

Committee: Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information	Dated: 19/06/2023
Subject: Early Help Strategy	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Claire Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Keisha Nurse, Early Help Lead, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

Summary

The City of London Corporation has a new Early Help Strategy 2023–2026. Children, families staff and stakeholders were invited to contribute to the consultation. The strategy will help to see the vision for the Early Help Service realised, which is that all City of London children, young people and families who access the Early Help Service are supported to address their concerns and are provided with practical assistance to help them to live full and happy lives.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

Engagement process

1. The strategy was devised following an engagement process and a 10-week public consultation. As part of the consultation, a series of questions were asked about various aspects of the current plan, and whether respondents agreed with the identified outcomes and priorities, and what they felt needed to be amended and updated. To identify the outcomes and focus areas of the new plan, key service professionals, both internal and external to the City Corporation, were consulted.
2. Engagement was carried out with professionals from the following service areas:
 - o Early Help & Children’s Social Care

- o Education and Early Years
- o The City Child and Families Centre at the Aldgate School
- o City Advice
- o Youth Services
- o Young Hackney
- o St Paul's Cathedral
- o Health Visiting
- o Mental Health Services
- o Adult Education

3. Published information from the Action for Children survey completed in 2022 was also used to help inform the updated Early Help Strategy as children/young people and families supported by the City of London were consulted to obtain their feedback about the service received. The engagement questions put to service professionals were framed in a way to seek how the service can improve to better meet the needs of children, young people and families.

Public consultation

4. Following the development of the updated strategy, a 10-week public consultation period was undertaken to gather feedback from children and young people, parents, Members, City of London residents and service professionals on the design of the Plan and the identified outcomes and priorities.
5. The consultation was hosted on the City of London website and was open for a period of 10 weeks (19 December 2022 – 24 February 2023).

Early Help Strategy 2023–2026 consultation response

6. The consultation was promoted to various groups to provide the widest range of multi-disciplinary feedback. These included:
 - a. Achieving Excellence Board
 - b. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Programme Board
 - c. Early Help Multi-Agency Practitioners Forum
 - d. Children's Senior Management Team
 - e. Early Help Sub-group
 - f. City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP)
 - g. Safeguarding Sub Committee
 - h. Children's Partnership Board
 - i. Emotional Health and Wellbeing Partnership
7. As well as promoting the consultation to individual groups, the survey was promoted by the CHSCP and sent by individuals to families they work with in the City.

Current Position

8. The strategy covers children and young people aged 0–18 and their families. The strategy has a focus on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and the need for specialist provision for this cohort. The priorities identified in the strategy will have a positive effect on advancing equality of opportunity for young people with disabilities, and support for their families. The strategy strongly considers inequality of services for children, young people and their families due to race, and also aims to identify inequalities in services.
9. The strategy is now published on the City of London website¹.

The Early Help Strategy

10. The Early Help Strategy sets out how services will respond to identified need at the right time, in the right place to maximise positive outcomes before needs escalate. The accompanying action plan addresses this across 6 overarching outcomes;
 - a. All children and young people feel safe in all aspects of their lives.
 - b. Children, young people and families feel their needs are identified, understood, and are responded to quickly.
 - c. Families feel supported to address their needs.
 - d. Inequalities experienced by children, young people and families in the City of London are addressed.
 - e. Children, young people, and their families feel their needs are a priority by all services that work with them.
 - f. Children, young people and families feel service development takes their needs into account.

Key Data

11. There were 14 responses to the consultation from range of sources across City early help partnership.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Corporate plan

12. This strategy contributes to a flourishing society, by promoting safety for children, their health and wellbeing and providing opportunity to have full lives and to reach their potential.

Financial implications

13. N/A

Resource implications

14. N/A

Legal implications

¹ <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Services-DCCS/early-help-strategy-2023-26.pdf>

15. N/A

Risk implications

16. N/A

Equalities implications

17. An Equalities Test of Relevance has been conducted and concluded that the Early Help Strategy aims to improve social mobility by illustrating our priority to work with families from all socio-economic backgrounds and address any issues of inequality of services that are identified so that all children, young people and their families can flourish and reach their full potential. By ensuring that inequalities are highlighted and challenged by all partner agencies, the strategy should reduce inequality between those with protected characteristics and those without.

Climate implications

18. N/A

Security implications

19. N/A

Conclusion

The Early Help Strategy is designed to be simple and accessible, clearly setting out how to achieve the vision of Early Help. It will be reviewed by 2026.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – The Early Help Strategy 2023–2026

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