

Committee: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 8 January 2020

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| Subject: | Family Support Programme |
| Lead Officer: | Head of Organisational Development |
| Portfolio Holder: | Community and Corporate Development Councillor Mrs C Elmer |
| Link to Council Priorities: | All |
| Exempt information: | None |
| Delegated status: | For decision |
| Key decision: | N/A |

Executive Summary:

The Family Support Programme (FSP) is part of a countywide scheme set up in partnership with Surrey County Council (SCC) Children's Services. It is the local response to the Government's Troubled Families initiative. SCC commissioned the Borough and District Councils to deliver the Family Support Programme, initially as a two-year programme. This phase ended in February 2015 and the team commenced with implementation of Troubled Families Phase Two.

The Family Support Team and their work (Phase Two) was due to come to an end in March 2020. This report outlines the current position with regards to extending the programme post 2020.

Recommendations: that

- (a) Cabinet supports the extension of the Family Support Programme in partnership with Spelthorne Borough Council and Surrey County Council to 31 March 2023, subject to continued Surrey County Council funding;**
- (b) the partnership arrangement be further reviewed and the Chief Executive in consultation with Spelthorne Borough Council, Surrey County Council and the Portfolio Holder for Community and Corporate Development be delegated authority to make a decision on how best to provide the service in Epsom and Ewell going forward; and**
- (c) Cabinet agree to allocate up to £60,000 to the project from the Home Office projects earmarked reserve, which is held in respect of crime and disorder initiatives which would be used over a 3-year period until 31 March 2023.**

Report:

1. Vision and Priorities

- 1.1 The Council's Vision is: "A responsive and effective Council, protecting and promoting the interests of residents and businesses and safeguarding our environment, while maintaining a community for all."

The Family Support Programme helps to support the Council priorities. These are:

- **Character and Environment** – We will make Elmbridge a sustainable and attractive place.
- **Quality Services** – We will work in partnership to ensure services are efficient, effective and offer value for money.
- **Economic Development** – We will facilitate economic growth, including improved infrastructure and housing.
- **Community Wellbeing** – We will listen to all our residents and support communities to become healthier, empowered and safe.

1.2 The FSP aims to improve and ‘turn around’ the lives of families with complex and multiple needs that draw on the resources of various public sector agencies.

2. Background

2.1 Phase One

SCC commissioned the Borough and District Councils to deliver the FSP initially as a two-year programme.

Under the Phase One programme, SCC had a target to ‘turn around’ the lives of 1,050 families that met specific criteria. These related to:

- non-attendance at school
- crime and anti-social behaviour
- adult unemployment
- being a family of concern (discretionary criteria)

This phase ended in February 2015 and the team commenced with implementation of Troubled Families, Phase Two.

2.2 Phase Two

The criteria had been widened for the programme, increasing the number of families who were eligible to receive support.

The new criteria included:

- parents and children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
- children who have not been attending school regularly
- children who need help (inclusive of all children receiving Early Help and Children’s Social Care interventions)
- adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of worklessness
- families affected by domestic abuse (past and present)
- parents and children with a range of health problems

The extended programme continued to use the current 'team-around-the-family' model. This involves providing appropriate intensive multi-agency support for a short period. The nature and scope of the support reflects the needs of the individual family.

2.3 Phase Three

Phase Three will be a local response (county wide) to providing Family Support across the County. The proposal from Surrey County Council would be looking to address some of the service gaps which have been identified in terms of the delivery of Children Services and build on the good practice which has been identified in the Family Support teams across the county. Following a restructure of services, SCC is now funding the Family Support Programme and it is therefore no longer vulnerable to the future National Funding which is still uncertain.

A Quality Assurance review has recently taken place. The locally agreed Surrey Family Support Programme Quality Assurance process allows for annual peer review and the sharing of good practice and the time to deep dive and explore areas of work in detail. It involves the collection of three pieces of evidence against each of nine standards, comprising a number of sections. It aims to examine consistency across all District and Borough Family Support Programme teams in providing families with a standard, high quality offer.

This is the first year that the North East Team was deemed 'outstanding' in each of the nine areas:

- Safeguarding
- Early Help Assessment
- Team Around the Family
- Case Files
- Governance, Leadership and Management
- Family Journey Experience
- Family Outcomes
- Partnership Working
- Training and development

Among some of the positive work acknowledged, the auditor considered that:

- "the voice of the child is recognised and built into targets and outcomes";
- "feedback is sought from professionals involved with families, shows best practice in sharing information"; and
- "it is evident when targets have been completed that work is progressive and not repetitive".

The Family Support Programme is part of a wider Family Service to support families with children aged 5 -18 that are the most vulnerable. The Family Support Programme will be delivered in accordance with the Family Support

Programme Specification, National Troubled Families Programme and the Surrey Troubled Families Outcomes Plan.

The programme will provide targeted help and referrals will come via the new SCC Early Help Hub, this Hub replaces the MASH (Multi Agency Service Hub) arrangements. This new approach builds on the Family Resilience model, based on early intervention and support, at the core of this approach is the idea that most families will be good enough parents and continue to care for their children. Surrey County Council are seeking to avoid children becoming subject to child protection or public care.

The Family Support Programme does not exist in isolation but is part of a local integrated system and a wide range of partners that builds family resilience in Surrey, improving the life chances of the most vulnerable children.

Aim

Working together with everyone who supports children, young people 5 – 18 years and their families, Family Support will promote the upbringing of children within their birth families and work with partners and families to ensure that children can thrive whilst remaining safely at home.

To do this Family Support will focus their work on improving outcomes for children aged 5 – 18 years needing additional help; these include:

- Children whose needs are complex and enduring (Specialist).
- Children whose needs are more complex with more than one service involved as part of a co-ordinated multi-disciplinary assessment and plan (Targeted Help).

Core purpose

As part of a quadrant early help offer Family Support will work together with children and families to meet their additional needs offering the right help at the right time to prevent needs escalating and reducing the need for specialist services.

Family Support Teams will achieve this by:

- Offering targeted help to support families at the right time as part of an early help plan;
- coordinating targeted help and taking the lead practitioner role where appropriate for families needing a multi-agency response;
- participating in a multi-disciplinary plan as part of specialist support for families in crisis;
- contributing to a co-ordinated Borough/District parenting offer for families; and
- Working in partnership with Family Centres, targeted youth support and Children's Social Care to meet the needs of the whole family.

Outcomes

Family support will focus on the following outcomes for families referred needing additional help at levels 3 and 4.

1. Reduced inequalities for disadvantaged children and families to prevent the need for statutory services
2. Strengthened family relationships and enabling families to stay together
3. Improved child and family health and wellbeing
4. Improved outcomes at school
5. Reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour and offending on children
6. Adults are supported to access employment and training
7. Reducing domestic abuse and the impact on children

The diagram below summarises the different levels.



As a result of being more resilient, families will increasingly enable children to be happy, healthy, learn, achieve their potential and become economically independent citizens. Surrey County Council will be allocating additional resources to support the further development of the programme. The team will receive £144,000 to employ two additional social workers and one family support worker.

2.4 Partnership

Elmbridge is currently working in partnership with Spelthorne Borough Council to deliver the service. The service is currently delivered across three Boroughs; Elmbridge Borough Council, Spelthorne Borough Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. It is suggested that this partnership arrangement between Spelthorne Borough Council and Elmbridge Borough Council continue but the arrangement with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council be reviewed and a decision be taken by the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Community Development around the best way to proceed going forward.

Below is a breakdown of the families which have been worked with:

April 18 – March 19

Elmbridge - 45
Spelthorne - 36
Epsom and Ewell - 17

April 19 – December 2019

Elmbridge - 24
Spelthorne - 35
Epsom and Ewell -17

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 SCC has offered to continue funding at a similar level for the existing team but are seeking on-going support from the District and Borough Councils to provide the service. The programme has been successful to date and is delivering positive outcomes for families. It is suggested that we continue to support the programme.

With the additional funding from Surrey County Council of £144,000, this should ensure a greater impact on Elmbridge families over the next three years.

Financial implications:

The Council provides management support for the programme, ICT equipment and office accommodation for the team. In 2018/19 this amounted to £149,000 which is made up of Elmbridge Borough Council management time, funding towards salaries and some support services, including ICT and accommodation.

Spelthorne Borough Council is the employer of the team.

It is suggested that we allocate up to £60,000 to the project from the Home Office projects earmarked reserve which is held in respect of crime and disorder initiatives and it is explained that this would be in place of a seconded resource.

Surrey County Council will be allocating additional resources to support the further development of the programme. The team will receive £144,000 to employ two additional Social Workers and one Family Support Worker.

Environmental/Sustainability Implications:

None for the purposes of this report.

Legal implications:

There is no statutory duty for the Council to deliver the Family Support Programme. We do have obligations, such as our duties under S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the prevention of homelessness under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) to support vulnerable families.

Equality Implications:

The Surrey Family Support Programme seeks to target support at those families who have a multiplicity of problems.

Risk Implications:

The extension of the programme does increase our risk in the event that the programme comes to an end or is restructured in the future. We will be liable for redundancy costs for the staff we have employed for more than two years. These costs would be shared between Elmbridge Borough Council, Spelthorne Borough Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.

Community Safety Implications:

The programme helps us meet our requirements under S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Principal Consultees:

Head of Finance
Surrey County Council
Spelthorne Borough Council

Background papers:

None

Enclosures/Appendices:

None

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