

# Report to Cabinet

**16 November 2022**

<b>Subject:</b>	Family Hubs and Start for Life programme Funding
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Children & Education Cllr Simon Hackett Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care & Health Cllr Suzanne Hartwell
<b>Director:</b>	Director Education and Children Michael Jarrett Director Public Health Lisa McNally Director Finance Simone Hines
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes The report highlights that SMBC will be receiving £4m of Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funding from central government for the period 2022-25
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Senior Commissioning Manager Peter Forth peter_forth@sandwell.gov.uk

## 1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to accept the Family Hubs and Start for Life funding from central government for the period 2022-25.
- 1.2 That the Director of Children and Education and the Director of Public Health be authorised to formulate plans for the expenditure of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funding working in conjunction with the Director of Finance and in line with the associated Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide from central government.






- 1.3 That the necessary virements are approved to enable the 2022/23 allocation of £1,041,000 to be spent in accordance with grant conditions.

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Sandwell is one of 75 local authorities that are eligible to receive the Family Hubs and Start for Life funding which has been made available from central government for the three financial years from 2022-25.
- 2.2 A comprehensive programme guide has been produced jointly by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education in respect of this funding. Spending will need to align to that document.

## 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<b>Best start in life for children and young people</b> Elements of the funding are targeted specifically at the start for life period (0-2 years). These include infant feeding support services; bespoke parent-infant relationships and perinatal mental health support; support to parents about the home learning environment.
	<b>People live well and age well</b> The programme builds on delivery of the Healthy Child Programme 0-19 years public health services. It also seeks to improve the integration of health and care services to make sure that they are more joined up and better able to meet the needs of families.
	<b>Strong resilient communities</b> The guidance recognises the importance of the communities where people live and the support that is available for families. The authority will be required to publish a Start for Life Offer. This will be established and reviewed through a series of Parent and Carer Panels.



## 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Sandwell is one of 75 local authority areas who have been identified by government as eligible to receive a share of over £300m Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funding package for the three financial years from 2022-2025.
- 4.2 The programme provides funding to develop a new Family Hubs model which integrates existing services for children and families, ensuring that they cover the age range 0-19 (25 for young people with SEND). It also includes some limited new investment for essential services in the crucial Start for Life period from conception to age two, and services which support parents to care for and interact with their children.
- 4.3 The vision is a seamless, integrated offer of support for all families delivered through a family hub model with tailored support available for those who need it most. The ambition is for every family to receive the support they need when they need it.
- 4.4 In Sandwell the programme will build on the consultation undertaken in late 2020/early 2021 by the Early Years Transformation Academy.

In addition, the authority will set up Parent and Carer Panels in each town which will help to shape the Start for Life offer.

- 4.5 The Family Hubs model is based on joint working with key partner agencies for example Health Visitors and Midwives but also with voluntary sector partner agencies to be able to deliver the seamless programme as set out in the guidance document.

## 5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The local authority could decide not to be part of this programme but that would mean turning down a substantial sum of money for the borough. This option has been duly discounted.



- 5.2 The programme has key objectives that need to be addressed although there is an acceptance from government that every local authority will be starting from a different point and will have different local needs, assets and existing provision to consider. This allows authorities to shape the programme to meet those local needs.

## 6 Implications

Resources:	Funding
	<p>Family Hubs funding is initially for three financial years from 2022-2025. The amount allocated to Sandwell is detailed below:</p> <p>2022-23 £1,041,000</p> <p>2023-24 Funding will be between £1,670,000 and £1,779,00</p> <p>2024-25 Funding will be between £1,391,000 and £1,477.000</p> <p>The final figures for 2023-24 and 2024-25 will be confirmed once all local authorities have submitted their expressions of interest.</p> <p>Confirmation will be given at Director level that the minimum delivery expectations can be delivered within the funding allocation and that no further revenue funding will be required from the Directorate.</p> <p>Future funding from 2025/26 will be dependent on the success of the programme nationally and future government spending plans.</p> <p><b>Premises</b></p> <p>In Sandwell initial plans are to maximise the existing core children's centre buildings along with the associated satellite centres. These are subject to leases with Barnardo's as the lead agency for delivery of children's centres.</p>



	<p>Other venues may be considered as the delivery plan takes shape.</p> <p>There is a small amount of capital funding to complete minor works as required to meet the needs of the new service.</p> <p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p>A small central team will be appointed by the local authority to co-ordinate the development of plans.</p> <p>All other decisions about staffing will be subject to discussion with partner agencies as the plans evolve.</p>
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	<p>The local authority will provide systems leadership, strategic oversight and management of the programme. The Director of Children and Education will chair the Steering Group for the programme. It will report quarterly to the Children and Families Strategic Partnership and will report to the Health and Well Being Board every 6 months.</p>
<b>Risk:</b>	<p>A risk assessment has been carried out to identify and assess the risks associated with the decisions being sought. This has identified a number of risks, two of which are assessed as red.</p> <p>The first red risk relates to partner agencies and the local authority who are reporting issues in the recruitment of staff across the different disciplines. This situation could pose a risk to implementing parts of the programme.</p> <p>The second red risk relates to the short timescales for the commitment of funding in 22/23. The funding as previously noted was only confirmed in August 2022 and the associated delivery plan is due for completion by the end of December.</p>



	<p>Local services working together and in partnership with the voluntary and community sectors is a key element of the approach. This poses challenges in terms of IT systems; information sharing; hot desking arrangements; management issues, health and safety matters; etc</p> <p>Many of these issues have already been faced through work on other initiatives. We will seek to build on those experiences both generically and on a case by case basis as appropriate.</p>
<b>Equality:</b>	Family Hubs are designed to offer a service universally to all families especially in the crucial early years period (0-2 years). The work of the Hubs will be duly closely monitored and reviewed to ensure equality of access.
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Health and Wellbeing issues underpin many parts of the programme with specific funding for parent-infant relationships and perinatal mental health. This will promote positive early relationships and good mental wellbeing for babies and their families.
<b>Social Value</b>	The programme will seek to work with a range of statutory, voluntary and community sector agencies to implement the programme. Opportunities to address social value will be included in those arrangements.

## 7. Appendices

None

## 8. Background Papers

Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide. HM Government. August 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-hubs-and-start-for-life-programme-local-authority-guide>

