**Title:**

WAVERLEY FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM PROGRESS REPORT

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Carole King]

[Wards Affected: All]

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**Note pursuant to Section 100B(5) of the Local Government Act 1972**

An annexe to this report contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 2 of Part I of Schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

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**Summary and purpose:**

To provide a progress report on the work and achievements of the Family Support Team during 2015, and the new criteria for support.

**How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:**

The report relates to the Council’s Corporate Priorities’ of Affordable Housing and Value for Money.

**Financial Implications:**

The team is jointly funded by Surrey County Council and the Housing Revenue Account. The service is delivered within agreed budgets.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

**Introduction**

1. The Waverley Family Support Team operates as part of the Surrey Family Support Programme. The team is one of six teams across Surrey delivering the governments’ Troubled Families Programme. The service is now in its third year of operation. The Waverley programme started as a pilot and formed many of the policies and procedures used countywide.

2. The programme aims to turn around the lives of families with multiple and complex needs.
3. Families can be referred into the programme or self refer. Referrals are discussed at the monthly, multi agency referral panel. If they are accepted onto the programme they will be offered intensive outreach support by a Family Coordinator for a period of six to 18 weeks, depending on the complexity of the presenting issues.

4. The intensive support is tailored to meet the needs of the individuals in the household and forms part of a multi agency action plan. The plan is agreed by all parties including the family. For those families who do not meet the eligibility criteria for intensive support, the panel will recommend alternative agencies, sign posting or interventions.

5. Once accepted, the allocated coordinator will make a joint visit to the family with the referrer. “Team around the Family” meetings will be held every six weeks with all the agencies working with the family. A family action plan is formed as the basis of the intervention and support to be offered. The plan incorporates the priorities of all agencies and the family.

6. The programme has been divided into two phases, Phase One and Phase Two. Last year at the end of Phase One the team had supported over 80 households in the Borough. Phase Two, a new five year programme, commenced in January. Phase Two introduced much wider criteria, meaning many more households will now be eligible for intensive support.

New Criteria

7. Families need to meet two of the new criteria to qualify for intensive support. At the point of referral the team start to look at desired outcomes as part of the forward plan for families around targets. The criteria for Phase Two is as follows:

- **Children who need help** - a child identified as in need of early help, child in need, child protection or child at risk of sexual exploitation.

- **Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion** - an adult with significant unmanaged debt, in receipt of out of work benefits, not in education, training or employment or homeless or at risk of homelessness

- **Children who have not been attending school regularly** – a child with persistent absence (+10% last consecutive school terms), permanent exclusion or 10 days fixed term exclusion in last three consecutive school terms, in Pupil Referral Unit; pupil of significant concern/subject to managed move or pupil support plan; emotional behavioural/mental health issue impacting on education, not registered with a school or otherwise educated or eligible for free early years education for two year olds or early years premium

- **Crime and anti social behaviour** – family with one or more criminal convictions/Anti social behaviour interventions in previous 12 months, adult prisoner with caring responsibilities on release or adult subject to licence/supervision in community
- **Health Problems** – a family with a mental health issue, drug problem, alcohol problem, young carer, or poor health impacting on whole family e.g. obesity, behind on immunisations or frequent unplanned health interventions

- **Domestic Violence and abuse** – a family with known perpetrator/victim of domestic violence, Police call outs for one or more domestic incidences in last 12 months, adult subject to a Domestic Violence Protection Notice/Order; (DVPO/DVPN) or referral to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

**Finance**

8. The programme operates on a payment by results basis. Successful outcomes are measured against the criteria in terms of adults moving into continuous employment, children improving school attendance and an evidenced reduction in crime and anti social behaviour and domestic abuse. Additionally, households who have improved finances, health and well being and no longer are a cause for concern for other services are considered successful outcomes e.g. child no longer subject to a child protection plan.

9. The team have secured £132, 452 this year from Surrey County Council to contribute towards the running cost of staff salaries. The HRA also makes a contribution via the Manager’s salary, one Coordinator post and a team administrator plus general operating costs. A small sum of money was also received for having a student social worker on placement within the team.

**Team Targets**

10. The team have a set target of working with 63 new households in the first year of Phase Two. Based on the estimate that the three full time family coordinators will work with 21 families each per annum to achieve the target. Some challenges with staffing numbers has led to a slight delay in reaching the desired level for this point in the year but with a strategic plan moving forward the team are confident in achieving or even exceeding the target overall by the end of the first year of Phase Two.

11. The importance of offering quality intensive support means a small caseload for each Coordinator in order for a whole family assessment to be completed and for a regular frequency of contact of several times a week in high need cases.

**Performance Data**

12. In addition to the data collected on behalf of the DCLG the team collect data locally to advise and inform on the progress of the team in all areas of the support being provided and this can be found in Annexe 1. The team are now seeing an emerging trend in Waverley tenants receiving intensive support as highlighted in Annexe 1.
Casework

13. There are some very high areas of need among the families referred to the programme. Mental Health problems have been an occurring theme for most of this year’s referrals for both adults and children. The team have also worked with families who are out of education, training or work and families with debt and budgeting issues. Often the information received on a referral form gives only a small indication of families’ problems.

14. It takes time to build rapport and trust between families and their coordinators. This then often results in disclosures being made about other issues such as significant debts, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, difficult relationships or problems with neighbours, family and friends.

15. Typical achievements and outcomes for families have been supporting them into school, training or work, financial and budgeting support, support to engage with health agencies and support in developing family relationships and rules. Thus supporting families to turn their lives around.

16. EXEMPT Annexe 2 provides case studies that show the types of referrals received and how the team has offered help and support.

Conclusion

17. The key strength of the team is in the multi agency working that has developed significantly over the last year. There has been an increase in continual referrals from other parts of the Borough where previously no referrals had been received.

18. The teams’ relationships with senior managers and frontline staff across all sectors in education, children’s social care, youth support, Police, social housing providers, the charity and voluntary sector and our health colleagues has been elevated to demonstrate excellent partnership working around meeting the needs of vulnerable families. There has been an increase in referrals generally and in the confidence of our partners in respect of the high standard of support the team can offer families.

19. The team have worked very closely in recent months with Waverley’s landlord services and on improving communication and working relationships for the benefit of the Council’s tenants.

20. It is clear from the cases highlighted in Annexe Two and from the information held about other families referred to the service, that at a very local level in Waverley, we are making a difference to people’s lives.

21. The family support team has embedded itself firmly into the referrals process for children and families, working with and alongside other services to provide holistic and bespoke packages of support for those households most in need.
Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee notes and comments on the progress and achievements of the Family Support Team.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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