



# Early Help Recommissioning March 2023 Market Engagement Feedback



**SURREY**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

# Market Engagement Summary

## About the event

Surrey County Council hosted two virtual market engagement workshops. These workshops were held on the 7 March and the 10 March 2023. The sessions were delivered via Microsoft Teams.

## **The purpose of these sessions where:**

- To share the knowledge Surrey County Council has collated through research, engagement and co-design sessions
- To outline a potential commissioning model
- Gather participants views and feedback via breakout rooms
- Provide a high-level timeframe for the recommission and next steps

This slide deck summarises the feedback captured from partners during both the Market Engagement events.

## **Questions that were asked in the breakout rooms**

1. What do you like about the proposals?
2. What do you think requires further consideration?
3. Do you think having a longer contract term would be helpful?
4. Do you have any concerns?
5. What are your hopes and fears for the recommissioning process going forward?

## **Market Engagement Participation**

7 March = 45 participants

10 March = 25 participants

Total = 70 participants

# Q.1 What Do You Like About The Recommissioning Proposals?

## The principles of the model

- Partners feel positive about the prospect of a new approach.
- Partners believe the proposal shows that SCC are listening and reacting to the feedback from engagement sessions.
- Partners feel that their voices are being heard.

## A Lead Provider in each geographical District and Borough area

- Partners respond positively to this aspect of the proposal as it adopts a localised approach.
- Partners said this will enhance local services and make them easier to access.
- Partners felt that community spaces in each district and borough will help isolated families.

## Longer Contracts

- Partners stated that longer contracts will help ensure stability.
- Partners also agreed that longer contracts provide staff with more job security.

## Partnership working

- Partners believe that the lead provider proposal could enhance the opportunity for greater partnership working.
- Partners told us that it could help to provide children, young people and families with a more holistic and joined-up approach.
- Partners stated it will help to improve cohesion between different partners as they will work closer together.

## Children and Family Centred approach

- Partners told us that removing age criteria's will help families receive a whole family service.
- Partners believe the proposed model provides families with greater continuity.
- Partners agree that the proposal has been informed by the needs of children, young people and families.
- Partners felt that families would respond positively to a joined up service and branding.
- Partners said they would like to see the removal of "levels" of need.



# Q.2 What do you think requires further consideration?

## Funding

- Partners said they would like to receive more information on how money would be distributed between the lead provider and sub-contracted partners.
- Partners would like to be signposted to any additional funding streams the County Council is made aware of.
- Partners would like to know whether the proposed model is cost effective.
- Partners highlighted the need to ensure inflation was considered as part of the recommissioning process.

## Staffing

- Partners felt there would be a requirement for training for front line staff to adapt to the new model.
- Partners want to know how to ensure staff morale remains positive through the recommissioning process.
- Partners highlighted the challenge of difference salaries across services and geographical areas

## Communication

- Partners would like to receive regular communication from SCC.
- Partners want SCC to share recommissioning timeframes and accompanying details as soon as possible.
- Partners have requested further clarity around the future use of "levels" and threshold documentation.
- Partners felt that it would be helpful to create a common theme and language shared between different partners in the Early Help system.

## Whole family approach

- Some partners felt that children in different age groups tend to have different needs therefore they would require different services.
- Partners have stated it is important to ensure all services commissioned are accessible and prioritise children, young people and families.
- Partners felt it is important to build on what's currently working well Early Help in the Early Help System.
- Partners asked us to consider whether Outcome Start is the best distance travelled tool to use with children, young people and families.
- Partners wanted guidance on how to step up families in the new model.
- Partners stated they want to avoid the potential of a post code lottery for children, young people and families.

## Lead Provider

- Partners asked how can sub-contracted providers work with the lead provider.
- Partners raised the importance of their branding and individuality being maintained in a lead provider model.
- Partners want to know how do we ensure accountability between lead providers and sub-contracted providers?
- Partners inquired as to how they establish trust and transparency between providers?
- Partners want to know if the lead providers would have a different specification.
- Partners are wondering whether the lead provider would act as a commissioner.
- Partners want to know if the lead provider would chose what services are delivered in their district or borough?

# Q.3 Do you think having a longer contract term would be helpful?

Benefits of a longer contract	Challenges of a longer contract
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners stated that longer contracts enables long term investment in training staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers highlighted that longer contracts involve obtaining longer building leases.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners noted that having a 5 to 7 year contract with extension options provides staff with stability and assurance of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners raised concerns about managing inflation over a longer term.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners believe longer contract terms will help provide families with a sense of familiarity as providers have more time to embed into the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners want more information including legal implication that need to be considered and complexities involved in having longer contracts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers said that longer contracts will improve staff morale and retention. It would also help with recruitment as possible recruits could have longer contracts.</li> </ul>	



# Q.4 Do you have any concerns?

## Staffing

- Partners noted there is a risk of inconsistent staff salaries across Surrey.
- Partners are worried staff could experience anxiety during the recommissioning process.
- Partners raised concerns around staff not receiving timely information.

## Funding

- Partners want confirmation that funding will be fairly allocated between the lead provider and sub-contractor.
- Partners asked if enough funding will be available to deliver services?
- Partners are concerned funding will be diluted between multiple providers.

## Communication

- Partners are worried that information can get lost in lengthy documents.
- Partners want to avoid tight and unrealistic timescales.
- Partners are concerned about not receiving next steps in advance.
- Some partners felt that threshold levels document should be reviewed as part of the commissioning process.
- Partners want to know how they will have greater connection with Social Care services.

## Lead Provider Model

- Smaller partners are concerned that they will miss out on opportunities to deliver services if they are competing against larger organisations for contracts.
- Partners have concerns about the specification favouring the lead provider.
- Partners want more information around how performance will be managed.
- Lead providers need to have the correct expertise and knowledge to take on this role.
- Concerns for the smaller organisations that may not have the resources to be a lead provider.

## Whole family approach

- Partners have enquired how will whole family working be embedded.
- Partners highlighted there is a risk that families already receiving good services could be negatively impacted by the change.
- Partners are concerned that good working relationships with families could be lost.
- Partners have asked if Family Centre's and FSP will be under one organisation.

# Q.5 What are your hopes for the recommissioning process going forward?

## Family

- Partners hope families do not experience any negative changes through periods of transition.
- Partners want the recommissioning to make it easier for children, young people and families to get help.
- Partners hope that processes and paperwork does not hinder the time that could be spent supporting children, young people & families.

## Staffing

- Partners are looking forward to positive change and using the expertise of staff to support children, young people and families.
- Partners want staff to continue to feel motivated
- Partners noted the importance of implementing a smooth transition period.

## Communication

- Partners would like to see clear communication.
- Partners want service specifications and outcomes to clearly define requirements and expectations.
- Partners hope to see the details around the specification and tendering process shared as soon as possible.

## Joint partnership working

- Partners want to continue working closely with Surrey County Council and the wider Early Help System.
- Partners hope for a successful implementation of lead-provider and sub-contractor model.
- Partners would welcome greater partnership working with health colleagues.
- Partners noted the importance of adopting a trauma informed approach to delivering services.
- It is hoped that the lead provider model will help simplify the Early Help System at a D&B level and enhance greater collaboration between organisations.

## Funding

- Partners hope there is enough funding to ensure children, young people and families receive the support they need.
- Partners hope that there are enough resources to help manage the increasing demand.

# Q.6 What are your fears for the recommissioning process going forward?

Partners are worried political changes could negatively impact how Early Help is delivered in Surrey.

Partners are worried about losing their contracts and being unable to deliver current services.

Partners fear losing relationships already built through partnership working

Partners have raised concerns around the cost of changing delivery of services being too high.

Partners fear negative impact on staff morale due to a fear of change.

Partners fear that a lack of regular meetings between multiagency partners might hinder partnership working.