

Delegated Decision

January 2023

Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme Spend 2022-2025



Report of John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to recommend approval for the distribution of Department for Education (DfE) Family Hub and Start for Life funding to enable all relevant programme spend to begin to take place.

Executive summary

- 2 The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Education (DfE) recently launched a three-year Family Hubs and Start for Life (SfL) programme to deliver a step-change in outcomes for babies, children, young people, parents, and carers. The Government's vision for Family Hubs and SfL is to provide a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services. Family Hubs will deliver these services from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities).
- 3 The DHSC and DfE have developed a Family Hub and SfL programme guide, a programme framework and expectations document which describes the offer required of each Family Hub and SfL programme across the three-year implementation period.
- 4 County Durham is one of 75 LAs to receive additional funding to develop its Family Hub and SfL offer. This was subject to a detailed report to Cabinet in December 2022.
- 5 This report sets out the proposed distribution of the Family Hub and SfL funding as agreed by the Family Hub and Start for Life Implementation Group in line with Durham's Delivery Plan and DfE expectations. This funding allocation is overseen by the Head of Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children and will be reviewed regularly.

Recommendation(s)

- 6 The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services as decision maker, approves the proposed distribution of the Family Hub and Sfl funding as outlined in Appendix 2.

Background

- 7 Evidence shows that disadvantaged and vulnerable children suffer from poor outcomes across the four key domains of development, *physical, cognitive, language, and social-emotional* from conception to 19 years.
- 8 We know that a child's experiences from conception to age five play a critical role in their development, and that the early years represent a key opportunity for families, policymakers and the economy. However, we know that measurable gaps in outcomes between disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their better off peers can emerge early, before children are two years of age, and are difficult and costly to close once open.
- 9 As children grow older and move into adolescence, the risks to them not only come from within their families but also the wider community. These include child criminal and sexual exploitation, gang involvement, county lines and trafficking, as well as serious violence, and peer-on-peer abuse. These can take place in both physical and online spaces. These risks often co-occur and can be further exacerbated by a child or young person's own vulnerabilities, for example if they have a learning disability, or where they have already experienced adversity earlier in childhood.
- 10 There is evidence to show that a child's home environment, family stability and parent-child relationships are central to children and young people's development and their success in life. Local and national services have a vital role to play in supporting families with this and reducing disparities. However, disadvantaged and vulnerable families often experience significant difficulty as they interact with a complex service landscape and must constantly 're-tell their story' to different services. Often professionals working in these services face practical barriers to working together as a team around the family, such as information sharing.
- 11 For families, there is no consistent public-facing point for access, assessment, and navigation of family services that directs them to the services across the myriad of needs they might have, such as maternity services, support for SEND, mental health, housing, parental support, and debt advice.
- 12 An improved single gateway for more of these family support services, such as through Family Hubs, could improve join-up between organisations, offer a whole family approach with relationships at the heart of family help, manage statutory pressures more effectively, reduce waiting times for early help interventions and ensure that families are offered support at the first time of asking.

- 13 Innovations in digital and data may provide opportunities to support local areas to further develop integrated service offers. While the Covid pandemic provides a challenging backdrop, it has also sharpened awareness of how some disadvantaged and vulnerable families risk being left behind and has encouraged local agencies to share information and collaborate in different ways.

National Family Hub and Start for Life programme

- 14 In the 2021 Autumn Budget, the Government announced a three-year Family Hubs and Start for Life programme to deliver a step-change in outcomes for babies, children, young people, parents, and carers. The Government's vision for Family Hubs is to provide a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services. Family Hubs will deliver these services from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).
- 15 Family Hubs aim to make a positive difference to parents, carers, and their children by providing a mix of physical and virtual spaces, as well as outreach, where families can easily access non-judgmental support for the challenges they may be facing. They will provide a universal 'front door' to families, offering a 'one-stop shop' of family support services across their social care, education, mental health, and physical health needs, with a comprehensive SfL offer for parents and babies at its core. A Family Hub will be designed to be particularly accessible to families from lower socio-economic groups, families who have special education needs or a disability, or those from minoritized groups who are experiencing exclusion.
- 16 The Family Hub and SfL programme is delivered by the Department for Health and Social Care and the Department of Education who will allocate £301.75 million over the next three financial years to enable 75 upper-tier local authorities in England, including County Durham, to deliver a package of family support and Start for Life services. This includes:
- (a) £100 million for bespoke parent-infant mental health support;
 - (b) £81.75 million to create a network of Family Hubs, improving access to a wide range of integrated support services for families with children of all ages;
 - (c) £50 million to establish multicomponent breastfeeding support services in line with local needs;
 - (d) £50 million to fund evidence-based parenting programmes;
 - (e) £10 million to support local authorities to publish a clear 'Start for Life offer' and ensure that parents' and carers' voices are heard in the design, planning and delivery of services.

- 17 A further £10 million will support trials of innovative Start for Life workforce models in a smaller number of areas. It will also include £28.7 million announced in August 2021 to train practitioners to support parents with the home learning environment.
- 18 This investment underpins the Government's commitment to giving families and their children the best start in life. It sits alongside funding to further embed the DWP Reducing Parental Conflict programme in local areas and the previously announced £200 million uplift to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Supporting Families programme.

Family Hubs Start for Life programme in County Durham

- 19 The government's vision for Family Hubs builds on County Durham's current 15 Family Centre offer which provides a range of family support services for children, young people aged 0-19 years (up to 25 with SEND) and their parents and carers. The government will expect all LAs to use the naming convention of Family Hubs for all buildings currently named as Family Centres in County Durham.
- 20 The programme will help further develop our current Family Centre offer, ensuring services such as Midwifery, Health Visiting, DCC's One Point Service (Early Help), both children and adult Mental Health Services, VCS and other key partner organisations, working with families, provide an integrated, accessible offer of support which is designed and delivered using co-production, based on the County Durham Approach to Wellbeing principles.
- 21 Our Family Hub vision is:

Family Hubs will provide a system-wide model of providing high-quality, whole-family, joined up family support services from pregnancy, through the child's early years and later childhood, and into early adulthood until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).

- 22 Our aims include to:
 - (a) make a positive difference to parents, carers, and their children, through providing a mix of physical and virtual spaces, as well as home visits for families to easily access non-judgemental support;
 - (b) provide a universal front door to families, offering a one-stop shop of family support services across their social care, education, mental health, and physical health needs;
 - (c) develop and publish a comprehensive Start for Life offer for parents and carers;
 - (d) facilitate professionals across public sector, voluntary, community and faith sector to work together, through co-location, data sharing and a

common approach to their work with children, young people, and families.

- 23 The outcomes we are working to achieving are:
- (a) improved health, wellbeing and developmental outcomes for babies, children, and young people.
 - (b) improved health and wellbeing outcomes for parents and carers.
 - (c) improved access, connections, and relationships within local family services.
 - (d) reduce inequalities; and
 - (e) a stronger evidence base on what works in difference delivery contexts.
- 24 The programme will be co-produced with system wide partners including DCC, VCS, Mental Health Services, Midwifery and Health Visitors and key partner agencies working with children and families, with a central focus on co-production with parents and carers with lived experience and will involve setting up of a Parent and Carer Panel to influence and shape service design and delivery. This will also build on the current strengths and assets of our communities in different parts of the county using the Approach to Wellbeing principles.
- 25 A multi-agency Family Hub and SfL Implementation Group has been established with programme management arrangements and five workstreams set up to drive the programme deliverables. Governance will be provided through the Prevention and Early Help Partnership reporting up to the Children, Young People and Families Partnership, engaging with the Best Start in Life Steering Group, which has seven priority areas, including perinatal and infant mental health and breastfeeding.

County Durham Family Hub Funding

- 26 County Durham funding allocation for the three-year programme ranges between £4.4 million and £4.6 million as set out in table 1 below. To date the first tranche of year 1 funding has been allocated with the second tranche funding being paid on submission of an approved delivery plan in January. DfE have confirmed there will be no facility to carry any unspent funding into year 2. The Family Hub and SfL Implementation Group appreciate it will be an ambitious task to utilise all available funding in year 1 but will ensure we maximise expenditure across the partnership.

	2022-23	2023-24		2024-25		Total	
	Total	Lower Range	Upper Range	Lower Range	Upper Range	Lower Range	Upper Range
Core funding	£1,123,000	£1,796,000	£1,923,000	£1,485,000	£1,583,000	£4,404,000	£4,630,000

Table 1: County Durham Family Hub Start for Life funding allocation

- 27 The proposed distribution of the Family Hub and SfL funding in County Durham for 2022 - 2025 is outlined in Appendix 2.
- 28 Although the Family Hub and Start for Life programme provides additional funding during the lifetime of the 3-year programme, the government has not provided guarantees of ongoing funding beyond 2025 and will therefore require the LA and partners to consider sustainability beyond 2025. A comprehensive national evaluation of the programme is planned which it is hoped will demonstrate the impact of the programme on positive outcomes for children and families as well as providing value for money.
- 29 It must also be noted that compared with when government launched this programme, both the national and local funding position has changed significantly, and we are likely to need to make savings over the three-year period of the programme. It will therefore be imperative we continue discussions with DfE and DHSC about sustainable funding as well as working locally with our partners to capture and evaluate the impact of the programme on children and families as well as savings to the 'Durham pound' through new ways of local working.
- 30 The Family Hub and SfL Implementation Group have developed a funding application process within the programme to ensure that funding is spent where there is evidence of improving outcomes for babies, children, young people, parents, and carers. In line with Durham's Delivery Plan additional resources in the form of full-time posts will be required across the partnership.
- 31 It is proposed the allocation of funding for the Family Hub and SfL programme is considered and distributed through the Implementation Group in line with DfE expectations. The group have developed a robust funding application process within the programme to ensure that funding is spent where there is evidence of improving outcomes for babies, children, young people, parents, and carers. In line with Durham's Delivery Plan additional resources in the form of full-time posts will be required across the partnership. The Family Hub and SfL Implementation Group discussed all additional posts by the end of December 2022 and are seeking to progress recruitment. Additional posts will include posts within partner organisations such as County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT), Harrogate and District Foundation Trust (HDFT) and Tees, Esk and Weir Valley NHS Trust, with a smaller number of posts within DCC, thus reducing any potential redundancy liabilities for DCC beyond 2025 if funding is not sustained after the three-year programme.

Conclusion

- 33 Due to DfE expectations on the Family Hub and Start for Life delivery milestones set out in the Family Hub and Start for Life Guidance it is necessary to request delegation of decisions on expenditure to facilitate and expedite decision making in line with the programme timescales.

Background papers

Family Hub and Start for Life Cabinet Report December 2022



Cabinet Report
Family Hub and Start

Other useful documents

- (a) Programme guidance documents [Family hubs and start for life programme: local authority guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/family-hubs-and-start-for-life-programme-local-authority-guide)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Family Hub and Start for Life programme is jointly funded and overseen by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC). DfE will be administering the grant funding on behalf of both departments. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out formally the working relationship and expectations relating to the payment of the grants from the Secretary of State for Education under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 with Durham County Council as outlined in the Family Hub and Start for Life programme guide.

Finance

County Durham funding allocation for the three-year programme ranges between £4.4 million and £4.6 million.

Consultation

The Family Hub and Start for Life programme will be co-produced with key stakeholders, parents, carers, children, and young people. Information on the Family Hub and Start for Life for 2022-25 has been shared and discussed with a wide range of stakeholders via:

- Corporate Management Team Report August 2022
- Members Briefing August 2022
- Partners Briefing August 2022
- Stakeholder Workshop October 2022
- Cabinet Report December 2022.
- Family Hub and SfL Implementation Group.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The DfE Family Hub and SfL funding will help to secure appropriate provision for vulnerable children and young people including those with protected characteristics.

Climate Change

The programme will encourage families to take up service offers through the network of local family centres/family hubs closest to where they live

Human Rights

Equal opportunities: Access: there is a clear and simple way for all families with children of all ages and abilities to access help and support through a Family Hub building and a Family Hub approach.

Crime and Disorder

None directly.

Staffing

Additional staffing across the partnership will be required to support delivery of the programme and will be funded through Family Hub and Start for Life funding allocation. The Family Hub and SfL Implementation Group have agreed all additional posts and will progress recruitment. Additional posts will include posts within partner organisations such as County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) and Harrogate and District Foundation Trust (HDFT) and with a smaller number of posts within DCC, thus reducing any potential redundancy liabilities for DCC beyond 2025 if funding is not sustained after then.

Accommodation

Minor improvement funding within current Family Centre stock is available within the 5.2% capital funding allocation.

Risk

A risk log has been established by the Implementation Group. Risks highlighted include, not being able to recruit appropriately qualified and trained staff to provide additional support on offer to families.

The Family Hub and Start for Life programme provides additional funding during the lifetime of the three-year programme, the government has not provided guarantees of ongoing funding beyond 2025 and will therefore require the LA and partners to consider sustainability beyond 2025.

Procurement

We have sought advice from DCC Integrated commissioning and procurement regarding the deliverability of the proposals.

Appendix 2: Proposed expenditure

Spend Area		Spend Total	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	How spend will be made
Staffing		£3,326,880	£326,967	£1,554,569	£1,445,344	
	3 fte Family Peer Supporters-HDFT					employed by HDFT
	1 fte x Senior Health Inequalities Midwife-CDDFT					employed by CDDFT
	3 fte x Family Hub Coordinator -DCC					DCC posts to be recruited through services in normal way- temporary fixed term posts
	6 fte x Early Help Practitioner-DCC					DCC posts to be recruited through services in normal way
	1 fte Speech and Language Officer and 1 fte Project Support					Proposed secondment from DCC
	1 fte Portage Worker-DCC					employed by DCC posts to be recruited through services in normal way
	2 fte Community Connectors-VCS					employed by VCS

	1 fte Staff Nurse -HDFT					employed by HDFT
	3 fte Family Peer Support Workers					employed by HDFT
	1 fte Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Specialist Nurse/Health Visitor- HDFT					employed by HDFT
	1 fte Nursery Nurse to provide Low level Perinatal Group Work within the Family Hubs- TEWV					employed by TEWV
	1 x fte Communications and Marketing Person					DCC post to be recruited through services in normal way
	1 fte Project Support					Re-alignment of DCC post
	Audit					Re-alignment of DCC post
	1 x fte Project/Change Manager					Re-alignment of DCC post
	0.4 fte Sponsor / Coordinator					Re-alignment of DCC post
	1 x fte Snr Information Management Data Services Officer-DCC					DCC posts to be recruited through services in normal way
	5 Infant feeding supporters - Increased Breastfeeding Prevalence and Initiation -CDDFT					employed by CDDFT
	1 fte Infant Feeding Supervisor CDDFT					employed by CDDFT

	1 fte Engagement and Participation Lead-DCC					DCC posts to be recruited through services in normal way
Procurement Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dads Peer Mental Health Support - 5 Men's Perinatal Peer Support Group Dads Peer Mental Health Support - Peer Support to 40 young fathers Baby Massage Breastfeeding Insights Research (Blue Grass) Publishing Start for Life offer Children and Young People's Engagement 	£492,329	£314,829	£119,669	£57,831	Individual procurement activity in line with DCC procurement procedures
Training and development of existing and newly recruited staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incredible Years 0-2yr programme Solihull Antenatal programme training DfE recommended perinatal mental health training for Family Hub practitioners Sleep Scotland Training 	£110,879	£95,879	£15,000	£0	To be procured by DCC or with Sleep Scotland procured by HDFT
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LiquidLogic Group work module Parentcraft materials Home Learning Resources Chairs for Breast feeding Updated Telephony Front of House- Telephones, software, new chairs, booking system 	£348,710	£184,738	£92,970	£71,002	To be procured by DCC

Other (inc signage, building adaptations, ICT)	£321,652	£153,803	£88,849	£79,000	To be procured by DCC
Total	£4,600,450	£1,076,216	£1,871,057	£1,653,177	