

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 10 December 2018

Report Title: 2017-2018 Integrated Front Door Update

Portfolio Holder: Jos Saunders, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Senior Officer: Jacquie Sims, Head of Service Children in & Child Protection

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update to Committee on the themes, issues and demands of the Integrated Front Door. A presentation will be given at the meeting to look at this in more detail and to talk about next steps.

- 1.2. The Integrated Front Door is now co-located in Delamere House with a number of key agencies and teams embedded. Significant work has been completed over the last 18 months to manage demand and to further improve our relationships with partner agencies and level of integration.

2. Recommendation/s

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

- 2.2. Members to endorse proposed plans to further improve the quality of service delivered by the Integrated Front Door. This will ensure that children continue to receive the right help at the right time.

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

- 3.1. It is important for Members to have an overview of issues affecting the Integrated Front Door

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not Applicable

5. Background

- 5.1. Cheshire East Consultation Service was established in 2014. In 2016 there was a planned redesign to co-locate with multi-agency professionals and teams. The purpose of the redesign was to improve the quality of information sharing and to develop a model of shared decision making to ensure that children receive the right help at the right time through consistent application of thresholds.
- 5.2. The Integrated Front Door receives initial contacts and referrals for children in need of help or safeguarding. Contacts are received from partner agencies, family or members of the public. The teams included within the hub include Early Help Brokerage, Youth Justice, Police Protection Unit, Child Exploitation / Missing from Home and the Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Hub. There are also a small number of workers providing additional support to partner agencies in delivering early help assessments and plans.
- 5.3. The Signs of Safety Social Work Model is used and this continues to be developed and embedded across social work teams, early help services and within partner agencies such as the 0-19 Service. The means that decisions are increasingly made jointly with partner agencies and there is a focus on safety planning for children whether the decision is for an individual agency to continue to work with a child or a referral is made to the social work team.
- 5.4. The service has been successful over the last 12 months in managing demand at the front door with a 9% reduction in contacts April 17-March 18. This means that children receive the right level of help and where appropriate support is offered by individual agencies at an earlier point to prevent escalation to more specialist services.
- 5.5. There have been positive developments in how teams and professionals within the front door are working together. Over the next twelve months there will be an increased focus on integrated working. Achievements to date include working with Cheshire Police to improve the quality of referrals. Weekly meetings with the Child Exploitation/ Missing from Home Service have also been introduced with shared decision making introduced for more of our vulnerable children.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1. The Service will continue to work with partner agencies to improve integrated working. This includes a specific focus on the relationship with Cheshire East's Domestic Abuse Hub and for a housing representative to join the front door on a permanent basis.

- 6.2. Work with partner agencies will continue to ensure that when contact is made with the front door good quality information is provided. For example through the consistent use of screening tools.
- 6.3. A peer review of the front door is planned in 2019 to ensure that the service continues to improve and we know ourselves well.
- 6.4. Following on from the earlier redesign of the Integrated Front Door a visioning event is planned following the peer review. This will look at a potential rebrand of the front door to better reflect the positive and specific aspects of Cheshire East's Integrated Front Door. It will ensure that all partner agencies have a clear understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities.

7. Implications of the Recommendations

7.1. Legal Implications

- 7.1.1. None identified.

7.2. Finance Implications

- 7.2.1. None identified

7.3. Policy Implications

- 7.3.1. None.

7.4. Equality Implications

- 7.4.1. There are no equality implications.

7.5. Human Resources Implications

- 7.5.1. None identified

7.6. Risk Management Implications

- 7.6.1. If the Integrated Front Door is not appropriately equipped and staffed to ensure that appropriate decisions are made regarding children in need of help or protection, there is a risk of serious harm to children and young people that are not effectively safeguarded.

7.7. Rural Communities Implications

- 7.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

7.8. Implications for Children & Young People

7.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

7.9. Public Health Implications

7.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

8. Ward Members Affected

8.1. There are no direct implications for individual wards.

9. Consultation & Engagement

9.1. Not applicable.

10. Access to Information

10.1. There is no additional information.

11. Contact Information

11.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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