

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

17 JUNE 2021

MEDWAY EARLY HELP STRATEGY ADDENDUM REPORT

Report from: Dr Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People – Children and Adult Services

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Summary

This addendum report sets out the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee which considered this report on 9 June 2021.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Head of First Response and Targeted Services introduced the draft Medway Early Help Strategy which set out Medway's early help offer and covered a period of three years.
- 1.2. Members then raised a number of questions and comments which included:
 - 1.2.1 Lead professionals – in response to a question about how to ensure a family is designated with the right lead professional, it was explained that the aspiration was for all agencies to use the same information system to make the sharing of information seamless and the discussion around who the appropriate lead professional easier.
 - 1.2.2 Sharing of data – officers confirmed they would share the strategy dashboard data with the committee.
 - 1.2.3 Proactive support – comments were made about whether the early help offer could be highlighted to families who were vulnerable, for example, where a child has complex needs. Officers confirmed that early help support needed to be consensual and there was no statutory right to intervene unless a serious safeguarding concern arose. It was therefore key to ensure that the early help offer was well advertised across the partnership.

- 1.2.4 Public awareness – in response to a question about how the Council was to ensure parents and carers knew how to access support, officers confirmed that the single point of access (SPA) information was widely advertised across the Council website, social media, libraries, family hubs, schools, Citizens Advice Bureau and many other partner organisations.
- 1.3. The Committee recommended the Medway Early Help Strategy, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, to the Cabinet for approval.

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