

## **Corporate Parenting Panel**

**28 February 2020**

### **Stronger Families Programme**

**Place-based approach to early help for children, young people and families in County Durham.**



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## **Report of Martyn Stenton, Head of Service, Early Help, Inclusion and Vulnerable Children, Durham County Council**

### **Electoral division(s) affected:**

Stanley and Consett, Ferryhill and Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee and Easington.

### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The report accompanies a presentation to members of the Corporate Parenting Panel on the development and implementation of three early adopter 'place-based approach' localities. The place-based approach developments forms part of the County Durham Stronger Families Earned Autonomy (EA) Service Transformation Plan and the delivery of an effective 'early help' offer to children, young people and families in County Durham.

### **Executive summary**

- 2 County Durham was one of 14 LAs nationally to be awarded EA, which provides up front funding rather than the traditional national Troubled Families (known in Durham as Stronger Families) payment by results model. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are clear that EA is aimed at helping areas embed better ways of collaborative working to mainstream the 'whole family' approach and embed the Family Outcome Framework (FOF) across their partnership and ensure children, young people and families with a range of multiple and complex needs have access to effective 'early help'.
- 3 The development and implementation of a 'place-based approach' in three early adopter localities across County Durham forms part of the EA Service Transformation Plan and aims to facilitate collaborative working arrangements, increase use of community resources and promote family and community resilience.

## **Recommendation(s)**

- 4 The County Durham Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to:
  - (a) Note the contents of the report and accompanying presentation as an update on the development and implementation of the place-based approach to early help as part of the County Durham Stronger Families Earned Autonomy service transformation plan.

## **Background**

- 5 The aim of the national Troubled Families programme is to transform the way that public services work with families with multiple problems to take an integrated 'whole family' approach and help reduce demand for reactive services. Phase 2 of the programme (2015- 2020) required County Durham's Stronger Families programme to identifying and 'turn around' 4,360 families. The MHCLG announced in September 2019 that the national Troubled Families programme will continue to March 2021. As of December 2019, County Durham has supported and achieved significant and sustained outcomes as per County Durham Family Outcome Framework for 4,030 families, 92% of March 2020 target.
- 6 MHCLG are clear that EA is aimed at helping areas embed better ways of collaborative working to mainstream the 'whole family' approach, embed the Family Outcome Framework (FOF) across their partnership and to:
  - (a) know and seek out children and families in communities most vulnerable to poor outcomes;
  - (b) ensure the use of evidence-based approaches to help children and families achieve positive change and
  - (c) as partners, work collaboratively at the earliest opportunity to maximise impact and reduce duplication and help prevent the need for high cost services.
- 7 The third annual Troubled Families report 2018-19, 'Building Resilient Families' was presented to parliament in March 2019. The national evaluation of the programme provides evidence of how the programme is delivering outcomes and sustaining progress for children and families facing complex needs. When comparing families on the programme to a similar comparison group over multiple years, the programme of targeted intervention saw:
  - (a) the number of children looked after is down by 32%;
  - (b) the number of adults going to prison down by a 25% and juvenile convictions down by 15%;
  - (c) 10% fewer people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance.

## **Place-based approach**

- 8 Following a period of development and stakeholder engagement, the implementation of three 'place-based approach' localities has begun planning and developing new ways of partnership working which are focussed on three identified key priorities. The place-based working groups are applying the 6 principles of County Durham's Approach to Wellbeing to the development of key actions ensuring support builds on community need, builds resilience and makes best use of our collective resources.

- 9 The early adopter localities have also introduced 'early help conversations' which facilitate a community based, multi-agency environment and decision-making arrangement for collaborative discussions of children, young people and families that may benefit from a coordinated package of early help making best use of local resources.
- 10 Partners involved in the place-based early adopter localities and early help conversations are providing very positive feedback in relation to developing positive relationships with each other and a better understanding and use of available community assets.

## **Conclusion**

- 11 The three early adopter localities are enabling the Early Help and Think Family Partnership to refine new ways of working to ensure children, young people and families receive effective early help across the system.
- 12 Learning from these localities will inform improvements to the processes ahead of rolling out the approach countywide by March 2020.

## **Background papers**

- None

## **Other useful documents**

- None

## **Author(s)**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

The Stronger Families Programme is Durham County Council's response to the Government's Guidance on "Working with Troubled Families". The aims of the Troubled Families Programme are to get children back into school, reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour, put adults on a path back to work and bring down the amount public services currently spend on them. This is achieved by providing effective family intervention and encouraging relevant agencies to meet as a "team around the family" to provide the relevant support to the family.

### **Finance**

Risk to an element of EA funding from MHCLG if service transformation progress is not demonstrated.

### **Consultation**

Work on Stronger Families and EA is progressed through the Think Family Partnership

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

None.

### **Climate Change**

None.

### **Human Rights**

None.

### **Crime and Disorder**

None.

### **Staffing**

None.

### **Accommodation**

None.

### **Risk**

Risk to ongoing EA funding if LA does not comply with EA MOU.

### **Procurement**

None.