

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 10/10/2022

Subject: Early Intervention Strategy

Report of: Cabinet Member for Children and Education - Councillor Alex Sanderson

Report author: Jacqui McShannon, Strategic Director for Children's Services

SUMMARY

The Early Intervention Strategy outlines our strategic ambition to work together as a local partnership to support children, young people, and their families at the earliest opportunity from universal services through to targeted support where necessary. Through the implementation of this strategy, all partners in the local area commit to improved integrated and partnership working to ensure we have an efficient and effective whole system approach to create services which keep children safe, support them to thrive and ensure every child fulfils their potential.

The Strategy has been developed in partnership and extensively co-produced across the local area and through consultation with children and young people and third sector organisations through Young Hammersmith & Fulham Foundation, reflecting the H&F value of doing things with residents not to them.

Following public consultation, the strategy has been further reviewed, commented and amendments made through the Early Intervention Steering Group, Children's Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team and the Cabinet Member for Children and Education. The strategy will also be presented for information at the Hammersmith Health and Care Partnership Board as the draft Strategy had previously been agreed by the Partnership and providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Cabinet approves the publication of the Early Intervention Strategy attached at Appendix 1.
-

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Ensuring the right level of support is offered depending on the needs of the individual to ensure children, young people and their families are given the

	best opportunities to thrive.
Creating a compassionate council	Listening and responding to feedback from professionals, young people, parents and carers regarding what was working well, what needed improvement and where the gaps were with regards to current early intervention support available.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The Early Intervention Strategy was developed in consultation with young people, with youth voice championed throughout by the Youth Voice Coordinator and Young Hammersmith & Fulham CEO. Further, the strategy has been updated in response to feedback received through consultation with wider stakeholders.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	There are no anticipated financial implications as a result of implementation of the strategy.
Taking pride in H&F	We want H&F to be the best place to grow up, live and work. This strategy will ensure our local offer of support available is designed to meet the needs of children, young people and families at when problems first arise, allowing us to intervene early and support families to thrive.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	There are no anticipated climate and ecological implications as a result of implementation of the strategy.

Financial Impact

The strategy was compiled and developed by Children's Services in partnership with local organisations and residents. It is expected that the implementation of the strategy and action plan will be managed within existing approved budgets. The funding of activities that support delivery of the strategy will be the subject of separate decision reports in line with the Council's normal decision-making process and/or considered as part of the annual budget setting process.

Jill Lecznar, Head of Finance Children's Services, 4 August 2022

Verified by Andrew Lord, Head of Finance, strategic planning & investment, 18 August 2022

Legal Implications

The Early Intervention Strategy covers a broad range of Local Authority functions from Youth Crime, Early Help, and Children Centres to SEND.

Section 17 of the Act defines a 'child in need'. With the accompanying guidance, it places a 'general duty' on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need and 'promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs'.

The Council has duties under Schedule 2 and Part III of the Children Act 1989 to take reasonable steps, through the provision of services, to prevent children within their area suffering ill-treatment or neglect. It must provide such family centres as they consider appropriate in relation to children within their area. It must provide services designed to minimise the effect on disabled children within their area of their disabilities and to give such children the opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible. The Council must also take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are children in need within their area and publish information about services provided.

The Council has duties under sections 39 and 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and paragraph 7(b) of Schedule 2 of the 1989 Act to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children and young persons not to commit offences.

The Council has a duty under Schedule 2 of the Special Education Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 to publish how it will support those with SEND.

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the legal framework for multi-agency 'cooperation to improve well-being'. Each local authority must 'make arrangements to promote cooperation' between the authority and its partners 'with a view to improving the well-being of children' and 'with regard to the importance of parents and other persons caring for children' in improving their well-being.

Adopting the strategy contributes to the fulfilment by the Council of this broad range of legal obligations and many others.

Verified by Jade Monroe, Chief Solicitor Social Care, on 2 August 2022

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

1. Early intervention is key to the development of children and young people. This strategy aims to improve the life chances of all children and young people and requires a whole partnership approach to achieve this. This strategy is the first time we have brought the whole partnership together, including children and young people and our community sector, to deliver a whole system approach of early intervention.
2. The Early Intervention Strategy outlines our strategic ambition to work together as a local partnership to support children, young people, and their families at

the earliest opportunity from universal services through to targeted support where necessary.

3. The Strategy has been developed in partnership and extensively co-produced, shaped by consultation with children and young people, the Local Authority, Public Health, West London NHS Trust, North West London Clinical Commissioning Group, Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust, and involvement of third sector organisations through Young Hammersmith & Fulham Foundation, reflecting the H&F value of doing things with residents not to them.
4. The strategy is fundamental to our OFSTED requirements and drives the practice that will be reviewed under any inspection regime, including HMIP.
5. Current best practice and leading research from the Early Intervention Foundation, Independent Review of Children's Social Care, and Cerebra all advocate strongly for a strategic, multi-agency approach to delivering targeted early intervention support to improve outcomes for children, young people and families

Option 1 – Publish the H&F Early Intervention Strategy which takes account of development with key partners and recent consultation undertaken with stakeholders.

6. The Strategy document was developed in partnership and extensively co-produced with young people, partners and providers across the local area, and a consultation exercise has been completed. The Early Intervention Strategy has been updated taking into account feedback received throughout the consultation period. The Strategy should therefore progress for publication.
7. A number of our existing strategies and partnership working arrangements already take on this approach, demonstrating our clear shared vision. Whilst there is no statutory requirement to publish an Early Intervention Strategy, this option unifies this ambition in name and clearly explains how we will move forward together as a local area to ensure children and young people receive the right support at the earliest possible opportunity.
8. The strategy will drive the procurement of future contracts, based around the principles set out within the document. These principles will also be used in contract monitoring and KPIs to ensure continued implementation of the aims of the strategy.
9. This is the recommended option.

Option 2 – Do not publish the H&F Early Intervention Strategy

10. This option would reject publication of the Early Intervention Strategy, therefore failing to implement a collectively agreed local area approach to working together to support children, young people, and their families at the earliest opportunity.

11. This is not the recommended option.

Reasons for Decision

12. The Early Intervention Strategy is an overarching document that sits above the SEND Strategy, Youth Crime Prevention Strategy and 0-5 Strategy, to bring together the various strands of work as a whole. The aim to deliver a coordinated cross partnership approach to provide the right support at the right time.
13. All providers and partners locally have been involved in the development of the Strategy and partnership principles and know that to implement this strategic ambition requires changes to delivery and contract arrangements.
14. The Strategy is a public document and a commitment from the local area partnership with regards to our early intervention services. It therefore needs to be published.
15. The Strategy will inform and drive how we change and deliver provision moving forwards including children's centre and youth provision, in line with the manifesto commitment to develop Family Hubs. Relevant contracts within the Early Help, Early Years and Family Support Framework will be reviewed during this transition process, including through statutory public consultation, to understand how we can adapt our delivery to better meet the needs of our communities.

Equality Implications

16. There are no anticipated equalities issues. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on 20/06/22 prior to consultation and has been kept under review. This can be found at Appendix 2.

Risk Management Implications

17. The report recommends approval of a strategy which has been subject to extensive consultation with stakeholders, including partners, providers and young people. The strategy sets out a vision and principles which will guide the partnership in delivering the strategy, including targeting resources to those at risk of the poorest outcomes and work as a network of services to make every contact count; reducing referrals for social work intervention, and entry to care or criminal justice systems. This is in line with being a compassionate council and in being ruthlessly financially efficient.

David Hughes, Director of Audit, Fraud, Risk and Insurance, 26 July 2022

Climate and Ecological Emergency Implications

18. There are no anticipated climate and ecological implications as a result of publication of the Strategy. Projects referenced in the strategy such as Family Hubs will form separate programmes of work within which the project team will liaise closely with the Climate Unit.

Consultation

19. In line with the H&F priority of doing things with residents not to them, the Early Intervention Strategy has been extensively co-produced with partners across the borough over a period of 6 months. This was led by a core working group of key stakeholders who met on a regular basis, including Youth Voice and Young Hammersmith and Fulham Foundation acting as Youth Voice Champions, Hammersmith and Fulham Borough team in NHS North West London, West London NHS Trust, Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust, Children's Commissioning, Education, Early Years, Family Support, Family Assist, Youth Justice Service and Public Health. In addition, wider partners were involved in several focused workshops throughout this period. All partners were involved in drafting the strategy and supported review and feedback throughout its development.
20. To inform development, we consulted with young people through a menti-meter survey to ask about their experiences living in H&F, who/where they would go to for help, and what is important to them about how they receive support. We worked closely with the Youth Voice Coordinator to utilise recent existing feedback from young people to make sure we were listening and responding to what they had already told us they want across our services.
21. In addition, a series of workshops were held to agree our partnership principles, understand how each service will be represented in the strategy and to further embed our joint working approach. This included consultation with voluntary and community sector organisations through the Young Hammersmith and Fulham Foundation Local Leaders Network. Members also supported by reviewing and providing feedback during development of the strategy.
22. Following approval by the Children's Leadership Team and Cabinet Member for Children and Education, the Strategy was launched for public consultation in June 2022 via the 'H&F Have Your Say' platform.
23. The consultation was shared with children and young people and parents/carers through a series of workshops during the consultation period.
24. Further, information on the consultation was shared with providers through in person engagement sessions and with Young Hammersmith & Fulham Foundation members through a virtual forum hosted in July 2022. The strategy and consultation was presented to the Hammersmith and Fulham Borough team in NHS North West London and ParentsActive SEND practice group in July 2022. Partners in turn shared the consultation with their service users to ensure the consultation was widely disseminated within the community.
25. In addition, the consultation was promoted via the Children's Services staff newsletter, school staff zone newsletter, the H&F website, ParentsActive forum, GP forum, faith and community forums, health channels, and Young Hammersmith & Fulham Foundation membership.

26. Due to the extensive effort to frontload engagement across the local area during the development of the strategy, there was a low response to the consultation platform. This demonstrates that the strategy echoes comments previously captured throughout the process of co-production. The consultation was seen by 235 people, however a total number of 13 responses were received from professionals, parents and carers, and were largely positive in nature. A summary of the responses received and how these have been addressed can be found at Appendix 3.
27. We have committed to create an easy read version of the Strategy document, including a glossary of key terms/phrases. This work is currently underway, supported by ParentsActive, and will be finalised ready for publication alongside the strategy.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: [Hammersmith & Fulham Early Intervention Strategy](#)

Appendix 2: [Equalities Impact Assessment](#)

Appendix 3: [Consultation Responses](#)