

## **LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD**

**22 MARCH 2019**

### **LSCSB UPDATE: SUPPORTING LEICESTERSHIRE FAMILIES (SLF)**

#### **Background**

1. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) were early adopters of Phase Two of the expanded Troubled Families programme, after a successful first phase. The programme purposefully left the 'troubled families' title and operated under the name of Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF). The Troubled Families programme remains in Phase Two and the inclusion of families into the programme is based upon a cluster of six headline issues. To be eligible for the expanded programme, each family must have at least two of the following six problematic areas:
  - i. Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour;
  - ii. Children who have not been attending school regularly;
  - iii. Children who need help: children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan;
  - iv. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of worklessness;
  - v. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse; and
  - vi. Parents or children with a range of health problems.
2. The programme commenced in 2013 and concludes in March 2020. There has been no confirmation as to the position post-2020 from Central Government.
3. The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on the progress of SLF over the last year and to update on relevant key information.

#### **Notable developments and challenges:**

4. **Payment by Results (PbR) element of Troubled Families Programme:** Leicestershire remain a high performing area when matching outcomes for families to the key six areas identified above. To date, Leicestershire have provided positive outcomes for 1596 families, with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) target being 2770 families. This equates to 58% of families being 'turned around'. A recent submission has been significantly delayed due to the changes in a computer system which has impacted upon data collection, regardless, LCC are on track to achieve 100% pull down of PbR funding.
5. **MHCLG Spot Check** - In December 2018, the Troubled Families Unit (TFU) visited LCC to undertake a spot check of LCC PbR submissions. All selected family outcomes were validated. The TFU recognised the depth of the

intervention that families were receiving and were able to see evidence of the family's journey recorded and with their voice and choice present throughout the work. The spot check, whilst unannounced, is part of a planned audit cycle. LCC were the first Local Authority to undertake a new style of audit.

6. **Supporting families to progress to work:** In Leicestershire, we are particularly proud of being the second highest Local Authority who are directing families' progress through to continuous employment. Of the 1596 families claimed to date, 642 of those families have entered and sustained employment for either 13 or 26 weeks, dependant on the type of benefit that they were initially claiming, whether this be for medical reasons or unemployment etc. The highest performing Local Authority is the city of Liverpool. The collaboration with the Department of Work and Pensions seconded Troubled Families Employment Advisor and SLF Intensive Family Support Workers has been a key in this work.
7. The 'Improving Lives: Helping Workless families' publication by the DWP in 2017 identifies that worklessness and associated risk factors, all negatively affect children's outcomes so by placing an emphasis on supporting families to progress to work outcomes for children are being improved. These children are twice as likely to fail at all stages of their education (not meeting milestones). Parents who are not working are most likely to experience relationship distress such as parental conflict and/or domestic abuse. The latter are examples of the impact that worklessness can have on families.
8. A case study is attached as an appendix to this report that details the work undertaken to support a family to progress into employment. SLF initiatives around supporting families into work will be featured as good practice in this years Troubled Families Annual Report.

### **Key issues for partnership working or affecting partners**

9. **National Troubled Families Agenda:** The national Troubled Families programme is due to end in March 2020, and the reserve funding is due to end in November 2020. In preparation for this the intensive family support offer currently led by the SLF team (working in partnership with a number of district councils) has been mainstreamed within the newly formed Children and Families Wellbeing Service. This has led to a number of staff who had worked within the SLF team from Melton Borough Council and Blaby District Council being TUPE transferred into the Service. However, if the Department for Education nationally does not provide any follow-on funding from troubled families for early intervention work, there will be a shortfall in funding to the Children and Family Wellbeing Service from November 2020. From the LCC evaluation of SLF, this indicates that this may have implications on both positive outcomes for families, and place increased demands on statutory children's services.
10. **The new Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS).** This Service commences on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and merges four services (SLF, Youth Offending

Service, Children's Centres and Early Help Information, Support and Assessment) into a singular service. The new service will embrace the learning from the Troubled Families programme around the successes of whole family working, a hands-on approach and working with families to achieve common goals. The model will enable a more fluid response to children, young people and families based on a locality model. The model promotes greater opportunities to work collaboratively with partners as teams will be based within localities. The Early Help Partnership Group is supporting this work and arrangements to maintain staff in District and Borough offices where possible.

### **Recommendations for the Board**

11. It is recognised that the Board will be concerned by the current position of the Troubled Families Programme nationally and the implications that this may have on Service delivery in 2020. At this stage, the Board are asked to note the positive progress and impact of SLF.

### **Officer to Contact**

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### **Appendices**

Appendix - Case study.

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