

# Birmingham City Council

## Report to Cabinet

16 March 2021



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**Subject:** **BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP:**  
Draw Down of Monies from Budget for  
Early Help Interim Funding

**Report of:** **Prof Graeme Betts**  
**Director of Adult Social Care**

**Relevant Cabinet Member:** **Cllr Kate Booth – Children's Wellbeing**  
**Cllr Tristan Chatfield – Finance and Resources**

**Relevant O&S Chairs:** **Cllr Kath Scott – Education and Children's Social Care**  
**Cllr Sir Albert Bore – Resources**

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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 008597/2021		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential: n/a		

## 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has been tough for Birmingham families. In the last year, the Birmingham Children's Partnership locality early help and transformation work by the Council and partners has helped thousands of the most vulnerable families and reduced demand to acute services. See table 1.
- 1.2 A refreshed business case has been prepared for FY21/22, this is in Appendix 2. It is recommended that investment is approved for the priority services in the business case, and for the additional early help teams in six localities that do not currently have an early help team. It is recommended that the remaining services described in the business case are paused, so the Council can consider our response to the Covid-19 pandemic and alignment with the City Help and Support programme.
- 1.3 Overall, the business case is designed to support c. 48,000 interventions and reduce demand to social care and SEND services.
- 1.4 When the impact of the pandemic and Council's intentions are clarified we will return with a longer-term proposal for investment aligned to City Help and Support and the Integrated Care System changes.

New Services	Volume at Feb 21	Potential vol April 22 <sup>1</sup>
Kooth	5,000	13,000
Parenting support (Solihull Approach)	700	1,800
Financial assistance	7,200	7,000
Locality support for families universal plus level	6,500	20,000
Longer term support for children w additional needs	tbc	2,000
CASS 'no further action' follow ups	700	3,500
Families in temporary accommodation follow up	350	1,200
Exclusion from school, 'Team around the family'	0	300
Community grant service support to families	8,000	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28,450</b>	<b>48,800</b>

**Table 1**, families supported by new Birmingham Children's Partnership services during lockdown, and projected by the full business case.

<sup>1</sup> Potential volume figures are estimates based on current supply and demand patterns in Birmingham and, in the case of Kooth and the parenting support service, equivalent uptake figures for comparable local authorities. Some families are inevitably helped more than once during the year, we calculate at least 14,000 unique families have been supported by Feb 2021.

## **2 Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the continued funding of priority children's early help services to support families through Covid-19, lockdown and the lasting impact of the pandemic. At an additional cost of £4.459m, to be funded from the Policy Contingency budget for Social Care Modernisation.
- 2.2 Approves the investment in additional early help capacity in six localities without early help teams, to support families in these neighbourhoods (Edgbaston, Hall Green, Perry Barr, Selly Oak, Sutton Coldfield, Yardley). At a cost of £2.036m to be funded from the Policy Contingency budget for Social Care Modernisation.
- 2.3 Approves a pause to other planned services and support described in the BCP Business Case refresh.
- 2.4 Delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer to award contracts and grants in consultation with the interim Director of Children's Services.
- 2.5 Authorises the City Solicitor to negotiate and complete any documents to give effect to the above decisions.

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 Children and families in Birmingham have found the last year really tough, and the impact of successive lockdowns, furloughing and job loss, domestic abuse, increasing mental illness including eating disorders and psychosis, disrupted education, food poverty, fuel poverty and digital poverty. National and local surveys and our work with families in localities demonstrate the challenge, and we anticipate a big and costly increase in demand for SEND, education, social care, health and policing services over the coming recovery period.
- 3.2 Three years ago the Council and partners set up Birmingham Children's Partnership<sup>2</sup> (BCP) to help tackle many years of failing children's services. This has been successful, through a nationally leading transformation and response to Covid-19. The original 2020 BCP business case was considered by the Council's Policy and Reserves Committee in February 2020, signed off by partners (listed in Appendix 1) in March 2020, and the design and first year of funding was formally agreed by the Modern Council Delivery Board on 6 April 2020.
- 3.3 In 2019, the Government announced an additional £1bn annual grant for social care. Birmingham City Council receives £35m annually, and the first year payment formed the Modernisation Fund.
- 3.4 This Modernisation Fund was used to pay for the first year of the BCP business case (£4.261m in 2020/21), from which we invested in early help in order to

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<sup>2</sup> [www.birmingham.gov.uk/BCP](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/BCP)

reduce demand and costs to social care and SEND. Funding for subsequent years has still to be agreed.

- 3.5 Full Council considered the Financial Plan 2021 - 2025 on 23 February. As part of those considerations, £50m is set aside for the new Delivery Plan and City Help and Support will form part of that plan, but requires further development. To continue with maintaining vital existing early help services to thousands of families, there is a need for funding for 2021/22. This is a critical part of our Covid-19 response.
- 3.6 There is a small underspend in 2020/21 within the BCP transformation of £0.390m that will be carried forward to sustain vital voluntary sector services for two months.
- 3.7 The refreshed draft business case is in Appendix 2, and the draft vision for Birmingham children and families is in Appendix 3. Note that due to the urgency of the Cabinet decision, the business case and vision are subject to change and not signed off by BCP Governance.
- 3.8 The refreshed business case includes options that were previously agreed April 2020. Due to uncertainty around the impact of the pandemic and City Help and Support plans, we are proposing to pause some of the delivery plan, and proceed with Priority 1 services only. Services may be reinstated at a later point when there is more certainty about the direction of travel. This is a difficult decision, it means we pause implementation of additional planned services that would support children and young people in school with mental health issues, we pause additional planned support to 3000 families with children on the autistic spectrum, and we pause our engagement and transformation work with the thousands of professionals that contribute to outcomes for children and families (see section 6).
- 3.9 Please note the commitment from Birmingham and Solihull CCG to increase the Early Help infrastructure for the City and the shift of resources to secure this. This involves a paradigm shift across service structures from specialist to preventative measures. The Integrated Care System changes will enable place-based commissioning and budgets from April 2022 reflecting local needs across the life-course. Shifting to outcomes-based commissioning at a population level will enable a significant investment in Early Help as the most cost-effective way to improve population health.

#### **4 Recommendation one (Indicative Implementation Plan)**

- 4.1 The following services are identified to continue for the next year. As described in the refreshed business case, the rationale for choosing these services as priority 1 is:
- 4.1.1 We are protecting frontline, children and family-facing services. We will continue to deliver through further future investment, based on future business cases, but for now we must support the work we have only recently stood up.
  - 4.1.2 We are seeking investment to support and sustain the local, and locality-based, delivery of services that build resilience, community engagement and family support.
  - 4.1.3 (Both of these help us manage demand for higher tariff, higher cost services. Future budget assumptions in the Council assume that we can do this.)
  - 4.1.4 We recognise that there is much we don't know now about need and risk in communities post-pandemic, and so want to be able to learn and respond, pulling together partner responses and making further evidence-informed business cases for further investment to support recovery for our children, young people and families, with our schools and communities.
- 4.2 The following describes our highest priority services that the Council would like to continue funding for one year at a total cost of **£4.459m** (including the **£0.390m** carry forward). Note these are services that will support thousands of our most vulnerable families over the next year as we seek to recover from the pandemic.
- 4.2.1 Locality teams phase one – Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT) has recruited 37 professionals delivering Early Help in three localities (Erdington, Hodge Hill, Ladywood) which started in February 2021. This includes interpreting services. This is the first phase of the locality staffing model, and these professionals are essential to support families during the COVID-19 lockdown period, and in the aftermath (£1.751m).
  - 4.2.2 Locality leads – there are nine locality voluntary sector organisations providing a locality lead and back-office support for the function. This service is funded through a grant to BVSC and is critical to engaging the community sector to support families and providing and coordinating the support that families receive. Nationally this is a unique model which puts us ahead on the pandemic response (£1m).
  - 4.2.3 BVSC leadership and administration – Birmingham Voluntary Sector Council (BVSC) is an important partner to manage the delivery of the locality Early Help, community connect service, making every contact count project manager, and community grants (£0.063m).

- 4.2.4 ECINS license (Electronic Charting and Integrated Navigation System) – for the new case management system that connects the whole Early Help system. If we don't purchase a new licence then the early help information sharing and protection of children will be at risk (£0.020m).
- 4.2.5 Online parenting support – important part of the offer for parents, grandparents and carers during Covid-19 lockdown to know how to deal with challenging behaviour and improve relationships within the family (£0.016m).
- 4.2.6 Community Connect service – 20 FTE staff are currently employed to deliver the community connect service in localities, with a service manager in BVSC to coordinate delivery. The community connect service trains all professionals across Early Help to connect families to local community resources so they are more resilient. These roles will significantly reduce demand by increasing the help that families get first in their neighbourhoods (£1m).
- 4.2.7 Kooth mental health service – this is an online platform providing advice and guidance, moderated peer support and counselling. Having an online mental health service has been critical during the periods of lockdown when children and young people's anxiety, psychosis and eating disorders have been rising. The service was commissioned in April 2020 and is a joint contract with Solihull, administered by Birmingham and Solihull CCG (£0.400m).
- 4.2.8 Mental health STICK teams – the Screening, Training, Intervention, Consultation and Knowledge service (STICK) is delivered by Forward Thinking Birmingham. The proposal is to significantly expand the service to provide more capacity to support families in the ten early help localities – providing both consultancy development of early help staff and direct support to children and young people (£0.543m).
- 4.2.9 Transformation Apprentices – two young apprentices with experience of the health and care system were recruited in January 2021 for a two year term to work on service design and engagement. Already their presence on boards and perspective is having a profound effect and these roles are important to model the future of Birmingham Children's Partnership (£0.055m).

4.3 The following table from the business case summarises the priority 1 investment:

Investments		2021/2	2022/2	2023/2	2024/2	Total
		2	3	4	5	
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
1	Locality Teams	2.830	2.849	2.849	2.849	11.377
2	School, Further Education and Nurseries	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.020	0.080
3	Community	1.000	1.000	0.500	0.000	2.500
4	Mental Health and Wellbeing	0.943	0.943	0.943	0.943	3.773
5	Autism Support	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
6	Integrated Commissioning	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
7	Culture Change	0.055	0.055	0.000	0.000	0.110
8	Impact Evaluation	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4.849</b>	<b>4.867</b>	<b>4.312</b>	<b>3.812</b>	<b>17.840</b>

Possible Business Benefits		2021/2	2022/2	2023/2	2024/2	Total
		2	3	4	5	
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
1	Locality Teams	2.1	3.4	3.4	3.4	12.2
2	School, Further Education and Nurseries	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3	Community	2.2	2.2	1.1	0.0	5.6
4	Mental Health and Wellbeing	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	3.8
5	Autism Support	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
6	Integrated Commissioning	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
7	Culture Change	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
8	Impact Evaluation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	<b>Total Benefits</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>21.5</b>

Net Cost (Benefits)		2021/2	2022/2	2023/2	2024/2	Total
		2	3	4	5	
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
	<b>Net (Benefits)</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>-1.7</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>-0.5</b>	<b>-3.7</b>

**Table 2**, summary of priority 1 investments and conservative analysis of non-cashable benefits. See Appendix 2 BCP business case refresh for details.

## **5 Recommendation two**

- 5.1 In addition Cabinet is asked to approve funding of additional capacity to support families coming out of lockdown, and to reduce the cost of social care and SEND delivery.
  - 5.1.1 Recommendation one includes early help professionals in three localities with the highest need (Erdington, Hodge Hill, Ladywood) and Northfield is covered by the pathfinder pilot. This leaves six localities without sufficient early help capacity to support families (Edgbaston, Hall Green, Perry Barr, Selly Oak, Sutton Coldfield, Yardley).
  - 5.1.2 Cabinet is therefore asked to approve funding of six additional Early Help teams in Edgbaston, Hall Green, Perry Barr, Selly Oak, Sutton Coldfield and Yardley managed by Birmingham Children's Trust, at a cost of **£2.036m**.
  - 5.1.3 Also note that Birmingham Children's Trust's projection of demand, which informs the contractual agreement for the cost of social care, is predicated on this investment in early help.

## **6 Recommendation three**

- 6.1 The following services are recommended to be paused, and when the impact of the pandemic and Council's intentions are clarified we will return with a longer-term proposal for investment aligned to City Help and Support and the Integrated Care System changes. Note the values are for implementation in FY21/22, full details of annual costs are included in the business case in Appendix 1.
  - 6.1.1 Family support case managers – we are planning to roll out ECINS case management to partners including schools. This would give us an enviable ability to manage the quality of Early Help across the whole Early Help system but requires capacity to coach and manage the quality of case records and practice. These roles support the practice in schools, nurseries and other universal services and are based in BCT (£0.162m).
  - 6.1.2 Mental health NewStart programme – this second new mental health service is based in schools and has been scoped by the Mental Health Design Team, with specifications agreed and Birmingham Education Partnership is ready to deploy. The proposal expands the number of schools running the NewStart programme from 75 to all primary and secondary schools. It's critically important that we develop capacity in schools to support children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing and reduce the likelihood of conditions getting worse and young people requiring acute interventions (£0.34m).
  - 6.1.3 Autism services – we have two new Autism services that have been scoped by the Autism Design Team, endorsed by the All-Age Autism Board, and are ready to be deployed. The Community Autism Service would support 3,000 families a year (pre or post-diagnosis), we have run a competitive tender and identified the preferred provider. The second service is for parenting training



and the specification has been agreed with the provider. Both services are ready to begin deployment and meet a huge gap in our SEND and Health services, with an Ofsted / CQC inspection expected in the Summer. 50% of children in care have an Autism diagnosis and Birmingham desperately needs early intervention capacity (£0.6m).

- 6.1.4 Head of Communications and Engagement – as a transformation that is working with hundreds of organisations and thousands of professionals, the comms function has been critical. As we promote support to families, directly engage through localities and roll-out a vision, the Early Help Handbook, weekly comms to all staff, and products such as the ethnographic study, we are dependent on effective delivery of comms (£0.094m).
- 6.1.5 Integrated Commissioning service manager – we recruited a service manager for the integrated brokerage service in Autumn 2020 to start the process of integrating commissioning in anticipation of the ICS programme. This role is critical to improve the education and care management of placements (£0.129m).
- 6.1.6 School engagement and data sharing – two school negotiation leads, employed in BEP and Birmingham City Council (BCC), are proposed to lead on scoping the offer and ask of schools / nurseries / FE, and coordinate our engagement with this strategically critical partner. The data leads would be employed in Public Health and support data sharing with schools leading to a new level of openness and partnership work (£0.379m).
- 6.1.7 New case management system – scoping and development of a new case management system that will ensure interoperability between Early Help and all-age social care (£0.898m).
- 6.1.8 Family group conferencing in the community – this is a pilot building on a Camden model to support people in the community to solve their own local issues (£0.061m).
- 6.1.9 Community grants – building social capital in localities that we can connect families to through a series of grants for small community, voluntary and faith groups. This proposal includes a post in BVSC to help small groups to bid to this, the 50 other grant schemes in the city, and national schemes (£0.8m).
- 6.1.10 Local offer website – development of the local offer website to host all information for families and young people (£0.063m).
- 6.1.11 Placements review – a third party review of placements across the partnership to identify improvements in outcomes for children and young people and efficiency improvements in how we manage providers (£0.6m).
- 6.1.12 Leadership academy – a service and system design and leadership training programme for service managers across the partnership to develop our ability to lead the changes needed for children and young people, and to develop more cost effective services that reduce demand (£0.2m).

6.1.13 Communications materials for engaging with professionals and communities across the whole system of children and family services (£0.025m).

6.1.14 Impact evaluation – to answer the critical question: what is the return on Early Help investment for each partner. So that all partners are confident that continuing to increase Early Help funding is the best way to make efficiency savings and support the city. The tender documents and market warming have been completed and are ready to go (£0.12m).

6.2 **Service Delivery Management** will be the responsibility of the Council's Education and Skills commissioning team, with the following specific grants and contracts for priority services:

6.2.1 Grant with BVSC – covering locality leads and support, BVSC leadership and administration, community connect service. This will be by way of extension of an existing grant agreements with BVSC approved by the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Commissioning). The previous grants to BVSC over the last year total £0.85m for service delivery, and £2.7m for community grants and vouchers to families. (Total value for FY21/22 £2.063m.)

6.2.2 Service agreement with BCT – covering locality teams, transformation apprentices. This will be delivered as part of the Teckal agreement the Council has with BCT (total value £1.824m for recommendation one for FY21/22, and additional £2.036m for recommendation two).

6.2.3 Section 76 agreement transferring funding to Birmingham and Solihull CCG – covering the Kooth service and STICK mental health service. These are existing contracts held with BSOL CCG and will be extended / continued by the new arrangements (total value for FY21/22 £0.943m).

6.2.4 Contract with third party providers – covering ECINS (case management system) and parenting support online courses. These are extensions of existing contracts with Empowering Communities (total value FY21/22 £0.02m) and University Hospital Birmingham (total value FY21/22 £0.016m) respectively.

## **7 Alternative Options considered and Recommended Proposal**

7.1 The business case includes 25 services that have been considered for continuation. Each has a strong rationale as described in Appendix 2.

7.2 There is an option not to sustain any services. The impact would be to reverse progress made by the Birmingham Children's Partnership, causing poorer outcomes for families, reputational damage with partners including the NHS, schools and voluntary sector, and increased costs for social care and SEND. From initial projections, this would reduce the number of early help interventions by 28,000 (see table 1).

## **8 Consultation**

- 8.1 Engagement is an important design principle for the Council and Birmingham Children's Partnership. The early help design has been informed by three young people workshops, and service managers across the partnership have been consulted on the transformation design. Engagement will be ongoing, with steering groups for each locality with members of the community, an engagement exercise with nearly 4,000 children and young people, and two young transformation apprentices that have been recruited to directly shape our design process.

## **9 Risk Management**

- 9.1 The Birmingham Children's Partnership Senior Delivery Group is responsible for the transformation workstreams and for managing risks. The group meets weekly, is chaired by Richard Selwyn, BCP Transformation Director, and includes Assistant Directors and Directors from across the partnership including the Council.

## **10 Compliance Issues**

- 10.1 **How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?** The recommended decisions are consistent with the Council's priorities, plans and strategies and supports the Vision and Priorities in the Council Plan 2018-2022 as agreed by Cabinet across four priority areas:
- 10.1.1 **Children** – an aspirational city to grow up in: We will inspire our children and young people to be ambitious and achieve their full potential.
- 10.1.2 **Jobs and skills** – an entrepreneurial city to learn, work and invest in: We will create opportunities for local people to develop skills and make the best of economic growth.
- 10.2 **Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility (BBC4SR):** Compliance with the BBC4SR is a mandatory requirement that will form part of the conditions of these contracts. The provider will submit an action plan with their proposal that will be assessed and will be implemented and monitored during the contract period.
- 10.3 **Legal Implications:** the Council has the power to enter into this activity by the general power competence secured by Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, to make provision for the functions and procedures of local authorities and to make provision about local government finance. The activity is within the boundaries and limits of the general power set out in Section 2 and 4 of the Localism Act 2011 respectively. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 confers power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions of the Council. The services provided under the contracts and grants will facilitate and be conducive or incidental to the discharge of a wide range of the Council's statutory duties, including those

relating to safeguarding, and specifically to the Council's general duty under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within its area who are in need and, so far as it is consistent with that duty, promote the upbringing of those children by their families, by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.

- 10.4 **Pre-Procurement Duty under the Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012:** The Social Value outcomes to be supported by this contract will be included in the specification, as well as incorporation of the associated themes from the BBC4SR that are to be included in the provider proposal.
- 10.5 **Information Management:** Delivery of the service as instructed under the resulting contract will involve working directly with citizens. The management of data, including personal data will be a feature. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and data management obligations will be included in the specification and associated data processing agreement/s will be entered into as part of the contract.
- 10.6 **Financial Implications:** the cost of the proposals can be met from the the Policy Contingency budget for Social Care Modernisation (which currently has a balance of £8.955m). There is also a small underspend from 2020/21 of £0.390m that will be carried forward to sustain vital voluntary sector services for two months.
- 10.7 The savings generated as a result of this procurement will contribute to service areas managing existing and forecast budget spending pressures.
- 10.8 **Procurement Implications:** the only Procurement implication relates to the ECINS (case management system) and parenting support online courses, and this will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's delegated procurement procedures.
- 10.9 **Human Resources Implications:** The procurement and contract management activity will be undertaken by Council staff.
- 10.10 **Public Sector Equality Duty:** An equality impact assessment has been completed in the refreshed business case in appendix 2. The equality impact assessment concluded a positive impact or no impact on groups with protected characteristics, as a result of the changes proposed and now being implemented.
- 10.11 Key recommendations concerned the importance of considering the experience of the 'digital generation' when designing and delivering services. Children born in the 21st Century are often considered 'digital natives' and expect services to be aligned with these expectations. At the same time digital exclusion remains a significant problem in society and our plans should take account of this.
- 10.12 The EIA warns of the how disadvantage, discrimination and disability can impact on some people and communities concurrently, creating a complexity of inequality that requires sophisticated service design and delivery to remedy. Regarding plans to transform mental health services the EIA made recommendations regarding the stigma associated with poor mental health in

some communities and the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ young people. There were also important recommendations regarding workforce development and the opportunities to create greater social value through our commissioning of services to third party organisations.

## **11 List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – List of Birmingham Children’s Partnership organisations

Appendix 2 – BCP business case refresh [subject to change and not signed off by BCP Governance]

Appendix 3 – BCP children and families vision [subject to change and not signed off by BCP Governance]

## **12 Background Papers**

12.1 None

## APPENDIX 1

List of Organisations in the Birmingham Children's Partnership:

Birmingham Children's Trust

Birmingham City Council

Birmingham Community HealthCare NHS Foundation Trust

Birmingham Voluntary Sector Council \*

Birmingham Women and Children's NHS Foundation Trust

NHS Birmingham and Solihull CCG

NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG \*

West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner \*

*\* New joiners since April 2020*