

### KCC Position Statement

KCC is firmly committed to supporting children across Kent to get the best start in life. In 2015, responsibility for commissioning the NHS Health Visiting Service was transferred to KCC. This provided a new opportunity for KCC to expand its delivery of services to families, as the health visiting is a universal service, available to every family with a child of pre-school age.

Following the transfer, KCC reviewed its approach for breastfeeding support. It recognised that its previous bespoke investment into breastfeeding was relatively small scale, and that a small proportion of families eligible for support, could access the service.

KCC has therefore developed a new model which embeds breastfeeding support into health visiting, to offer the opportunity for support to more families across Kent. This model builds on national Department of Health guidance which has identified areas in which health visitors can achieve high impact, one of which is breastfeeding.

The proposal is that the Health Visiting Service holds responsibility for the provision of infant feeding services, including breastfeeding.

- The service will run 36 professionally led drop-in clinics weekly with focussed breastfeeding support, in collaboration with Breastfeeding Peer Supporters.
- In addition, there will be referrals to 24 dedicated specialist clinics (6 per week) spread across the county, with location and frequency based on need.
- In addition, arrangements will be in place to spot purchase specialist services from specialist organisations where needed.
- There will be the facility to provide home visits, again based on need.

KCC recognises that breastfeeding is not the choice of every family for a range of reasons. KCC wishes to make it easier for mothers and families to choose breastfeeding. KCC also understand that families have a right to choose the approach to feed their new baby that is right for them. Therefore, it is a comprehensive infant feeding support service for all families, that is proposed, to support whatever a family's choice may be.

KCC currently invests £22m per year into the Health Visiting Service and has worked with local Maternity and Health Visiting Services to enhance the focus on breastfeeding and to ensure a more consistent offer to families.

In addition, KCC will commit a further £100,000 this coming year. This will be to:

1. Run a campaign to promote breastfeeding and the services available for support. This will ensure a consistency of message across the system.
2. Enable Maternity/Health Visiting Services to buy any additional service which cannot be delivered in particular in the first 0-14 days and closely monitor any unmet demand.

3. Work with our digital colleagues to find ways to improve communicating with families including diagnosis of tongue tie.
4. Work with the maternity system on their digital record to ensure consistent messages are available for all families.