

## DECISION REPORT

**From:** Dr Anjan Ghosh, Director of Public Health

**To:** Dan Watkins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health

**Subject:** To approve the adoption of the co-created strategy in regard to low to moderate Perinatal mental health and Parent infant relationships

**Decision Number:** 24/00058

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of report:** Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee – 2 July 2024

**Future Pathway of report:** Cabinet Member decision

**Electoral Division:** All

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**Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes**

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### **Summary:**

Kent County Council has been successful in receiving Family Hub Transformation Authority status and has therefore received designated Family Hub Transformation Funding.

A Start for Life Programme update was provided to Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee on 11 July 2023. This provided an opportunity for members to ask any questions, help shape the programme of work and explained the governance route for future decisions.

A key decision is required to approve the adoption of the cocreated strategy in regard to low to moderate Perinatal mental health and Parent infant relationships in order to support improvement in outcomes for families over the next five years.

### **Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, is asked to:

- a) **APPROVE** the adoption of the co-created strategy in regard to low to moderate perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships, as detailed in the report.
- b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health to take necessary actions, including but not limited to, allocating resources, expenditure,

entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This strategy supports two key areas of transformation to family hubs which relate to Start for Life and are relevant to Public Health namely perinatal mental health and parent infant relationships.
- 1.2 Start for Life is a component of the family hubs model with a specific focus on the first 1001 days, between conception and the age of two, essential for the healthy development of babies. This focus for support was identified by the Dame Andrea Leadsom Review in 2020 and further articulated in March 2021 in publication of The Best Start for Life: A Vision for the 1,001 critical days. This was followed by the announcement of £300m government funding to support Family Hubs with a focus on parent carer panels, parenting programmes, parent infant relationships, perinatal mental health and infant feeding in April 2022. Kent was one of 75 local authorities provided with the opportunity to benefit from the £300m funding.
- 1.3 On 4 October 2022 the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services took a key decision (Decision number 22/00094) to adopt the principle of Kent becoming a Family Hub Transformation Authority.
- 1.4 On 23 March 2023, a further key decision was taken under decision number 23/00015 Family Hub Transformation Funding: a) To commence development and co-design of the Family Hub model for Kent in line with Government Family Hub framework for delivery and associated plans. b) To allocate and spend funding allocated via the Family Hub Transformation Authority for 2022/23 financial year.

## **2. Perinatal mental health and parent infant relationships .**

- 2.1 The requirement from the Department of Education (DfE) is to 'establish a local perinatal and parent–infant mental health strategy (with sustainable plans beyond the funding period), to support strategic planning / delivery and joined-up working across the whole system.'
- 2.2 An external organisation, Barnardos was commissioned in August 2023 to develop a cocreated perinatal mental health and parent infant relationship strategy.
- 2.3 A perinatal mental health and parent infant relationship steering group was established in August 2023, as part of our governance process and to help us to bring key stakeholders together. This included having an external stakeholder as chair.
- 2.4 Opportunities were developed and offered to enable stakeholders from across the system to improve and develop their awareness and

knowledge of parent infant relationships and perinatal mental health through bite sized training webinars, and full day training programmes.

- 2.5 A draft strategy, 'Nurturing little hearts and minds' was presented to the Start for Life Board in December 2023.
- 2.6 The needs of the local population were estimated by the provider of the strategy.
- 2.7 A total of 14,685 babies may need parent-infant relationship support in Kent over the next five years. That is 2,937 parent-infant relationships per year.
- 2.8 A total of 33,317 parents and carers may need perinatal mental health support in Kent at a mild-to-moderate level over the next five years. That is 6,663 per year.
- 2.9 The strategy contains three themed action areas:
  - Relating with warmth: developing relationship-based support
  - Thriving together: improving equity of support
  - Leading collaboratively: nurturing a system of support.
- 2.10 A public consultation took place between 8 February and 3 April 2024. with presentation of materials online, digital promotion and attendance at various events across the county to enable discussion and opportunity to take or complete hard copy of the survey.
- 2.11 Analysis of the consultation responses was completed by the provider, Barnardos who developed the strategy. The consultation analysis is provided as an appendix to this briefing. [Appendix 1].
- 2.12 Minor amendments have been made to the strategy following the public consultation.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The DfE family hub grant is a ring-fenced grant specifically for the family hubs and start for life programme which includes a focus on perinatal mental health and parent infant relationships and does not impact the council general revenue fund. This has provided opportunity to increase workforce capability and capacity to expand the reach of low to moderate perinatal mental health and parent infant relationship support and to raise awareness of support available for those with low to moderate perinatal mental health. The implementation of this strategy will be pivotal to further progressing and embedding this work.

### **4. Legal implications**

- 4.1 The Council entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department for Education (DfE) which creates obligations to meet specific deadlines and timescales set by the DfE or risk losing further funding or funding claw back.

- 4.2 Access to the associated funding, depending on the type and level of transformation activity progressed, is conditional on compliance with the terms of the MoU and demonstration of progress toward an effective Family Hub Model.
- 4.3 The Council has and will enter into a number of contractual agreements to support delivery in line with Spending the Council's Money and Public Contract Regulations 2015 and aligns with Objective 3 of Securing Kent's Future.

## 5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed (attached as appendix 2) and has identified that emotional and regulation needs may impact on access and communication; race and faith may impact on access to perinatal mental health support with proposed mitigations outlined.

## 6. Governance

- 6.1 The Cabinet Member decision will provide the strategic policy position of KCC, alongside that of partner agencies such as health, regarding the specified workstreams. The key decision will delegate authority for required activity to support the further progression of co-design, expenditure of funding and resources to commence delivery to improve services as required.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This strategy sets out a considered and engaging dialogue to further develop our approach to improving low to moderate perinatal mental health and parent infant relationships, enhancing our support for families.

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## 8. Recommendation(s): The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, is asked to:

- a) **APPROVE** the adoption of the co-created strategy in regard to low to moderate perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships, as detailed in the report.
- b) **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Public Health to take necessary actions, including but not limited to, allocating resources, expenditure, entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

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## 9. Background Documents

Consultation analysis report: Perinatal Mental Health and Parent Infant Relationships strategy

## 10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Consultation analysis

Appendix 2 – Equality impact assessment

## 11. Contact details

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