

Portfolio Holder Decision

Health Visiting Public Consultation

Portfolio Holder	Leader of the Council
Date of decision	28 July 2023
	Signed

1. Decision taken

That the Leader of the Council

- 1.1 Approves the engagement in public consultation in relation to the delivery of the 0-5 Public Health Nursing Service and the development of a Section 75 Partnership Agreement between Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire University Foundation Trust

2. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 The current 0 - 5 Public Health Nursing Service is delivered by South Warwickshire University Foundation Trust (SWUFT) via a contract for services with the Council which expires on 31st March 2024.
- 2.2 The Council are considering options for the future commissioning and delivery of this service from April 2024. One of the options being explored is entering into a partnership agreement with SWUFT under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006, under which commissioners can delegate health visitor functions (s6C NHS Act 2006 and Part 2 of the Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013) to SWUFT.
- 2.3 The Council can enter into a partnership agreement with SWUFT providing:
 - The Council is satisfied that the arrangements are likely to lead to an improvement in the way in which those functions are exercised; and
 - The Council and SWUFT have jointly consulted people likely to be affected by such arrangements
- 2.4 Entering into a S75 partnership agreement will allow the Council and SWUFT to work together in a more coordinated way to integrate the delivery of 0-5 health and care services, reduce duplication of support and create efficiencies, be responsive to changes in population size and increasing complexity of need.
- 2.5 Market testing indicates that there is a limited provider market with no other NHS Providers expressing an interest in the delivering the 0 – 5 PH Nursing Service. Due to the limited market and the benefits associated with the development of a S75 Partnership Agreement, the decision has been made to explore this

- opportunity.
- 2.6 A Portfolio Holder/Leader of the Council decision is required to commence this joint consultation. The results of the consultation will be used to inform the redesign of services and future commissioning arrangements for Health Visiting. Should a Section 75 partnership agreement be recommended, the decision will be made by Cabinet. The aim of this consultation is to jointly work with SWUFT to inform and shape the redesign of the Health Visiting Service in Warwickshire to make best use of the resources available and deliver the right service at the right time.
- 2.7 Through the consultation, commissioners aim to understand:
- People's views on these proposals
 - How these proposals may impact on service users, potential service users and stakeholders
 - Consider alternative options and how concerns can be mitigated
 - Consider the specific equality impacts and any mitigation
- 2.8 The proposals have been developed over the past 18 months and informed by engagement with Warwickshire families, customers and key organisations working with Health Visiting Services within Warwickshire. Consultation is an opportunity to share these proposals and to inform the redesign and future commissioning of services.
- 2.9 Commissioners are jointly consulting following the Council's consultation guidance. The consultation will be conducted by the Council and SWUFT whilst the proposal is still at a formative stage and the consultation will provide enough detail to permit intelligent consideration and response. The consultation will be informed by an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to ensure commissioners have regard to:
- Protected characteristics
 - Be clear and concise about the purpose of the consultation,
 - Provide adequate time for response,
 - Take the results conscientiously into account
 - Publish the results with feedback on how the results were used.
- 2.10 Those being consulted will include Warwickshire residents, service users and potential service users and key stakeholders such as:
- Midwifery and Maternity Services, GPs, Allied health professionals and children's health services within SWUFT
 - WCC staff in Public Health, Children's services including social workers in early help and safeguarding, education colleagues including early Years and SEND
 - Voluntary and community sector organisations
 - Relevant commissioned services including School Nurses and Staff from Children and Family Centre Providers within the market
 - Early Years Settings and Schools
 - CWPT Rise and Children's LD and A Services
 - District and Borough Councils

2.11 Consultation will be carried out through the use of the Ask Warwickshire survey. In addition to this, commissioners will deliver stakeholder workshops, outreach with seldom heard groups, service users and potential service users who may be less likely to engage

Consultation Timeframe	
05/06/23 – 07/06/23	Consultation Design
28/07/23	Leader decision date
14/08/23	Start of consultation (with call in assumed)
11/09/23	Mid-Point Review
29/09/23	Close of consultation
02/10/23 – 01/11/23	Analysis of Consultation Results
23/01/24	Cabinet Decision

3. Background information

3.1 Between January and September 2021, commissioners delivered 34 virtual focus groups with over 193 Healthy Child Program (HCP) partners in Warwickshire, two online surveys for GPs and early years staff. In addition to this, 314 parents/carers voices were captured through face-to-face interviews and an online survey. This consultation was carried out to inform the re-commissioning of the 0-5 Public Health Nursing Service. The consultation highlighted the following themes that can be summarized into 5 key areas:

- Service integration, closer alignment and collaborative working with other 0-5 partners was seen as top priority for both families and frontline staff in order to streamline more coordinated support for families, improve efficiency and reduce duplication
- The need was recognized for prevention, early intervention and a locality targeted approach based on existing inequalities.
- Value driven: Strengths based service that is person centered, where families feel understood and empowered.
- Mental Health Support: Awareness and access to support in a tailored timely manner. Being able to navigate support and feeling heard.
- Understanding the role of the Health Visiting service and that this is communicated well to families in the right formats and in easy-to-understand language.

3.2 Entering into a S75 partnership agreement will allow the Council and SWUFT to work together in a more coordinated way to address the ambitions highlighted above. The benefits of developing a S75 Partnership Agreement with SWUFT are outlined below:

- Brings the organisations together in equal partnership and provides the opportunity for greater integration across Council and NHS services including early help, midwifery and children and family centres. This should improve transitions of care and information sharing
- Facilitates joint decision making and allocation of resources to allow for flexibility, adaptability, innovation, and co-ordination of services to optimise efficiency and reduce duplication. This agreement would allow pooled budgets and delegated authority where appropriate to support integrated delivery.

- Stability and continuity for the staff team and service delivery. This is particularly important given the current challenges associated with national workforce shortages of Health Visitors, which is impacting recruitment and retention of staff.

3.3 There are significant strategic considerations that need to be addressed within the future commissioning arrangements of the service. These are:

- The development of integrated partnership working with the potential to consider co-location of services, multi-disciplinary teams and `team around the child` within the early help and early years system
- The recommendations and findings of Warwickshire’s 0-5 JSNA published June 2022. For example, there are predicted increases in the number of under 5-year-olds in Warwickshire that needs to be accounted for in the commissioning of services. Some increases are in the immediate term, in particular a 2% year on year growth in numbers is predicted in South Warwickshire. Over the longer term there is a county wide increase in the number of under 5-year-olds by 17.7% in 2043.¹
- Targeting services to better meet the needs of groups of the population that experience greater inequalities

Financial implications

4.1 No financial implications associated with engagement in Public Consultation.

4.2 Any cost to carrying out the Public Consultation is covered within the existing service budgets

4.3 Any service changes planned to be contained within existing budgets.

Environmental implications

5.1 Sustainability and environmental considerations will be incorporated into the Service Model as this is developed. [SWFT’s Green Plan 2022 - 2025](#) and [WCC’s Environmental Management System](#) will support and inform this approach. Potential opportunities to reduce the service’s carbon footprint include:

- Reduced car travel for health visiting staff
- Efficient use of building space and co-location of services

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Assistant Director	Becky Hale Assistant Director People Strategy and Commissioning
Strategic Director Portfolio Holder	Nigel Minns Executive Director for People Cllr Izzy Seccombe Leader of the Council
Urgent matter?	No
Confidential or exempt?	No

¹ Needs Assessment Children’s 0 – 5, Warwickshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2022

Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?

No

List of background papers

None

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Isobel Seccombe

Corporate Board – Nigel Minns

Legal – Valerie George and Caroline Gutteridge

Finance – Andrew Felton

Equality – Delroy Madden

Democratic Services – Isabelle Moorhouse

Councillors – Warwick, Birdi, Philipps, Boad and W. Roberts

Local Member(s): n/a