

**SERVICES FOR FAMILIES OF DISABLED CHILDREN AGED 0-3 YEARS**  
**2 November 2016**

**PRESENT** – Councillors C Taylor (in the Chair), Crudass, Crumbie, Mills, Tostevin and Storr.

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Crudass, Hutchinson and S. Richmond.

**OFFICERS** – Yvonne Coates, Head of First Contact and Locality Services and Allison Hill, Democratic Officer.

**Purpose of the Meeting** – To scope the review of services for families with children with disabilities aged 0-3 years.

**Points Discussed and Considered -**

- Yvonne advised Members that she had been tasked with examining the whole 0-19 sector (including 0-3) following the substantial cuts made in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) .
- Consultation events with staff have been held over the summer to discuss ways to deliver the early support service in the future.
- There are currently 24 persons on the team delivering services for disabled children 0-3 years working with 35 families. These families are children with severe disabilities.
- It was established that the early support service was previously part of the portage service which was later developed into the 0-25 service (including 0-3).
- Members examined the list of Early Support Service key stakeholders including parent and carers, health professionals, internal Council stakeholders and education and agreed that initially Members were keen to meet with the Community Paediatricians and the Specialist Health Visitors for Continuing Care.
- The Chair advised Members that he was keen to meet with parents to discuss the service and Yvonne agreed that this could be arranged by inviting some parent representatives to an informal gathering at one of the Children's Centres.
- Members questioned if Officers were aware of families that may not be taking up the service and Yvonne advised that the multi-disciplinary team at the Memorial Hospital identify children at birth and Claire Orr, Senior Early Support Co-ordinator will be able to provide some figures on offers made to

families and how many are taken up. However it was noted that there were currently no families on the waiting list for services.

- Members agreed that they needed clarification on the exact services that are being offered and how referrals are made to the service.
- Yvonne confirmed that she would be able to provide Members with the number of families offered per year broken down into those taking up the service and those that did not; how many families have an allocated social worker who made the referral; the level of service those families are accessing; and the range of disability of these children.
- Members agreed that it would also be helpful to know how the 0-25 Service links in with families of disabled children 0-3 years.
- With regard to experiences in education settings, it was suggested that opinions from the teaching professions would be useful to the review.
- A Member expressed her view that there may be a fear of engagement with some families and that the service was not readily known about outside of the authority and it was agreed that signposting would be examined as the local authority has a statutory duty to deliver this service.
- Members also agreed that it would be useful to have the performance targets relating to the service.

**ACTION** – Meet with families/parents/carers by end of November.