



## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**20 JANUARY 2014**

### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

### **SUPPORTING LEICESTERSHIRE FAMILIES PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To present to members of the Committee an overview of the first six months of the Supporting Leicestershire Families Service and the outcomes for families.

#### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. In June 2012 the Cabinet approved the model for Troubled (now Supporting Leicestershire) Families and the introduction of the new service on a phased basis from September 2012. In June 2013 the Scrutiny Commission received a Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF) Programme update and resolved that the approach taken to provide holistic support to troubled families via the SLF Programme be commended and that a further update on the performance of the SLF Programme be submitted to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny body in six months' time.

#### **Background**

3. A pooled budget of £8.7m was created to fund the SLF Service for three years until March 2016 through contributions from the national Troubled Families Unit, the County Council, the seven District Councils, both Clinical Commissioning Groups, Job Centre Plus, Police, and Probation.
4. In July 2013 the Secretary of State announced a further £200 million investment in the Troubled Families Programme for 2015/16 and made reference to the work taking place in Leicestershire as good practice in relation to the insight work undertaken, the model of delivery and the achievement of outcomes.
5. The SLF Service commenced in April 2013 and is made up of 48 Family Support Workers and 7 Senior Practitioners (one based in each of the seven localities). The Service operates through a locality model and each District Council has

nominated a locality manager who provides local leadership for the SLF Service. Three additional Family Support Workers (FSW) have been appointed over the last three months, two funded by the Youth Offending Service and one jointly funded by Longfield School and Melton Borough Council.

6. Referrals for the SLF Service come via the First Response Central Duty which provides a 'single front door' for all Leicestershire County Council Children and Family Services. These referrals are discussed at locality Hubs, made up of a range of professionals, in order to make a decision about which Early Help service (including Supporting Leicestershire Families) can best meet the needs of the children and their family.
7. The Service works closely alongside Children's Social Care, Probation and other key service agencies, and uses the Signs of Safety model in order to identify risk and protective factors and manage them appropriately. Over the Autumn Term schools events were run in each locality with the aim of sharing information about SLF and Early Help and exploring ways of working with schools in developing joint work with families. The events were well attended by both primary and secondary school staff, as well as staff from SLF and Early Help.
8. The FSWs provide intensive support to families on a wide range of issues in order to enable them to build resilience and achieve better outcomes, in particular around employment, children missing education, crime and anti-social behaviour. The FSWs also take on a co-ordination role to ensure services are working effectively together to deliver plans of support around the family needs.
9. Governance for the Service is through the Supporting Leicestershire Families Commissioning Board and an Executive group comprising senior leaders from each of the partners engaged in the delivery of SLF.

### **Performance of Supporting Leicestershire Families Service**

10. 250 families, made up of around 1000 individuals, have been engaged with the Service during the first six months of operation.
11. Service Performance is monitored on a monthly basis, primarily focusing on outcomes for families based on an assessment undertaken by the FSW. The dashboard at Appendix A provides the latest performance overview of the Service. The main issues at the start of intervention are: difficulties in looking after children (87%); healthy lifestyle Issues (73%); family heavily or solely reliant on state benefits (71%); family has financial difficulties (65%); and child with violent or aggressive behaviour in the household (61%).
12. In November 2013, 25 cases were audited to assess the extent to which they met the required service standards for timeliness, quality of response and outcomes for families. The audit found that:

- 100% showed examples of good practice in relation to multi-agency working;
  - 91% had good evidence of child and family voice embedded in the work;
  - 100% had good evidence of outcomes for the children and families;
  - 86% had assessments completed within timescales and timely input of case notes on the family.
13. Families who have been engaged with the Service for more than 12 weeks have been reviewed and this has helped the Service to track improvements or other changes in issues assessed. Seventy families have been reviewed to date and positive progress is noted across most of the issues assessed. The Family Star tool is used alongside the parent(s)/carers in the household to assess the ten key areas of the parent and parenting abilities. The dashboard shows improvement across all ten areas.
14. Alongside the performance information, the Service has collated a number of summarised case studies from the Family Support Workers in order to identify early outcomes for families as a result of SLF intervention. The majority of early changes have been around debt and finances, in particular supporting families onto debt reduction programmes and out of rent arrears. There have also been a number of individuals in families moving into employment and children engaging with education. A brief summary of these cases can be found in Appendix B to this report.

### **Resource Implications**

15. A pooled budget of £8.7m is available to fund the SLF Service for three years until March 2016 through contributions from the national Troubled Families Unit, the County Council, the seven District Councils, both Clinical Commissioning Groups, Job Centre Plus, Police, and Probation.
16. In July 2013 the Secretary of State announced a further £200 million investment in the Troubled Families Programme for 15/16. The direct benefit to Leicestershire is yet to be worked through, but once known the SLF budget will be re-profiled.

### **Timetable for Decisions**

17. There are no decisions directly relevant to this performance monitoring report.

**Conclusions**

18. The drive from the National Troubled Families Unit was to get something up and running by April 2013. Whilst still in its early stages, initial performance of the Supporting Leicestershire Families Service is positive, which indicates that the family model developed is delivering positive outcomes for families.
19. In 2014, the focus will be on strengthening and building on current arrangements alongside a more focused and targeted approach. In particular, work will take place to understand and demonstrate the cost benefits of the Service to a range of partners both at a local and national level. A further priority will be to develop work with individual schools and school partnerships.
20. The Supporting Leicestershire Families Service will feature in both the Children's Centre inspection and the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers as part of our early help services.

**Equal Opportunities Implications**

21. Many SLF families experience a range of issues that may lead to challenges and marginalisation. Many are experiencing mental health and disability issues, over 50% of families are lone parents, most of the families are facing socio-economic challenges and many SLF families are facing isolation. Therefore the Service needs to continue to monitor the impact and reach of Service delivery on particular groups.

**Relevant Impact Assessments**

22. The SLF workforce is regularly monitored to ensure that risk is minimised.

**Background Papers**

Report to the Scrutiny Commission, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013 – Leicestershire Supporting Families Programme – Update

Report to the Cabinet, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012 – Implementing New Services for troubled Families

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

None.

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**Appendices**

Appendix A - Performance Dashboard

Appendix B - Summary of Case Studies

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