

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – MARCH 2018

Title of paper:	Edge of Care Services		
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman – Director, Children’s Integrated Services	Wards affected:	All
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Other colleagues who have provided input:	Donna Stenton Groves - MST Supervisor Mark Ball – Edge of Care Hub Manager		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)			
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:			
Strategic Regeneration and Development			<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools			<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing			<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services			<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer			<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport			<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector			<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture			<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration			<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):			
<p>•To update the Board on the current menu of services provided at the edge of care, to prevent family breakdown.</p> <p>•To provide a brief overview of the effectiveness of these services in keeping families together, and building resilience in order to avoid children coming into care.</p>			
Recommendation(s):			
1	To continue to invest in Edge of Care (EOC) Services.		

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Whilst there have been increases in the numbers of children coming into care on a national and local level, the reasons for this increase are primarily due to child protection concerns with children being at risk of significant harm and coming into care following the conclusion of care proceedings. Edge of Care Services target those children and young people at risk of coming into care, due to conflict or family breakdown. These services have had some success in keeping families together, and avoiding more children entering the care system.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 Nationally, the number of children accommodated and those involved in care proceedings is increasing. As a result most Councils seek to invest in EOC services to support children to remain at home (where possible and where safe to do so) to avoid the trauma of family breakdown.
- 2.2 Over 10 years ago, the Green Paper 'Care Matters' (2006) argued that we "should concentrate our efforts on avoiding the need for care, except for those who truly need its support. "We must identify problems earlier and respond quickly and effectively". Our responses must be driven by what we know are the key characteristics of effective interventions. These are:
- multi-disciplinary and multi-agency;
 - centred around the child;
 - sustained, with support continuing as long as it is needed; evidence-based, i.e. grounded in robust evaluation of what works.
- 2.3 In 2011 Nottingham City Council introduced the Edge of Care Panel, which seeks to provide effective interventions in the way described above. The format of the Panel has changed over the last few years. The Panel sits weekly, and is chaired by the Head of Service for Children's Social Care. There are on average five families presented at the Panel every week. Originally, Targeted Family Support (TST) was the main Edge of Care service to work with families on the edge of accommodation, and was later joined for a short time in 2012 by the independent provider "Social Work Choices" who undertook edge of care work.
- 2.4 The Department for Education Research Review (Rethinking support for adolescents in or on the edge of care, 2014) found that, by the age of 14 years, abuse and neglect accounted for just 42% of entries to care, with 45% accounted for by a mixture of acute family stress, family dysfunction and socially unacceptable behaviour. However, it is important to note that earlier abuse or neglect may also exist in families experiencing acute family stress, and in some cases may account for the family stress.
- 2.5 With this in mind it was important to ensure the Edge of Care Panel provided a range of services which would target the children, young people and families referred to in the 2014 Research Review. Work has taken place over the last four years to identify evidence-based interventions likely to support families in addressing difficult periods, reducing problematic behaviours, addressing unresolved trauma and thus preventing breakdown. This investment in Edge of Care Services saves children and families from the trauma of separation and public care costs, since these identified interventions can improve their relationships. Even if an intervention cannot avoid accommodation of a child, it can help to repair rifts in family relationships making a long-term difference.
- 2.6 In 2013 an initiative called Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) was introduced, providing a therapeutic framework for working with families, and the professional networks around them including schools. The criteria for accessing this type of support included children who displayed anti-social behaviour, who were involved with / or at risk of becoming involved with the criminal justice system and children with poor / low school attendance. 'MST standard' is not licenced to work with young people in child protection, however it has demonstrated a huge impact on families overwhelmed by trauma and complex histories. In the same year, the Edge of Care Hub was also

implemented to bridge the gap by providing support to families that did not meet criteria of MST.

- 2.4 In 2016, two further services contributed to the Menu of Services, which can be accessed at the Panel. These were 'Multi-Systemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect' (specifically aimed at child protection) and Safe Families for Children as an earlier intervention.
- 2.5 Since the number of support services and interventions has increased, the Panel can now consider which of the services available best meets the needs of the family, and this allows a more flexible approach to be taken. It is also important to note that families do need to give their consent to work with a particular service. All of these interventions have been established to work with families and prevent children being accommodated by working intensively with the whole family and building resilience, improving parenting and strengthening the relationships between parent / carers and their children.

The Edge of Care Services- Brief Overview

- 2.6 The Targeted Family Support Team (0-8yrs) provides an emergency response to families at imminent risk of breakdown. There is a brief intervention of 6 to 8 weeks, which is solution focused with family network meetings.
- 2.7 EOC Hub (0-18) provides intensive support to families in crisis, meets Priority Families criteria, work with complex issues including mental health, pregnant mothers with chaotic lifestyles or a low repertoire of parenting skills. EOC Hub also works with families who do not meet MST criteria.
- 2.8 MST Standard (working with young people aged 11-18) is a 24/7 on call service which provides an evidence based, licensed programme. It provides intensive home, school and community based services to adolescents and their families who are experiencing difficulties in multiple areas of their lives. There might be family conflict, non-school attendance and the children and young people may be known to the Youth Justice system due to anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, MST works with parents who may suffer with mental and emotional health issues and potentially have unresolved trauma themselves.
- 2.9 MST CAN (working with young people aged 6-17) is a 24/7 on call support and intensive intervention for families who have physically abused or neglected their children. The aim is to reduce /overcome risk factors that contribute to the maltreatment e.g. drug and alcohol misuse.
- 2.10 Safe Families for Children is a faith-based organisation, providing trained volunteers to support and befriend vulnerable families. It aims to prevent their problems escalating, or support them whilst they are in crisis. This service also offers children overnight stays, mentoring support and resources, to relieve family pressures.
- 2.11 All of these services contribute significantly to building resilience in families, reducing problematic parenting behaviours and risk. They create an environment that sensitively confronts and addresses issues that may have been present across generations. In a number of cases, this has achieved positive change, resulting in children being able to remain safely at home.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 None.

4 FINANCE COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 Edge of Care Services generate considerable budget relief.

5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 None.

6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)

6.1 None.

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No

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An EIA is not required because the report does not contain proposals or financial decisions.

Yes

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8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

8.1 None.

9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

9.1 Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care. 2006
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-matters-transforming-the-lives-of-children-and-young-people-in-care>

9.2 Rethinking Support for Adolescents in or on the Edge of Care
Department for Education Children's Social Care Innovation Programme. 2014
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342052/Rethinking_support_for_adolescents.pdf