

Agenda

Children and young people scrutiny committee

Date: **Tuesday 19 January 2021**

Time: **10.00 am**

Place: **Online meeting only**

Notes: To view the meeting please access the link below:

<https://youtu.be/6i34N3w-fuQ>

For any further information please contact:

Matthew Evans, Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01432 383690

Email: matthew.evans@herefordshire.gov.uk

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Agenda for the meeting of the Children and young people scrutiny committee

Membership

Chairperson **Councillor Carole Gandy**
Vice-Chairperson **Councillor Diana Toynbee**

Councillor Graham Andrews
Councillor Paul Andrews
Councillor Kath Hey
Councillor Phillip Howells
Councillor Mike Jones

Co-optees **Andy James** **Parent Governor Representative – SEND Sector**
 Sam Pratley **Church Representative – Diocese of Hereford**

Agenda

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES To receive details of members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive declarations of interest in respect of Schedule 1, Schedule 2 or Other Interests from members of the committee in respect of items on the agenda.	
4. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive any written questions from members of the public. <i>Deadline for receipt of questions is 5:00pm on Wednesday 13 January.</i> <i>Accepted questions and answers will be published as a supplement prior to the meeting. Please submit questions to:</i> councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk .	
5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL To receive any written questions from members of the council. <i>Deadline for receipt of questions is 5:00pm on Wednesday 13 January.</i> <i>Accepted questions and answers will be published as a supplement prior to the meeting. Please submit questions to:</i> councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk .	
6. PROVISION OF CHILDREN CENTRE SERVICE IN BROMYARD AREA: PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY To undertake pre-decision scrutiny of proposals for the integration of the council commissioned early help children's centre service for the Bromyard area (worth £25k per annum) with the existing in-house provision from 2021.	5 - 24
7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting will be held on 23 March 2021, 1.00 p.m.	



Meeting:	Children and young people scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	Tuesday 19 January 2021
Title of report:	Provision of children centre service in Bromyard area: pre-decision scrutiny
Report by:	Director of Children and Families

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

Bishops Frome & Cradley; Bromyard Bringsty; Bromyard West; Hampton; Three Crosses;

Purpose

To consider proposals for the integration of the council commissioned early help children's centre service for the Bromyard area (worth £25k per annum) with the existing in-house provision from 2021.

The Bromyard Reach area is the only part of Herefordshire where Children's Centre provision is externally commissioned. All other areas are supported via an in-house service which is centrally governed and managed. It is intended that all children centre services are integrated across Herefordshire.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) The committee reviews the proposals for the provision of the children centre service in the Bromyard area through the council's in-house service and determines any recommendations it wishes to make to the executive, which may enhance the effectiveness of the plans.**

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Amanda Price, Richard Watson, Tel: 01432 383047, email: amanda.price@herefordshire.gov.uk,
rwatson@herefordshire.gov.uk

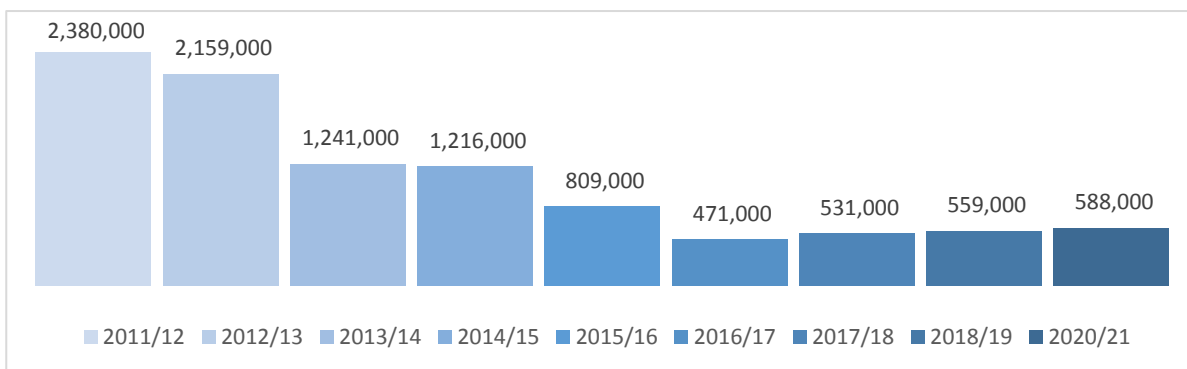
Alternative options

1. Direct award of a new contract to the incumbent provider. Market testing undertaken in 2018 indicated that there may be other alternative providers which would require the council to undertake a competitive procurement process. A direct award can only be undertaken in line with the council's contract procedure rules.
2. Re-commission a new service to be delivered via an open procurement process in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules. Continuing separate provision in the Bromyard area will limit the council's ability to quickly and consistently adapt services to support vulnerable children and families with the most need for early help as demand fluctuates across the county.

Key considerations

3. The Childcare Act 2006 sets out a duty for councils to improve the inequalities of young children in its area. The Act describes the duties of local authorities to consider providing services through a children's centre but does not prevent an English local authority or any of their relevant partners from providing early childhood services otherwise than through a children's centre. Statutory guidance describes children's centres as being as much about making appropriate and integrated services available, as it is about providing premises in particular geographical areas. Ofsted inspection of children centres was suspended in 2015 and the management of children's centre buildings was separated from direct family support some time ago.
4. Children's centre services operate as part of a strategic whole family and whole system approach to early help, supporting families with different levels of need that may require universal, targeted, multi-agency or specialist/statutory support (Appendix 1). The work of children's centre services is informed by the number of 'known' 0-5 year olds living in the reach area. The core purpose of children's centre services is about improving outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on early help for the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in:
 - i. child development and school readiness
 - ii. parenting aspirations, self-esteem and parenting skills
 - iii. child and family health and life chances
5. A core purpose of children's centre services across Herefordshire is to provide appropriate support for families of children aged 0-5 who may need some extra early help or, in some cases, support those that need further or serious help (Appendix 1). Advice and guidance can be provided around healthy lifestyles, school readiness, managing behaviour, nursery education funding etc. or families can be signposted to appropriate support elsewhere such as breastfeeding, immunization, weaning, domestic violence services, and job centre plus. The range of support can include facilitating midwife and health visiting clinics, supervised contact, adult learning, and parenting support. As funding has reduced nationally since 2011, the council has increasingly focussed its children's centre activities on vulnerable families through a more targeted approach that is enhanced by partnerships across a breadth of early year's provision.

6. Investment in children’s centre provision in Herefordshire has reduced significantly since 2011, although this has increased above inflation since 2016/17.



7. Bromyard is the only area in Herefordshire where children’s centre services have been procured from an external provider. Services across the rest of the council are delivered directly by the council’s Early Help team. In 2019 the council’s in-house children’s centre service for the rest of the county was revised to:
- i. ensure vulnerable families with children under 5 years are supported to bring about sustainable changes to improve outcomes for these families
 - ii. ensure there is no ‘postcode lottery’ for vulnerable families
 - iii. improve the knowledge of community assets available to all the family
8. This revision has underpinned the team’s move to a more targeted and responsive approach to vulnerable families in line with ‘right time, right place’ principles described by Herefordshire’s Children and Young People’s Plan. Working flexibly across the county, the in-house team consists of two Early Years Senior Support Workers, three Early Years Family Connectors, ten Early Years Support Workers, and four Early Help Information & Signposting posts. The in-house service is overseen by an Advisory Group made up of key partners including CCG, Public Health, Early Years providers, and Wye Valley NHS Trust. Central management and oversight of delivery has ensured a focus on achieving sustainable change, consistency of support provided regardless of location, and reinforced the focus on maximising community assets. More recent developments as a result of the coronavirus pandemic include use of group chat platforms, virtual online sessions, social media and engaging with families face to face via doorstep/ garden visits.
9. Ensuring an efficient, continually evolving and responsive offer from the children’s centre provision in line with the needs of local families, enhanced by existing community assets, is at the core of the proposed decision to deliver children’s centre provision via the in-house team across the county.
10. Historically, the level of resource allocated to the Bromyard area exceeded that of other parts of the County. To bring funding into parity across the County, in July 2018 the then Cabinet Member for Young People and Children’s Wellbeing made the decision for *resources for the Bromyard area be tapered to align with other parts of Herefordshire, based upon the population of 0-5 year olds, reducing from £65k in 2018/19 to £25k per year by March 2021*. The subsequent contract was expected to achieve greater take-up of nursery education funding, deliver a consistent countywide approach to formal requests for early help support and improve service performance reporting.

11. The Hope Family Centre in Bromyard via the existing contract between Hope for Children & Their Families Limited and the council supports local families through, for example, providing advice and information, running universal sessions such as 'let's play', providing healthy eating and weaning sessions identifying families who may benefit from early help assessments (EHA's), and supporting families (through EHA's) to achieve sustainable change. The contract value for 2020/21 is £25,000 for an average of 11hrs support per week, although hours delivered has averaged at 17.5 hrs per week over the first two quarters of this financial year.
12. The Hope Family Centre delivers this service alongside a broad range of other services and facilities based at the Hope Family Centre, including a Child Contact Centre, Early Years Nursery and pre-school, Hope Community Hub, a Community Café and facilities and venue hire.
13. There are a number of areas where the incumbent provider has performed well in comparison to other parts of the county, including the number of distinct adults given advice and guidance and the provision of Baby Lets Play and Lets Play sessions delivered, which should act as a key pathway into early help assessments. In addition, Nursery Education Funding take up has significantly improved for the Bromyard reach area over the last year, from 9 children in the autumn term of 2019, to 18 children in the summer term of 2020.
14. A key measure of whether services are delivering the objective of reaching vulnerable families is the number of formal early help assessments being undertaken with families in each area.
15. Herefordshire's successful Early Help approach has delivered evidenced sustainable change for many vulnerable families across Herefordshire in line with the National Troubled Families Programme. Despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, quarter 1 and 2 of 2021 has seen Herefordshire perform exceptionally well in achieving family outcomes, ranked 32nd (Quarter 1) and 40th (Quarter 2) out of 140 LA's and top and second to top in the first two quarters for claims in the West Midlands. This has only been possible due to the positive and productive relationships developed with partners across the county. This can be illustrated by the fact that 75% of Early Help assessments have been completed by partner agencies during 2020, including health visiting, midwifery, schools and Early Years settings.
16. Although the service provider for the Bromyard reach area has worked alongside the council to better align performance information and, where possible, have flexed the way in which services have been provided within the confines of the contract, the strategic direction of children's centre services as part of Herefordshire's overarching Early Help offer is expected to be most efficiently and effectively delivered via a county-wide in-house provision. As a key community asset the council wishes to continue its positive working relationship with Hope for Children & Their Families Limited to enable effective partnership working in the Bromyard area.
17. This approach to delivery will be expected to enable more efficient and successful partnership working with key services such as health visiting and midwifery to ensure partners are fully engaged with Early Help both at strategic and local area level.
18. The in-house service ensures that its approach complements wider early help developments, can respond to the varying and changing needs of vulnerable families due

to its varied 'toolkit' of skills and techniques, and can evolve in line with the Signs of Safety model currently being implemented in Herefordshire.

19. The Bromyard area, alongside all other parts of Herefordshire will benefit from children's centre staff trained in Signs of Safety, ensuring an asset based approach to supporting vulnerable families is embedded. Children's centre provision delivered in-house will ensure that all children's centre staff have access to the necessary training, support (including peer support), tools, techniques and resources to develop this approach and again, benefit from learning in other parts of the county.
20. This approach will also ensure a countywide response to any legislative, strategic or policy changes. This includes local consideration of the Children's Commissioner Report: 'Best beginnings in the Early Years', such as integrated pathway development, any recommendations following the Early Years Healthy Development Review (report due in January 2021) and to respond to local intelligence (a recent example is the rapid development of an enhanced offer for parents aged under 21yrs involving partners across the Early Years arena).
21. Realignment of the £25,000 funding to the in-house service has the potential (dependent on TUPE, mileage requirements etc.) to increase the capacity for direct support that can be delivered. With no required increase to management costs, alignment to in-house provision aims to maximise the amount of children's centre funding that is used to directly support vulnerable families.
22. The in-house team now have trained workers to deliver Baby Massage so that they can deliver directly to those 1:1 with an Early Help Assessment and have the flexibility to deliver small groups if there is a cohort in the same area that need the intervention at the same time. The in-house team can also now deliver Solihull parenting courses termly as part of a county wide provision which complements the Early Help Family Support team who deliver Triple P. The in-house team deliver Let's Talk with your Baby and Lets Talk at Home while only Let's Talk is provided by the Bromyard service. The in-house service ensures that its approach compliments wider early help developments, can respond to the varying and changing needs of vulnerable families due to its varied 'toolkit' of skills and techniques, and can evolve in line with the Signs of Safety model currently being implemented by the council in Herefordshire.

Community impact

23. The recommendations support the council's County Plan priorities, with particular reference to specific community priorities:
 - Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve
 - Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people
24. The recommendations will also support the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan across all pledges with a particular focus on safety:
 1. Keeping children and young people safe – BE SAFE FROM HARM
 2. Improving children and young people's health and wellbeing – BE HEALTHY
 3. Helping ALL children and young people succeed – BE AMAZING
 4. Ensuring that children and young people are influential in our communities – FEEL PART OF THE COMMUNITY
25. The number of known children aged 5 years or under in the Bromyard Reach area

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Amanda Price, Richard Watson, Tel: 01432 383047, email: amanda.price@herefordshire.gov.uk,
rwatson@herefordshire.gov.uk

is 507 (March 2020), with 188 children known as living in areas of deprivation. In 2019/20 where funding levels for the year were £42,642 for Hope for Children & Their Families Limited in Bromyard via the contract with Herefordshire council provided and average of 19 families with information and advice per month across the year, provided twice weekly 'let's play' sessions attended by an average of 59 families per month and provided two healthy eating / weaning sessions per quarter.

26. In light of the coronavirus pandemic, due to restrictions on face to face sessions with families, activity has focussed on provision of information and advice (213 contacts between April and September 2020) and delivery of online sessions for families.
27. The Hope Family Centre in Bromyard is fully recognised as a key community asset and the council wishes to work successfully alongside the current provider, as it does with other key partners across the county, to ensure that children and families are successfully supported to achieve their full potential. If children's centre provision is brought in-house, support worker resource would be allocated to the area, complemented by other in-house resource including Community Connectors and information and signposting roles. This will ensure that local families can benefit from the full range of support on offer, both within the Bromyard area and across Herefordshire.
28. Transition to the new arrangements will be carefully planned and communicated to families alongside the provider to ensure continuity for vulnerable families needing support during/ beyond the transition phase.
29. Upon confirmation of the decision, the council will work with the provider to confirm any TUPE implications and progress with consultation as appropriate. With the implementation of the Provider Portal as part of information technology developments at the council, case information regarding Bromyard families supported by the current provider can be recorded centrally from early 2021, enabling a timely transition of information relating to families requiring ongoing support. Family progress will be assessed alongside the provider during the transition period to ensure the timely identification of any families requiring ongoing support, and enable appropriate individual arrangements to be made in a timely manner. This process will also include reviewing need and availability of relevant group sessions in the Bromyard area.
30. The in-house team, with an existing infrastructure of information and advice and community connectors will be in a position to further build networks with the Hope Family Centre and wider Bromyard community organisations in readiness for the transition to in-house support. The transition process will be continually reviewed to minimise the impact on vulnerable families needing support.
31. In-house children's centre provision will aim to enhance the core Hope Family Centre offer rather than duplicating provision, whilst providing the flexibility and capacity where needed, to support families most in need at locations of their choosing, including within the home setting. The service will be able to draw on a team with a breadth of skills and experience in delivering children's centre services across the county, and the Bromyard area will be able to benefit from best practice approaches across the county.
32. In line with Herefordshire's approach to Early Help, the support provided will have a greater focus on those families most in need, therefore regardless of the model of delivery, there may be a reduced focus on direct delivery of universal provision unless gaps in local provision are identified. New arrangements will aim to ensure that the number of EHA assessments undertaken, and number of families

achieving sustainable change are maximised.

Environmental Impact

33. The council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.

Equality duty

34. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

35. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

36. Children and families with emerging or additional needs will continue to be supported effectively through Herefordshire's approach to Early Help, with children's centre provision working alongside local partners to ensure a consistent approach to supporting vulnerable families across the County. With a greater focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged families, a positive impact will be expected in relation to the number of vulnerable families achieving sustainable change. Equalities monitoring of children's centre provision will be undertaken via council systems to ensure equality of access to support across the County. Equalities considerations will be a key part of transition planning. The council will continually monitor any impact of service changes to ensure that any mitigation against negative impacts are in place for children and adults with protected characteristics.

Resource implications

37. There will be no change in the allocation of resources to children's centre provision in Herefordshire. The current annual investment of £25,000 to the Bromyard Reach area for children's centre provision will be transferred to the in-house children's centre team.

Legal implications

38. Scrutiny committees have the power to undertake pre-decision call in of forthcoming decisions programmed on the forward plan. The constitutional rules concerning pre-decision call in are contained in the Scrutiny Rules under paragraph 4.5.90.

Risk management

39.

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Developing new approaches to support could impact on some people with protected characteristics with emerging or additional needs	The council will monitor the service to ensure consistency and will work to identify and mitigate any impact of the change in delivery mechanism.
Given the current challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, a change to service delivery arrangements may cause disruption and negatively impact vulnerable families	The council will work alongside the current provider to minimise any potential disruption to service delivery. If it is deemed that this cannot be managed within the time constraints, a short extension to the contract may be sought to ensure a smooth transition of the service, which will include adherence to applicable TUPE requirements.
There is a break in service in the Bromyard area	Transition to the new model of delivery will be managed alongside the current provider, to ensure families are at the centre. Where timescales are considered insufficient to achieve a smooth transition, a short contract extension may be sought.
Children and Families in Bromyard receive a less effective service	<p>Performance management of the in-house team is in place and includes analysis against key deliverables. The team are also required to secure feedback from families receiving support and record numbers of Early Help cases where sustainable change has been successfully achieved.</p> <p>This data and intelligence will be monitored by the Children's Centre Manager and reported to the Early Help Strategy Board (which will be acting as the Advisory Board for Children's Centre provision) to ensure effective oversight and scrutiny. The board includes representation from the Hope Family Centre. Dependent on the nature of any areas of poor performance, actions may include further work with partners to overcome barriers, engagement with local toddler groups, multi agency groups etc to</p>

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promote the Children's centre offer and delivery of universal sessions where there is no local group provision identified.

Consultees

40. A summary of responses can be found in Appendix 2.
41. Prior to the award of the current contract, consultation was undertaken across the Bromyard children centre reach area, which involved an online survey and drop-in engagement sessions.
42. The on-line survey received 184 responses with 57% of respondents agreeing that children's centre services should be delivered in places where communities have the most vulnerable children. Most respondents (40%) thought that voluntary groups or charities would be the best type of provider for children's centre services in Bromyard. Although respondents liked services delivered from a children's centre building, there was a notable need for outreach services outside of Bromyard town centre in pre-schools, village halls and schools.
43. Engagement with the CEO of the Hope Centre was undertaken to discuss the potential future options for the delivery of the service. Given the reduced levels of funding through the contract lifetime, the provider was confident that they had delivered against the contract outcomes and brought a great deal of added value due to the wider Hope offer. The Hope Centre has good connections with local families and the wider community. Concerns about the long standing strategic value of the relationship with the council were raised if arrangements were to change alongside the need for a careful transition. Re-commissioning of the service was a clear preference for the provider.
44. Engagement with ward members for the Bromyard reach area has been undertaken where representatives articulated high regard for the Hope Family Centre and the wider role the centre fulfils in the Bromyard area. Any change to delivery should be focussed on delivering improvements in support for vulnerable families and there was concern regarding the potential loss of the added value delivered by the wider Hope Centre offer. Benefits of consistency in delivery of the council was however recognised.
45. Further correspondence has also been received from the Chair of Trustees for Hope for Children and their Families Ltd. Concerns relating to timescales for the decision were raised, alongside transition to new arrangements at a difficult time for families.
46. Political group consultation is underway and feedback will also help inform the decision taken.

Appendices

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Amanda Price, Richard Watson, Tel: 01432 383047, email: amanda.price@herefordshire.gov.uk,
rwatson@herefordshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Early Help in Herefordshire

Appendix 2: Engagement and Consultation Summary

Background papers

None identified.

Appendix 1: Early Help in Herefordshire

Whilst parents and carers have primary care for their children, local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'*¹ was published by the government in July 2018 to provide a guide for inter-agency working with the intention of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This national guide provides a definition of Early help:

'Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child is returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.'

Working Together (2018) also states that:

"Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life..... Early help can also prevent further problems arising".

"Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- 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".

Practitioners should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves

1

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

Early Help in Herefordshire

In Herefordshire Early Help means providing the Right Help at the Right Time to meet a family's needs, to develop the families own skills to determine their future, reducing poor outcomes and inequalities, with the child at the centre.

Early help is recognised as everyone's responsibility and key partners include:

Primary and Secondary Schools, Health Visitors, School Nurses, Midwives, General practitioners and other health practitioners, Mental Health partners CAMHS and Adult Services, Early Years providers, Police, Department of Work & Pensions, Housing Associations, Voluntary and Charitable organisations, HVOSS, Youth Offending Service and Probation.

The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership vision is "Children are safely cared for by their family. Where needed services will work well together with them to achieve this".

The board recognized that this can only be successfully achieved by supporting the right children and their families, at the right time, in the right place for as long as is needed.

Services need to:

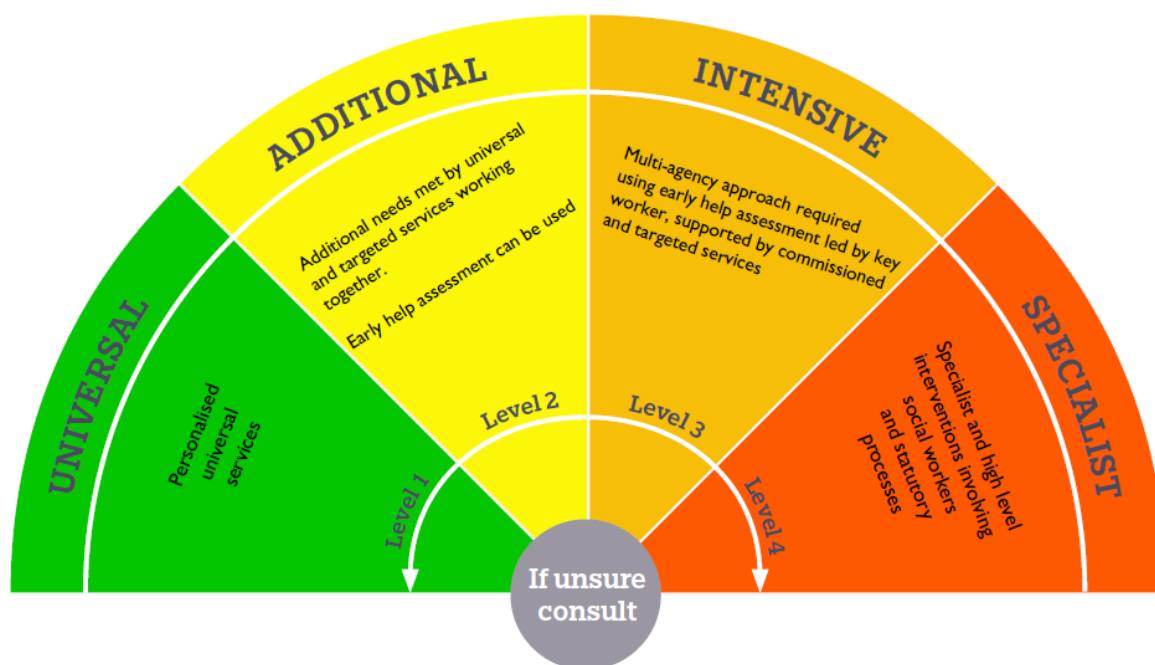
- Support children and families when they first need help
- Build strong relationships with children, parents, extended family and local communities so children are safe
- Listen to children and parents to understand their strengths and needs and offer support that they know can make a difference
- Provide support so change happens, and children can be cared for by their parents/family

Partner agencies deliver a range of services to support children and families and recognise the need for collaboration with children and families and each other when so doing.

Early Help Assessments

For children and families with more complex needs, Herefordshire partners have developed the Early Help Assessment to assess the needs of the whole family and offer the right support at the right time. Multi-agency services will work collaboratively to support families before their difficulties escalate. Most children and families supported by an early help assessment do not need council or more specialist services to achieve positive change.

The diagram below sets out the 4 levels of need that services and professionals will use to ensure the right help is provided at the right time to the right children and families.



The below table provides information about when an Early Help Assessment is required, who provides support to the family and how to access support and advice when completing an assessment.

Levels and Referral Routes	Needs	Services (examples)	Outcome
Level 1 Universal Open access to provision	All children and families who live in the area have core needs such as parenting, health and education	Early years, education, primary health care, maternity services, housing, community health care, children centre services Let's Play & Baby Let's Play and leisure services. Children are supported by their family and in universal services to meet all of their needs. WISH – Wellbeing, Information & Signposting Herefordshire website	Children and young people make good progress in all/most areas of development

<p>Level 2 Additional</p> <p>Two or three services work together to meet child and family needs, co-ordinated by a service and/or people who know the child/family best</p> <p>It may be helpful for these professionals to complete an Early Help Assessment but not essential at level 2. If no EHA a plan of actions with a review timeline to make sure that the help on offer is making a difference. This would</p> <p>be a plan established and managed by the leading agency</p>	<p>Children and families with additional needs who would benefit from or who require extra help to improve education, parenting and/or behaviour, or to meet specific health or emotional needs or to improve their material situation</p>	<p>Parenting programmes</p> <p>School holiday and short breaks provision for disabled children</p> <p>Extra health support for family members; behavioural support</p> <p>Housing support</p> <p>Additional learning support</p> <p>CAMHS tier 2 support to schools (SEN support and help to find education and employment</p> <p>Speech and language therapy</p> <p>Children’s centre services</p> <p>Services provided on a voluntary basis to families (these may be offered by volunteers and/or commissioned through a voluntary organisation)</p>	<p>The life chances of children and families will be improved by offering additional support</p>
<p>Level 3 Intensive</p> <p>An Early Help assessment to be completed by the agency which knows the family best or who the family trust with an outcome based support plan agreed by the family. There will be an identified Key Worker who will be the main link for the family and hold all the agencies involved to account to deliver their agreed support.</p> <p>Support from the special educational needs and disability service</p>	<p>Vulnerable children and their families with multiple needs or whose needs are more complex, such as children and families who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a disability resulting in complex needs • exhibit anti-social or challenging behaviour, including the expression of radicalised thoughts or intentions. • suffer some neglect or poor family relationships • have poor engagement with key services such as school and health • are not in education or work long- term 	<p>Due to the complexity of needs, especially around behaviour and parenting, a shared professional and co-ordinated plan is developed with the family. The assessment and plan is led by a Key Worker and the service is provided ONLY with the consent of the parents/carers</p> <p>A wide range of services might be involved in meeting the family’s needs, eg CAMHS tier 3, adult mental health or drug/alcohol team</p> <p>Families needing substantial support to care for a disabled child, usually with the help of a social worker from the children with disability service</p>	<p>Life chances will be significantly impaired without co-ordinated multi-agency support</p>

<p>Level 4 Specialist Access requires a MARF</p> <p>Children's social care Child protection Care proceedings Children in need</p> <p>Youth treatment orders/ custody</p> <p>Tier 4 CAMHS</p> <p>Hospital or hospice in-patient</p>	<p>Children and young people who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>This will include victims of child exploitation and also those at high risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)</p> <p>Children with significant impairment of function/learning and/or life limiting illness</p> <p>Children whose parents and wider family are unable to care for them</p> <p>Families involved in crime/misuse of drugs at a significant level</p> <p>Families with significant mental or physical health needs</p>	<p>Children's social care, youth offending service</p> <p>Criminal justice system, tier 3 and 4</p> <p>CAMHS In-patient and continuing health care Fostering and residential care</p> <p>Health care for children with life limiting illness</p> <p>Services for children with profound and enduring disability</p> <p>Referrals have to be made to services with the power to undertake statutory non- voluntary intervention and services with specialist skills</p>	<p>Children and /or family members are likely to suffer significant harm/ removal from home/ serious and lasting impairment without the intervention of specialist services, very often using their statutory powers</p>
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For more information please use the link below:

<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/herefordshire-safeguarding-children-partnership/for-professionals/right-help-right-time-levels-of-need/>

The Early Help Hub in Herefordshire has been developed to promote children and their families get the right help at the right time. The Early Help Hub sits alongside the Multiagency Safeguarding Hub and is responsible for contacts which come into the local authority at level 3 or below and for contacts that MASH have assessed as not needing level 4 intervention. The Early Help Hub proactively works with families and referrers to ensure the right support is offered, including signposting, offering advice and guidance and facilitating the completion of an Early Help Assessment, where appropriate, with those families whose needs meet level 3 or high level 2 and who give their consent.

Appendix 2: Engagement and Consultation Summary

Children's centre services in the Bromyard reach are externally commissioned and currently delivered by Hope for Children and their Families Ltd at a current annual contract value of £25,000 per annum. The contract is due to end on 31st March 2021. The following provides a summary of relevant engagement and consultation undertaken in relation to delivery of Children's Centre services in the Bromyard Reach area.

Bromyard Reach Area Consultation (2018)

Prior to the award of the current contract, consultation was undertaken across the Bromyard children centre reach area, which involved an online survey and drop-in engagement sessions at the HOPE Centre Play Zone and Health Visitor Clinic, Bishops Frome Parent and Toddler Group and St. Peter's Primary School, Bromyard.

The on-line survey received 184 responses with 57% of respondents agreeing that children's centre services should be delivered in places where communities have the most vulnerable children.

Most respondents (40%) thought that voluntary groups or charities would be the best type of provider for children's centre services in Bromyard.

Although respondents liked services delivered from a children's centre building, there was a notable need for outreach services outside of Bromyard town centre in pre-schools, village halls and schools.

Hope for Children and their Families Ltd (September 2020)

Engagement with the CEO of the Hope Centre was undertaken to discuss the potential future options for the delivery of the service. Given the reduced levels of funding through the contract lifetime HOPE were confident that they had delivered against the contract outcomes and brought a great deal of added value due to the wider Hope offer including, for example, attracting lottery funding to broaden their offer to families and their community food programme.

Relationships with partners was positive, enhanced by the MAO being based at the centre and the Hope Centre has good connections with local families and the wider community.

In terms of impact of loss of funding, whilst it is a small amount of funding in monetary terms, concerns about the long standing strategic value of the relationship with the council were raised.

If re-commissioned, which was a clear preference for the provider, even though the funding is now much reduced in comparison to previous levels, HOPE would intend to bid for the contract and work hard to meet the requirements of the contract.

The need for a carefully managed transition was also raised to ensure that disruption was minimised.

This was supplemented by the CEO via email correspondence to the Lead Member which stressed the added value offered by the Hope Centre and concern about community impact of any change in delivery.

Further correspondence has also been received from the Chair of Trustees for Hope for Children and their Families Ltd in December 2020. Concerns relating to timescales for the decision were raised with a request for a longer decision period.

Concerns were raised regarding changing support workers and contact procedures at a difficult time for vulnerable families given the coronavirus pandemic.

Concerns about families' ability to access new models of support were also highlighted in relation to travel/ IT restrictions if local support could not be provided.

Bromyard Reach Area Ward Member Engagement (November 2020)

Engagement with ward members for the Bromyard reach area has been undertaken, supplemented by emails to the Lead Member, where representatives articulated high regard for the Hope Family Centre and the wider role the centre fulfils in the Bromyard area.

With specific reference to Children's Centre provision, a key concern is to ensure that any changes to the way in which provision was arranged should be focussed on improving the support provided for vulnerable families.

The benefits of consistency of the Children's Centre offer across the county was recognised, but members stressed that any change must not lead to duplication of provision, and voiced concern about the potential loss of any added value that the Hope Family Centre delivers under current arrangements.

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