

## Children's Service Scrutiny

**Scrutiny topic: Impact of Early Help on preventing escalation to statutory services**

### Our role as a scrutiny committee:

- To ask questions about decisions that have already been taken
- To ask whether these decisions are good enough
- To make recommendations to further improve what the council (with partners) are doing

**The current scope of the early help scrutiny** is very broad with a focus on the extent to which services provided by Islington council and its partners are preventing needs escalating to the point children, young people and families need statutory intervention.

**Feedback from committee members** has highlighted that with a focus that is currently so broad, it will be difficult to scrutinize meaningfully and provide useful and clear recommendations.

### Next steps following the initial early help report and presentation:

- To use the initial report to unpick where there are areas that require further questioning
- To identify which aspects of section 4 and section 5 of the early help SID would be most useful to look at in more detail

#### Section 4: The local early help offer

- Early help offer: Families First; IFIT (Islington Family Intensive Team)
- Parenting Programmes
- Evidence of what works

#### Section 5: Partnership working

- Interagency working (ie. Family Action; Parent Employment Partnership)
- Inter-departmental working
- Work with schools and other partners (ie. Police and health)

- To identify the most appropriate question to focus on in order to effectively scrutinize and provide useful recommendations. Example questions:
  - Is Families First reaching the right families, those families who, without the support, are more likely to require statutory intervention?
  - Do parents get the right help when they need it? And do parents feel this help is beneficial?
  - How do we know Families First is making a difference?
  - Do we know Families First is reducing demands on statutory services?
  - Are parenting programmes working?
  - Is Families First an effective use of resources? Are we going to save money/avoid costs in the future?