



Buckinghamshire County Council Select Committee

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Title:	Early Help
Committee date:	Tuesday 17 October 2017
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Purpose of Agenda Item

This item is at the request of the Select Committee to update them on the current Early Help public consultation and invite members to collectively contribute to the consultation.

Background

The Early Help Review is part of the Change for Children Transformation Programme. Details of the drivers for change and principles of the new model are contained within the Cabinet report 10.7.17.

We want to provide support to children and families who are most in need of our help, quickly and in the right way. There are many families who get support from a number of organisations to help with problems they are facing, but this support isn't always coordinated in a way that makes sense to the family. This causes confusion and frustration for the family and it doesn't always enable things to improve quickly enough, or for those improvements to be sustained.

There is a need to focus our resources on those who need our help the most. This may require changes to how we identify and interact with families in need in our communities. To achieve this, consultation with families, stakeholders and our staff about a new model of delivery is currently underway and will inform how we work in the future with families in need. The proposal we are consulting on aims to bring together all the people who work with families when problems are emerging, by creating one service: the Early Help service.



In future we will integrate services and organisations working with families, to ensure help is timely and effective.

Summary

A Cabinet paper was approved on 10.7.17 (publicly released 30.6.17), with agreement to go to public consultation on the Early Help Review. This went live on the 14.7.17, following 3 days call-in period after cabinet 10.7.17.

Mid-way through the consultation, feedback showed that more detail about the proposal would be useful. Further information was added about the current services and how these would change with the proposed new service. The consultation was extended to 16.10.17 (launched 4.9.17) to allow as much time as possible for responses.

A number of focus groups have been set up with targeted groups.

Key issues

The link to the consultation is available here:

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/care-for-children-and-families/improving-early-help-services-for-children-young-people-and-families/>

For information, the full list of consultation questions can also be found at appendix 1 and 2.

The questions that form the consultation and are for consideration/discussion at the Select Committee are:

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for a new Early Help service?
- When improving the way we deliver services for children and their families, what are the most important things we should consider?
- Do you have any other comments on our proposal for a new Early Help service?

Resource implications

The Council's overall financial position and plans have led to service areas reviewing their performance against best practice. This has identified Early Help services where a new improved delivery model has the potential to deliver £3.3m of savings included within the Council's financial plans.

Next steps

Timeline for decisions:

- Early Help public consultation end 16.10.17
- Analysis of public consultation results.
- Cabinet decision 13.11.17 on implementing model.