

## One Stockport Family Hubs Programme Update

### Report of the Director of Children's Services

#### 1. Purpose of the briefing

- 1.1. The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update position in relation to Stockport's Family Hub transformation programme and next steps in the ongoing development, implementation and long-term sustainability.

#### 2. Background

2.1. In 2022, Stockport was awarded almost £1 million transformation funding by the Department for Education (DfE) to create a network of family hubs. Stockport was one of 13 successful authorities to receive the funding from the DfE, who received 84 bids from upper-tier local authorities. The funding provided has been aimed at enabling the transformation, creating the conditions for system change and capturing learning. This will catalyse our focus in Stockport on a Neighbourhoods and Prevention approach to bring whole system collaboration to supporting families in need. In the summer (2023), the DfE officially announced an extension of the transformation programme. The new end date, set for September 2024, will have 7 'live' family hub networks across the borough supported by a virtual family hub.

2.2. Family hubs will exist as networks of connected help and support within local neighbourhoods enabled by an infrastructure of connected buildings, services, people and virtual delivery. Family Hubs are not just about buildings, they are about relationships and the way we work together.

2.3. Family hubs support will be available to all families living in Stockport in different ways:

- Families can go to one of the local family hub main sites – currently Westmorland Drive, Brinnington and Garners Lane, Adswold with more sites to be opened in the next 9 months
- Families can find family hub support in other places, like local Libraries and Life Leisure centres. These places are identified by family hub signs or banners
- Families can also access family hubs online via [www.stockport.gov.uk/familyhubs](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/familyhubs)

#### 3. Overview

3.1. Stockport will transform access to family information, help and support, through the implementation of family hubs for the following reasons:

- Identified as our next phase of transformation and catalyst for wider neighbourhood and prevention work.
- We are 'ONE Stockport' – family hubs, aligns to the vision and ambition of the 'ONE Borough Plan.'
- Builds on our already excellent integrated services with ambition to go further.
- Complexity of our support system can make it overwhelming and inaccessible for some families.

- Better connection with communities and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector.
- Improve levels of trust with communities - some people can feel stigmatised asking for help.
- Support consistency of our offer across Stockport and build the capacity of the community offer.
- Empower family self-help to navigate the system with confidence.
- Reduce inequalities and increasing demand on costly statutory services.

3.2. Our coproduced vision is that family hubs will support families in Stockport to start well, live well and thrive. Working with families, partners and communities we will:

- Ensure there is a clear and simple way to access information, help and support via physical buildings, outreach, and digital developments with a warm welcome to all families, reducing any stigma in asking for help.
- Build the network of family hubs based on a strong universal offer, linked to anchor community institutions (nurseries, schools, GPs and libraries).
- Focus on two thematic areas; early childhood development, especially speech, language, communication; and improving integrated pathways for children with SEND.
- Empower families to support their children's development by providing easy access to information and self-help resources.
- Develop trusted relationships with communities, further developing relationships and trust with the VCFSE sector.

If we achieve our vision and ambition, families should feel supported, confident, resilient and connected to their community.

3.3. Family hubs are a way of joining up locally at a neighbourhood level to bring existing family help and support services together alongside community offers, enhancing delivery where needed. They will provide a single point of access to a 'one stop shop' of information, help and support accessible via physical buildings, outreach and digital engagement.

3.4. Family hubs will support families from pregnancy through to young people turning 19 (or up to 25 with SEND) to get the right information, help and support at the right time, built on a platform of trusted relationships. Importantly access points will be non-stigmatising and well connected with services, practitioners and the full local offer. Furthermore, a published offer will empower families to navigate the system and services with confidence and improve communication between stakeholders. Branded as **'One Stockport Family Hubs'**, **our approach locally will exist as networks of connected help and support within a local neighbourhood.**

3.5. The Government has published the Family Hub Framework which sets out expectations for service delivery under the three delivery areas of **access, connection and relationships**. Stockport must meet the key criteria set against each delivery area to demonstrate successful implementation. In addition, the DfE have also asked that Stockport align with the Family Hub Service Expectations guidance. We are required to meet all the 'minimum expectations' set out in guidance by September 2024 whilst demonstrating our ambition to 'go further'.

3.6. The service offer for family hubs as set out in government guidance is broad ranging, covering all aspects of family life. This includes relationship support, debt and welfare advice, public health and mental health services, substance (alcohol/drug) misuse support, smoking cessation, oral health improvement, nutrition and weight management, intensive targeted family support, housing, youth services - universal

and targeted including youth justice services, SEND provision, domestic abuse support and parenting.

3.7. Specific to the early years includes; midwifery, health visiting, parent-Infant relationships and perinatal mental health support, early language and home learning environment support, infant feeding, activities for children aged 0-5, early childhood education and care and financial support. Many of these early years services are already delivered through our Start Well place based integrated delivery model, providing a strong foundation to extend beyond the early years to a 0-25 approach.

3.8. These core services for children, young people and families are delivered by the Council, NHS and partners, with a faction commissioned from the VCFSE sector and funded from existing funding arrangements. A system wide self-assessment against service delivery expectations with partners suggests we are in a good position to meet expectations. The process is helping align our local help and support offer for children and families with the family hubs brand.

#### 4. One Stockport Family Hubs – the evolving picture

4.1. With less than 2 years to implement family hubs, we are now moving into the last 9 months of the transformation programme. A huge amount of groundwork has taken place over the last 12 months to ensure we build on the integration, partnerships and service delivery that we already have in place.

4.2. During the project scoping phase, time was invested with stakeholders in the establishment of a collaborative view of family hubs. Together we have developed a branding identity that reflects a partnership route and alignment to One Stockport and identified five key priority areas of focus that family hubs can help address:

- Mental health and wellbeing support for teenagers
- Access to sexual health and relationship support
- Early Years SEND and Child Development
- Transition support into adulthood
- Adult mental health and wellbeing support, particularly for dads

These priority areas of focus will be reflected upon further as we develop our outcomes framework and agree key performance indicators.

4.3. Family hubs are a prevention and communities first – early help approach. As mentioned in 3.2, the most value will come from the network of connected help and support within local neighbourhoods enabled by the infrastructure of connected buildings, services, people and virtual delivery. The illustration in **appendix 1** outlines our locally coproduced model.

4.4. The networks will share a common approach to working with families and communities supported by a workforce development plan – our values are warmth and trust.

4.5. There will be a number of main family hub sites across Stockport, which will support the co-location of multi-agency core teams including midwifery, health visiting, school nursing and family help.

4.6. There will however be less emphasis on designating family hub buildings and a greater focus on developing a local **network of family hub bridges**, which will facilitate and enhance access to the family hub offer. These places and people will have strong links to communities and trusted relationships or established connections with families, creating a wide breadth of access to information, help and support.

## 5. Partnerships and stakeholder engagement – successes to date

- 5.1. During the groundwork phase of the programme (Autumn 22 – Spring 24), over 150 residents and professionals contributed to the design of family hubs over a series of workshops. This informed the development of design groups in the initial early adopter areas who have been actively involved in developing the networks in those neighbourhoods.
- 5.2. A position statement is currently being drafted to outline how the voice of infants, children, young people and families are and will inform family hub development and service delivery. This includes existing parent carer panels/forums, equality and diversity groups, SEND panel and youth voice groups, who have been instrumental in coproduction across other service delivery workstreams.
- 5.3. Children and families have told us that they want to get information and support from a wider range of places, people and trusted organisations in their communities and issues such as mental health, cost of living and housing are major priorities for them.
- 5.4. Through our Innovation Partnership with Nesta, parents have been helping to identify potential improvements to our early years delivery model in Stockport, for example, more diverse and accessible places to get help, and better connection between services so families don't have to repeat their stories/information.
- 5.5. Local dads/coparents were asked to share their views to improve the offer and further develop dad friendly practice. This led to a joint funded post for a Dads Perinatal and Parent Infant Mental Health Coordinator, to be employed by a third sector partner.
- 5.6. Strong links have been forged with Sector 3 who are hosting the employment of a Family Hubs VCFSE Engagement Lead worker. One of the key responsibilities of this role, is to help families and public sector organisations be better connected with their communities.
- 5.7. The Department for Works and Pensions have agreed to co-locate the Supporting Families Advisors in the identified main family hub sites, where unemployment remains higher than other parts of the borough. This will facilitate and enhance relationships with midwifery, health visiting, school nurse and family help teams and extend reach to those families needing support. Alignment of linked workers to early adopter areas and main sites has also been agreed with the Youth Offending Service, Mosaic and Housing.
- 5.8. Agreement for Libraries and Leisure Centres to become our first family hub bridges in the early adopter areas will enhance existing access to information, help and support on all aspects of family life and improve connections between families, communities, services and providers. More recently, agreement has been secured with Stockport Homes for their Housing Support Officers, Homelessness team and Corner Stone Reception to come onboard as the next family hub bridges. A warm discussion has also started with the first GP practice to become a family hub bridge.
- 5.9. It is important to note that wider services engagement has also included Early Years providers, Schools, GPs, Children's Therapy services, CAMHS, Adult and Family Weight Management and Sexual Health services. A thorough and wide-reaching communication strategy is ensuring continued engagement and sharing of the opportunity that family hubs brings. See **appendix 2**.

## 6. Next steps

- 6.1. The first release of the virtual family hub has been launched ([Family Hubs - Stockport Council](#)); an online network of information, help and support. Our digital ambitions are aligning to wider digital transformation within Council and the creation of an online directory of support including community offers.
- 6.2. In October 2023, the first three networks went 'live' in the early adopter areas of Werneth and Brinnington; Edgeley; and Offerton, Great Moor and Hazel Grove. This included the opening of our initial One Stockport Family Hub sites at Westmorland Drive, Brinnington and Garners Lane, Adswood, and colocation of core teams. Further colocation opportunities are being scoped for Reddish, Offerton and the Cheadle/Bramhall footprint.
- 6.3. Life Leisure and Library sites in our early adopter areas have trained staff who are ready to take enquiries. This will support libraries and life leisure's existing services, enhance the public's access to information, help and support on all aspects of family life and improve connections between families, communities, services and providers.

These sites are:

- Werneth and Brinnington footprint – Brinnington Library, Brinnington Park Leisure, Stockport Sports Village, Bredbury Library and Life Leisure Romiley
  - Edgeley footprint – Adswood and Bridgehall Library, Life Leisure Avondale and Edgeley Library
  - Offerton, Great Moor and Hazel Grove footprint – Offerton, Hazel Grove and Great Moor Libraries
- 6.4. Further family hub bridges, including Stockport Homes will be set up from January 2024.
  - 6.5. With prototyping of the family hub approach well underway in the early adopter areas, the design phase for Heaton and Reddish and a Town Centre approach has started. A series of launch dates have been set for mid-February 2024. See appendix 3 for more information. Phase 3 (Bramhall and Cheadle) design will start late Spring 2024 with prototyping planned for Summer 2024.
  - 6.6. A priority next step is to agree how family hub networks will be facilitated and consider opportunities within the broader neighbourhood and prevention programme.

## 7. Monitoring and evaluation

- 7.1. The DfE monitors progress through the transformation delivery plan and quarterly progress meetings with designated senior responsible officer for the programme.
- 7.2. The delivery plan has recently been updated and resubmitted to the DfE to reflect an extension in the timeline. The plan sets out key milestones for the launch of branding and opening of family hub sites, virtual hub development, implementation of workforce training offer, data collection and evaluation, VCFSE engagement, and strengthening of the start for life offer (Start Well).
- 7.3. Management information is submitted to the DfE three times through the duration of the programme. The first submission was made in the summer and focuses on footfall/activity at designated family hub main sites to capture baseline information and understand progress. This however conflicts with our local approach to family hub delivery and less emphasis on buildings. The DfE are understanding of this and have assured us that future submissions (March and September 24) will have no bearing on

making a judgment regarding the effectiveness of our implementation. Nevertheless, we are exploring internally how we can capture engagement activity that reflects our local approach.

7.4. An outcomes framework and performance management scorecard are in the very early stages of development to demonstrate the impact of implementing family hub networks in the longer term. This may include alignment with the Supporting Families Outcomes framework. A collection of family hub stories on a quarterly basis will also provide qualitative evidence of impact.

7.5. Data packs profiling the family hub community are being formulated for early adopter areas to support the networks to better understand the local populations and ensure a collective responsibility for improving outcomes.

## **8. Funding allocation and financial implications**

8.1. The funding awarded to Stockport is to support our transformation process to develop a family hub model of working. It is not intended to cover the cost of service delivery. The transformation funding has also included a small amount of capital.

8.2. Funding is received upon demonstrable progress against the key milestones of the delivery plan and effective delivery of the minimum expectations set down in guidance.

8.3. Despite the challenging timeline and pace set by the DfE, the majority of activity has been on track at each monitoring meeting, with examples of progress being made against some milestones earlier than expected.

8.4. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **9. Equalities Implications**

9.1. It is expected that family hubs will improve access to information, help and support for all families in Stockport. The voice and engagement of vulnerable and marginalised groups will be a priority in the development of family hubs and delivery of services to support accessibility.

9.2. Further equality impact assessments and action plan needs to be developed as the model is implemented.

## **10. Legal Implications**

10.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **11. Governance**

11.1 The programme governance has been strongly established on the back of the scoping phase reflecting the strength of the partnership. The family hub advisory board has been developed to bring together a cross section of strategic and senior leaders from public and VCFSE sectors who provide support, advice and challenge to assist and oversee the implementation of the family hubs transformation programme through shared responsibility.

11.2 Interdependencies with other boards and strategies include: Start Well and School Readiness, Early Help, SEND, Safeguarding, and Health and Wellbeing.

11.3 The programme sits formally within the Neighbourhoods and Prevention Programme.

## **12. Conclusions and key messages**

12.1 **One Stockport Family Hubs** will be launching at pace over the next 9 months. Family hubs are a critical component of children's transformation and catalyst for wider neighbourhood and prevention ambitions to reduce escalating need and demand on costly statutory services.

12.2 Family hubs are a universal offer and for all families in Stockport. They will empower families to navigate the system and services with confidence and normalise asking for help and support.

12.3 Family hubs will exist as networks of support, enabling families easier access to information, help and support on all aspects of family life via physical (people and buildings) and virtual access points. By September 2024 we will have 7 One Stockport Family Hub networks across the borough and each network will be bespoke to the communities it serves.

12.4 The family hub bridges' concept, digital developments and investment in VCFSE relationships and engagement are all crucial to the success and sustainability of the programme – capturing and scaling learning will support a different way of working and will strengthen the sustainability of our existing partnerships, adding an additional layer of resilience and support.

12.5 Transformation is being supported by a clear workforce development plan and training offer which is currently being implemented. This is a key enabler of the programme.

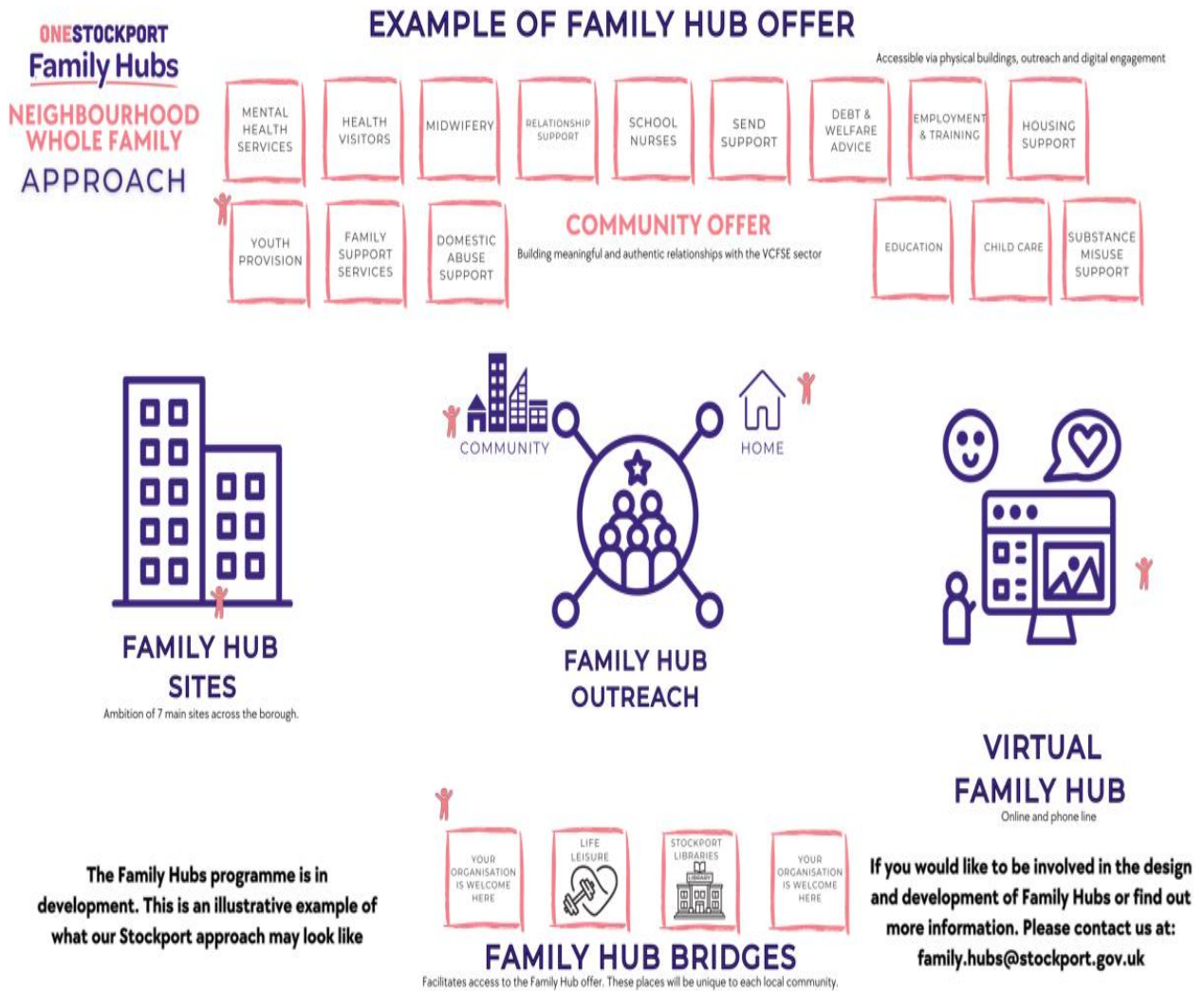
## **13. Recommendations**

13.1 Note and comment on report.

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## Appendices

- **Appendix 1 Illustrative example of family hub model**



- **Appendix 2 Family Hubs Communication and Engagement Plan**



Family Hub Comms Plan.pdf