

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLY HELP TO PROMOTE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES

## WITNESS SUBMISSION

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### 1. Background

1.1 The council's Early Intervention and Prevention Service was fully established in September 2015 as a consequence of transformation activity undertaken within the overall Children's Pathway Transformation Programme.

1.2 The new service comprises 4 divisions that have been created by a combination of aligning existing services with the overall service structure and disestablishing previous services in order to create new service areas. The four service areas are:

- **Child and Family Development Services:** Securing and providing a range of early learning, childcare and family development services delivered through early years centres and children's centres;
- **Targeted Programmes:** Meeting the needs of families by securing and providing targeted programmes of developmental activity that enable children, young people and families to develop the behaviours, skills and capabilities to avoid or overcome problems and risks;
- **Key-working Services:** Meeting the needs of families by providing integrated 1-1 support and challenge to enable them to overcome problems including those concerned with school absence and non participation in education employment and training, and;
- **Youth Offending Services:** Meeting the needs of young people who have come to the attention of criminal justice agencies by delivering intervention and tracking services with a view to reducing the likelihood of further offending behaviour.

1.3 In addition to these services the externally commissioned 0-19 Healthy Child Programme has been aligned to Early Intervention and Prevention Services.

1.4 The Service also leads on the development and implementation of a cross partnership Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy.

1.5 Over the past 18 months the service has been primarily concerned with conducting and concluding service review and re-structure activity. This process has included the undertaking of work in order to put in place the required infra-structure to enable the service to organise and plan its activity. This work has included the production of a plan within which service activity can be located together with a draft framework for determining and measuring service impact against agreed outcomes.

1.6 Prior to the review and re-organisation services worked to a range of different outcome measures and performance indicators. The following is offered as a summary illustration of the type of headline outcomes secured by services located within the new structure:

### **Child and Family Development Services**

- There have been 74,818 beneficiaries of the Children's Centre programme between April and September 2015 with 58% of these being from targeted under-represented group (TUR);
- The most popular activities at the Children's Centres are in the 'Strong Families' workstream with 38,036 beneficiaries from April to September 2015. Activities include Stay and Play sessions, and Family Support and Baby Groups. Family outcomes include increased parent / child attachment, increased parenting skills and development of friendship and family support networks;
- TUR groups are most represented (86%) in the work stream promoting Safe Families. Activities include Accident Prevention and Housing Support. Family outcomes include increased ability to prevent accidents in the home and the ability to secure and maintain appropriate family accommodation;
- The Healthy Families work stream had 24,049 participants from April to September 2015 of which 47% were from TUR groups. Activities include midwifery and baby clinics, child and mother health clinics and speech and language sessions. Family outcomes include the ability meet a babies health needs in the early days and weeks after giving birth, early identification and resolution of post natal challenges including depression, baby achievement of developmental milestones including communication development.

### **Targeted Programmes**

- There have been 2,377 targeted programme beneficiaries between April and September 2015;
- 110 young people have been supported between April and September 2015 to address emotional health and well-being problems via the Link Counselling Services. Outcomes include enhanced confidence and self-esteem and the ability to manage stress and anxiety;
- 25 young people have received targeted support between April and September 2015 to overcome challenges in relation to transition from primary to secondary school. Outcomes include the ability to develop new friendships and relationships; the ability to manage change; and
- 1,500 young people have participated in informal learning programmes between April and September 2015 which have developed their ability to avoid risks associated with unhealthy and unsafe relationships. Outcomes include the development of self-awareness, confidence and self-esteem, development of assertiveness in managing relationships and knowledge of risks associated with unsafe sexual behaviour.

## **Key-working Services**

- 172 families supported to overcome emergent difficulties through use of the Early Help Assessment process between April and September 2015. Family outcomes include problems not escalating because they had been identified and responded to swiftly and the relaying of problems just once through one managed process;
- 170 families supported overcome identified problems by multi-agency virtual teams convened via the Team Around the Family process between April and September 2015. Outcomes for families include being supported to overcome problems with the support of all relevant agencies via one managed and coordinated process;
- 227 families supported to overcome problems identified as requiring key-work support between April and September 2015. Outcomes for families include having planned outcomes achieved to the point at which no further support is required; and
- 37 families supported to move away from the need for statutory services. Family outcomes include having secured planned outcomes that have led to the resolution of significant risks to the well-being of the family and child.

## **Youth Offending Services**

- The service has seen a reduction in the number of entrants to the juvenile justice system in quarter 2 of 2015 - 2016. Family outcomes include the risk of negative outcomes associated with entering the criminal justice system avoided as a consequence of preventative activity including the use of triage processes and effective diversionary activity; and
- Looked after children receiving Youth Offending interventions has decreased. 16% were received during Q2 of 15/16, compared to 38% in Q2 of 14/15. Outcomes include children in care being supported to make positive choices in relation to involvement in risk related behaviour.

Work is ongoing to re-define the outcomes the service seeks to achieve together with the measures and indicators that are needed to evidence progress. This work is being progressed in parallel with associated work with partners within the context of developing the wider Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy.

## **2. Planning to provide early help in order to promote positive outcomes for families**

1.1 This section of the witness statement explains the approach to the future planning, delivery and evaluation of services in response to the need to intervene early to avoid and or reduce the risk of negative outcomes for families.

1.2 The statement is accompanied by the following appendices:

- 1.1.1 Early Intervention and Prevention Services Strategic Direction document;
- 1.1.2 Early Intervention and Prevention Services Plan;
- 1.1.3 Early Intervention and Prevention Services Structure;
- 1.1.4 Local Safeguarding Children's Board Thresholds Guidance; and
- 1.1.5 Draft Early Intervention and Prevention Services Performance Web.

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1.3 Committee member attention is drawn to the following three documents in particular.

1.4 **Early Intervention and Prevention Services Strategic Direction document.** This document provides definition of terms for the work undertaken by Early Intervention and Prevention Services and outlines the priorities the Service seeks to attend to through its work. It is informed by a range of needs related reference documents including the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment (JSNA).

1.5 **The Early Intervention and Prevention Service Plan.** This document sets out the outcomes the service seeks to achieve together with the operational objectives in place to secure the required outcomes. Each objective has a relationship to both high level strategic outcomes and strategic priorities drawn from the JSNA.

1.6 **Draft Early Intervention and Prevention Services Performance Web.** This draft document aims to provide the service with a framework whereby it can document the outcomes it wishes to secure alongside the indicators and measures that will evidence if these outcomes are being achieved or not. The draft web poses the following questions with a view to putting the required processes in place to answer them so that we may know how effective we are at intervening early in order to prevent family problems escalating:

- How successful are we at knowing which families are most in need of our support?
- How successful are we at enabling families to develop the resilience to overcome emergent problems at the first opportunity?
- How successful are we at enabling families most in need of targeted services to access them and overcome presenting difficulties?
- How successful are we at enabling families to develop the resilience to overcome more significant and complex problems?
- How successful are we at enabling families to develop the resilience to step down and away from the need for statutory intervention?
- Are we satisfied with the quality of our work?
- Are we using the resources at our disposal to best effect?

1.7 They are offered to the Committee in order to explain how services are planned in response to need identified via a number of sources including the JSNA, how services are planning and delivering in response.

1.8 Work is ongoing to develop both the services charged with achieving the success referenced in the plan and the performance web, as well as the systems for evidencing impact and outcomes.

1.9 Additional witness statements present to the Committee will provide more specific information in relation to outcomes generated as a consequence of activity referenced within the Early Intervention and Prevention Services Plan.