

# Children & Young people's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

March 2015



## Stronger Families Update Report

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### Report of Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director Children and Adult Services

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#### Purpose of Report

To provide for Members with an update on the Stronger Families Programme, the local delivery for the national Troubled Families Programme. The presentation will be given by Rachel Hirst Dean, Think Family Services Strategic Manager, Children and Adult Services.

#### Background

1. The Troubled Families Programme locally known as Stronger Families was launched in April 2012 and is required to 'turn around' 1,320 families by 31st March 2015.
2. The Programme is designed to ensure that services work together to ensure positive outcomes for families. In Durham there is strong commitment to work towards transforming the way that services are delivered to families and that ownership and accountability for the success of the programme sits across the partnership.
3. The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) continue to be pleased with Durham's progress both in its Payment By Results claims and the transformational work we are undertaking. This has resulted in Durham County Council becoming an 'Early Starter' into Phase 2 of the national Troubled Families Programme.

#### Progress and Learning

4. The implementation of the Stronger Families Programme and the requirement to ensure families on the programme achieve sustainable outcomes (60 % reduction in youth crime over a 6 month period, children achieving 85% or above school attendance for 3 consecutive terms, parents back into work) both require practitioners and services to effectively engage and work with families.

#### Number of families identified and engaged

5. As at the end of February 2015, the Stronger Families Programme has identified / worked with 1,840 families exceeding the programme's core target across the county.

### Payment-by-Results

6. As at February 2015, the Stronger Families Programme has been successful in 'turning around' the lives of 1185 families in County Durham, equating to 91% of the target to be reached by March 2015 Durham is on trajectory to meet 100% of its target by May 2015.

### **Future planning - Next Steps**

7. In August 2014, due to the successful implementation and delivery of Phase 1, Durham was invited to be one of the 50 Early Starters for Phase 2 of the Troubled Families Programme. This new phase includes much broader criteria with locally derived outcome measures.
8. As Durham moves into Phase 2 of the programme there is a very clear need to shift our focus to ensuring families are worked with in such a way that supports significant and sustained change. Should this not be achieved there are two clear risk outcomes; one being the family not receiving effective support and therefore are failing to achieve improved outcomes and the second being the financial implications for the service if we are unable to meet the Payment by Results (PBR) measures.
9. Phase 2 will be delivered over a 5 year time period and Durham will have 4330 families to work with within this period.
10. As part of being an early starter Durham was asked to deliver work to an additional 650 families by March 2015. Durham has also been invited to take part in the design and development of Phase 2 ready for national implementation in April 2015.
11. Phase 2 will have a greater focus on localised results but there will be 6 main eligibility criteria of which a family must meet two to be included on the programme;
  1. **Parents and children involved in crime or antisocial behaviour**
  2. **Children who have not been attending school regularly**
  3. **Children who need help**
  4. **Adults who are out of work or are at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of worklessness**
  5. **Families affected by domestic violence and abuse**
  6. **Parents and children with a range of health problems**

12. There will be a strong focus on health services for Phase 2 in Durham to reflect the new eligibility criteria and also findings from Phase 1. The national interim report 'Understanding Troubled Families' published in July 2014 by The Department for Communities and Local Government showed that nationally 71% of the Troubled Families cohort have poor health, 46% having a mental health problem and 32% a long standing illness or disability. What is also worrying is the level at which this is found in the children in these households – with over a third of children suffering from mental health problems and a fifth a long standing illness or disability.
13. All early starters were required to produce an outcome plan for DCLG with intended outputs and measures for the six new criteria. In Durham, this Plan, which is a working document was developed in a series of task and finish workshops via the Think Family Partnership and with strong support from many of our key contacts across the partnership.
14. Durham's plan has been selected by the DCLG along with 4 other Local Authorities to be used as an exemplar model for national roll out from April 2015.
15. During Phase 2, there will be a greater focus on evaluation and tracking of outcomes. Evaluation at a national level is being conducted by ECORYS and programmes are asked to support this in three key areas;

### **1 - Family Monitoring Data (FMD)**

16. All programmes are required to gather and submit additional data on a minimum 10% of randomly-selected families. The FMD collects anonymised data on the characteristics and problems faced by families and evaluates changes over time (e.g. from entry to the programme to being 'turned around'). The data is based upon Lead Professional / Key worker intelligence of the family.
17. Data is submitted to the national evaluation team twice-yearly (July and December). The Think Family Team will be implementing a process of routinely collecting this information from Lead Professionals on an on-going basis from September 2014.

### **2 - National Impact Study (NIS)**

18. This study involves participating programmes sharing personal information (e.g. names, DOBs, postcodes) of those family members engaged by the programme, as well a control group of those that did not engage with the programme.
19. This information will allow the national evaluation team to assess the impact of the Programme against its objectives.

### **3 - Cost Saving Calculator (CSC)**

20. The CSC is an online cost benefit analysis tool designed specifically for Troubled Families Programmes. Durham County Council and partners can use the tool to identify benefits deriving from the work of the programme. The tool includes a reporting facility that will provide fiscal savings as a result of the programme's work.
21. The cost calculator will enable us to analyse future savings and evaluate the impact on services across the County Durham Partnership.

### **22. Workforce Development**

23. We will continue to use this programme drive and embed the Early Help and Think Family ethos across Durham. Over the last few years the work of the Think Family Services Team has included direct workforce development and training with a broad range of practitioners across the County Durham Partnership, 1:1 mentoring by the Think Family Partnership Mentors, case file audits, family monitoring data collection and an extensive baseline data exercise as well as the quarterly payment by results exercise. Stronger Families has significantly contributed to the design and delivery of transformation training programme across Children's Services.
24. A Think Family Workforce Plan has been developed and is being delivered in partnership with a range of key partners steered by the Think Family Workforce Development work stream (a sub group of the Think Family partnership). This piece of work won a national Children Young People Now award in November 2014.

### Delivering the programme- Phase 2

25. Durham's target number of families for Phase 2 is in excess of four times the number of Phase 1. The new criteria is so general that we anticipate that almost every family in receipt of level 3 services and above will qualify.
26. The 4000+ families target in Phase 2 alongside our plans to include all families with an additional need (step 3 and above on the Durham staircase model) means that the majority of families held by our practitioners in Children's Services will be included in the programme. This will allow us to really embed the Think Family ethos in to everyday practice within our services. It will however mean a much greater level of support and monitoring is needed for a many more practitioners and services.
27. We must ensure must ensure practitioners across the partnership are turning families around and delivering results. Although we have made huge steps in driving this work forward there is still a long journey ahead to embed the practice needed to ensure positive outcomes for the children and families we are working with.

28. Durham's Chief Constable is now the ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) national lead for the Troubled Families Programme which will strengthen our partnership but may also subject Durham's Stronger Family programme to additional national interest and scrutiny. Funding to match resources within Durham Constabulary has also been agreed for Phase 2. This resource will allow our colleagues within the constabulary to free up time of various staff to work directly on the Stronger Families Programme. This includes them taking a lead on the development of the cost calculator and research and analysis time for Stronger Families cohort.
29. The funding in Phase 2 is also enabling us mitigate impact of budget reductions and sustain services which may otherwise be cut. An example of this is the NEET (not in education employment or training) service which delivers support to children and young people in Durham and without contribution would not be sustainable.
30. Targeting worklessness has been a main eligibility criterion for Phase 1 and continues to be so in Phase 2. The achievement of a sustainable job outcome within this programme allows for an automatic claim for a 'turned around family'.
31. The funding has also supported colleagues in partner services such as Regeneration and economic Development, CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services), and Neighbourhoods. The transformation programme within Children's Services has also been supported, the extra resource this has provided has enabled Think Family Practice to be embedded at an accelerated rate and has allowed frontline teams extra capacity to identify and target our most vulnerable families to offer early help and support.
32. Think Family Services is contributing 1 million pound to savings across the 4 year period 2016/17- 2019/20. To enable us to deliver successfully on the programme we need to ensure that both the reserves and the future payment by results funding is ring fenced to Think Family Services.
33. The success of Phase 1 in Durham and the early starter status means Phase 2 of Durham's delivery will be under scrutiny in the coming year and we need to ensure both our standard of delivery and our result remains at the high standard we have so far managed to achieve.

## **Recommendation**

34. The members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the content of the report and comment accordingly.

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**Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance – As set out in report**

**Staffing – None**

**Risk – None**

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None**

**Accommodation – None**

**Crime and Disorder – None**

**Human Rights – None**

**Consultation – None**

**Procurement – None**

**Disability Issues – None**

**Legal Implications – None**