

## Report of Strategic Director, Place to the meeting of Bradford East to be held on 5 September 2019

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**Subject: Better Start Bradford Programme Update**

### **Summary statement:**

An update on the implementation of the Better Start Bradford programme, outcomes, impact and the implications for the district

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**Portfolio:**

**Children and Families**

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

**Children's Services/Health and Social Care**

## 1. Summary

1.1 Better Start Bradford (BSB) is an opportunity for Bradford to test out and add to the evidence base of 'what works' in improving child health and development outcomes in the early years, improving maternal and child health and school readiness.

1.2 It also provides an opportunity to test innovative approaches to changing the way our systems work together as we are using the Better Start Bradford partnership programme as a vehicle for reform across the district in early years and child health

1.3 This report outlines the background to the programme, the key principles of the approach and reports on the implementation stage and the key aspects of evaluation and learning across the district.

## 2. Background

2.1 The Better Start Bradford programme is the result of a successful £49 million National Lottery Community Fund bid led by Bradford Trident, for a 10 year early intervention and prevention programme. We are currently in year 5.

2.2 Bradford was one of only five areas nationally to be awarded funding from the National Lottery Community Fund's *A Better Start* programme, following intensive partnership work between Bradford Trident, Children's Services and Public Health in the Council, the Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), NHS providers, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, elected members and local families.

2.3 Better Start Bradford is a 'test and learn' programme which is being used as a vehicle for reform across the district in early years. 'Test and learn' means that we have a heavy focus on evaluation and will leave a legacy of learning what successfully improves outcomes for children in Bradford.

2.4 The Better Start Bradford programme is being delivered in 3 disadvantaged wards (Bowling and Barkerend, Bradford Moor and Little Horton) but aims to embed what works across the district.

2.5 Focussed on improving maternal and child health and school readiness, the programme's primary outcomes are to improve communication and language development, social and emotional development and nutrition in children aged 0-3 years. It is anticipated that it will affect a change to our systems so that families benefit from smarter, seamless services which recognise and address needs at an earlier stage, with a workforce providing responsive, consistent support.

2.6 During pregnancy a woman's mental and physical health, behaviour, relationships and environment all influence the developing foetus and can have a significant impact on the baby's wellbeing and long term outcomes. Pre-conception, pregnancy and the early years are an ideal opportunity to target interventions as this is when extensive brain development occurs and any new experience, both positive and negative, can have short and long term impacts. Therefore the programme is entirely focused on families during pregnancy and the first 3 years of a child's life.

2.7 From a cost benefit approach the best time to invest in evidence based prevention and early intervention is in the first 3 years of life, as it is this time when improvement in outcomes is highest. The increasingly robust national and international evidence base support effective interventions at a very early stage; pre-conception, pregnancy and first three years of life.

### 3. Key principles of the BSB approach

3.1 *Know what you want to change:* A clear focus on outcomes for children, with a framework detailing the measures to be used to measure change against short, medium and long term outcomes.

3.2 *Use what works and create local evidence:* Early intervention and prevention interventions rooted in the best available evidence and science, alongside detailed evaluation of their implementation and effectiveness, led by Born in Bradford.

3.3 *Joint Accountability:* A Partnership Board made up of communities and local public services. The Partnership Board includes representation from the Director of Children's Services, the Director of Public Health and local parents who jointly oversee the programme and the budget. Joint accountability is also demonstrated through public sector organisations contributing leverage funding alongside the National Lottery Community Fund grant.

3.4 *Cost benefit analysis:* The London School of Economics is working with Better Start Bradford to develop a tool to identify unit costs and potential savings from successful interventions. This will inform future commissioning plans for the district and is currently being tested before full integration into the programme.

3.5 *Community involvement:* A focus on working with our communities as an equal partner in planning and delivering projects, and in ensuring that our key messages are embedded into families and parenting so that we can achieve a real sustainable change in outcomes for children.

3.6 *Improve how systems work together:* A focus on strengthening integration will provide more consistent support for families by implementing common pathways, a joint training programme and a shared data system.

### 4. Better Start Bradford Delivery Update

4.1 The first four years of the programme were designated as the implementation phase, enabling Better Start Bradford to ensure that it became well established with strong partnership commitment, community and workforce engagement and involvement and a unique partnership to create a monitoring and evaluation platform with Born in Bradford.

4.2 The following projects are now being delivered:

For pregnant women and their partners

- **Baby Steps** – 26-30 weeks of pregnancy, support into parenthood, 10-week sessions

- **Bradford Doulas** - support six weeks before birth, during labour and six weeks after birth
- **Personalised Midwifery Care** - enhanced service ensuring quality continuity of carer
- **Born in Bradford's Better Start (BiBBS)** - research study
- **Welcome to the World** – A friendly, local antenatal course for pregnant mums, dads and carers

For pregnant women or families with children under one

- **Baby Buddy App** - free mobile phone app with advice/guidance for parents-to-be and parents
- **Breastfeeding Support** - support for families with a baby up to six months old, who are breastfeeding/mixing bottle and breastfeeding
- **ESOL for Pregnancy** - English classes for pregnant women
- **HAPPY (Healthy and Active Parenting Programme for Early Years)** - pregnant women with a BMI greater than 25
- **Perinatal Support Service** - emotional support for parents struggling with their emotional health during pregnancy/first year after birth

For families with children under four

- **Better Start Imagine** - providing free books to children under four and activities for families
- **Cooking for a Better Start** - six-week cooking sessions helping families cook low-cost, healthy food
- **Forest School Play Project** - nature-based play programme
- **HENRY** - eight-week course/one-to-one sessions for families with under 5's to develop healthy lifestyles
- **Home-Start Better Start** - practical help at home for families with children and during pregnancy
- **I CAN Early Talk** - supporting early years' practitioners to improve speech, language and communication for children aged 0-3
- **Incredible Years Toddler Basic** - for parents with a child aged between 12-36 months. Improves parent-infant relationships and attachment by using positive parenting strategies
- **Little Minds Matter** - supporting expectant parents and those with a baby up to the age of 2, and practitioners by offering regular training opportunities and consultation on infant mental health.
- **Pre-Schoolers in the Playground (PiP)** - 10-week project provides opportunities for parents and children to get active in school playgrounds
- **Talking Together** – providing language assessments for all two-year-olds in the Better Start Bradford area and in-home support if needed.

4.3 In addition the following initiatives are being supported by the Better Start Bradford programme:

- **Neighbourhoods Project**

Increasing community knowledge of key messages and engagement with Better Start Bradford projects

- **Better Place**

Creating safer and healthier places for families in the Better Start Bradford area

- **Parents in the Lead Activities Fund**

For parents to apply for up to £2,500 to run activities for babies or children under four

4.4



- Major campaign for 2019/2020 across all five A Better Start sites to improve parents understanding of key messages relating to babies brain development.
- Shows parents and carers how even the smallest interaction can help their baby's development, such as sharing a story together and using loving words.
- Eight short videos at: [betterstartbradford.org.uk/biglittlemoments](http://betterstartbradford.org.uk/biglittlemoments) These have been shown on the big screen in City Park since May and will be on 11 BT ad sites across the city centre during August 2019 and January 2020
- Additional campaign materials include: a booklet, flash cards, wallchart and stickers and special inflatable characters

## 5. System Change

5.1 Better Start Bradford is working with partners in a number of areas that will contribute significantly to system wide change these include:

- ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Leading development of ACEs, trauma and resilience strategy. Facilitated screenings of 'Resilience' documentary, raising community awareness and working with Sharing Voices to establish a community steering group.

- MECSH (Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting)

Pilot of MECSH model in Bradford East providing additional support to parents at risk of poor outcomes. Additional resource is being invested into the Health Visiting team to facilitate this. If successful we will explore how this could be rolled out across the district.

- CCG Reducing Inequalities in City (RIC)

Potential of a number of Better Start Bradford projects being extended across the whole of the City CCG area.

- Data sharing and systems

A pilot shared child record is being rolled out in some of the Better Start Bradford projects which will develop learning to identify whether this can be extended across other statutory and community partners.

## 6. Evaluation, Learning and Development

6.1 A comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of the projects is being undertaken by the Better Start Bradford Innovation Hub. Impact evaluations will be carried out on a number of individual projects alongside an overarching evaluation of the impact the intervention and investment have had on the children in the Better Start area.

6.2 In addition the National Lottery Community Fund are working with a consortium led by Warwick University to evaluate the programme as a whole.

6.3 Learning Together is the training and development programme for everyone working with pregnant women and young families in the Better Start Bradford area offering a range of expert sessions, workshops and events bringing leading professionals to Bradford to lead discussions in the latest thinking in the field.

6.4 2019 -20 has been identified as our Year of Learning, Nurturing Knowledge. Reflecting on what we have learned to date, supporting the development of an integrated early years workforce and celebrating young children and their families.

6.5 The second Baby Week Bradford takes place across the district from 4-10 November 2019. Over 40 events have been submitted including baby raves, family walks, a 'dads matter' event, and infant mental health awareness training for healthcare professionals.

## 7. Financial & Resource Appraisal

The principles underpinning Better Start Bradford are joint accountability and investing in prevention and early intervention. Together with the cost benefit tool it is hoped that this approach will be strengthened with further investment from services and social finance once improvement in outcomes is demonstrated.

## 8. Legal Appraisal

There has been close scrutiny of the governance structures and the management of shared resources by partners' legal teams and a Partnership Agreement is in place.

## 9. Other Implications

### 9.1 Equality & Diversity

No implications

### 9.2 Sustainability Implications

The sustainable delivery of local services and strengthening of capacity in the community to support behaviour change is core to the Better Start Bradford strategy.

### 9.3 Greenhouse gas emissions impacts

Notable areas which have opportunity to address greenhouse gas emissions (carbon footprint) include good lifestyle habits, redesigning services and integrated working all of

which are addressed through the Better Start Bradford programme. The Better Place capital investment will directly impact this area.

#### 9.4 Community Safety Implications

No Implications

#### 9.5 Human rights act

No implications

#### 9.6 Trade Union

No implications

#### 9.7 Ward Implications

Ward Officers in the Better Start Bradford area are involved in a range of engagement activities supporting the delivery of the programme

#### 9.8 Area Committee Action Plan Implications

#### 10. Not for publication documents

None

#### 11. Options

The paper does not provide options

#### 12. Recommendations

12.1 That the Area Committee notes the report and Ward Councillors receive regular updates.