

Lancashire's Response to the National Troubled Families Programme

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Executive Summary

This report outlines the details of progress achieved to date with the national programme and identifies the challenges still to be addressed in the final two years of programme activity to enable vulnerable residents in Lancashire to fully benefit from the programme's requirements and for the council to achieve its projected financials linked to significant and sustained progress.

Recommendations

The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the report.

Background and Advice

Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW) is leading the response in Lancashire, to the national Troubled Families Programme.

Phase 1 of the programme was launched in 2011 and referred to as Working Together with Families, the expanded (Phase 2) programme was rolled out nationally in April 2015, building upon the original programme and aiming to improve the life chances of 400,000 families nationally who are experiencing multiple issues in the family unit.

Lancashire was accepted on to Phase 2 of the programme in September 2015 and has been set a target of identifying, working with and evidencing significant and sustained progress for up to 8,620 families by 2020.

Lancashire has been able to demonstrate significant progress in response to the requirements of the programme despite many challenges that have needed to be resolved. This means that Lancashire has exceeded its profile to date on targets for 'attaching' families to the programme and is safely on target to meet the total number of families it has been projected to attach by 2020 (8620 families). Lancashire has

also submitted 1,759 claims for 'Payment by Results (PBR) in 2017/18, taking us to a cumulative total to date of 2,097.

This report outlines the details of progress achieved to date with the national programme and identifies the challenges still to be addressed in the final two years of programme activity to enable Lancashire to fully meet the programmes requirements and benefit from the financial rewards linked to significant and sustained progress. Although Lancashire remains below the aspirational forecasted Payment by Results (PBR) target at this stage of the programme, there is significant work underway to explore how improvements can continue to be made and where outcomes can be evidenced to increase PBR claims. We are confident that we will continue to see the numbers of our families achieving significant and sustainable outcomes increasing in the final two years of the programme.

Programme Criteria

Families are eligible to be 'attached' if there is evidence that they meet two or more of the six national criteria:

1. Parents or children involved in crime / anti-social behaviour
2. Children who have not been attending school regularly
3. Children who need help, identified as in need or subject to a child protection plan
4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness
5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
Parents or children with a range of health problems

The programme principles focus on:

- Ensuring that there is an assessment in place and that this takes into account the needs of the whole family (Family Common Assessment)
- A plan of work is agreed with the family (a 'risk sensible' action plan) which is clear on which agencies are involved in supporting the family on which outcomes, and a lead professional identified by and for the family.

If a family is attached to the programme, they all receive coordinated support delivered by a CFW 'Lead Professional' who is the main point of contact for the family. The support delivered is underpinned by a whole family assessment (Common Assessment Framework) that considers the unmet needs of each family member with the jointly agreed actions required to meet the identified needs outlined in a family action plan.

In learning from Phase 1 of the programme, it was identified that a more sustainable approach to delivering the programme would be to embed the principles of the programme within core service delivery. The accepted proposal was that the Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFW) would focus their capacity to work as

the Lead Professional for families who meet the Troubled Families programme criteria.

Programme Targets

Lancashire has been set a target of identifying, working with and evidencing significant and sustained progress for 8,620 families by 2020. Our aspiration is that Lancashire seeks to achieve 100% of attachments and significant and sustained progress for all the families we work with. However, given the potential unviability of being able to evidence significant and sustained progress for every attached family, the forecast for Payment By Results (PBR) claims has been set at 80% of the total (6950 families) and the breakdown of how this has profiled to be achieved across the 5 years of the programme is outlined in the table below.

The medium term financial strategy (MTFS) includes the agreed profile of attachment numbers (8,620) and resulting funding (£1,000 for each family "attached") which is on track to be achieved. As the forecast for the PBR performance has proved more of a challenge a prudent forecast of 70% of the overall attachment numbers was built into the budget and therefore any improved performance in 2018/19 and 2019/20 will provide an in year financial benefit. As performance is tracked the assumptions may be revised as part of the 2018/19 quarter 1 MTFS if profiled or aspirational PBR numbers are achieved.

Phase 2 Programme Year		Profile of Attachment Numbers	Actual Performance in year (Attachment)	Profile of Payment by Results (PBR) Numbers	Actual Performance (PBR)	<i>Aspirational PBR</i>
Year 1	2015/16	1,470	1,470	0	0	0
Year 2	2016/17	2,833	4,747	338	338	338
Year 3	2017/18	2,190	4,435	1,500	1,759	2,250
Year 4	2018/19	1,696	-	2,600	-	2,600
Year 5	2019/20	431	-	2,512	-	3,432
		8,620		6,950		8,620

2097 PBR claims have been submitted to date (against our aspirational profile of 2588). This means that as we enter the final two years of the programme we are;

- at 24% of our aspirational PBR claims target where we had profiled to be at 30% by end of Yr3
- at 30% of our agreed forecast PBR target where we had profiled to be at 26% by end of Yr3

There are a number of factors that need to be taken into consideration of Lancashire being below the PBR target profile at this stage:

- Lancashire's delayed entry to Phase 2 of the programme meant that attachments only started from November 2015, meaning November 2016 was the earliest point that a large majority of attached cases could possibly trigger a PBR claim.
- Partner agencies who deliver early help support to families in many cases do not have the programme principles sufficiently embedded in their organisations to enable them to provide cases that can subsequently meet the evidence requirements of the programme
- Unprecedented service disruption and change was experienced during 2015/16 and 2016/17 due to wholesale service transformation and merging of services to form the new CFW service and resulting in 34% vacancies in front line staffing during 2017/18
- Without the benefit of a dedicated IT data management system for CFW the process of identifying and evidencing the families that could be part of the Troubled Families Unit (TFU) programme and capturing evidence of progress has required a significant amount of manual data processing effort needing to be completed with limited staffing resources.

Payment Mechanism and the link with 'Payment by Results'

Local authorities receive £1,000 for each family "attached" to the programme with an additional £800 paid on a "payment-by-results" basis only where there is clear evidence that all identified issues have been resolved and the change has been sustained for a defined period.

Programme Challenges

There are real positives in Lancashire's approach to the Troubled Families programme which are recognised by the national Troubled Families team and confirmed in their recent visit. However, there remains a number of challenges that need to be addressed if Lancashire is to fully achieve the nationally agreed targets and ambitions for the programme.

- Quality recording on systems and quality of supervision and management oversight on casework has been of variable quality during the inception period of the new service as staff in new roles have worked hard to adapt their historic practice
- Significant investment has been needed in supporting staff to adopt the programme principles and embed these within their everyday working practice, and there remains ongoing workforce development issues.
- None of the data/information systems used by services within LCC, or within partner agencies are currently linked together. This means that there is a substantial amount of manual data matching required to identify families.
- At a national level there are issues for the programme which fall out of the implementation of the Universal Credit benefit. There is currently no national data sharing of this data, unlike other out of work benefits where we receive monthly updates. The large number of families engaged in the programme in Lancashire means that the scale of tracking this issue is significant as there are

now more adults on universal credit and not in employment than on job seekers allowance in Lancashire.

- Significant data quality issues have impacted on the programme to date. Inherited original data systems had not been robustly managed resulting in cases not kept up to date or closed appropriately.

Over the lifetime of the programme, Lancashire will have two 'spot checks' where colleagues from the national team will visit Lancashire and ensure there is demonstrable evidence in place to support PBR claims which have been submitted. The first of these 'spot checks' happened on 12th October 2017. The feedback from the spot check was very positive:

- All cases passed the spot check and evidenced a common sense approach to our systems and collation of evidence to support claims.
- There was confidence in the level of information provided and they were able to see very clearly how the data and work in practice marries together. They were pleased to hear how the use of quantitative information informs front line practice.
- It was clear that the principles of the programme were being met both from a qualitative and quantitative evidence point of view.
- From interviews with CFW practitioners, it was clear that there is a strong understanding of family working and how the programme facilitates whole family working.
- Achievements were noted in relation to the geographical size and complexity of Lancashire and the significant service transformation that had been evident.
- It was noted that Lancashire had achieved positive progress as a result of both effective operational practice supported by strong and experienced analytical work.
- Recognition that manually dependent data tools and processes supporting audit and reporting have had to be developed from scratch.

Governance

A governance review is currently being undertaken which seeks to establish an accountability framework for the multi-agency partnership responsible for delivering the TFU programme which requires strong multi-agency engagement, commitment, support and effective challenge. In order to deliver evidenced outcomes, it is necessary for organisations to embed whole family working within their organisations which is not generally the 'modus operandi' of some partner agencies.

The main challenges for partners to effectively engage in delivering within the programme are;

- The requirement to provide evidence of robust assessments (CAF)
- Their workforce acting as lead professionals
- Lack of shared data systems creating barriers to sharing evidence of family progress to meet programme criteria

The progression of attachments and payment by results claims on families where multi-agency partners are the lead professional have not been able to be progressed i.e. Police, Health, District Councils, Fire & Rescue.

Future developments to further embed successful outcomes for families

There are a number of key actions that we are currently driving forward to secure a county-wide offer within which all partners coordinate, prioritise and maximise their collective efforts to enable children, young people and families to achieve success, resist stress, manage change and uncertainty, and make safe decisions about their future. We are confident that positive development in these areas will assist the programme to capture more evidence through partnership working of the impact we are having on families' ability to change and sustain positive outcomes as they become more resilient and are able to function autonomously without the need for intervention from key services.

Development activity includes:

District Integrated Teams

The establishment of multi-agency Integrated Teams is being progressed as a way of working in every district across the County. By integrating together in community based settings, integrated teams will be able to make more effective and efficient use of their collective resources and strengthen the delivery of a multi-agency Early Help offer, impacting positively on the programme and information exchange as colleagues can speak directly about families.

Developmental self-assessment

This is a toolkit to help multi agency teams assess the maturity of their progress in providing integrated support for complex families and evidence and assess their performance against six strands:

1. The family experience of transformed and integrated services
2. Leadership
3. Strategy
4. Culture
5. Workforce Development
6. Delivery structures and processes

Shared management information systems

During the period June 2017 to September 2018, there has been significant investment in the development of a 'shared' IT solution for capturing, recording and allocating 'early help' work with children, young people and their families. Joint investment by LCC and Lancashire Constabulary is enabling the implementation of the Liquid Logic Early Help Module.

This will "go live" on the 1st October 2018 with some aspects coming on line within the following 3-6months. Whilst the system cannot fully replace the complex data matching and tracking processes we have in place for the Troubled Families programme, it will significantly enhance our ability to evidence the impact our interventions have on improving outcomes.

Addressing worklessness

A key objective of the programme is to work with families where there is a history of worklessness. The Department for Work and Pensions have seconded four Troubled Families Employment Advisers (TFEAs) to the CFW service to support getting adults in the family back in to or working towards employment. This role has been crucial in supporting an increase in claims as 70% of cases attached to date have worklessness as an identified need.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risk implications.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
N/A	N/A	N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A