolescent neglect and neuro – diversity, creating a wider workforce to 'case hold' and support families.

Summary and Conclusion

This is a real opportunity to refocus on number of initiatives to ensure our Trafford, Family Help approach is embedded in communities, supports strong partnership working and provides the right help to children and families at the right time.

Recommendation(s)

1. Scrutiny committee are informed about the ambition for Family Help in Trafford.
2. A further progress report is brought to Scrutiny Committee in six months.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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