

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES CABINET PANEL  
WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE 2018 AT 9.30AM**

**REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE 0-25 TOGETHER SERVICE AND  
0-25 SEND (SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)  
COMMISSIONING**

*Report of the Director of Children's Services*

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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Panel of the progress made by the 0-25 Together Service since its launch in October 2016; and provide an update on the future vision for the 0-25 social care offer. The report also outlines current priority work areas in 0-25 Together and 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities ( SEND) Commissioning.

**2. Summary**

2.1 This report provides updates on the on-going development of the 0-25 SEND system in order to most effectively meet the needs of children, young people, young adults and their families. The future vision for the 0-25 SEND system is to use person centred/individualised care practice to support families to remain resilient by building circles of support, including within their local community. This will be supported by a strategically commissioned local offer focused on working in partnership (co-producing) and delivering resilient pathways to community-based support.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Panel is asked to note and comment upon the progress of 0-25 Together, and the future vision for the 0-25 SEND system.

### **4. Background**

- 4.1 Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, its associated regulations and the SEND Code of Practice establish a framework for the provision of support for children and young people aged from 0 through to 25 years.
- 4.2 The County Council established the 0-25 Integration Programme Board to design a system-wide network of support for children and young people with SEND. This was a county-wide initiative and involved the County Council, both of Hertfordshire's Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's), Adult Care Services ( "ACS"), (then known as Health and Community Services), Carers in Herts, and Hertfordshire Parent Carer Involvement Group (HPCI).
- 4.3 In October 2016 Children's Services launched the 0-25 Together Service by bringing together the Disabled Children's Service and the Transitions Team. The Service was designed in response to feedback from families who stated that transitions to adulthood were challenging, and the system of support was confusing. The 0-25 Together Service was developed to smooth the transition into adulthood and ensure that families received consistent support across the age range.

### **5. The 0 - 25 Together Service, Progress to Date**

- 5.1 The Service currently comprises 5 teams, 4 locality teams, aligned with the two CCG areas, and a central team. The teams consist of qualified children's and adults' social workers, unqualified children's practitioners, unqualified preparing for adulthood workers and learning disability nurses (post 18 years only). The locality teams carry out a range of functions including child/adult protection/safeguarding, assessments for support and the development of plans to meet identified needs. The central team takes new referrals, reviews support to families receiving short breaks only (not overnight) and works with Looked After Children (children who are placed in the care of the County Council as a result of Sections 31 and 38 of the Children Act 1989 or provided with accommodation by the County Council under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989). All parts of the service provide information, advice and guidance, carry out carers' assessments and contribute to the Education, Health and Care Plan ("EHCP") process.
- 5.2 Demand for support for children, young people and young adults with disabilities are high. At the end of March 2018 the service was working with 1,070 children and 1,417 young adults. There are 56.5 staff

working in the service. Managers work to ensure that social workers who are carrying out statutory functions have manageable caseloads. Over the last year the average number of disabled children on a child protection plan has been 24 and the average number of Looked After children has been 52.

5.3 The social care practice of 0-25 Together is based on:

- Motivational interviewing and strengths based practice
- Person centred approaches and tools
- Promoting independence and community involvement
- Planning for adulthood from an early age with a sustained focus from 14
- Promoting a 'One Plan' approach wherever possible, so that families have one plan to work to rather than a number of different plans from different service areas.
- Ensuring high quality and proactive communication with young people and their families
- Embodying the principles of the Professionals' Promise

The Professionals' Promise is a co-produced series of commitments made to each family the service supports and can be found on Hertfordshire's SEND Local Offer.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/media-library/documents/professional-promise.pdf>

5.4 Earlier this year an audit was carried out by the quality assurance team which looked at practice in 40 children's cases open or recently closed to the 0 – 25 Together Service. The cases looked at were children in need or children subject to a child protection plan. The audit evidenced that, over the last two years, there has been a good improvement in child protection work across the Service and that child protection plans addressed the assessed risk and needs of children, included purposeful contact with the child and family, were implemented in a timely way and Good outcomes for children were achieved. The implementation of Child in Need plans was also found to have some good features, including good engagement of multiagency partners and good assessments of children's needs. The audit identified some areas for improvement in the implementation of Child in Need cases, including ensuring there is a plan that is reviewed regularly, there is timeliness in implementation and there is recorded supervision and management oversight of casework.

5.5 Families were contacted as part of the audit. Overall, feedback was positive, with 16 of the 19 families (84%) stating they are very clear about the reason for the 0-25 Together Service's involvement. Twelve (63%) have seen their child's Child Protection/Child In Need Plan and believe that it is making/will make changes for their children, 68%

believe they have been treated with respect and listened to and 63% were satisfied with the service provided.

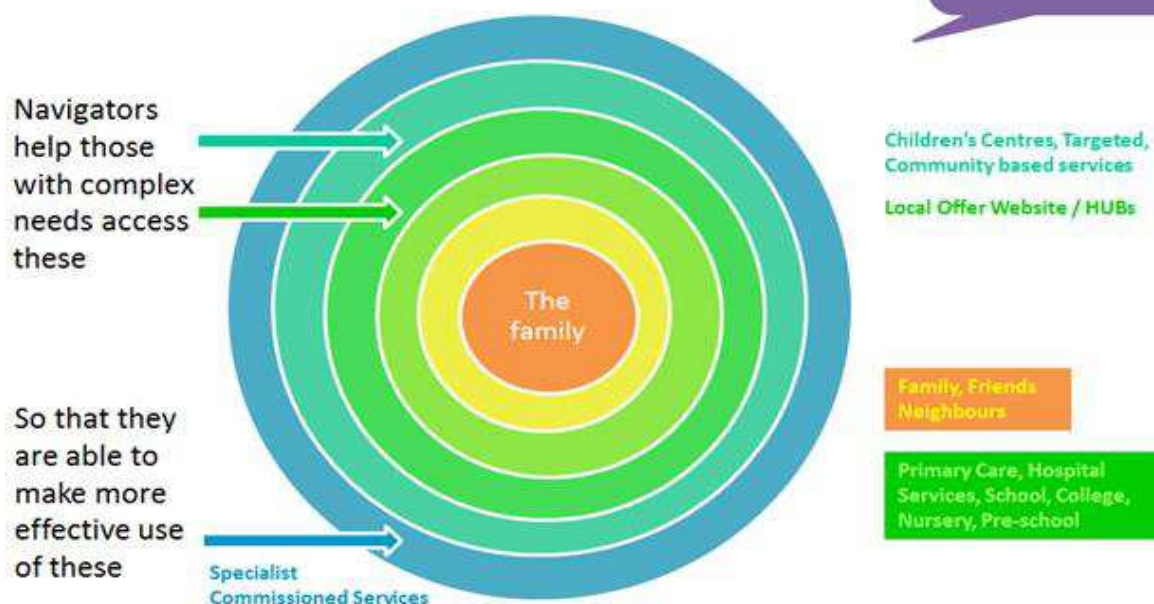
- 5.6 Staff in the 0 – 25 Together service were recently asked to complete a survey to ascertain staff wellbeing 18 months into the service. 34 staff completed the survey and findings included 91% feeling happy in their job all or most of the time, 82% feeling inspired to meet their goals at work all or most of the time and 88% feeling well supported by their manager all or most of the time.

### **The Future Vision of 0 -25 Together Service**

- 5.7 The vision for the future practice of 0-25 Together is a 'circles of support' approach. This is a holistic approach to care practice, which involves caseworkers and 0-25 SEND Commissioning.
- 5.8 Circles of support is a family-centred approach which begins by asking families what matters to them, and building up a multi-layered support package which includes informal support, complemented by formally commissioned resources. This model is designed to prevent families feeling like they have to fight through barriers and systems, and support them to access provision locally, which is a consistent request from families. 'Circles of support' aligns to the Connected Lives model in ACS. This is a way of support families by connecting them to communities, encouraging positive risk taking, sustaining positive relationships, and finding independence. This model recognises that sustainable and consistent support for families works best when informal support networks complement commissioned services. The innovative use of informal networks, as part of the Circles of Support model, will enable the system to manage long-term demand.

# Circles of Support

“As well as not instead of”



5.9 Other priorities for development during 2018/19 include:

- Implementing Family Safeguarding approaches across the service, adopting a multi-disciplinary approach and recognising that vulnerable children often live with vulnerable adults. The disability might, in many cases, enhance the vulnerabilities.
- Designing pathways for early years support, which build resilience and prevent escalations. There is a commitment to develop a clear pathway for all families, with initial sign-posting through the new Family Centre Service.
- Supporting children with complex health needs in community based support which will mean increasing the skill set of community based providers and ensuring that clinical support is available in the community as required.
- Developing clear pathways to adulthood, particularly relating to employment and to housing related support. This will require closer partnership working District Council as well as with colleges and potential employers in Hertfordshire.

5.9.1 These priorities form an integral part of the recently developed Invest to Transform (ITT) Proposal on 0 – 25 SEND services. This proposal outlines the increasing demand for both social care services and services to support special educational needs. It notes the statutory functions carried out in both these areas and requests additional resource in order to transform services, making them fit for the future. There are three key strands to the proposal:

- 5.9.2 The first is to identify and meet needs earlier and more effectively by bringing together services and harnessing community based resources more effectively. This very much fits with the 'circles of support' approach as well as the priority of early support delivered through universal Family Centre Services – rather than 'excluding' children at an early age and pushing families into a dependence on specialist services. The development of integrated, locality based teams who are familiar with their 'patch' will support this approach.
- 5.9.3 The second strand relates to making better use of digital technology including by enabling families to carry out more transactions 'on line', improving access to personalised information, advice and guidance and exploring how technology can be used to support young people achieving a more independent adult life.
- 5.9.4 The third strand mirrors the final priority above in that it is focused on helping young people move on to satisfying and fulfilled lives. It explores extending local college opportunities as well as bringing together support for young people as they move into employment. Alternative options for supported living arrangements will also be explored.
- 5.9.5 The ITT proposal recognises the challenge of whole system transformation whilst continuing to meet statutory requirements and deliver good quality services.

## **6 SEND Strategic Commissioning**

- 6.1 To make community support more resilient the current 0-25 Integrated Commissioning Strategy is being reviewed. The new strategy will focus on stimulating and developing community-based providers; understanding gaps in community provision; and making community provision more adaptable. Partners from both CCGs, Integrated Services for Learning, HPCI and Carers in Herts are represented on the group developing the new 0-25 Integrated Commissioning Strategy and membership will be continually reviewed to ensure that all voices are heard. The SEND young commissioners, young people with SEND who are being trained and supported to carry out activities in all parts of the commissioning cycle, will also be contributing to the development of the 0-25 Integrated Commissioning Strategy as well as being involved in commissioning activity as it develops.
- 6.2 The 0-25 SEND Commissioning team have developed four work streams to take forward the work the approach to making communities more resilient. These work streams are:

<b>Work stream</b>	<b>Description</b>
Community and Overnight Short Breaks	<p>To review existing models for commissioning the Short Break Local Offer and Overnight Short Breaks, to identify programmes for involving the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to increase the range of opportunities available to families.</p> <p>This will include the development of an integrated overnight short breaks service where the significant majority of families will be able to access their local service regardless of the complexity of their child's needs.</p>
Connect and Enable	<p>To create and co-ordinate pathways which connect families to community-based resources; and to develop enabling services which support transitions.</p> <p>This work stream will have a specific focus on post-16 provision, to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to creating pathways to independence, and effective transition planning for leaving colleges.</p>
Integrated Therapies	<p>To deliver the long-standing strategic commitment to establish an integrated commissioning model for Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy.</p> <p>To understand best practice models of therapeutic interventions, which achieve sustainable outcomes.</p>
Community Navigation	<p>A social prescription approach which connects families to community resources, as they are going through social care assessment processes.</p> <p>This will involve current Brokerage Officers taking on the role of community navigators and supporting families to access support that extends beyond local authority funded services.</p>

6.3 The long-term ambition is to create resilient networks of commissioned community support. This means that families are able to access events, opportunities, and support services in the community around them. This ambition reflects the entire six outcome Bees.

- 6.4 The 0 – 25 Together Service is well established and working practice is closely aligned with commissioning activity. The service is currently looking forward to the next stage of its development which will involve closer working with special educational needs colleagues as well as with other partners. Feedback from stakeholders indicates that the service is becoming more ‘seamless’ and that communication is improving – although further work needs to be carried out in this arena, as evidenced through the recent audit.
- 6.5 Embedding a community-based approach will reduce the number of families escalating through the social care system; by supporting families to develop resilience and confident self-management, more families will be able to manage independently, within their ‘circles of (both formal and informal) support’. The SEND young commissioners and the parent/carer forum (HPCI) will be closely involved in all service development

## **7 Equality implications**

- 7.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 7.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council’s statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 7.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.4 The work of the 0-25 Service is focused on inclusion and equity, giving disabled people the same opportunities and expectations as their able bodied peers. The work to embed support for disabled children and young people into ‘mainstream’ support, for example Family Centres and Families First services, is a key part of this strategy. A core principle of the future SEND system will be to ensure that there is equality in service offer across county.



7.5 Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) are carried out whenever there is a change to service delivery. Recent EQIA's include an assessment of the impact of changing the delivery model for overnight short breaks and changing the model for the delivery of information, advice and guidance. These assessments enable the 0-25 Together Service to identify and seek to mitigate any negative impact on any individual group with regard to their protected characteristics.

## **8 Financial implications**

- 8.1 The 0 – 25 Together Service works within a budget of approximately £45.9M. Circa £3.4M is spent on independent placements for children looked after and approximately £8M is spent on community based support for children and young people, much of which is provided as direct payments to families to 'commission' their own support. The remainder of the resource is spent on young adults with disabilities, primarily learning disabilities (£30.9M), with £3.3M spent on young adults with physical disabilities.
- 8.2 Overall last year the budget came in slightly underspent with a small overspend in the under 18 activity being offset by a slightly bigger underspend in over 18 activity.
- 8.3 This said however, the population of children and young people with SEND is rising, as is the complexity of need. Between 2018 and 2023 the population of children and young people with SEND is forecast to grow by 23% nationally. The ITT proposal discussed above is intended to ensure that the shape of services and support will accommodate this growing need. The investment request is for £3M which will deliver a small saving in future years as well as absorbing the projected increase in need/demand and cost.

### Background Papers

[Children's & Families Act 2014](#)  
[0-25 Together Service Home Page](#)