

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

17th JUNE 2022

LSCSB UPDATE: CHILDREN AND FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE, LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background

1. The Children and Family Wellbeing Service (CFWS) provide early help services to a child, young person and family where they are experiencing difficulties that cannot be supported by universal services alone, such as GP's or schools.
2. The Service offers a breadth of interventions from groupwork to intensive support for those who are living with domestic abuse, parental conflict, suffering with their emotional wellbeing, needing parenting support or achieving inclusion for those children who have special educational needs or are young carers.
3. The CFWS has responsibility for the Supporting Families programme and Family Hubs, both of which will be the key feature of this report for the Board.

Notable developments and challenges:

Past Year

4. The Comprehensive Spending Review at the end of October 2021 announced the continuation of the national Supporting Families Programme for the next three years. Funding has now been confirmed for 2022-23 with indicative amounts shared through until 2025. New targets have been set for the number of families required to meet sustained and significant outcomes. In 2022-23 this figure is 464 families but by 2023-25 the target increases to 928 families. During 2021-22 the target figure was 464 families for Leicestershire and this target was achieved in full in March 2022.
5. During 2021-22 the service received 6,484 referrals for children and families, of which over 60% have been supported through an allocated caseworker. Other forms of support include group work programmes, for example we offer the Triple P Parenting Programme for parents of 5-11 years olds, parents of teenagers, and parents of children with special educational needs or disabilities, aged 0-12. 34% of all referrals were from schools and the second largest referral agency was the Police accounting for 23.4% of referrals. Most

police referrals relate to standard risk DASH assessments – often indicating couple/parental conflict as opposed to domestic abuse.

6. A new project, Strengthening Leicestershire Relationships, was launched by the service in November 2021. This project has a focus on the impact of parental conflict on children. The work on parental conflict was initiated by the Department for Work and Pensions, identifying the link between worklessness, poverty and family stress and the subsequent impact this has on child outcomes. A Leicestershire practitioner toolkit has been commissioned alongside practice training to enable our family support workers to work with parents on this issue. During March 2022 110 practitioners from the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, Children's Social Care and voluntary sector organisations (Centre for Fun and Families and The Bridge) have been trained to deliver work to families living with parental conflict. 11 individuals have been trained in a 'train the trainer' approach which means that delivery of the toolkit is sustainable going forward. This work is set to continue from 2022-25 with work with Police, District Councils, Education and Health being planned. In addition to Toolkit training, several CFWS practitioners have been trained to deliver an evidence-based programme for parents who are separating or divorcing (Transitions Triple P) and where this is having a detrimental impact on the children due to the level of conflict being displayed by parents. Parental conflict during separation/divorce is a common reason for referral to CFWS and this evidence-based approach is a cost-effective way of delivering to significant cohorts of parents.
7. From January 2022 to end of March a feasibility study was completed by the Service to explore the benefits of adopting a Family Hubs approach in the County. Although Leicestershire was not identified as one of the 75 Local Authorities to receive government funding for the development of Hubs, the Leicestershire Early Help Partnership is keen to develop this way of working in principle. During the quarter work began to look at low and no cost approaches to enhancing partnership working and an action plan is due to be considered for 2022-23.

Coming Year

8. As mentioned above, the national Supporting Families programme has been extended for the next three years. Funding is a blend of grant and payment by results which gives a potential funding pot of £4.7 million over the funding period. Alongside the challenging targets for the number of families to be successfully supported, the conditions of funding include expectations for the whole Early Help Partnership, recognising that early help is the responsibility of a wide range of agencies. A needs assessment is currently underway with

the Early Help Partnership which will be submitted to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities at the start of July. The assessment will help us to understand the maturity of the Partnership across 5 key areas: Communities, Data, Family voice and experience, Workforce, Leaders.

9. Following the assessment, the Partnership is required to submit 3 key priorities for progress in the coming year. It is likely that we will be required to make progress on our data maturity.
10. Data sharing between agencies to support effective decision making, resource allocation and improved service delivery is a significant focus of the programme and linked to future funding. Specifically, progress is required in achieving person level live data feeds between CFWS, Police, Housing, and health. This represents a significant challenge for all partners but the risk of not achieving expectations is a loss of funding to CFWS which would clearly have a significant impact on the provision of early help services in the county.

Key issues for partnership working or affecting partners

11. There are no issues for the Board at this juncture. All required representatives from agencies across the Board are engaged with this work streams identified above.

Recommendations for the Board

12. The Board is asked to note the contents of this Report.

Officer to contact

Carly Turner
Youth and Justice Service Manager – Leicestershire County Council
Tel: 0116 305 0030 Email: carly.turner@leics.gov.uk

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