

CABINET MEMBER DECISION 31 JANUARY 2018

VARIATION OF EARLY HELP COMMISSIONED SERVICES CONTRACTS (PARENTING AND FAMILY SUPPORT)

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr A Roberts

Relevant Officer

Director of Children, Families and Communities

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families is recommended to:

(a) note the background and information relating to Parenting and Family Support contracts and the proposal to vary those contracts, contained in this report;

(b) authorise the variation of the three Parenting and Family Support contracts as set out in this report in order to bring Targeted Family Support services under the direct delivery of the Council's children's safeguarding services;

(c) authorise the Director of Children, Families and Communities to take all necessary steps to implement the above variation.

Background

2. Since 2013, a number of Council-funded Early Help services, including Targeted Family Support, have been delivered by commissioned providers. In June 2016 the Cabinet approved the variation of these 'Early Help' contracts, including the extension of those contracts to the end of March 2019. This enabled an alignment to the future commissioning cycle of early intervention services referred to collectively as 'Starting Well' (including parenting and public health nursing). The extended contracts included the delivery of Targeted Family Support service which at the time of the decision was delivered by four contracted providers.

3. In September 2016 one of the providers, 4Children, made the decision to cease operations and with the agreement of the Council novated the contract for the Wychavon area to Action for Children who were an existing commissioned provider in Malvern Hills and Worcester City Districts.

4. The agreed variation to contracts was implemented on 1 December 2016 and delivery of the Parenting and Family Support service by the following providers commenced:

- Action for Children in South Worcestershire (Wychavon District, Malvern Hills District and Worcester City)

- Redditch Borough Council in Redditch borough and Bromsgrove District

- Barnardo's in Wyre Forest District.

5. This provision forms part of the Council's Early Help Offer and delivers support to families where children and young people have complex or escalating needs. They may have difficulties across more than one area of their lives and are likely to require some extra support from more than one agency. This provision (together with other services) delivers Worcestershire's Troubled Families programme by working with the whole family to address a range of needs.

6. Ofsted and the DfE Commissioner have advised that Targeted Family Support should be aligned more closely to locality safeguarding services with a more effective 'step up, step down' process in place.

7. In December 2017 the Cabinet considered the options for an Alternative Delivery Model for Children's social care. The report included reference to the expectation of the DfE Commissioner that Targeted Family Support services be within scope of any future ADM as it is 'essential to improvement'.

8. In order to best prepare for an ADM it is now appropriate to bring forward the planned creation of a county-wide Targeted Family Support service by bringing the commissioned family support services under the direct management of the Council prior to the planned end of the contracts in March 2019. On 11 January 2018 the Deputy Leader (in the absence of the Leader) authorised the CMR to take this decision.

9. Discussions have been held with representatives of the three commissioned providers who have been advised of the intention, subject to approval, to begin a period of six months' notice to vary the contract and implement a programme of integration.

Recommendations and Next Steps

10. As noted above, in order to best prepare Targeted Family Support services for the proposed Alternative Delivery Model for social care, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families authorises the variation of the three Parenting and Family Support contracts to remove the provision of Targeted Family Support services from those contracts, and authorises the Director of Children, Families and Communities to take all necessary steps to implement the above variation.

11. Subject to approval the next stage in implementation of the decision is to serve notice to the providers detailed above that the contract will be varied. This notice period of six months (as required by the contracts) to begin as soon as possible and to include a programme of change in advance of the planned transfer of services and staff to the council.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

12. The proposed notice to vary contracts is in compliance with the terms of those contracts.

13. There are HR implications for the Council arising from this report as it is anticipated that provider staff will transfer to the Council under TUPE arrangements. The funding for these posts is currently within the contract value, which will be renegotiated as part of the changes.

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The funding for these posts is currently within the contract value, which will be renegotiated as part of the changes. There may however be costs relating to pension strain and as a result of current terms and conditions of transferring staff, which will be identified during the notice period.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

15. These proposals have no direct impact on information risk or privacy impact at this stage. All case management information is held and will remain on the Council's case management system.

16. A Public Health Impact Assessment of these proposals is not required

Equality and Diversity Implications

17. There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from these proposals. It is anticipated that impact on service users will be minimal as it is not anticipated that the changes will impact on continuity of service and support.

Supporting Information

18. Further information on the service provision is available in the document 'Early Help in Worcestershire' attached at Appendix 1

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Cabinet Report – Children's Social Care Services Alternative Delivery Model – options appraisal and model recommendation (December 2017)

- Cabinet Report – The provision of effective prevention services for children and young people including optimising the use of Children's Centre buildings (June 2016)

Appendix 1 – Early Help in Worcestershire can be found at the following link:

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/8060/early_help_in_worcestershire