

## Central Bedfordshire Council

Executive

04 April 2017

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### Children's Services Transformation Programme

Report of Cllr Carole Hegley, Executive Member Social Care and Housing ([carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:carole.hegley@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk))

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### This report relates to a non Key Decision

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#### Purpose of this report

1. To provide an update on the current Children's Transformation Programme including key timelines for proposed implementation.
2. To provide Members with an overview of key implications for the broader council directorates in supporting and implementing the changes proposed.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

<p><b>The Executive is asked to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>consider the information contained in the report; and</b></li><li>2. <b>champion the Children's Transformation programme.</b></li></ol>
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#### Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

3. An overview of the Transformation Programme was presented to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 March 2016. At the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a further briefing was arranged for members on 8 July 2016.

#### Background

4. Central Bedfordshire is a high performing council and aspires to be 'outstanding' across all areas for services to children.

5. To achieve this goal, the Director of Children's Services (DCS) has launched an ambitious Transformation Programme with a focus on responding to needs earlier in the lives of children and families, reducing demand on statutory specialist services, getting families back to work, improving longer term outcomes and raising standards and aspirations for our children.
6. The Transformation Programme is following an evidence based approach, using data and system analysis to inform the actions required to achieve the programmes vision. A variety of analysis was completed in the first phase of the programme last summer, with the findings and evidence from this demonstrating the need for a more integrated and targeted approach to early intervention in Central Bedfordshire (key findings included in Appendix A).
7. The Transformation Programme is designed to support the Council and partners to help children and families realise their full potential whilst also enabling services to be redesigned and recommissioned in the most effective and efficient way.

### **The Case for Change**

8. Through detailed analysis, we have found that the key causal factors leading to children's needs escalating come from their parents, particularly parental drug and alcohol misuse, domestic abuse, parental criminality and parental mental ill health.
9. We also recognise that children in Central Bedfordshire are not achieving as well academically as their peers in other similar areas, both at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
10. Although 89% of our schools are graded as Good or Outstanding by OFSTED, only 29% (186 children) of our disadvantaged children achieved the expected standard in Key Stage 2 in Reading Writing and mathematics last year. This is compared with 57% of all other children in Central Bedfordshire. This performance is in the lower quartile of performance of all Councils nationally (142/150).
11. A similar pattern follows at Key Stage 4 where disadvantaged children under perform compared to their peers by 1.5 grades per GCSE exam. This performance also places Central Bedfordshire in the lower quartile nationally (131/149).
12. Traditionally our services and the skills of our workforce have concentrated on tackling and responding to the issues of children. The findings outlined in Appendix A demonstrate that a radical re-think of the skill set of our staff, the interventions that we use to support parental behaviour change and deeper integration of adult focused services (such as specialist drug and alcohol services, adult mental health support, housing and police) are critical changes being pursued as part of the programme.

13. We are also rethinking how services can be targeted and delivered with a more local focus to reflect the specific needs that are presented in each area of the Council.
14. Our Transformation Programme cannot be delivered by the council alone. The factors driving demand for our services are the same as those for our partner agencies; these are mainly adult centric.
15. Our ambition is that this becomes a Children's Transformation Programme in its broadest sense – to improve the outcomes for children by changing the whole system; not just Children's Services.
16. We are committed to delivering a family centric 'one family, one worker, one plan' approach. This approach will empower our staff to be professionally curious and innovative with their work with children and families.
17. We embrace a strengths based approach to working with families. We will continue working with families for as long as it takes to overcome the key challenges in their lives and to build their capacity to effect lasting change.

### **System Governance**

18. We have established the Children's Leadership Board (CLB) to lead this programme and have council and partner agency system leaders working alongside us to re-design our locality model. Appendix B includes the governance structure for the programme.
19. We are working with children and families to test and refine the emerging thinking from the workstreams.
20. We have worked with key partners to develop the plans for the Transformation Programme; there has been positive feedback and great commitment from partners so far.

### **The Transformation Programme**

21. We will be integrating our current children's services offer into five locality teams from June 2017. This will see the Council's early help and social care teams working differently and more embedded in the localities. The five localities are:
  - Dunstable
  - Houghton Regis
  - Leighton Buzzard
  - West Mid Beds
  - Ivel Valley

In addition, the ambition of the programme is to integrate (at the first opportunity) more of the council's broader 'early help' services, including strengthening links with services such as libraries and housing.

22. The model we will implement will have a 'one family, one worker, one plan' approach; with families having a key contact who can provide or coordinate most of their support. Our support will be focused on building family and community resilience and capacity, adopting a strengths-based approach and this includes teams proactively reaching out to develop 3<sup>rd</sup> sector provision and building social capital.
23. Workers in these teams will be trained in the core areas that lead to family breakdown, including domestic abuse and parental mental health with specialist support increasingly based in these locality teams over time.

### **Prototype Multi Agency Locality Model**

24. The Children's Services teams will 'go-live' in all five areas from June 2017. The Dunstable locality will be a multi-agency prototype. In practice this will mean that we will no longer have multiple teams delivering 'parts' of early help across Central Bedfordshire with our teams will be integrated and based in local areas – this could be in council buildings, or in schools, or with the police. Further detail about this model is shown in Appendix C.
25. The prototype model in Dunstable has a specific focus on Domestic Abuse. The demand for support from families affected by Domestic Abuse remains high and we know that Central Bedfordshire has higher levels of repeat offenders than Luton and Bedford.
26. Our prototype Dunstable model work over the summer of 2017 includes two different approaches; a preventative approach and targeted input. The preventative approach will be multi-agency work with schools to develop the offer of Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) focusing on Domestic Abuse. Our targeted approach will be to identify 10-15 families within the local area where there are concerns about the risk of Domestic Abuse. Our multi-agency 'one family, one worker, one plan' strategy will provide intensive support to the children, families and perpetrators.
27. Both the approaches within the prototype model will be thoroughly evaluated to inform how our developing model could be rolled out across other localities and sustained within the Transformation Programme.

### **Reasons for Decision**

28. Members of the Executive are asked to fully support the Transformation programme to deliver whole system, whole Council approach to improving outcomes for children and families.

## **Council Priorities**

29. The Transformation Programme will contribute to all the Councils key priorities:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
- Great Resident Services
- Improving Education and Skills
- Protecting the Vulnerable; Improving Wellbeing
- Creating Stronger Communities
- A More Efficient and Responsive Council

## **Legal Implications**

30. The Transformation Programme will support the Council to provide its statutory duties relating to safeguarding children.

## **Financial and Risk Implications**

31. The Transformation Programme is the vehicle by which Children's Services efficiencies, as detailed in the medium term Financial Plan will be delivered. Should the plan not be successful, there is a risk that the efficiencies will not be met.
32. The detailed service models that will be needed to fully implement the programme are being costed based on the multi-agency footprints across the Central Bedfordshire Council area.

## **Equalities Implications**

33. An Equality Impact Assessment is being developed with the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) to consider the impact of the Transformation Programme on all children and families. The EIA will be presented to the CLB.

## **Risk Management**

34. The CLB are leading the implementation of the programme and consider all risks.
35. The demand management approach for services to children and families will be carefully monitored to ensure that we continue to keep children safe.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

36. The transformation programme is on track to deliver the integration of our internal Childrens Services early help and social care teams from June 2017.

To make the progress necessary to meet the ambitions of the programme, including raising school standards, improving outcomes for our vulnerable groups and meeting the challenges of our MTFP will require a step change in the make-up and scale of the integrated teams.

37. Securing partner commitment to providing staff and resources is vital to the longer term sustainability of our model. The positive commitment from partner agencies to co-construct the model to date has demonstrated that this is achievable
38. Further updates will be provided to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive about the programme at appropriate key milestones.

## **Appendices**

The following appendices are attached:-

**Appendix A – key findings from initial research/analysis**

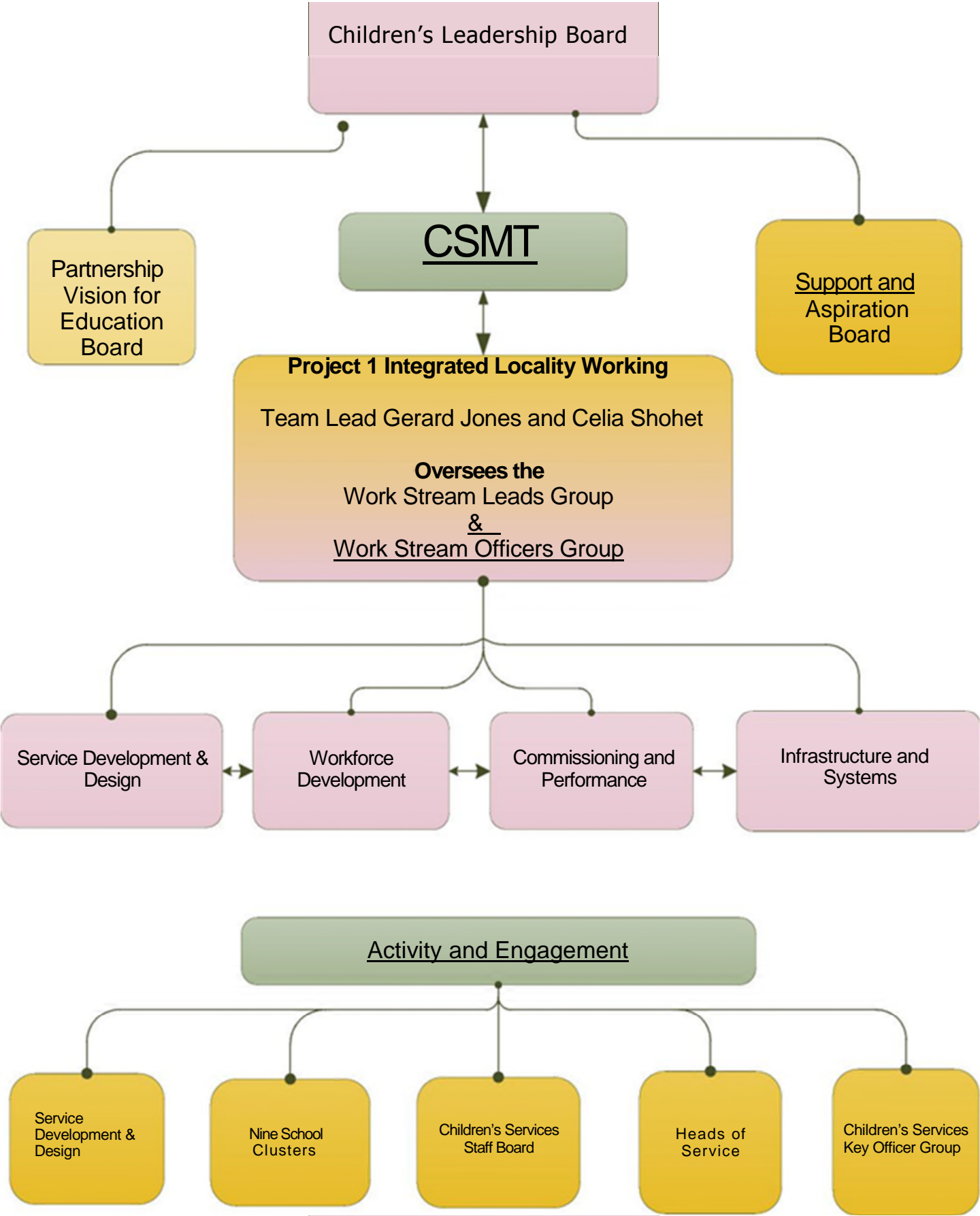
**Appendix B – Governance structure for the Transformation Programme**

**Appendix C - Proposed model of Locality based working**

## **Appendix A – Key findings from phase 1 of Transformation**

1. The first stage of the Transformation Programme was to fully understand the current demand for services, and the current system wide approach to supporting children and families. Below are some of the key findings from this analysis:
  - a. The Council has consistently reduced demand for Children in Need (12% reduction) and Child Protection (44% reduction) plans over the last 4 years despite an under 18 population growth of 3%
  - b. Reduced the number of Looked After Children (LAC) by 6% despite a 12% national increase and a 5% under 18 population growth (2010-2015)
  - c. Our overall prevention spend across the wider council is still strong but it lacks a common aim and purpose and needs re-focusing
  - d. We are not utilising our spend appropriately on the core issues in families – for example the % of Council budget spent on tackling domestic abuse
  - e. Domestic abuse, criminality, substance misuse and parental engagement are key issues we need to tackle in more targeted ways
  - f. There are key cohorts that are driving demand and we need to target these more – particularly 0-1 and 14+ young people
  - g. Our reviews of 25% of LAC cases demonstrate there are opportunities to prevent children becoming looked after. However, to do so requires deeper integration and targeting of our offer
  - h. A relatively high number of our social work assessments aren't necessary and we need to improve feedback across the system
  - i. Our new Early Help approach is having an impact (as evidenced through our overall demand reductions) but partners are still confused about pathways
  - j. There is evidence this is leading to inappropriate demand, some of which we can tackle
  - k. Our analysis has shown there remains confusion at times about the early help offer in localities and that there can still be multiple services involved around families experiencing some kind of crisis – with families telling us they cannot engage with so many services all at once.

Appendix B – Transformation programme governance





## Appendix C - Proposed model of Locality based working

2. An overview of the proposed locality based model is shown below. This demonstrates the core teams based in localities that will be further complemented by statutory services and partners as the model develops.

### What do we hope our locality teams will look like?

