

FAMILY HUBS - NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Committee name	Health and Social Care Select Committee
Officer reporting	Claire Fry
Papers with report	Draft Family Hub Strategy
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This report provides an overview of the national context for Family Hubs and the Council's commitment and proposed approach to delivering support and early help services for babies, children and young people and their families in Hillingdon, through Family Hub networks, should the strategy be approved following public consultation. It also seeks to provide context to service delivery through Uxbridge Family Hub, which has been operational since November 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Overview and Background

1. The Government has committed to provide Family Hubs in every region of England as a means of providing integrated family services via a central access point. Family Hubs provide families with children aged 0-19 (and up to 25 for SEND) somewhere they know they can go if they need information, advice or guidance for family, relationship, health and other issues.
2. The National Centre for Family Hubs was launched in May 2021, led by the Anna Freud Centre and funded by the Department for Education (DfE), to support the upscaling of Family Hubs nationally. Furthermore, the Early Years Healthy Development Review Report - The Best Start for Life, led by Dame Andrea Leadsom MP, champions Family Hubs as a place where families can access support in the early years of their child's life, through the delivery of a specific Start for Life offer, incorporating access to Maternity and Health services, alongside support for parenting and reducing parental conflict.
3. In August 2022, the Government published the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide for the 75 local authority areas funded in 2022-25, to establish their Family Hubs and Start for Life Offer. Hillingdon has not received funding in this first phase, in part due to the advances already made locally in establishing Uxbridge Family Hub in November 2021 and work underway to deliver a second Family Hub in Hayes, due in July 2023.
4. The Government has also published the Family Hub Framework which sets out expectations for service delivery under three delivery areas of access, connection and relationships, to which multiple key success criteria are aligned. As Hillingdon is not currently in receipt of Government funding, there is no requirement to adhere to the framework. However, it

provides a useful tool for developing and measuring success of the Family Hub programme locally and will support future funding applications as and when they arise.

Local Context

5. As a council we are committed to ensuring that families and their children are able to access the right help at the right time. Family Hubs enable this by providing local families with access to information, advice and support and bringing together a wide range of services, in an integrated way.
6. The Council has developed a draft strategy for delivering a network of Family Hubs across the Borough, supported by additional delivery points, to bring together services in a coordinated way. The draft strategy is currently out to consultation and residents are encouraged to complete the survey and have their say on the proposals. The consultation runs for 12 weeks and closes on 30 July 2023.
7. However, our first Family Hub was developed in 2021. It made creative use of the Mezzanine level in the Civic Centre, to provide a purpose-built bright, modern and welcoming space for children, young people and their families.
8. The Hub provides a base for service delivery for 5 Council services, including Uxbridge Children's Centre, the Supervised Contact service, Adolescent Development services, the Multi Agency Psychology Service (MAPS) and the Youth Justice service.
9. The Hub has been developed with a wide range of uses in mind; with safe spaces to play and learn for our youngest children, relaxed and comfortable spaces for parents to have supervised contact with their children, spaces that support and facilitate therapeutic work, a clinical space to deliver midwifery and health clinics and a fully equipped Lifestyle kitchen that enables children and young people of all ages, and their parents, to learn to cook and prepare healthy and nutritious meals and gain skills for life. An outdoor space has also been made available, enabling children and young people to have safe access to the outdoors and increasing the breadth of services available.
10. The Family Hub also enables children, young people and their families, to access a broad range of services to support their health and well-being, delivered by our partners from Health and the Voluntary sector.

Service Delivery

11. From the first days of pregnancy, families can access antenatal and postnatal community midwifery services, in addition to infant feeding support, including support for breastfeeding. Health visiting services are also delivered from the Hub and parents can have their baby weighed and receive information, advice and guidance on a range of health matters, including childhood illnesses, immunisations and accident prevention. Developmental checks at ages 8 months and 2.5 years are also delivered as part of the universal health visiting offer.
12. Specialist services are also available including a Trauma and Loss group delivered by Maternity services, and activities to support mental health and wellbeing, including Nurturing Beginnings and clinical support from the Perinatal Mental Health team.

13. Children's centre staff deliver a full programme of groups and activities, designed to support children's development and early learning, through a universal and targeted offer. Groups such as baby group, musical babies, story and rhyme time, stay and play are open to all families to access. Targeted activities including Attention Hillingdon, Language for Life, Stay and Play Plus, are provided to support children and families who need more specific support, particularly with attention and listening and speech language and communication.
14. Universal Youth and Adolescent Development Services (ADS) use the Hub to deliver a range of services for children and young people, in the afternoon and evenings, including Duke of Edinburgh scheme activities, Young Enterprise, and Project evenings.
15. Adolescent Development Services (ADS) deliver KISS, a sexual health and wellbeing appointments and drop-in clinic, AIMS mentoring (one to one sessions), Boys and Young Men's one to one sessions, Girls and Young Women's groups and one-to-one sessions and Transition Support Programme.
16. Youth Justice services use the Hub to hold individual meetings with young people, group work and reparation activity.
17. Partners use the space to deliver an enhanced offer of support to families with a drop-in stay and play session for hearing impaired children provided by SEND services, counselling sessions delivered by Barnardo's and Family Group Conferences supported by Daybreak. Additionally, colleagues from Young People's Team in Children's Social Care regularly hold one-to-one meetings with young people in the Hub, and the Children's Social Care Court Team are using the space to deliver workshops for parents.
18. SENDIASS have begun to hold drop-in advice sessions for families with children with special educational needs and disabilities and P3 deliver an advice service for families, which focuses on housing advice, financial support (including access to benefits) and support to enter education, employment and training.
19. The Hub also provides the base from which services can outreach into the community and engage with residents in a way that best meets their needs. The children's centre team works closely with the Stronger Families key working team in the south west locality and receive referrals from the Stronger Families Hub, which are triaged and allocated to workers to support priority access to groups and services, in addition to targeted family support through a Stronger Families Plan.
20. Children's centre services have also continued to provide an online digital offer, and this will be further developed alongside the core offer to children and families, as we develop our Family Hub offer more widely across the Borough.

PERFORMANCE DATA

21. Uxbridge Family Hub has been fully operational since November 2021 and, during this period, the teams located there have worked together to ensure that everyone who visits the Hub receives a warm welcome and are directed to the right support to meet their needs at the right time.

22. An informal review of the space and activity delivered in the Hub, was completed in June 2022. A snapshot of the first 7 months of operation, found that the services had collectively supported over 618 children and young people and 499 parents/carers, a total of over 1,117 residents (unique users between November 2021 and June 2022) many of whom attended repeatedly to access the support that they needed.
23. Due to varying nature of the services provided, some of which are statutory in nature, and others health-based, data is collected for varying needs and using different performance management systems, and there is not a central system for capturing the service delivery and attendance for all services. Partner services also capture their own service delivery data. This is an area for further consideration as the Family Hub offer develops across the Borough.
24. Children's centre routinely register families using the service, in order to understand levels and patterns of attendance and changing need of residents over time. Data for 2022/23 shows that 1,496 families (unique families) with children under 5 years accessed services, with a total of 4,744 family attendances across the year. 40% of these families are from priority groups, which include families on a low income, children in need of additional support, lone parents, workless households and new arrivals to the UK.

RESIDENT BENEFIT

25. The Family Hubs model in Hillingdon will build upon existing services in place to support families in the early years, by evolving the children's centre offer to support older children and young people, integrating with a wider range of delivery partners thereby increasing the range of support and services available to children and families.
26. Using a locality-based approach will ensure that services are tailored to the needs of local communities and are agile and able to respond to the needs of the residents who live there.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with the recommendation in this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.