

Proposed Decision to be made Under the Council's Urgency Procedure by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education on 16 December 2021

Bid for Funding to Department of Education for the development of a Family Hub within Warwickshire

Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jeff Morgan
Date of decision	Decision Date
	Signed

Decision taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education approves the submission of a bid for up to £1,000,000 (one million pounds) for the creation and development of a Family Hub within Warwickshire, and delegates to the Strategic Director for People the finalisation of all bid documents.

Reasons for decision

In November 2021, the Department for Education invited bids for up to £1million from Councils for seed funding to develop Family Hubs.

The proposed Warwickshire bid centred around the buildings on the Warwickshire Academy site ("the Site") with the intention to create a Family Hub. Given the significant size of the property we are referring to the site as a Family Village, which will in the long-term act as the main hub, which will focus on SEND. This can then be used as a model to be rolled out across Warwickshire's fifteen Children's Centres and four Youth & Community Centres.

The Site contains an administrative building and several bungalows that have been identified as suitable for the creation of the SEND focussed Family Hub and the proposal meets the conclusions of the Peopletoo report completed about the Site.

Children and Families have engaged with key partner agencies and are confident that the bid has support and will meet the DfE's stated focus on SEND, centres that can open and scale up quickly (before 2024) and have a whole family approach.

The bid does not commit to any match funding. It will state that funding will be sought within the Council but that this is not guaranteed as the funding application must go through the Council's governance processes.

Reasons for Urgency

The bid must be submitted by 17 December 2021. The opportunity to bid was not announced until November and due to the work required to compile the bid at the same time as meeting the requirements of the Ofsted inspection the decision is an urgent one.

Background information

Warwickshire and partners have worked together to create a shared strategic vision to co-produce and deliver services for children, young people and their families and have an ambitious plan to achieve this by 2024.

This application will support our first Family Hub which will have a specialist focus on SEND / SEMH. Reflecting the rising numbers of CYP with SEND / SEMH and the difficulties families experience at times accessing and navigating services.

Early Help Offer

Warwickshire's strong Early Help offer is evidencing strong impact and outcomes. Based upon a stepped approach, services are available to support children and families at the right time to prevent needs from escalating to require specialist services.

At present Warwickshire externally commission 14 Children and Family Centres. This application is for the first Family Hub, known as the "Family Village" at the site. Warwickshire is committed to the delivery of the Hub model and seeks to deliver the first hub as a flagship Family Village. The site has been purchased by WCC and there has been a potential £2m allocation made for a capital bid that we can adapt the site for delivery. We will deliver the requirements of the 1001 days in the main building and we wish this hub to have a specialist overlay by becoming the single point of access to support for children with special education needs and disabilities, and those with Social, Emotional Mental Health, and behaviour disorders.

In 2023 we will start the process of recommissioning the current 14 children and family centres and our internal 4 Youth Centres, which will enable us to join this flagship hub with the 18 other centres, that will convert into Family Hubs too.

Access

Virtual Offer

We recognise that to be accessible and connect with families we need to think beyond buildings. Our Family Village offer will be enhanced with a digital offer. We have learned from the Covid-19 pandemic that a large majority of children, young people, and families prefer to communicate and access services online, in a way that is inclusive, non-stigmatising and at a time which is convenient to them.

An online digital offer will provide access to a wealth of information advice, signposting services, online counselling, and parenting groups etc. Our Family Navigators will be available to support families via a “chat” function, ensuring they receive timely support.

Family Village (the Site)

We have purchased the Family Village buildings will invest in developing them to a suitable site for delivery. This site will become the Single Point of Access to services for children, young people and their families within Warwickshire. It will be the central point of contact for early intervention and support and will be the gateway to a coordinated approach to provision for all children and young people with SEND and SEMH. This will bolster the universal offer available to all children and young people age 0-19

Face to face

Building A, will become the main universal delivery building, it is in this building that the 1001 days offer will be situated. A multi-use universal provision room for early years, it will provide extensive opportunities for children to experience sensory play in a dedicated sensory room. A children's library (supporting with SEND and Mental Health resources) will be available, as will a Community Café. This is of importance to reduce social isolation of and increase inclusion of families with SEND and Disabilities and intergenerational work and volunteering to commence. It will host up to 5 clinical rooms on the ground floor, to be utilised by midwifery, health visiting, speech & language, physiotherapy, Community Paediatrician, Occupational Health, and other services requiring clinical standard space.

On the top floor are a suite of offices which multi-agency partners can access. A large training area can facilitate multi-disciplinary training, including with parents and community groups.

To support connections with marginalised groups we hope to include a registrar of births service, providing our family workers with a face-to-face opportunity to welcome new parents and introduce our services reassuring them that they are there to guide and support them through their family journey.

The value added for this SEND/SEMH specialist family Village is the suite of 5 large bungalows on site. Our ambition is to utilise these for the delivery of specific prevention services to support children with SEND and Mental Health. Initial scoping has identified the following priority areas:

High intensity parenting support

Objective is to support children from pre-birth to adolescence by providing a coordinated high intensity parenting offer:

- Health Visitors using Video Interactive Guidance to increase strong attachments and supporting perinatal maternal mental health.
- Early Help Family Support Workers and Early Help Assistant Psychologists working in conjunction with the Primary Mental Health teams.
- Educational Psychologist service.
- Systemic family therapy service – aid rehabilitation from care and prevention of LA accommodation.
- Foster carers support: to provide placement stability and prevention of breakdown.
- The ability for Drug and Alcohol and Adult Mental Health recovery services to deliver support on site.
- Adult social care will be intrinsic to the delivery of the Village to improve transitions.

Education Support

Flex Learning support, enabling CYP a place to go to support with reintegration to school once out for medical related issues. The referrals for children into this service has increased exponentially over recent years due to anxiety. This will support the SEMH aspect of the centre.

- **Early Support** and portage supporting under 5s with SEND, in conjunction with Early Help onsite
- **SENDIAS:** Integrated support on site from the voluntary commissioned service supporting SEND families.
- **Adult and community Learning** to be located in this space and deliver education directly to adults.

Out of hours

- The Emergency Duty Team and STAY (existing Adolescent Support Service) could have a base to facilitate out of hours support to families.
- Along with other services such as support services for Domestic Abuse and for fathers who are often hard to engage in usual hours.

Connection

The ambition is that the multi-agency services working together on site would all agree to a multi-disciplinary information sharing agreement and would share one connected electronic management recording system and telephony system. Whilst we do not underestimate the challenges this creates; we are very willing and prepared to drive this forward.

Relationships

Warwickshire is a Restorative Practice authority. Many professionals in our network have been trained in this approach along with Parental Conflict and an understanding of Trauma responses would be part of the mandatory induction training for all Family Village colleagues. This work builds upon our progress made through the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children project.

The main building and the bungalows would be managed by one Operations Manager, who would support the multi-disciplinary partners. In addition, the building would have one access control and recording system.

This approach would be the approach we would seek to convert all the 14 Children and Family Centres and the 4 Youth and Community. Therefore, this bid is for the maximum funding, to launch the flagship Family Village in preparation to convert the other centres and create 18 Family Hubs in phase 2 of our plan.

Financial implications

We would request the full funding amount of £1 million to support our application. £167,000 Capital will be used plan, design and get the service ready to create the spaces to deliver the Family Village that make this a flagship for SEND and SEMH. WCC are committed to the Family Hubs model and have purchased this site and buildings accordingly.

Capital Monies

The capital bid monies would pump prime the infrastructure and will enable a full feasibility study to be carried out to enable WCC to develop the site into a flagship Family Village for SEND/SEMH delivery. There is a nominal £20,000 for immediate materials and equipment to enable some services to be delivered from Sept 2022. Services will then scale up on site up to 2024 when the remaining 14 children and family centres are onboarded to create a portfolio of 1 flagship Family Hub (our Family Village) and 14 separate Family Hubs around the county.

£833,000 programme

The ambition is to use the transformation money to create a culture of relationships and connectivity in our Family Village which will then.

We will fund the one-off cost for an Information Sharing Agreement to written between multi-agency partners and authorised by legal. We have identified the key staffing roles required and

have costed these from the date their planned employment up to March 2024, taking into consideration “on costs” and inflation.

We have included a comprehensive training package for multi-disciplinary Family Village staff

The transformation monies have been allocated to pump prime the delivery of the Family Village as a centre of excellence for SEND/SEMH.

- An operations manager to oversee the development, delivery and long-term implementation of the Family Village and Family Hubs
- A project manager to oversee the governance and delivery
- Independent consultation with parent carer forums and partners
- Develop a strong virtual offer to enable SEND/SEMH specialisms to be delivered online (ie through webchat, virtual delivery and social media content
- Specialists to support with one information sharing agreement to cover all multi-disciplinary teams in the village and be robust enough to cover the 15 family hubs from 2024
- Mosaic development and data analysts to create the platforms for one integrated recording and reporting system
- Centre workers, Family Support Workers and Early years workers in the Village. These workers will be trained in SEND/SEMH during the early stages of the project and whilst they will have responsibility for delivery of services in the Village eventually, will also have the responsibility to transform and upskill workers in the other 14 Family Hubs. Onboarding these workers early will enable training, growth and knowledge that will be shared across a range of multi-disciplinary partners, community and voluntary sector and parents and carers.
- This will enable service extension into rural areas and schools and Early Years settings also.

Added Value

- Joint working and recording and reporting aids efficiencies and reduces duplication
- Ambition is to:
 - Prevent late diagnosis
 - Prevent escalations to social care interventions and accommodation

Running costs and match funding

Running cost are not included in this bid.

The bid to DfE and CIF will enable the Family Village to be set up and initially developed. The ongoing revenue costs of operating the Village will be met from existing budgets and an additional permanent MTFs funding allocation being agreed through the current budget setting round to minimise the need for children with disabilities residential care placements.

There is no match funding confirmed, the bid is clear any further funding will need to be applied for and agreed through the county council usual procedures. Should the bid be successful, accepting the funding will be predicated on securing County Council Capital Investment Funding as well for the project, otherwise it will not be viable to modify the buildings.

Environmental implications

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Consideration will be given to environmental issues and implications as the project develops should funding bid be successful.

Report Author	John Coleman
Assistant Director	John Coleman, Assistant Director Children and Families
Strategic Director	Nigel Minns, Strategic Director for People
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education

Urgent matter?	Yes
Confidential or exempt?	No
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	No

List of background papers (If applicable)

Family Hubs guidance from DfE is available [here](#)

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jeff Morgan

Corporate Board – Strategic Director People and Strategic Director Resources

Legal – Nichola Vine, Legal & Governance Service Manager

Finance – Brian Smith, Finance Lead (Children's and Education Services)

Equality – EDI Team

Democratic Services – Nichola Vine, Legal & Governance Service Manager

Councillors – (For consent to Urgency) Cllr Yousef Dahmash