

Date: 26 July 2019

Subject: GM School Readiness Programme

Report of: Cllr David Jones, Portfolio Lead Leader for Young People and Cohesion, and
Jon Rouse, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Young People and Cohesion

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the GMCA on the School Readiness programme and seek approval to use the £2.1m funding awarded from the GM Health and Social Care Partnership Transformation Fund to deliver the outlined plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GMCA is recommended:

1. To note and agree the school readiness programme delivery plans for 2019/20 - 20/21 to be funded through the £2.1m received from the H&SCP Transformation Fund.
2. To approve the allocation of the funding to the programme areas outlined in the report at paragraph 5.2.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Jane Forrest – Assistant Director, Public Service Reform

Risk Management – see paragraph 6

BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

Legal Considerations – see paragraph

Financial Consequences – Revenue – see paragraph 5

Number of attachments included in the report:

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Funding for a 24 month programme of transformational work to drive improvements in early years services and school readiness across Greater Manchester was approved by the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership in 2018 with Greater Manchester Combined Authority identified as the lead delivery partner.
- 1.2. This is a joint programme between the GM Health and Social Care Partnership and the GMCA and is referred to as the Greater Manchester School Readiness Programme. The investment agreed for programme delivery is £2.1m and a contract is now in place to enable transfer of the funding to GMCA in line with the agreed payment schedule.
- 1.3. The aim and objectives of the proposed work programme align with a series of related GM Early Years policies, including the GM Start Well: Early Years Strategy, GM Population Health Plan, GM Children’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Priority 1 of the Greater Manchester Strategy and the GM Children’s Plan.
- 1.4. The programme will aim to ensure that all children in GM have the best start in life and the right support to be ready to learn. A review of progress to date has taken place and refreshed delivery plans produced; these reflect current priorities identified through recent evaluation at a locality and GM level and stakeholder engagement at the 2019 GM School Readiness Summit.

2. Context

- 2.1. Greater Manchester remains an outlier in Early Years outcomes compared to the national average, with only 68% of all eligible children achieving a good level of development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (reception) in academic year 2017/18, compared with 71.5% nationally. This represents 11,800 children in GM who are starting school not ready to learn.
- 2.2. Poor early years outcomes are harming the life chances of thousands of children, and holding back the region’s development. The 2009 Manchester Independent Economic Review highlighted early years performance as key to closing Greater Manchester’s skills and productivity gap, and what happens in our children’s first years can also affect education, health and crime. The GM Strategy has an ambitious target to meet or exceed the national average for the proportion of children achieving a good level of development in GM by 2020 and for all early years’ settings to be Ofsted rated ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’, an increase from 90% in 2016.

2.3. In 2012 GM developed a model for integrated Early Years services. The GM Early Years Delivery Model (EYDM) is built upon the principles of proportionate universalism. It recognises the 1001 critical days starting at conception and harnesses the universal reach of maternity services and Health Visiting for the crucial early identification of vulnerability in both parents and infants. When the EYDM is implemented across GM to a consistently high standard, families will be in receipt of a proportionate, multi-agency tailored response relevant to their level of needs.

2.4. A recent evaluation (quarter 2, 2018/19) of the implementation of the EYDM across the 10 localities has highlighted where the model is contributing to an improvement in early years outcomes, and identified the following collective challenges to implementation across the early years system:

- **Workforce** – varying degrees of maturity in integrated workforce models and workforce development planning across the EY systems and a need for a core development offer aligned to evidence based pathways and place-based, integrated working.
- **Data capture and sharing** – lack of digital enabled assessment processes influencing performance monitoring, coverage and impact of school readiness plans. A recognised need to link multiple data sources and share across providers.
- **Implementation of best practice pathways** – identified need for further pathway development embedding early intervention and prevention principles across early years.

2.5. The School Readiness programme focuses on addressing these challenges to enable further implementation of the EYDM at scale across localities. Key areas of work identified for improvement include:

- Antenatal early intervention and prevention pathway
- High/Complex needs pathway
- Physical development pathway
- Speech, language and communication pathway
- Social, emotional and behavioural pathway
- The role of schools as system leaders
- Data capture, storage, sharing and analysis
- Investment and commissioning
- Workforce development

2.6. Funding received from the H&SCP Transformation Fund will assist with developing and implementing solutions to address these priorities and, subject to GMCA approval, provide capacity for overall programme management and oversight.

3. Delivery Plans 19/20

3.1. The GM model for improving school readiness is included at Appendix A, this is structured around three priority themes: delivering an evidence based model; embedding best

practice pathways and developing our enablers. A summary of 19/20 delivery plans within each priority area is included in Appendix B.

3.2. Key milestones for programme progress have been agreed with the H&SCP and the programme team will report on project delivery through the Population Health Programme Management Office and the newly established Children's Plan Programme Management Office.

3.3. All areas of work within the proposed programme require resources to lead, co-ordinate and ensure delivery throughout the 24 month timeframe for delivery. It is therefore proposed to create a School Readiness programme team within GMCA. The team will be based within the GMCA Public Service Reform team, working closely with a range of partners, including localities and the H&SCP. The team will include the following posts:

- 1FTE Strategic Lead
- 1FTE School Readiness Programme Manager
- 1FTE Project Support Officer

3.4. The team will bring together all work contributing to school readiness under the new GM School Readiness Delivery Plan, ensuring a cohesive and integrated programme of work, which will support the management of interdependencies and alignment with wider work.

4. Governance and Leadership

4.1. The School Readiness Board will provide governance oversight of programme delivery. The Board was established in September 2017 to provide system leadership and accountability for the GM School Readiness work programme. A governance review has recently taken place and localities have been asked to nominate suitable representatives to strengthen the local authority and health voice at the board and ensure the right representation from all 10 areas to drive implementation and deliver system change.

4.2. The Board meets quarterly and is chaired by Jon Rouse, Chief Officer, H&SCP. Chris McLoughlin, Director for Children's Services Stockport, is the lead DCS for School Readiness and attends board meetings in this capacity. The Board will report on progress to the GM Reform Board, GM Children's Health and Wellbeing Board and the newly established Children's Board.

4.3. A programme steering group has been set up to ensure coordination of activity, oversight of risks and issues and management of interdependencies. A subgroup structure has also been established to provide capacity to take forward delivery and ensure involvement from a board range of stakeholders, including VCSE organisations and families, in co-design and co-delivery of new initiatives. Resources have been allocated to support this.

4.4. The GM Population Health Programme has appointed the Assistant Director Public Service Reform, as the senior leader responsible for delivering value for money from the GM Population Health Funding awarded to the GMCA.

5. Financial Considerations

5.1. Investment secured from the H&SCP Transformation Fund will be used to provide overall programme management and system engagement capacity working across all 10 localities and pump prime funds to develop and implement new pathway models and key enablers.

5.2. The table below outlines the allocation of the £2.1m across programme priorities. The programme will be required to provide quarterly reports to the Population Health team as part of the transformation fund assurance process. Funding will be paid quarterly to GMCA subject to satisfactory evidence of progress against programme deliverables.

Programme Priority	Activity	Cost (for 2 years duration)
Delivering an evidence based model	Programme team (GMCA) Capacity to lead project planning, delivery and evaluation and ensure alignment across wider public service reform agenda.	£400,000
	Engagement, co-production & external expertise Resource to support work from VCSE to embed the voice of families and children in pathway development, creation of a GM measure for school readiness and a sector support model. Commissioning of subject specific expertise to support data and evaluation work.	£240,000
Embedding best practice pathways	Complex/high needs Antenatal prevention & intervention Physical Development Social, emotional and behavioural Parent and Infant Mental Health Work to design, pilot and evaluate GM pathways and develop programmes to address associated workforce needs. Analytical capacity will support identification of need and development of risk stratification tool to inform commissioning and investment decisions.	£930,000
Developing our enablers	Development and delivery of Early Years workforce academy Resource to develop academy and delivery of first year of programme. Match funding is being sought.	£330,000
	Developing schools as system leaders Involvement of head teachers in development and implementation of system leadership for early years	£200,000
TOTAL		£2,100,000

NB - Investment to support digital improvements for early years has been secured from other sources.

6. Risk Management

6.1. The programme management function will involve development of a comprehensive risk log, which has already identified risks outlined below. Comprehensive mitigating actions have been identified.

- Insufficient resources for work programme delivery: this work programme requires the additional funding from the Transformation Fund to enable resources for delivery.
- Timeframe: the work programme is scheduled for completion in 2021. However, success will require rapid recruitment and close management of priorities to achieve delivery within this timeframe.
- Policy does not meet the needs of all localities: GM wide governance and delivery arrangements are in place and have recently been reviewed to ensure that strategy and implementation plans are developed in collaboration with all GM localities. Programme plans include co-design, piloting and evaluation of new approaches and tools.
- Insufficient engagement with schools and early years providers: engagement with schools and early years providers has already been established as a key priority and is being supported through work with localities and a newly established Community of Practice for School Readiness.

7. Performance and Evaluation

7.1. The GM School Readiness programme seeks to add value to existing system wide activity taking place across GM to improve early years outcomes. Specific evaluation of the deliverables within the programme will be included as part of delivery and evaluation activity undertaken by the GMCA programme team.

7.2. Annual performance against the Early Years Foundation Stage – the national benchmark for school readiness – will continue to be measured and disseminated via the GM Children’s Plan data dashboard. The programme includes further work to undertake analysis at a place based level to align with the 30-50k neighbourhood delivery model. The programme will also aim to explore alternative measures to be used as indicators of school readiness, to develop a GM measure that aligns with the EYDM and GM best practice pathways.

7.3. Initially this programme will be developed and piloted using investment from the Population Health Transformation Fund, however sustainable funding options need to be identified. Evaluation will support future work to review existing investment to ensure commissioning reflects GM evidence based approaches and pathways.

8. Conclusion

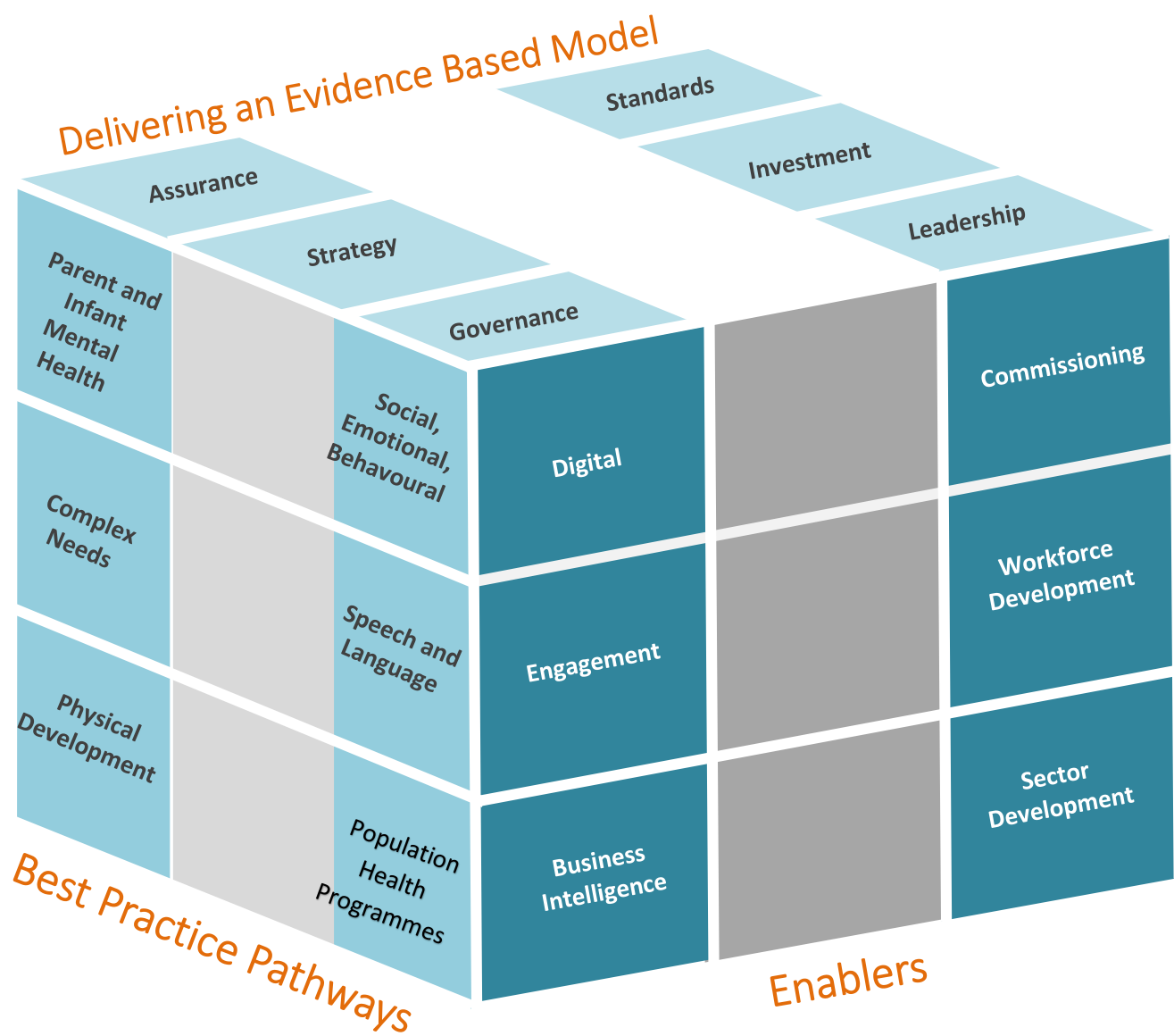
8.1. Significant progress has already been made across GM to improve school readiness levels. The initiation of a new GM School Readiness Programme will seek to address remaining gaps and challenges that have been identified by localities as barriers to improving early years outcomes. Further updates will be shared with GMCA at regular intervals.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Improving Early Years and School Readiness in Greater Manchester - Project Initiation Document, 2018

TRACKING/PROCESS		[All sections to be completed]
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		Yes / No [Delete as appropriate]
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		[Please state any reasons here and the date the report can be released into the public domain]
TfGMC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
[Date considered at TfGMC; if appropriate]	[Date considered by the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee]	

Appendix A – GM School Readiness Model



Appendix B – 19/20 Summary Delivery Plan

Priority 1 – Delivering an evidence based model

Priorities	Intent	19/20 Deliverables
<p>Strategy – a GM School Readiness strategy that reflects place-based integrated working approaches and locality implementation of Early Years plans.</p>	<p>Understanding of GM level activity to address shared challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refreshed GM School Readiness Strategy and delivery plan for 2019/20 – 2020/21 • Review of implementation of stages 4b onwards within EYDM – 2020/21 • Review of implementation of stages 4b onwards within EYDM
<p>Governance– effective structures, processes and capacity in place to deliver intended programme of work and realise outcomes.</p>	<p>Shared accountability and governance of school readiness programme at locality and GM level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance structure reviewed and refreshed • Work streams and SROs identified, reporting into school readiness board • Programme Management team within GMCA
<p>Leadership – Developing new and existing partnerships and what works alliances to support overall programme of work. Building on existing good practice across GM.</p>	<p>Programme informed by evidence based approaches, supporting innovation and maximising use of resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working arrangements in place with HEIs, HEE, Children's Commissioner, BBC and Early Intervention Foundation. • System leadership community of practice group established • System leadership embedded in relevant workforce academy training programmes • Establish model for working with research and teaching schools to improve school readiness
<p>Standards – consistent implementation of best practice and Early Years delivery model.</p>	<p>Improve early years outcomes across GM and support consistent understanding of school readiness across system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader specification of school readiness drafted with associated metrics agreed • Mapping of existing strengths across localities and consideration of scale and spread.

Investment - supporting GM wide bids, working with private and philanthropic partners.	Maximising resource across GM to deliver early years outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment plans aligned with standards, GM outcomes framework, best practice pathways, commissioning framework and single investment plan. • SR governance supporting joint funding bids.
Assurance	Assurance of implementation of EYDM and best practice pathways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of EY data dashboard with data displayed at GM, locality and place-based level. • Peer reviews shared and used to identify best practice approaches. • Local stocktakes using EOF audit tool.

Priority 2 – Embedding best practice pathways

Priorities	Intent	19/20 Deliverables
Physical Development pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent, evidence base assessment and intervention models used across GM. • Inequality gap reduced for most disadvantaged children in GM. • High quality of intervention for children with most complex needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways developed with consistent implementation across GM to support Early Years Delivery Model. • Pathways embedded in local commissioning plans. • Identify development needs of workforce to implement pathway. • Workforce academy programme developed to meet identified needs. • 20/21 plans to include pathway evaluation and further development where required.
Complex Needs pathway		
Antenatal pathway		
Speech and language pathway		
Parent Infant Mental Health Pathway		
Social, emotional and behavioural		

Priority 3 – Developing our enablers

Priorities	Intent	19/20 Deliverables
Digital	Improved data sharing across early years system. New, digital models of support for parents and professionals to improve speech and language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of integrated early years record • Legacy paper digitisation • BBC pilot rolled out across GM • Web-based parenting and professional portal
Communication and engagement	Effective communication and engagement with stakeholders across early years system in GM to support and inform programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and engagement strategy and plans • VCSE task and finish group integrated across work streams
Commissioning - identifying GM commissioning standards and approaches.	Consistent standards for measuring outcomes from early years commissioned services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment plans aligned with GM outcomes framework, GM standards, commissioning framework and single investment plan.
Workforce	Increased early years workforce capacity. Improved skills and competencies to ensure consistent delivery of early years support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years workforce academy model developed • Delivery of a single consistent and high quality programme to roll out to place-based teams and early years settings through workforce academy
Sector development – supporting schools as system leaders	Improved quality of EY provision Clear role for schools in place based, integrated working model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector support model with schools as system leaders agreed and work taken forward to implement.
Business Intelligence	Improve assessment and targeting. Increase understanding of workforce and children over time. Develop broader understanding of school readiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward level data added to EY dashboard • Risk stratification tool piloted in 3 areas • Partnership developed with MMU and UoM