

This Report will be made public on 8 November 2016

**Folkestone**

Hythe & Romney Marsh  
Shepway District Council



Report Number **C/16/73**

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 16 November 2016  
**Status:** Non-Key Decision  
**Head of Service:** Sarah Robson, Head of Communities  
**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee, Cabinet Member for Communities

**SUMMARY:** Kent Troubled Families Extended Phase Programme and grant allocation (2017/18) update

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:** Cabinet is asked to consider the following reason for recommendation:

- The report provides a clear steer for delivery Troubled Families in Shepway, setting out Kent County Council's (KCC) proposal for allocating the Troubled Families Grant to Shepway District Council in 2017/18, including certain grant stipulations and options.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the following recommendations:

1. **To receive and note Report C/16/73.**
2. **To consider the options being presented to:**
  - **Accept KCC's proposed grant of £129,221 to Shepway District Council (SDC) for 2017/18 – with a reduced allocation of £53,741 for Troubled Families and £75,480 for Working Families Everywhere.**
  - **Approve KCC's grant stipulation that SDC would need to procure the new KCC Intensive Family Support Provider model, Porchlight, to deliver the Troubled Families programme in Shepway, utilising approximately £97,000 of the grant.**
  - **Approve KCC's grant stipulation that the remaining portion of the grant (£32,221) be used to support a local service to address local housing need for families.**
  - **Approve the officer recommendation to use the remaining portion of the grant to provide a Family Housing Solutions Officer.**

- **Agree the Family Champions team will be made redundant as at 31 March 2017, as a result of Kent County Council (KCC) confirming that they will not fund the current Shepway Family Champions programme in the new financial year.**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In April 2012 the Government launched the Troubled Families Programme, a £448 million scheme to incentivise Local Authorities and their partners to turn around the lives of 120,000 troubled families by May 2015.
- 1.2 Kent County Council (KCC) is the accountable body for the Kent Troubled Families programme, which has been delivered in partnership with District and Borough Councils. In each District, the approach has been tailored to local conditions, to enable areas of best practice to be noted and developed.
- 1.3 Phase 1 of the Programme supported families where children were not attending school, young people were committing crime, families were involved in anti-social behaviour and adults were out of work.
- 1.4 Following the success of Phase 1, the Government decided to expand the Troubled Families Programme for a further five years from 2015, in order to reach an additional 400,000 families across England.
- 1.5 Under the Expanded Troubled Families Programme in Phase 2 the target numbers of families to be turned around in Kent grew from 2,560 to 9,200. For identifying this larger number of troubled families and the key issues faced by families, the criteria were expanded to include the following:
  - Parents and children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
  - Children who have not been attending school regularly
  - Children who need help: children of all ages, who need help, are identified as children in need or who are subject to a Child Protection Plan
  - Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness
  - Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
  - Parents and children with a range of health problems.
- 1.6 In Shepway, engagement with families is delivered through KCC's Early Help and Preventative Services, commissioned intensive family support providers, including Addaction and Stonham and lastly, Shepway District Council's Family Champions team. However, KCC has recently commissioned Porchlight as its new intensive family support provider, who will work alongside Early Help and Preventative Services with effect from 1 December 2016.
- 1.7 The Shepway Troubled Families programme is currently funded by an annual Troubled Families Grant of £74,600 and a discretionary Working Families Everywhere (WFE) Grant of £75,480. Although the funding has to be spent in accordance with the strict DCLG Troubled Families criteria, the additional Working Families Everywhere concept has allowed for discretionary spend for project and family budgets. The current funding agreement for the Family Champions is due to expire on 31 March 2017.

## **2. TROUBLED FAMILIES – LOOKING AHEAD**

- 2.1 In September 2016, KCC announced that the expanded programme would continue to be funded in Kent for the next two financial years - 2017/18 and 2018/19 - with funding allocations being calculated based on children living in out of work households.

- 2.2 KCC's current funding proposal for Shepway in 2017/18 is a reduced Troubled Families allocation of £53,741 and remaining WFE grant of £75,480, totalling £129,221. However, KCC has confirmed that it will not support the existing Shepway Family Champions model in the new financial year, as a result of poor case management, long-term cases, weak criteria returns and auditing and monitoring, which has been problematic across the Kent Troubled Families programme and is being addressed in the emerging delivery model for Troubled Families.
- 2.3 If Shepway District Council accepts the £129,221, KCC have stipulated that as part of any grant agreement, Shepway would have to procure Porchlight, the KCC Intensive Family Support Provider, utilising 75% (approximately £75,000). This would secure 3 Intensive Family Workers from Porchlight for Shepway. KCC would facilitate the discussions with the provider and the terms would be very similar to the main contract KCC has with the provider.
- 2.4 This has been the arrangement KCC has had with other Borough and District Councils across Kent since the Troubled Families programme's inception in 2012 and allows local councils to adopt KCC's governance model, whilst best reflecting local circumstances and knowledge, whilst utilising existing local multi-agency arrangements.
- 2.5 KCC has requested that the remaining portion of the grant (£32,221) be used to support a local service or projects to address a provision gap in supporting local housing need for the Troubled Families cohort.

### **3. IMPACT ON SHEPWAY DISTRICT COUNCIL FAMILY CHAMPIONS**

- 3.1 At present, the Family Champions team consists of one full-time Senior Family Champion and three full-time Family Champions, who support an ongoing individual caseload of 13 families each. All posts are currently contracted to 31 March 2017 and subject to formal approval from KCC regarding future funding, would be liable for redundancy payment.
- 3.2 However, the Senior Family Champion, resigned and left the Council's employment on 30th September 2016. One Family Champion also accepted a 1 year temporary contract as Communities Officer role with the Council and started her new role on 10 October 2016.
- 3.3 KCC has agreed that no further families will be allocated to the Family Champions, allowing the remaining cohort of families to be managed and supported towards case closure by 31 March 2017.

### **4. OPTIONS**

- 4.1 **Option 1:** Do nothing. However, this is not recommended as it poses the risk of a lack of continuity and care for families in the remaining 6 months left of this programme. The District Council will also need to be in a position to provide a business plan and funding bid to KCC for next year's funding by early December 2016.
- 4.2 **Option 2:** Agree an exit strategy for Family Champions. With 6 months left of this year's programme, it will be difficult to recruit permanently to the vacant posts highlighted in 3.2 above.

- 4.3 KCC has confirmed that it will not fund the Family Champions model from April 2017, as it is moving to a significantly different model, which provides intensive, targeted, time limited, short term interventions for families (children living in out of work households) incorporating the tools and techniques of Social Return on Investment. Therefore, the Council could rationalise the existing arrangement providing an exit strategy for the current Family Champions model by 31 March 2017.
- 4.4 A temporary Senior Family Champion has been secured from an agency to provide line and case management to the team until 31 March 2017. This post will ensure continuity for the officers and families. A sufficient budget is in place to cover these costs.
- 4.5 A review of all long duration cases held by the Family Champions will be undertaken in order to assess what further work needs to be undertaken or whether cases should be closed.
- 4.6 Estimated redundancy implications as at 31 March 2017 for the remaining two Family Champions based on current salaries would total £7,103.29.

Once the Family Champion currently undertaking a temporary contract as Communities Officer, finishes in September 2017, the estimated redundancy cost would be £7,275.36.

There are no LGPS implications.

- 4.7 **Option 3:** Undertake Option 2 above, alongside KCC's suggestion that an alternative proposal may be submitted by Shepway District Council, bidding for the full grant of £129,221, apportioning £75,000 to support 3 Family Intensive Support Workers commissioned by KCC. The remaining portion of the grant (£32,221) could be used to support a local service or projects to address a provision gap in supporting local housing need for the Troubled Families cohort.
- 4.8 Council officers have undertaken early discussions with KCC to discuss how the remaining grant of £32,221 can be used, with a preference for an early intervention/prevention role through the appointment of a Family Housing Solutions Officer, which would report directly into the Council's Housing Options Team Leader.
- 4.9 The District Council's Community Services Manager, would continue to provide oversight of the local programme, supporting the Intensive Family Workers with the necessary links with the various agencies and as part of the multi-agency operational structures to which many of the identified families are already known.
- 4.10 The Family Housing Solutions Officer would provide a dedicated service for dealing with complex or escalated housing cases, specifically to ensure successful intervention and preventative action is taken with troubled families to assist them to secure and retain their accommodation, reduce anti social behaviour and prevent homelessness.
- 4.11 The post would ensure Early Help and Porchlight officers that support Troubled Families have a named officer that they can contact to seek advice in relation to housing or refer specific cases where people are in need of housing assistance.

4.12 The Officer would be based from the Council's Civic Centre offices, but co-locate across the district's Early Help hubs as part of the weekly Early Help Notification meetings and Porchlight, supporting households living in their own property, whether owner occupied, council, private rented or housing association.

4.13 The Family Housing Solutions Officer would:

- Help families who may be at risk of homelessness, or in urgent need of housing advice/assistance, to resolve their housing difficulty by ensuring they have easy access to the services they need.
- Carry out housing needs and risk assessments in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures, providing a Personal Housing Plan, which will capture a household's circumstances as well as suitable housing options available to them, including finance and debt advice and support.
- Provide practical support and signposting to residents to achieve positive housing outcomes.
- Receive referrals direct from the new KCC commissioned service for Troubled Families.
- Provide case specific housing and welfare advice and signposting to residents to help them to maximise their physical and mental health, access personal development opportunities, develop positive and effective relationships, play an active role in their community, and sustain their tenancy.
- Seek legal advice, mediation and restorative justice services to enable swift action (e.g. to prevent eviction or homelessness caused by family relationship breakdown), the effective management of risk to the Council and partners, and protection for residents and members of the community.
- Visit and assess applicants for disabled adaptations and manage the assessment process, supporting the delivery of adaptations and/or related services for households and their families.
- Assess the need for and/or organise a private Occupational Therapist assessment and directly order appropriate works from the Private Sector Housing team where minor adaptations are required
- Refer households to statutory or voluntary services who provide specialist support and contribute information to housing and welfare risk assessments, care plans and support plans
- The officer would benefit from the support network provided by the Community Safety Unit and Partnership to address safeguarding, domestic abuse and other cross cutting issues / programmes, including substance misuse.

4.14 The salary grade would be subject to job evaluation. Similar housing officer posts fall within the Council's E/F grade bracket. The post could provide suitable alternative employment for Family Champions staff at risk of redundancy, depending on the remit and the salary grade.

## 5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Option 3 is the officer's preferred option, providing the most sensible solution for a transition into an early exit strategy from the Family Champions model and to bid for bid for a reduced allocation of £129,221 from next year's Troubled Families and Working Families Everywhere grants. It would ensure continuity and care for existing families working with the Family Champions team and reduce any potential reputational risk to the Council. Option 3 would support the recent restructure of the Housing Options team, providing an increased focus on reducing homelessness through prevention and partnership work through the appointment of a Housing Family Solutions Officer.
- 5.2 The Council's achievements since April 2012, should be acknowledged and praised. The Shepway Working Families Everywhere and Troubled Families programme had, over the 3 year period to 2015, identified 368 families in Shepway. 87.5% (322) of these were engaged under the programme, providing families with intensive family support with a particular focus on embedding parenting skills and improving school attendance. 264 were claimed for Payment By Results (PBR) – 117.5% of Shepway's Phase 1 target of 225. Shepway's performance was consistently in the top three across the county.
- 5.3 The current Phase 2 programme commenced in April 2015 (807 families to be worked with in Shepway in Phase 2). To date 417 families in Shepway are identified as Troubled Families (meeting at least two headline criteria). The Family Champions hold a caseload of 40 families at any one time. 57 claims for PBR have been made to date in Phase 2 across all commissioned streams, however the volume will increase as new working practice have now been embedded.

## 6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no resource implications that are not covered within the Finance Officer's comments below.

## 7. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 7.1 Perceived risks as follows:

Perceived Risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increased impact on Council resources, particularly housing and community safety if positive outcomes for families are not met.</li></ul>	Medium	High	Establish a clear direction of travel to ensure better value for money, sustainability and an outcome focused approach.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Resources are not allocated and used efficiently and effectively to meet the Troubled Families criteria.</li></ul>	Medium	High	Implementation of a targeted commissioned service to support the most vulnerable and complex families.

## 8. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

8.1 The following implications are identified:

- **Legal (DK):** There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report.
- **Resources (LH):** There are financial implications surrounding the termination of the current organisational structure and the setting up of any future scheme. Financial advice and support should be sought at all stages. As this is a grant funded project the implications of any grant terms and conditions should be carefully reviewed and costs must be contained within the grant limits.
- **Equalities (ST):** The Troubled Families programme has and will continue to meet the needs of all vulnerable sectors of society. The proposal for a Family Housing Solutions Officer will provide a focused offer for those vulnerable clients with an identified housing need.
- **Communications (ML):** There are no adverse impacts as far as communications is concerned as allocated Troubled Families in Shepway will continue to be supported, albeit in a different environment. However, we will need to manage reputational risk about any change in troubled families programme which until recently we have held up as a success.
- **Human Resources (RB):** While affected staff are employed on fixed-term contracts, if the post of Family Champion ceases on 31st March 2017 then this may be for reason of redundancy and the process will therefore be managed under the Council's Managing Organisational Change Policy. This policy necessitates a period of consultation and adequate notice of redundancy will need to be given. Associated redundancy costs are outlined in the body of the report. The creation of a new post may provide a redeployment opportunity for one of the two affected staff.
- However, if the function and service currently undertaken by the Family Champions is not ceasing, it may be viewed as transferring to the newly commissioned provider, Porchlight. While it is noted that location and aspects of identity may change, TUPE is likely to apply if the activities are "fundamentally the same as the activities carried out by the person who has ceased to carry them out". As such there may be a TUPE implication that needs further investigation prior to commencing consultation.

## 9. CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting.

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report: None

**Appendices:** None