

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 27 September 2022
Subject:	Early Help Services		
Report of:	Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education	Wards Affected:	All
Portfolio:	Children's Social Care		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

This report provides an update on the work to review Early Help Services and sets out an approach to present to Members of the Committee.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) To note the report.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To ensure that members of Overview and Scrutiny are aware of the development of the new model.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

NA

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no additional revenue costs identified within this report.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no additional capital costs identified within this report.

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): The proposals contained within this report have a potential impact upon employees. It will be necessary for the Authority to comply with the duty to consult with recognised Trade Unions and employees.</p>									
<p>Legal Implications:</p>									
<p>Equality Implications: The equality implications will be considered as part of the review.</p>									
<p>Climate Emergency Implications:</p> <p>The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Have a positive impact</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a neutral impact</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a negative impact</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> </table>		Have a positive impact	N	Have a neutral impact	Y	Have a negative impact	N	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
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Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: Early Help Services have a helping role to play in protecting the most vulnerable children and supporting families when they need some additional support.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Early Help Services support families to build their confidence and resilience.</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: Early help and early intervention mean taking action to support a child, young person or their family early on when a problem emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth through to adulthood and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own.</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer: The Council takes a lead role in the Sefton Safeguarding partnership effective support and safeguarding for children and young people is the responsibility of all professionals working with children and young people</p>
<p>Drivers of change and reform: Effective early help relies upon local partners working together to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify children and families who would benefit from early help • undertake an assessment of the need for early help • provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child.

In undertaking this review the Council will work with all partners.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: NA
Greater income for social investment: NA
Cleaner Greener NA

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

Trade Unions and staff will be consulted and HR processes will be complied with.

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6964/22) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5164/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

The Council will consult with partners and service users.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

<https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/final-report/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/minister-quince-oral-statement-on-childrens-social-care-review>

1 Background and current position

- 1.1 In January 2020 following a period of consultation with communities and system partners, the Council adopted its Early Help Strategy. The Strategy built upon the Family and Wellbeing model developed as part of the Council restructure in 2017.
- 1.2 The pressures upon Children Social Care within Sefton and across the country have been well documented. The focus of Early Help in Sefton has been on responding to demand needs, addressing local priorities and thereafter distribution of available resources. These interdependent factors have also been overlaid within a set of enabling factors such as outcome measures, workforce availability and capability to support communities, partner and community engagement.
- 1.3 In April 2022, the Local Government Association (LGA) revisited Sefton to review the progress against the LGA Peer Review recommendations made in 2018 and whilst they found that the Locality Model was better understood they felt it required some review *“Given how much change the world has seen in the last two years and how the localities model has been required to react, work with partners to review the localities model.”*
- 1.4 This coincided with a full Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Services for Children (ILACS) where Inspectors found there were serious gaps in Early Help services and they felt that too many children were moving back and forth between teams.
- 1.5 To address this it was agreed that a Targeted Family Support and Family Time Service was required and staff from the Early Help Service are currently being transferred into the Children Services department to provide greater line of sight and a more flexible approach to resource deployment.
- 1.6 Following more recent work undertaken over the summer it is now proposed that further service realignment is considered. This would also build upon the McAllister recommendations submitted to Government in 2022 to which it was recommended that Early Help services would adopt a new Family Help Model with teams of multi-disciplinary workers supporting families and individuals together working alongside other partners.
- 1.7 To develop this Model further it will require some co-design with individuals and families, as well as consultation with the workforce and this process will commence very shortly with a new Model proposed within the coming months. Committee will be kept apprised of the work but the aim will be to develop a clear set of outcomes, performance matrix, clearer line of sight for the Children Services department in order to deploy resources.