

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee - 8 February 2023

Subject: Thriving Babies, Confident Parents Service

Report of: Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

Summary

The presentation on the Thriving Babies, Confident Parents Programme is one a series of 'think family' projects which have developed an innovative response to children and families who required co-ordinated and intensive support from children and adult services.

Initially funded by the *What Works Centre for Children's Social Care* the Thriving Babies: Confident Parents programme aims to improve outcomes for vulnerable, 'high risk' babies, both pre- and post-birth, by providing an early, coordinated, multi-agency intervention for parents who are recognised as having specific vulnerabilities. The programme seeks to allow babies to thrive by intervening early, ensuring that they are living in safe, stable, permanent homes and can remain with their families and communities. The 'Think Family' focus ensures that services and interventions are coordinated to address parental challenges, whilst the use of trauma-informed, culturally appreciative practice promotes safety, trust, and empowerment in collaboration with families.

The programme brings together Statutory, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners, including Home-Start, Midwifery, Health Visiting, Vulnerable Babies Team, CAPS, Early Help, Early Years, and Adult and Children's Social Care, creating a core team of multi-disciplinary practitioners.

An independent evaluation of the programme found that there was a reduction in parental risk factors, for example domestic violence or substance use, and that this led to improved resilience and coping skills among parents. Whilst there was a good level of parental engagement in the intervention, the evaluation found no evidence to support concerns that parents might become dependent on the service, and parents described feeling confident about the future.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Committee members are invited to:

- (1) Consider the innovation and impact achieved by the Thriving Babies Confident Parents Programme.
- (2) Recognise the best start for life for babies achieved by the programme.

- (3) Acknowledge the strength of the partnership work which has delivered a ‘think family’ approach and has been recognised by the independent evaluation of the programme.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The Confident Babies Programme has delivered culturally attuned services with significant impact and learning and demonstrable improved outcomes for babies from Black, Asian and minority ethnic families.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective support for children and families is critical to ensuring the most vulnerable citizens can connect and support the drive towards a thriving and sustainable City.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	Ensuring the most vulnerable in our society are given the opportunity to access early support and connecting parents with an offer of early help enables families to access the right support at the right time.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Building a trusted relationship with families helps builds families resilience which they need to achieve their potential.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for children and families across the city helps build and develop communities.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The Thriving Babies Programme has delivered good outcomes for babies, provides value for money, and supports families to remain in their communities and contribute to the continuing growth in the city.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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1.0 Introduction

This report summarises the annual report for 2021/2022 of the Manchester Complex Safeguarding Hub

The Multi Agency Complex Safeguarding Hub has been operational since October 2018, delivering a partnership approach which demonstrates good multi -agency information sharing, coordination, planning and intervention in response to emerging contextual and extrafamilial safeguarding risks. The work of the Hub contributes to increased safety and improved outcomes for children and young people.

2.0 Background

The Hub delivers bespoke interventions specific to child criminal and sexual exploitation and missing from home and care. This includes county lines, serious youth violence and links to organised crime. Daily governance meetings, joint risk assessment, mapping and information sharing across Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Social Care, Youth Justice and Health systems are embedded as part of daily business to ensure the delivery of effective and timely responses to children and their families who experience complex safeguarding risks. This informs the assessment, planning and intervention work provided to individual children and the complex safeguarding investigations focusing on safeguarding, disruption and the context in which exploitation takes place.

3.0 Main issues

The annual report demonstrates that the work that is being undertaken is complex and the model of partnership delivery is effective in increasing disruption of perpetrators of exploitation. The need for effective intelligence sharing and joined up responses is evident, as the extra familial risks and harm children face evolves, we need to be responsive. The demand for the service and the delivery of safeguarding and intervention work has continued throughout the year.

The Complex Safeguarding Hub in Manchester has now been operational for 4 years, building on the strong partner relationships and the shared desire to prevent, intervene and disrupt exploitation. We are in a good position, over the year ahead to consider where we are and to ensure that the delivery is responsive to the themes, trends, and experiences of young people in the city.

4.0 Recommendations

Scrutiny Committee members are invited to:

- (1) Consider the Complex safeguarding Hub's response to child exploitation
- (2) Consider the improved outcomes for children who have worked with the Complex safeguarding Hub
- (3) Acknowledge the partnership work within the Complex safeguarding Hub which improves the offer and outcomes for children who have been or are at risk of exploitation.