

**Meeting date:** 27/02/23

**Report to:** Joint Scrutiny Boards: Health and Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Education and Skills and the Stronger Communities and Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Boards

**Subject/report title:** Update on the Family Hubs Pilot

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**Wards affected:**

- All Wards |  Bickenhill |  Blythe |  Castle Bromwich |  Chelmsley Wood |  Dorridge/Hockley Heath |  Elmdon |  Kingshurst/Fordbridge |  Knowle |  Lyndon |  Meriden |  Olton |  Shirley East |  Shirley South |  Shirley West |  Silhill |  Smith's Wood |  St Alphege
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**Public/private report:** Public

**Exempt by virtue of paragraph:** n/a

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 For members of the Scrutiny Boards to consider plans to develop and deliver a Family Hub offer in Solihull by March 2024.

**2. Decision(s) recommended**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Boards are asked to:

- 2.1.1 Note the aims and objectives of the pilot Family Hubs programme which is being funded by the Department for Education to test a single-branded multi-agency family support offer from pre-conception to 25 years.
- 2.1.2 Consider and comment on the proposed locations for the pilot sites and the rationale for locating sites in these areas.
- 2.1.3 Note the engagement that has taken place to date and plans for further engagement on the scheme.

2.1.4 Note the timescales for decision-making and roll-out of the pilot consultation and engagement process.

### 3. Matters for Consideration

#### 3.1 Introduction to the Family Hub Offer (*A 'Plan on a Page' is available in section 5*)

- 3.1.1 Solihull is one of 12 local authority areas (out of 84 applicants) to have been awarded up to £1 million to create a network of Family Hubs by the Department for Education. The Family Hub offer must have three components:
- (a) **Hub buildings** - this funding will enable four Family Hubs initially with an aspiration to open further sites if the rigorous evaluation demonstrates effective delivery in the future.
  - (b) **Outreach activity** - in community venues
  - (c) **Digital offer** – borough-wide offer of online advice and group sessions, a website, app and ICT equipment in the hubs for families to access.
- 3.1.2 The funding supports improvements to facilities, investment in digital systems and staff for the transformational programme up to March 2024.
- 3.1.3 The hub offer will co-locate a range of key existing services for families from **pre-conception to 19 years** (and **25 years** for young people with additional needs).
- 3.1.4 The Department for Education sets out [24 key service areas](#) the hub offer should cover including six mandated services incorporating maternity, health visiting, infant feeding, special educational needs and disabilities, perinatal and infant mental health and safeguarding.
- 3.1.5 Commissioner and providers of NHS-led maternity services, health visiting, infant feeding, school nursing, Family Nurse Partnership (for adolescent parents), perinatal mental health services are already committed to delivering through the hub offer. Best practice across the country has found that having maternity services and mandated health visiting checks in the hubs are vital in effective engagement of families in the early years.
- 3.1.6 Council-provided services, including early help family support, parenting support, social work and SEND support will utilise the hubs for service delivery, with workforce teams co-locating with multi-disciplinary, multi-agency partners, strengthening collaborative work for families.
- 3.1.7 Public health commissioned services such as domestic abuse, physical activity, healthy weight, lifestyle, sexual health and addictions services will also be partially delivered through the hub offer.
- 3.1.8 There is ongoing dialogue and a plan to systematically engage a number of service leads both statutory and in the VCSE sector for SEND, mental health, financial, employment, housing, youth work, peer support, oral health and early years services/support.

- 3.1.9 Additionally, there will be social activities to foster peer support with a thriving parent volunteer group supporting sessions. This will encourage families to come to the hubs or outreach activity in communities and engage with multiple aspects of the offer, led by their particular needs.
- 3.1.10 The DfE funding, along with other sources of income including existing service revenue streams, will enable us to work collaboratively on prevention and early intervention across the system. This aligns with national policy published in the [Best Start in Life \(Leadsom\) Review \(2021\)](#).
- 3.1.11 Teams across the council and wider partners, including the NHS, voluntary sector, parents/carers, children and young people, are collaborating to shape our hub offer so families can access the right help, at the right time, in the heart of communities who need it most, directly addressing intergenerational patterns of disadvantage.
- 3.1.12 Our strategic intent is defined in our Health and Wellbeing and Inequalities strategies. Our draft Economic Strategy also states that closing the gap in life expectancy and attainment, which is laid down in early years, is crucial to economic success and levelling up. Family Hubs are central to this aspiration and are also consistent with the goals of the Integrated Care System.

## 3.2 **Aim of the hub offer**

- 3.2.1 The aim of the hub offer is to improve the health, wellbeing and resilience of children and young people, creating confident, productive adults, through effective, evidence-based support. Family Hubs are flexible, attuned to local needs and able to connect families with the right help from the right people in the right way, reducing the need for crisis intervention by social care services.
- 3.2.2 Research shows that most children enter the care system because of problems within the family environment that put the child's safety at risk with abuse and neglect the most common reason for entering care. Evidence also shows that many referrals are underpinned by wider socio-economic problems.
- 3.2.3 Providing better access to integrated family support services has been recognised as a key building block to reduce the number of children entering the care system. The Case for Change report by the Independent Review of Children's Social Care in England found there was "*innovative practice by local areas*" in the area of family support, "*with family hubs being a notable example*".

### 3.2.4 Programme goals and key outcomes

3.2.5 The overall programme goals are set out below:

#### Theory of change to realise the Family Hubs Vision

Why change is needed	Who change is needed for	How the intervention will work	What the short and medium term impact is	What the primary outcomes are
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large disparities in outcomes across areas</li> <li>Inconsistencies and a lack of cohesion for the service offer</li> <li>Need to engage marginalised families</li> <li>Families report confusion/ service fragmentation &amp; repeating their story</li> <li>Lack of infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families in areas that have most identified unmet needs with children having poorer outcomes and developmental delay</li> <li>Parents/carers to access cohesive support</li> <li>Need to address pattern of intergenerational disadvantage and empower parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase access &amp; integration of services</li> <li>Services delivered from hubs and outreach venues as well as online</li> <li>Embed a strength-based relational approach</li> <li>Ensure robust pathways into specialist and targeted services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short-term:</b> approach is strength-based; delivers consistent messaging single point of access; integrated pathways; families can access the right help at the right time, first time</p> <p><b>Medium-term:</b> confident parents/carers; attuned relationships; improved child development; protective factors against adversity</p>	Secure, parental attachment protecting against harmful, life-long effects of trauma; reduced infant mortality; improved development, health, employment prospects, educational attainment, pro-social behaviour and resilience; reducing criminal behaviour and escalation to statutory services.

[Template source: [www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/toolkits/the-family-hub-development-process/](http://www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/toolkits/the-family-hub-development-process/)]

3.2.6 Outcomes will be closely monitored through a programme dashboard, developed in partnership with the Department for Education. This will include existing measures in the current Health and Wellbeing Strategy scorecard (including child development at 2 and 5 years of age) and other key measures including low birth weight, infant mortality, smoking at time of delivery, hospital admissions due to injuries/self-harm, young people not in education, employment or training, family emotional wellbeing and mental health, children entering child protection proceedings and care and levels of access into employment opportunities.

3.2.7 The offer will also aim to prevent escalation of issues reducing referrals requiring statutory services, increase parental confidence and familial closeness and reduce household conflict and anxiety.

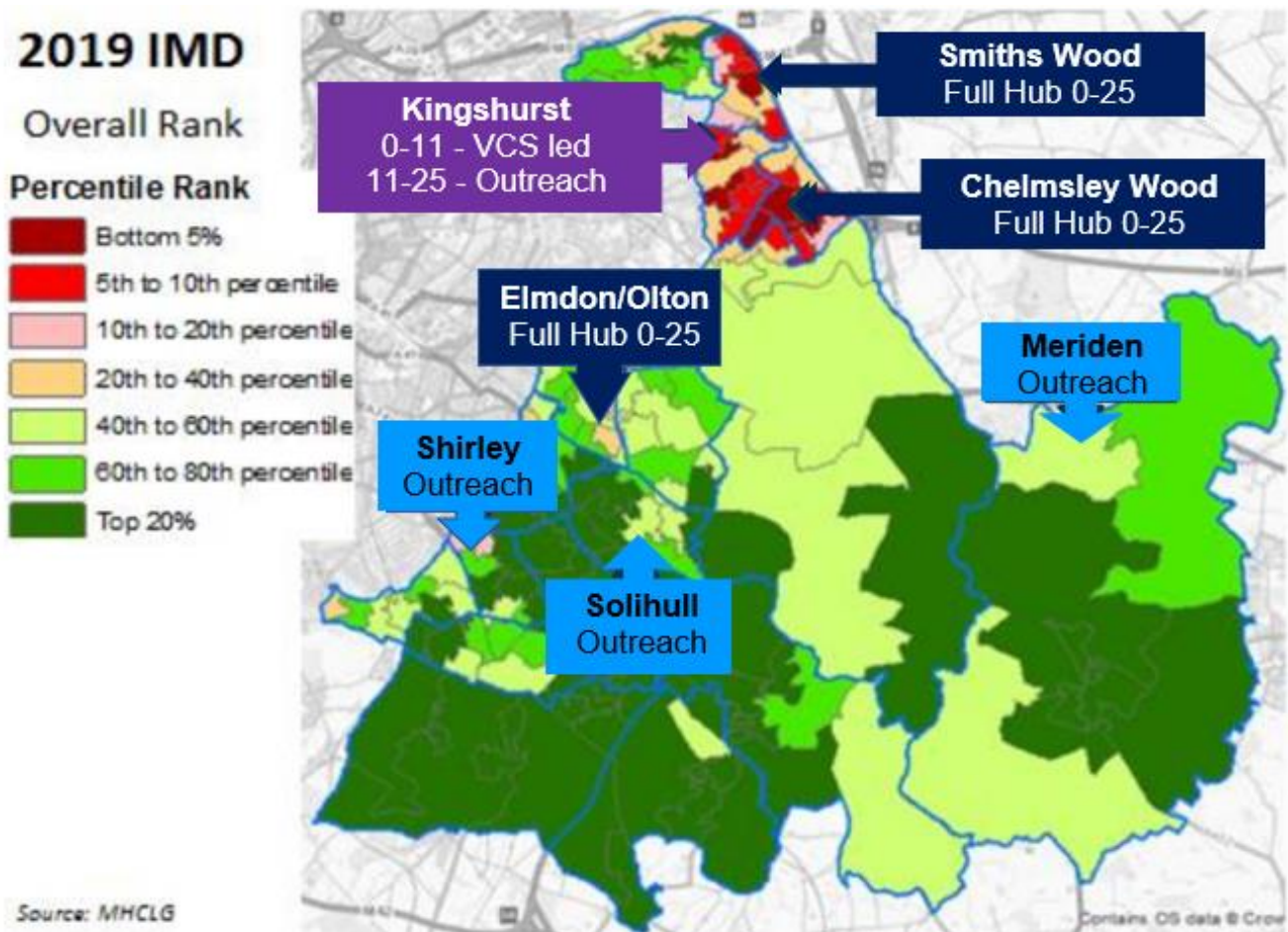
### 3.3 Hub locations

3.3.1 Four areas have been provisionally agreed with the Department for Education as areas to focus hub activity, using the following criteria:

- Concentrated in areas of higher need** based on key outcome data to address local inequalities but with a wider outreach offer to provide greater coverage.
- 
- Accessible** - on good public transport routes, close to amenities where families already go.

3.3.2 Needs assessment has been undertaken to inform the hub locations including analysis of outcome measures reported in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment including children living in poverty, low birth weight, breastfeeding rates, obesity, child development at 2 years, communication delay at 2 years, uptake of early years education funding and school attainment.

3.3.3 It is proposed that the hub building will be located as shown below:



3.3.4 In addition to correlation with the index of multiple deprivation (IMD as shown in the map above), the findings of the needs assessment for each proposed location are detailed below:

- (a) **Smith's Wood/ Kingshurst/ Chelmsley Wood** – compared with the national and Solihull average, there are a:
- higher proportion of children in poverty.
  - higher proportion of low birth weight at term
  - higher proportion of children who are delayed in their development at 2-2.5 years (ASQ check with Health Visitor).
  - significantly lower than national average for good level of development at end of reception (5 years old).
  - higher early years pupil premium rate.
  - lower educational attainment.
  - higher proportion of pupils under 5 years old with special educational needs and disabilities
- (b) **Meriden** – compared with the Solihull average, there is a:
- higher proportion of people experiencing social isolation and loneliness
  - geographically isolated
  - lower educational attainment in Meriden West (location of Meriden village)

- emerging complexities associated with parenting issues and deprivation.
- (c) **Olton/Hatchford Brook and Shirley** – compared with the national and Solihull average, there are a:
- significantly lower proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of reception in the Lyndon ward
  - greater inequality gap at 5 years in the Lyndon, Shirley East and Shirley West wards.
  - higher proportion of children aged under 5 years with special educational needs and disabilities in Shirley South.
- (d) **Solihull town centre** – compared with national and Solihull average, there is a:
- higher proportion of pupils under 5 years old with special educational needs and disabilities in Silhill ward
  - localised pockets of deprivation
  - acts as a hub for south Solihull with excellent public transport links for communities in the rural East locality and central Solihull.
- 3.3.5 Based on the available national funding, a pilot approach will be adopted to create four hubs (three SMBC-led and one VCS-led) with enhanced outreach in Meriden, Solihull and Shirley. The offers in these areas will not be full-time or a full-service offer (i.e. with no clinical appointments or access to sensory rooms) and the more ad hoc approach will be monitored for comparable effectiveness with a hub building.
- 3.3.6 It should be noted that the number of hub building locations and associated staffing is contingent on a sustainable recurrent funding stream, as yet unidentified. The national approach to the transformational programme states that the evidence and best practice gathered from the programme will inform the case for future investment so, whilst we are in receipt of the transformational funding, there is not a national fund that will support the operation and sustainability of the Family Hub offer.
- 3.3.7 We are the only local authority out of the 12 pilot areas not to have existing children centres, and therefore, we have no existing budgets for operational delivery that would be moved across to fund Family Hubs. As such, operational budget needs to be identified, rather than transferred as in other areas.
- 3.3.8 At each of the hub locations, the key operating principles is to utilise existing buildings and co-locate services, where possible, to reduce development and operational costs. Hub and outreach sites may be owned either by the council or local partners and this scoping work is nearing completion for three sites. This work has entailed collaboration with the Stronger Communities team and NHS partners and has resulted in a series of workshops to ensure that the hubs will be maximised as assets across the pre-conception to 25-year age span, alongside additional potential all-age activity, such as arts and culture space and joining with libraries.
- 3.3.9 Hub buildings will comply with a minimum specification and have a **clinical room** for health appointments, a **sensory room**, **large room** for group

sessions/training and **smaller rooms** for therapeutic/individual support. Each hub building will have a **kitchen**, a **room for activities/group sessions for young people** and **office space** for remote working and ICT equipment for family use. Each hub will have access for wheelchairs and pushchairs with a welcoming reception.

3.3.10 The clinical room will enable health appointments on site, such as antenatal check-ups and therapeutic services. Each hub will have a room with clinical flooring, a sink, examination bed and privacy screens. This will enable parents/carers to access the hub sites from early pregnancy, increasing their likelihood of attending the hubs throughout parenthood.

3.3.11 The hub sites are being considered in liaison with teams in the Council, the NHS and the voluntary sector. Hub buildings under consideration so far include previous youth centres, current community buildings and aligning with active community hubs where possible, particularly where VCSE organisations are operating as community anchors. It will be key to ensure the choice of hub sites delivers maximum potential for families to access services and activities in place in venues, such as a hub site at a library would enable easy access to 'story-time' sessions for pre-school children, and potentially wider support services, such as Solihull Connect, improving service navigation for families.

3.3.12 Each site is subject to final confirmation following feasibility studies and consultation with partner agencies and families by June 2023. Final options will be subject to Cabinet Portfolio decision making in July 2023.

3.3.13 Hub sites will require re-modelling to ensure the minimum specification for the space is reached, including the addition of partition walls, kitchens, reception areas and a range of room sizes to accommodate service activity, including large groups, smaller groups and one-to-one work.

#### 3.4 **Virtual (digital) offer**

3.4.1 The virtual (digital) offer comprises of a branded website, app with age-specific information/push notifications and bookable activities, social media feeds, virtual group sessions and advice appointments. A draft website (with links to partner agency websites, the Family Information Service and the Local Offer) has been created and the app is currently under development.

3.4.2 ICT equipment and privacy pods will be in all hub buildings for parents/carers and young people to access video appointments/online sessions directly addressing digital exclusion.

3.4.3 ICT hardware will also be available in the hub buildings for children and young people to access online advice, support and quality-assured educational games and apps.

#### 3.5 **Outreach services and activities**

3.5.1 Outreach activities and services will be offered as 'pop-up' sessions in community venues near full hub buildings and in Meriden, Solihull and Shirley, to

widen the reach of the offer. Outreach venues will display Family Hub branding to create brand awareness and ensure families see them as part of the overall offer.

- 3.5.2 Community venues will be block-booked for specific sessions across the week with the intention that these remain consistent, so families know when to expect regular service activities. The outreach offer will enable non-clinical services to hold sessions, advice and support alongside social and peer support activity, although the sites will not operate in the same way or have the breadth of service activities and in full hubs.
- 3.5.3 Vulnerable families are often less likely to visit centres for support so a robust non-judgmental and flexible outreach offer is crucial and will focus on marginalised families, offering parenting support, home learning advice and befriending. An aspiration for the hub offer will be to have a network of volunteers to connect with families to encourage them to attend their local hub/outreach activity, directly removing barriers to access and assisting in navigating available support.
- 3.5.4 All professionals and volunteers working within the Family Hub offer will be fully trained in safeguarding and spotting signs of abuse and neglect. There will be clear escalation pathways for safeguarding issues with social care teams being an integral partner in the Family Hub offer.

### **3.6 Multi-disciplinary system working and related challenges**

- 3.6.1 A key aspect of the effectiveness of the Family Hub Offer is multi-disciplinary, multi-agency integrated working, dissolving organisational boundaries. This will be supported by co-location of teams in the hubs with robust information-sharing to ensure families only tell their story once. In addition, the use of joint consent forms will be utilised where possible to support seamless engagement of families in the integrated model.
- 3.6.2 These are significant service delivery challenges and will require cross-system sign-up from statutory and VCSE partners to agree to share appropriate information securely and agree to the use of a joint information system and consent form. In addition, the ability to fully co-locate multi-agency workforce teams by the compressed timescales will be difficult and a phased approach will be adopted to ensure safe transition of staff teams to hub sites.
- 3.6.3 One of the key benefits of the Family Hub approach is the integration of existing services, but there is no additional resources for new services, therefore, a key issue for the transformational team will be to ensure that the Family Hub offer integrates existing provision with competition or duplication of services.
- 3.6.4 The transformation required to support this will need a specific focus and will be continued and monitored once the offer is operational, to ensure families' experiences of the services are not fragmented.



### 3.7 Governance & delivery

- 3.7.1 The hub offer will be overseen by the new multi-agency Children and Families Prevention and Early Intervention Board which reports to Solihull Place-based Committee, and the Health and Wellbeing Board. In addition, a Family Hub Oversight Board (SMBC) and a multi-agency Operational Group have been established with collaborative online space for joint planning.
- 3.7.2 A Parent Carer Panel is being convened as recommended in the Best Start in Life (Leadsom) Review (2021) with representatives from arrange of parenting scenarios, such as young parents/carers, lone parents/carers, LGBTQ+ parents/carers, foster carers and families with children and young people with additional needs. The first meeting for this panel will take place in early March 2023.
- 3.7.3 The Family Hubs initiative is being delivered as a cross-council programme led by Public Health but including Children’s Services (particularly Early Help, Social Care, Early Years, Education, SEND and the Family Information Service), Stronger Communities, ICT, Communications, Finance, Legal, Facilities and Strategic Land.
- 3.7.4 Updates on the develop of the hub offer will be communicated on the Solihull Council website at [www.solihull.gov.uk/children-and-family-support/family-hubs](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/children-and-family-support/family-hubs)

A summary of high-level deliverables and milestones is below:

Deliverable	Timeframe & estimated completion date
<b>Hub buildings and outreach</b>	
Feasibility studies and scoping of hub sites and outreach venues	June 2023
Final approval for confirmation of the hub sites	July 2023
Retrofitting and equipping of hub sites including provision for clinical space and sensory rooms	June 2023-January 2024
Pilot hub soft launch to enable real-time testing of approach	August/September 2023
Four hub sites and outreach venues launched and operational	March 2024
<b>Digital offer</b>	
Digital offer development incorporating the website and app	January - April 2023
Initial testing of digital offer with families	April 2023-June 2024
Further testing of digital offer	August 2023-January 2024
Launch of the digital offer	February 2024
<b>Service offer</b>	
Confirm integrated service delivery partners	June 2023
Agree service agreements including data sharing	January 2024
<b>Consultation and engagement</b>	
Focus Groups and public consultation	January - April 2023
Parent Carer Panel established	March 2023
Re-shaping of service offer with families	Ongoing

## 3.8 Budget

- 3.8.1 Solihull has been awarded £999,783 (comprising of £833k revenue programme costs and £167k capital costs) of transformation funding from the Department for Education (DfE) with a deadline for delivery of March 2024. No additional national funding has been made available to support Family Hubs beyond 2024.
- 3.8.2 Detailed financial modelling is underway to ensure there is clarity on the operational revenue required for the delivery of the Family Hubs from April 2024. This includes offsetting costs currently incurred by workforce teams when they co-locate into the Hub buildings. The Family Hub Oversight Board is directing the financial modelling to ensure value for money and realise efficiency savings.
- 3.8.3 Additional funding is being sought from other sources, including potentially the Integrated Care System Fairer Futures Fund, to support the transformation costs and revolutionise multi-agency service delivery for families, focusing on primary prevention. Joint funding will be sought from system partners for operational delivery, however, there is no commitment at present.
- 3.8.4 UKSPF funding is being utilised to develop community facilities through the Transforming Community Buildings and Family Hubs stream and will be utilised to support the offer.
- 3.8.5 A contingency fund within the Public Health Directorate has been established to be utilised, if required, to support transformation and delivery.
- 3.8.6 The hub offer is an important means of delivering early help at the heart of our communities, with an aim to reduce the number of families entering statutory services. As such, this offer is an integral part of the Children's Improvement Plan.
- 3.8.7 As the hub offer will form part of the wider prevention and early-intervention model for children living in the borough, the expectation is that it is embedded into existing core budgets, potentially with a joint approach to operational funding from partner agencies.

3.9 **Workforce/Volunteer Development** - There will be a continual focus on workforce development and recruiting parent volunteers to maintain lively and engaged peer support networks.

3.10 **Evaluation** - Rigorous evaluation of effectiveness (particularly outcomes rather than outputs) will inform future service delivery as will qualitative feedback from families who have accessed services. This will happen in close collaboration with the evaluation team at the Department for Education and Ecorys, during both the transformational set-up phase. Local monitoring will continue once the offer is launched. There will be an outcomes framework with metrics that are benchmarked to local and national data as a means to measure effectiveness and enable the offer to develop and flex to respond to emerging needs. The data and information dashboard for both the transformational programme and the operation of the hub offer will be broad and will capture process outputs and, crucially outcomes, with qualitative and

quantitative data to inform ongoing service delivery.

3.11 **Learning from other areas.** As part of the development work for this service, the team have been learning from other areas with similar schemes in place, including how to de-stigmatise the service and engage families, as follows:

- (a) **Being universally welcoming** - adopting a working principle to be welcoming to everyone with universally accessible social activities and peer support sessions. Local community partners and charities (such as local sports team and national retailers) will be important in providing opportunities for families, offering sessions and access to donated clothes, toys and books. The hubs should be seen as venues for fun social activities, creative play and coffee/chat sessions, not solely for service provision. This matters in enticing families to return time and again.

In addition, the hub offer will be tested through a Fair Treatment Assessment to ensure that hubs and outreach are not heteronormative and any LGBTQ+, lone, older, younger parents/carers with any protected characteristics are considered in the operating model. In addition, material will be translated into community languages where necessary, enabling easier access for families.

- (b) **Ensuring access from pregnancy onwards** – locating antenatal services at the hubs will be extremely important in engaging new parents/carers whilst normalising the hub space for them. A robust ‘start in life’ offer is a non-negotiable deliverable of the hub offer and parents/carers will be invited to the hubs for Health Visiting clinics/sessions, infant feeding support, wellbeing sessions alongside peer-support groups and social activities, reducing the social isolation many new parents/carers can feel. It is hoped that this robust, early offer creates a relational link with parents/carers to return to the hubs throughout childhood and adolescence.
- (c) **Concurrent timetabling of activities and services** – so families can be immediately signposted to peer/social activities whilst attending for health appointments, for example. Conversely, having advice sessions run alongside social activities/clinics will ensure people can access them with an alternative non-threatening reason to be in the hub, accessing support opportunistically whilst attending a social session or clinic.
- (d) **Ensuring there is space for older children and young people** – the hubs need to feel meaningful for older children and young people and the minimum specification for the hubs details a multi-use room designed with and for young people. The room will contain facilities such as ICT equipment, sports equipment, video game consoles, music recording equipment, and space for young people to socialise with their peers and for youth work. There will be specific sessions for young people with particular needs, such as autism and ADHD, as well as a timetable of peer activities.
- (e) **Responding to the needs of families with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities** – the hubs need to ensure that all families receive support in the best way for them, asking how they wish to be communicated with, ensuring there is space on the timetable for peer support

sessions, play/activity sessions for children with additional needs and their siblings alongside co-designed services addressing specific needs. Peer support opportunities are particularly important for parents/carers of children with additional needs who understand and appreciate the challenges they face.

- (f) **Capturing the voice of the child** – areas with existing Family Hub networks in the West Midlands and the North West have demonstrated excellent engagement to capture the voice of the child/young person in the hub offer. They have vibrant engagement methods and accessible and appropriate means to capture what matters to children and young people and their wishes and feelings about the hub offer. In addition to directly capturing their views, service reviews and Fair Treatment Assessments will be approached from the experience of the child/young person’s perspective to enable meaningful service improvements. The input from Parent Carer Panel will also be key to this work.

#### 4. Implications and Considerations

4.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the Council Plan:

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>People and Communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull.</li> <li>2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it.</li> <li>3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities.</li> <li>4. Enable communities to thrive.</li> </ol>	<p>The hub offer centres on improving outcomes for families, children and young people, providing seamless, accessible support when they need it most.</p> <p>The needs-led approach employed in this programme ensures the impact will be seen most in our disadvantage communities.</p> <p>The aim of the hub offer is to improve community resilience, supporting them to thrive, through improved parental confidence, good early child development and prevention of escalation of issues.</p> <p>The hubs will also support the Corporate Parenting offer with space and facilities for activities for groups of children in care and care experienced young people.</p>
<p>Economy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Develop and promote the borough’s economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres.</li> <li>6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2.</li> <li>7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable.</li> </ol>	<p>The hub offer aims to support families with access to employment and adult education opportunities, alongside evidence-based initiatives to improve child development, educational attainment and future economic productivity.</p>

Priority:	Contribution:
Environment: 8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions.	The virtual offer will enable the delivery of services and activities online, including group sessions. This will reduce mileage and CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from vehicles used by professionals, volunteers and attendees.
9. Promote employee wellbeing	Th hub staff will have a wellbeing plan and the relational approach adopted with families will broaden the reach of wellbeing advice and encourage pro-social behaviour.

## 4.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

4.2.1 A thorough consultation and engagement plan is underway to inform the shaping of the offer, as follows:

- (a) **Webinar** – an evening webinar took place on 19 January 2023 with a presentation on the Family Hub offer followed by a Q & A session. The [webinar recording and slide deck](#) are available on the Solihull Council website.
- (b) **Focus Groups** – with a wide range of organisations/families will enable a deeper understanding of the issues faced navigating the current support offer focused on families facing particular challenges.
- (c) **Questionnaire** – a public consultation will capture views on the planned hub offer.
- (d) **Branding** - the brand values will be co-produced with families and service partners to ensure the tone and appearance of the branding conveys the values and aims of the hub offer.
- (e) **Testing and co-production** - parent/carers, children and young people will be invited to test elements of the virtual/digital offer and give feedback, shaping its development.

4.2.2 Key findings from the engagement work so far include:

- (a) Positive response from partner agencies and families and a sense of relief that there will be Family Hub sites in Solihull.
- (b) Disappointment that there are no Family Hub sites located in south Solihull.
- (c) Concern has been raised over the potential duplication with current service provision but this has been addressed directly with organisations in the scope of the offer and who have raised this being invited to deliver services through the hub offer. This will be a recurring theme that will be re-visited through the transformation.

- (d) Long-term funding security has been raised by families and partners, although appreciating that this is a very positive development, they were seeking reassurance on the longevity of the offer.
- (e) There have been a number of schools that have been extremely positive about the hub offer and have pro-actively offered outreach space on their sites.
- (f) Expectations have occasionally been high from families and partner agencies and care has been taken to be mindful of this, carefully communicating the limitations with transparency ensuring that expectations of the offer are managed appropriately.

4.2.3 Each component of the consultation and engagement plan will incorporate promotion of the Parent Carer Panel (see section 3.6.2) to ensure the widest reach possible in recruiting parents/carers with particular needs and from a range of familial situations to participate.

4.2.4 In addition, Solihull is a member of the West Midlands Community of Practice for Family Hubs and the regional Best Start in Life network and have an active collaborative approach with other local authorities in sharing best practice and lessons learned. This has already proven extremely helpful in planning the hub offer and avoiding pitfalls. Engagement of other local authorities to resolve specific issues will be an ongoing principle of both the transformational work and the operational delivery from early 2024.

#### 4.3 **Financial implications:**

4.3.1 Further funding is required to support transformation including potential funding from the place-based Fairer Futures fund.

4.3.2 The identification of recurrent budgets is required to ensure long-term sustainability and viability of the hub offer to maximise this opportunity for Solihull and prevent closure of the hubs. Further work is required to identify recurrent funding from existing budgets to support ongoing delivery from 2024/25.

#### 4.4 **Legal implications:**

4.4.1 Legal advice will be sought to support the operating agreements for hub buildings and their ongoing facilities management and maintenance, as well as any additional legal issues in the development of the offer.

#### 4.5 **Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:**

4.5.1 Factors that may impact on the successful delivery of this project (and the potential mitigating measures) include, but are not limited to:

4.5.2 Budgetary constraints for the set-up of the hub offer will be mitigated by robust procurement arrangements including keeping up-to-date risk registers to avoid financial pressures in one area impacting on another.

- 4.5.3 Budgetary constraints for the ongoing operation of the hub offer from March 2024 will be mitigated by the Oversight Board formulating a plan of the transformational project, focused on identifying core budget and re-direction of potential savings.
- 4.5.4 Lack of support from partners along with lower than necessary engagement levels required – mitigated by frequent opportunities for partners and families to provide feedback via professional networks and parent/carer groups.
- 4.5.5 Limited estates creating delays in building/acquiring of new assets – mitigated by robust mobilisation of estates and project teams has taken place identifying needed assets. Service and asset mapping has been undertaken and continues to be reviewed by relevant project groups.
- 4.5.6 Insufficient data sharing agreements and capabilities mitigated by robust data sharing agreements and a priority focus on a joint case management system.
- 4.5.7 Key project risks will be collated into SMBC's risk management system and risk registers and assessed on their likelihood and impact. The risk register will remain a live document and be maintained by the project team, who will update risk scores as and when risk profiles change.

#### **4.6 Equality implications:**

- 4.6.1 The hub offer is universal by nature and all families will be welcomed in the hub buildings and to the online and outreach aspects of the offer. Communications to families will be engaging and the hub will offer a range of means for families to interact with professionals and volunteers in ways that are meaningful for them, culturally sensitive and taking protected characteristics into account.
- 4.6.2 The Parent Carer Panel will have an important role in informing and shaping the offer from the perspective of their own experiences. The panel will be convened with a strict attention to being representative of parents/carers in a range of familial situations.
- 4.6.3 There is a clear commitment to inclusivity including ensuring the hub buildings have access for wheelchair users. Resources will be offered in a variety of communication methods where possible, with images and content reflective of the diversity of families in the borough.
- 4.6.4 To ensure that both the digital and in-person family hub offer are accessible, equitable and appropriate, materials will be co-produced with parents/carers, children and young people where possible.
- 4.6.5 A Fair Treatment Assessment will be undertaken alongside a “walk through” of each aspect of the Family Hub offer to consider the experience and potential barriers for people with protected characteristics, ensuring identified barriers are addressed and positively resolved. This work will be an integral to de-stigmatisation and inclusivity.

#### **4.7 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care**

## System (ICS):

4.7.1 The development of the Family Hub offer is embedded into the Solihull place-based programme for the Integrated Care System and NHS partners have been pro-active, supportive and fully engaged in shaping the offer.

## 5. List of appendices referred to



5.1 Solihull Family Hub Offer Summary Solihull\_Family\_Hu  
b\_Offer-Summary\_v2

## 6. Background papers used to compile this report

- 6.1 Solihull Delivery Plan for the Family Hub Offer and funding bid
- 6.2 [The best start for life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) – Leadsom Review (2021)
- 6.3 [Family hubs and start for life programme: local authority guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 6.4 National Centre for Family Hubs (2022): Family Hub Development Process at [www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/toolkits/the-family-hub-development-process/](http://www.nationalcentreforfamilyhubs.org.uk/toolkits/the-family-hub-development-process/)
- 6.5 [The Case for Change - The Independent Review of Children's Social Care \(childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk\)](#) (2021)
- 6.6 Barnardo's (2021) It takes a village: The case for family support in every community at [It-Takes-a-Village-the-case-for-family-support-in-every-community.pdf \(barnardos.org.uk\)](#)
- 6.7 [Knowledge Base - The Family Hubs Network](#)
- 6.8 West Midlands Blueprint for Family Hubs (2022) *[featuring Solihull's Theory of Change]*

## 7. List of other relevant documents

7.1 The Department for Education Family Hubs Model Framework can be found at [Annex E - Family Hub Model Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)