

Communities and Health Advisory Board

Troubled Families Briefing

11th January 2016

Troubled Families Phase 2 is a five year Programme which commenced in April 2015. It is a DCLG payment by results (PBR) programme aimed at turning around the lives of families facing a range of complex issues and challenges. Families are identified according to specific criteria; Crime / anti-social behaviour, education, children who need help, out of work or at risk of financial exclusion, domestic abuse and health. (A summary of indicators and payment by results outcomes will be distributed at the meeting.)

Kent's target is to turn around the lives of 8960 families by 2020. Tonbridge & Malling's target is 613.

The programme is primarily delivered by KCC Early Help & Preventative Services with additional support from a range of partner agencies and commissioned services. Families are identified through the Early Help Notification process with a range of agencies (e.g. schools, health visitors, GPs, CAMHS, housing providers, drug & alcohol support services) submitting notifications for families with their consent. Families can also self-refer.

Early Help Workers and Family Intervention Project Workers carry out a holistic family assessment and then devise and implement a plan with the family to address their needs. Additional support is provided by a Jobcentre Plus Troubled Families Employment Advisor, an RBLI Employability Mentor, the Young Lives youth mentoring service, Kent Police troubled families officers and the KCC Skills & Employability Team.

PBR claims are made when families achieve outcomes in relation to each of the identified Troubled Families criteria. This progress must be evidenced through agreed assessment, planning and review documentation for each family and backed up with hard data where appropriate.

In Tonbridge & Malling, 233 families have been identified and 114 families are currently being worked with.

Key Challenges in Phase 2

Kent faces a number of challenges in delivering the programme. Some of these are national

issues and others are specific to Kent.

1. The funding for Troubled Families has reduced. For Phase 1, Kent was allocated £4,000 per family turned around. For Phase 2 Kent will receive £1,800 per family who achieves success. (Made up of an upfront attachment fee of £1,000 per family and a results-based payment of £800.) The overall national budget for the Troubled Families Programme has reduced by 55 percent. In short, authorities are expected to produce greater results with less funding.
2. The criteria and the outcomes required are more diverse. In Phase 1, families only needed to meet outcomes in relation to 3 criteria – Phase 2 requires outcomes in up to 6. It is therefore more challenging to achieve PBR outcomes in Phase 2.
3. The process of evidencing claims is more rigorous in Phase 2. Claims may only be made where an Early Help Assessment, planning and review document has been completed for a family. In each case there must be clear reference to Troubled Families indicators and outcomes as a result of interventions specified in the plan. In short, if the paperwork isn't up to the required standard, no claim can be made, even if the desired outcomes have been achieved.
4. Restructuring within KCC Early Help has led to delays in agreeing the assessment paperwork and processes. During the spring of 2015, KCC Early Help & Preventative Services underwent a restructure process. The subsequent recruitment of staff, training and implementation of new systems and new ways of working led to a delay in the sign off of the family assessment, plan and review documentation. The implication of this is that while work with families has been taking place since the beginning of the programme, the county has only been in a position to evidence any of that work adequately for PBR claiming purposes since late summer 2015. As a result, it is anticipated that significant numbers of PBR claims will only begin to be made from Spring / Summer 2016.

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