

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

# Cabinet Meeting

## 24 February 2016

<b>Report title</b>	Children's Services Re-Design	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Young People	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Linda Sanders, People	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Emma Bennett	Service Director, Children and Young People
	Tel	01902 551449
	Email	<a href="mailto:emma.bennett@wolverhampton.gov.uk">emma.bennett@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a>
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	People Leadership Team	8 February 2016
	Strategic Executive Board	9 February 2016

---

### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the eight localities strengthening families hub model with outreach, as detailed in the report presented to Cabinet on 11 November 2015 and as further developed following public consultation.
2. Receive outcome of the employee and stakeholder consultation and agree the areas for action arising from consultation feedback as summarised in the report (para 3).
3. Approve the full implementation of the new Early Intervention and Prevention model, including the structural arrangements as set out in Appendix one.

4. Approve the design, workforce development, commissioning, performance management and implementation arrangements as proposed within the report.
5. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, in consultation with the Strategic Director of People, to make any further changes to the employee establishment within the new model as a result of the formal employee consultation which has taken place during January and February 2016 and ceases on 1 March 2016.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet on the updated proposals for the fundamental re-design of front line services that deliver Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP) also termed “Early Help”.
- 1.2. This report summarises the feedback from the consultation and sets out the changes to the proposed model as a result of the feedback. It also gives an overview of the work currently being undertaken to prepare for full implementation.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The transformation of City of Wolverhampton Council’s EIP capability has been ongoing since the launch of the Families r First (FrF) Programme in April 2014.
- 2.2 The transformation, so far, has been a success. As of 31 March 2015, there were 780 Looked After Children (LAC). As at 1 February 2016, there were 667 LAC, 199 children subject to Child Protection plans and 1395 Children in Need.
- 2.3 The report submitted on 11 November 2015 outlined a whole system transformation, focusing on improving the outcomes of children in Wolverhampton. Cabinet agreed to:
  - Support the overarching aim of EIP being to safely prevent family breakdown and thereby reduce the number of children being taken into care
  - Approve the outline design of the EIP model and associated proposals for the re-design based on the objectives and principles set out in this report
  - Approve the commencement of formal consultation on these proposals.
  - Agree to receive a further report in February, following consultation, to make proposals for implementation
  - Approve any necessary Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) transfer of employees in Early Help (0-5) Services currently delivered through School Governing Bodies
- 2.4 Since the report to Cabinet, the Council has undertaken a comprehensive consultation programme with both employees and the public alongside the planning for implementation.
- 2.5 Also, since the report, 101 staff have been transferred from school to Council employment, which has allowed the employee consultation to begin.
- 2.6 This project reports into the Transforming Children’s Services Board, chaired by the Strategic Director for People to ensure strong programme management and supporting governance.

### **3.0 The results of the public and stakeholder consultation**

- 3.1 Public and stakeholder consultation took place over 12 weeks from November 2015 to February 2016. The consultation used:
- an online survey, advertised through posters at Children's Centres, Community Centres and Libraries
  - the Council's, Wolverhampton Homes' and The Way Youth Zone's social media pages and websites
  - emails to stakeholder groups and in the schools' bulletin
- 3.2 The project team also completed the survey with members of the public visiting the Civic Centre and Family Support Workers completed the survey with service users.
- 3.3 17 members of the Youth Council and six members of the Children in Care Council also gave their comments.
- 3.4 The survey received 295 responses, 204 of whom were members of the public and 91 were professionals who work with children. A detailed summary of feedback can be found on the Council's consultation page<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.5 In addition to the online consultation, eight public and four stakeholder events were held across the city in November and December 2015, including one aimed at school stakeholders and another aimed at Health. 25 people attended the stakeholder events and 65 people attended the public events.

#### **Public consultation**

- 3.6 80% of the public agreed or strongly agreed with the objectives of the re-design to focus resources on those most at risk of family breakdown. The majority of feedback was positive and highlighted the importance of Early Help services to families. There were concerns around the capacity of employees and around the impact that making cuts to save money has on the support available to a child.
- 3.7 With the investment going into the Specialist Intensive Support service, and the focus on directing support to those children most in need, we continue to be confident the proposals will allay these concerns. We also continue to believe the focus of the re-design on achieving significant sustained changes with families will reduce the need for families repeatedly needing support and, therefore, the current proposed model will be sufficient and sustainable to meet demand.
- 3.8 Respondents were asked where they currently spend time with their family and how they travel to services. The most popular places to spend time with family were at playgrounds and shopping centres. 45% of respondents said they could

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/consultations>

travel between one and two miles to access services. This was the most popular answer, which aligns with the proposals for locations which are geographically spread across the city and enhanced by outreach bases in each of the localities. The number and location of outreach bases will be influenced by local need and where the public are most likely to visit.

- 3.9 68% of the public agreed that the Parent Champion initiative (parents who have positive experiences of accessing provision and act as advocates and peer advisers to other parents in their community) would be a good way to engage and support communities. 24 people gave their details as they were interested in becoming Parent Champions.
- 3.10 Based on this very positive feedback, we will now prioritise the implementation of a Parent Champion scheme as part of the implementation plans.
- 3.11 Respondents wanted staff that are friendly, respectful, genuine and understand their family situation. They access services from settings other than Children's Centre's and Family Support Workers, such as GP, health visitor, schools and the internet. Around 60% of respondents did not know of or rarely accessed advice online.
- 3.12 As a result of this feedback, we have developed a set of values and behaviours, which reflect what the public expect. We will further develop the EIP offer in conjunction with partners (where the public initially access services) to ensure the pathways into EIP are clear. We expect an increase in use of online services as part of the corporate digital transformation programme.

### **Stakeholder consultation**

- 3.13 The majority of respondents supported more integrated working by professionals. There were some concerns about meeting families in their own homes, especially if they are vulnerable adults, children, victims of domestic abuse, drug users or when a family is in crisis.
- 3.14 We will therefore ensure the public are able to access the proposed community outreach bases as well as the eight Strengthening Families Hubs. We also intend to have specific staff within the new service who will have a greater level of skill and knowledge of specific needs so they are able to support other staff to engage with families in crisis and provide an integrated response.
- 3.15 Professionals fed back that the proposal for Strengthening Families Workers to be a single port of call for families would be less confusing for families and would help support better relationships and, therefore, produce better outcomes. There was enthusiasm to develop mechanisms to work together with other professionals in order to raise confidence in their work. We will therefore make sure that sharing skills and experience is core to the workforce development plan which will be developed.

- 3.16 Stakeholders were asked about how they access additional support from other professionals. 78% said they would contact others in their organisation for additional support, 56% said they would make a referral via Early Help and 42% said they would research online.
- 3.17 Therefore, we will ensure a culture of support and assistance is embedded both in the values that we expect employees to demonstrate and highlighted in the induction given to new and existing employees.

#### **4.0 The proposed design**

- 4.1 The outline design was set out in the November 2015 Cabinet Report. Work to develop the emergent model (which includes Universal Services and services for families from priority groups, the Targeted Early Intervention and Prevention service, the Specialist Intensive Support (SIS) service and the Central Early Intervention and Prevention team) is described below. The intended organisational structure for the new services can be found in Appendix one.
- 4.2 Due to the specialist nature of the therapeutic support function within the SIS Service, we propose this is commissioned from an organisation with a track record of delivery.
- 4.3 Job Descriptions have been reviewed or developed to support the new structure and include feedback from the consultation. They reference the agreed values and behaviours (as described in Section five) and reflect the skills and experience we expect employees to demonstrate.
- 4.4 A key component of the re-design is ensuring an agile and mobile workforce, supported by suitable technology solutions and aligned to the Council's digital transformation programme. Technology is being tested through the trial of devices with a selection of employees in various roles to ensure the final mobile working solution meets their needs.
- 4.5 Re-designed pathways, outlining the journey a family will make both into the EIP service and within the service (escalating up from universal to the SIS team and deescalating down), have been mapped out to ensure EIP offers the right level of support at the right time to families.

#### **5.0 Workforce development**

- 5.1 The Council has been considering which evidence-based working model to adopt to enable front line employees to effectively work with families and enable improved outcomes. The model will need to increase consistency and quality of casework, increase practitioner confidence, support the culture and be suitable for Wolverhampton. It will be strengths-based and solution-focused, with an emphasis on working in partnership with families.

- 5.2 As a result of in-depth research, understanding the evidence base from where models have been used elsewhere and evaluating the options against an agreed set of criteria, two models are being considered: Signs of Safety and the Family Partnership Model. Both models are being rigorously assessed and a decision about which to use will be presented to the Transforming Children's Board for approval.
- 5.3 The guiding principles and behaviours we expect employees to demonstrate are based on the corporate PRIDE behaviours, discussions with employees and feedback from the consultation. The values and behaviours are embedded within the new Job Descriptions, the induction for new and existing employees, the working model, and will be reflected in future workforce development plans.
- 5.4 The levels of skills and the specialisms within each locality are currently evolving and will be agreed before implementation begins. From an analysis of existing data, we already know there is a need to upskill the workforce in domestic violence, substance misuse, mental health issues and child sexual exploitation.

## **6.0 Developing the model with partners**

- 6.1 Partners, such as schools, Health professionals, the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Youth Council have been involved in the consultation process through existing governance forums. Engagement will continue through Learning Communities and the Children's Service newsletter.
- 6.2 Partners will be involved within each project workstream, where required, to ensure their views are incorporated into the detailed design and during implementation. This will ensure the EIP service has the right local networks in place to optimise its effectiveness.

## **7.0 Commissioning and procurement**

- 7.1 Work is underway to map out the commissioning and procurement processes for the EIP service and analysing spend data to establish purchasing trends, which will be matched with the needs identified across the city.
- 7.2 The Strengthening Families Workers will have the ability to broker support relating to specific needs so we are working to develop a clear process which will allow the micro-commissioning of additional, creative solutions. The process will ensure a timely response while adhering to the Council's procurement rules. The processes for the macro (or strategic) commissioning of goods and services are being reviewed to ensure they are streamlined, effective and avoid duplication of effort across teams.
- 7.3 We are also collating existing contracts from each locality so other localities can make best use of what's in place and identify where there are existing corporate contracts that could be utilised to achieve greater economies of scale. A "locality

contract register” will be developed, drawing on relevant contracts from the corporate register, to improve access to existing contractual arrangements.

## **8.0 Performance management**

- 8.1 An EIP-wide performance framework is being developed, which will allow the service to measure the impact of interventions on individual families, the impact of specific services, and whether the Council is achieving its strategic aim of preventing family breakdown. The framework will provide strategic information to senior management and give operational reporting detail to the Strengthening Families Partnership Managers (previously named Locality Managers) and Heads of Service.
- 8.2 Existing Locality Managers and Heads of Service have been involved in developing the dashboards of management information to support them in making informed decisions. We intend to make use of readily available data where possible and to supplement with new data collections where necessary. Specifications for any data collection or reporting mechanisms which are currently unavailable will be fed into the corporate Future Performance Programme.
- 8.3 The new Development Officer role will provide clear links between each locality and city-wide planning for EIP, ensuring a flow of data and information. This will include performance and service user feedback data to support Strengthening Families Partnership Managers and will help inform commissioning priorities.
- 8.4 Work is also underway to identify how the Development Officers will work closely with the corporate Business and Intelligence Hub to best use the available data, cross-referencing data collected by other teams, directorates and partners and weighting the data so that localities are able to target the right families.

## **9.0 Implementation approach and timescales**

- 9.1 Implementation of the new EIP model is planned to take place by June 2016 with some elements having the potential to be in place earlier.
- 9.2 Implementation plans are being developed for each workstream which show detailed activity from February to August 2016, including how each workstream output will be embedded following the go live date. The re-design will continue to be governed by the Transforming Children’s Services Programme and partners and users will continue to be consulted throughout the implementation.
- 9.3 A high level implementation plan, showing key activities and milestones for each workstream, can be found in Appendix two.



## 10.0 Financial implications

- 10.1 The total budget for Children and Young People Services for 2015/16 is £51.9 million.
- 10.2 There are a number of existing Early Intervention and Prevention services which have been initially deemed in scope for this transformation programme. The initial focus of this programme are those services that the Council delivers directly to families and those that a provider is commissioned to deliver. The total budget for these services is £10.2 million; the budgeted net cost to the Council in 2015/16 is £8.2 million.
- 10.3 The Medium Term Financial Strategy included a saving proposal for the reduction in Looked After Children of £6 million (£3 million in 2015/16 and £1 million each year for 2016/17 – 2018/19).
- 10.4 The Medium Term Financial Strategy also includes a savings target of £1 million, deferred from previous years. This will be realised as the number of Looked After Children reduce, enabling a reduction in employee resources. The Budget Report on the same agenda proposes to re-profile £750,000 of this from 2016/17 to 2017/18.
- 10.5 Cabinet on 22 July 2015 and 21 October 2015 included savings proposals of £4.4 million for the Children's Services Re-design, which were approved for further development in the Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2018/19.
- 10.6 Therefore, the total savings requirement in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2016/17 is £6.4 million. In summary the savings for 2016/17 will be delivered by:

Description	£000
<b>Total Savings Target for Children's Services 2016/17 – 2017/18</b>	<b>(6,350)</b>
Net Savings from Service Re-Design	1,975
Savings from the reduction in the number of Looked after Children	3,625
Reduction in employee resources as a result of the reduction in LAC	750

- 10.7 The whole service re-design will underpin the delivery of an accelerated, sustainable and lasting reduction in the number of LAC over the medium term. The Medium Term Financial Strategy assumes a reduction in the number of LAC to 583 by 31 March 2017 and 559 by 31 March 2019, which assumes the delivery of significant savings in placement costs of £3.6 million.

10.8 Capital investment for this proposal will require investment of £405,000 to undertake essential works. This has been incorporated into Capital Programme 2015/16 to 2019/20 Quarter Three Review on the same agenda, which will then go onto Full Council for approval.  
[NM/02022016/G]

## **11.0 Legal implications**

11.1 Following on from the Cabinet Report in November 2015, Cabinet is now being asked to approve the EIP model and its implementation, including its proposed organisational structure. Given the human resources and equal opportunities implications of the proposed re-design of the EIP Service in relation to staff and their employment, all endeavours will be undertaken in accordance with relevant employment and equal opportunities legislation and practice to ensure that they comply with legal constraints.

11.2 Further, due to the potential nature of the proposed re-design, consideration has been given to Section 5(a) of the Childcare Act 2006, amended by the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009 which requires Local Authorities to ensure there is sufficient Children's Centre provision within the local area to meet local need. The proposals set out in this report ensure that the Council continues to discharge its duties in relation to this.

11.3 Section 5(d) of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 provides a statutory framework in which consultation about proposed changes to Children's Centres can take place and due regard would be given to ensuring compliance with these requirements.  
[JB/01022016/C]

## **12.0 Equalities implications**

12.1 The Equality Act 2010 and the General Equality Duty that the Act creates at Section 149 require the Council to ensure, as far as is proportionate or practical, that policies and services are compliant before decisions are taken to approve them; to have what the Act calls "Due regard".

12.2 Equalities are core to the transformation set out in this report and have been integral to the process from the outset. This can be evidenced in the tender specification that was developed for the consultancy work that has underpinned these proposals.

12.3 The proposal to establish a service development function will enable local trends to be understood, evidence collated and work supported to ensure that the Council's equalities ambitions and duties operate in practice as well as in policy.

12.4 This report and its associated initial equality analysis have identified the potential for adverse implications for some people who share characteristics as defined and protected in the Equality Act. The report describes a new service model and

officers are clear that adverse impacts can be mitigated and/or justified within the context of those permissible under the Act.

12.5 A full equality analysis has been undertaken and this was informed by the consultation findings. The analysis can be found on the Council's website <sup>2</sup>.

12.6 Any proposed employee changes will fall within the Council's Equality in Employment Policy and will be reflected in the Council's annual equality monitoring reports.

### **13.0 Environmental implications**

13.1 There are no environmental issues arising from this report.

### **14.0 Human Resource implications**

14.1 The proposals for the re-design will lead to a reduction in the overall resource requirements within the EIP service. Affected employees have had the opportunity to participate in the design and development of the future service. Full consultation with employees and trade unions is taking place regarding the proposed changes to the service.

14.2 Changes to organisation structure, job roles and resource numbers is being managed in accordance with the City of Wolverhampton Council's policies and procedures. In order to minimise the impact of redundancy on employees and in accordance with the Council's Assimilation Policy and Process, where it's appropriate employees will be assimilated into posts with ring fenced recruitment being used for new posts or posts for which duties have substantially changed.

14.3 The proposed re-design will require employees to adopt a five out of seven day working pattern. In accordance with the Collective Agreement, full consultation will be undertaken with affected employees. Following appropriate local consultation processes, the working week of individual employees may be arranged over a seven-day period (five out of seven), including weekends, provided that the employee's average core hours over a pre-determined reference period does not exceed 37 hours.

14.4 Employees who do not secure a post through the restructure will be offered redeployment support in accordance with the Restructure and Redundancy policy. The Council is currently operating a voluntary redundancy scheme which has been made available to all employees to mitigate the need for compulsory redundancy.

14.5 Employees have TUPE transferred from Children's Centres to the Council. This has been undertaken ahead of the full consultation with employees on the re-design. Consultation with affected employees regarding potential redundancy

---

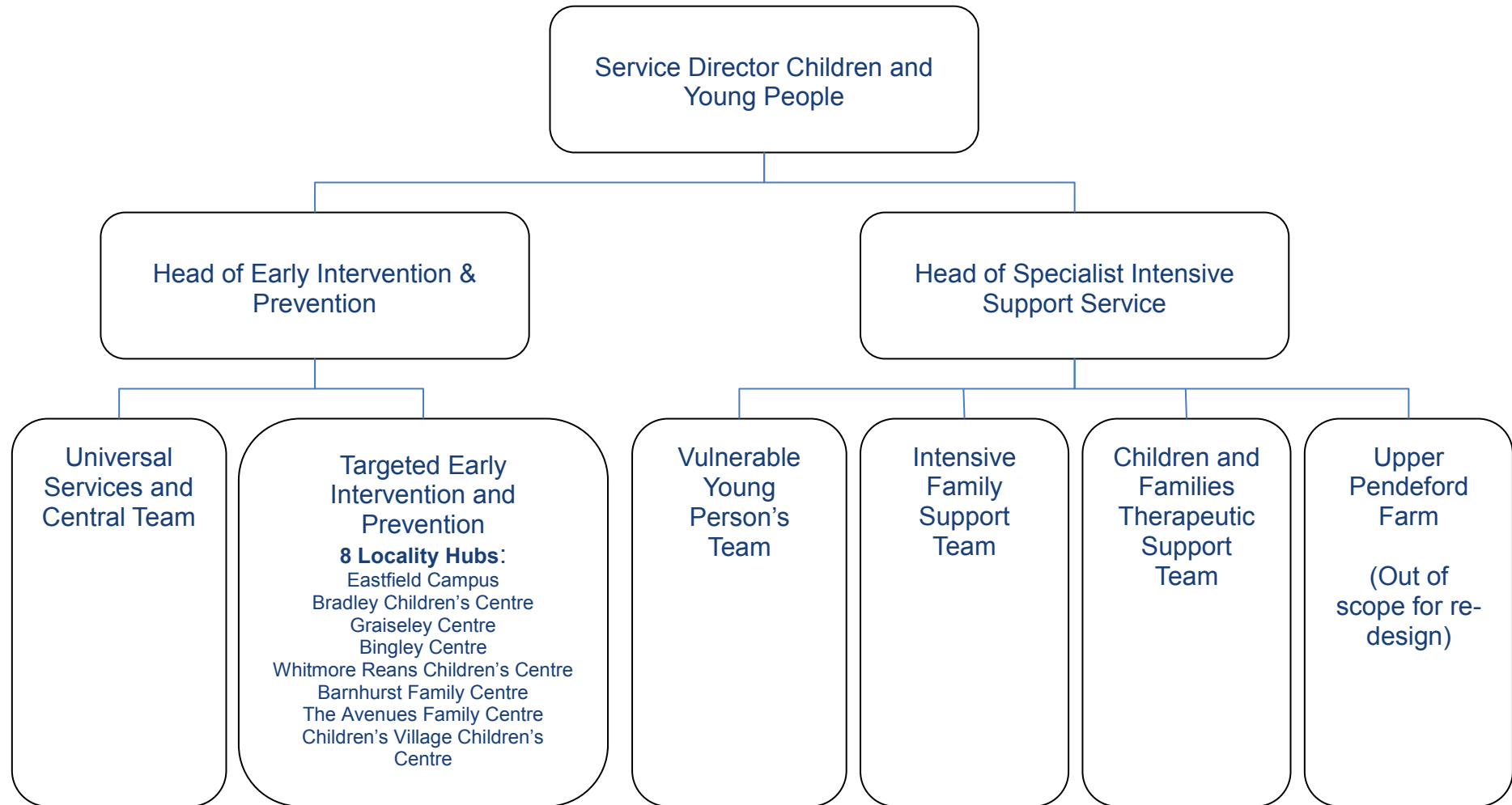
<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/article/3929/Equality-Analysis>

implications is being undertaken in accordance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.  
[HR/JF/EB/008/v2]

## **15.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 15.1 The re-design proposes one Strengthening Families Hub supporting each of the eight localities, which will provide a strengthened offer than currently delivered in individual centres and which supports a less building-centred approach.
- 15.2 The service currently occupies 25 assets of which it is proposed to retain and remodel (where appropriate) six as Strengthening Families Hubs together with two new Council sites to create a Hub in each locality. The remainder will become vacant and are predominately school sites.
- 15.3 For the school assets that will become vacant, Corporate Landlord, Children's Services and Education Services are working together to determine how the vacant spaces can be fully utilised for the good of the school estate and to support future basic need requirements.
- 15.4 The future of the potentially vacant non-school assets (Wednesfield Housing Office and Middleway Green) will be determined by the Corporate Landlord Board and a decision will be made on their future following consultation and Cabinet approval.

## Appendix One: Proposed Organisational Chart



- Universal Services and Targeted Early Intervention and Prevention teams will work out of eight Strengthening Families Hubs
- The number of employees in each of the eight Targeted Early Intervention and Prevention locality teams are based on the analysis of need in each locality

## Appendix Two: High Level Implementation Plan, February to August 2016

