

NORTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

6th December 2017

Development of a New Early Help Strategy

1. PURPOSE OF PAPER

- 1.1 To provide the Children's Trust with an update on the move towards the development of an Early Help Strategy and to begin discussions about the direction of travel for the Prevention Service as it approaches the end of year 3 of operational delivery.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of the budget proposals for 2020 North Yorkshire, it was agreed to create a new single Prevention Service for the 0-19 age range. The new Prevention Service became operational from April 2015 and brought together a range of preventative work previously undertaken by separate services, to create a single service which operates seamlessly throughout the 0-19 age range.
- 2.2 An underlying aim of the Prevention Service is to reduce the numbers of children and young people requiring more intensive and more costly interventions, delivered through Children's Social Care. The Prevention Service and Children's Social Care were brought together under the newly configured service area called 'Children and Families' (C&F) in April 2015, coinciding with the launch of the Prevention Service.
- 2.3 North Yorkshire recognises the need to continually look for improvements in service delivery and it is timely to begin to look again at the Early Help Strategy and the service delivery model. While the delivery of outcomes is strong, the feedback we get from families at times, points towards a lack of co-ordination of services and this appears to be impacting on our ability to deliver the right support, at the right time and thereby have positive impact at the earliest opportunity.

3. DEVELOPING AN EARLY HELP STRATEGY

- 3.1 Work has commenced on developing a new Early Help Strategy. The strategy will build on section 10 of the Children Act 2004 which requires each local authority to: -

...make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority, each of the authority's relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authorities area as the authority considers appropriate. The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the well-being of all children in the authority's area, which includes protection from harm and neglect.



3.2 The strategy will also build on the guidance in Working Together (2015) and the current draft Working Together which is out for consultation, which reinforce the partnership responsibility for both Early Help assessment and the provision of services.

Effective early help relies on local agencies working together to:

- *identify children and families who would benefit from early help*
- *undertake an assessment of the need for early help; and*
- *provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of the child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child. (Working Together 2015)*

3.3 From a service delivery perspective, the strategy will look at how as a partnership we can reinforce the progress made by the Prevention service since 2015 and build a model of service delivery that is joined up, strengthens multi-agency working and ensures that the Early Help system is responsive at the earliest opportunity. This includes exploring how professionals outside of the Prevention Service can begin to pick up Lead Practitioner roles and complete Early Help assessments and plans.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Children's Trust are asked to note and comment on the information in the report.

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