

REPORT TO: Children & Young People Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 24 May 2010

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Young People

SUBJECT: Teams Around the Family (also known as C&YP Locality Work)

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To brief PPB on the development of Locality working (Teams Around the Family).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the PPB note the contents of this report

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Halton Children's Trust has developed a 'Levels of Need' Framework to help practitioners and managers in the various agencies in Halton to identify the needs of children and young people, and make decisions on how those needs can be met and by which agencies. The Framework operates at four levels, with Level 3 being divided into (a) and (b):

Level 1 - children with no additional needs, accessing universal services (including, for example, schools and primary health care)

Level 2 - children with additional needs that can be met via CAF and coordinated by a Lead Professional, if a multi-agency response is required

Level 3(a) - children with additional more complex needs that require a multi-agency response coordinated by a Lead Professional – either via CAF or a Child in Need Plan

Level 3(b) - children with a high level of needs, where parenting may be compromised and who are at risk of having needs at Level 4 – a Child in Need Plan is required

Level 4 – children with significant needs and compromised parenting/caring and in need of protection from harm.

3.2 The locality working model is composed of the following strands:-

Strand 1: Additional Support around CAF (Common Assessment Framework) Implementation

- Identifying children and young people who should have a CAF
- Identifying children and young people who may have a CAF but who do not need one (i.e. single agency intervention required)
- Challenge and embed robust CAF framework ensuring that CAF is not a barrier to services and does not become a referral process
- Ensure a holistic assessment is undertaken which identifies needs rather than resources
- Undertake some CAF assessments where it is not easily identifiable who should complete that assessment and identify lead professional
- Offer practical support to colleagues undertaking CAF assessments where appropriate – e.g assisting in the identification of resources to support CAF plans
- The development of a Locality Support Forum engaging with all partners who deliver services to children, young people and their families to ensure that services meet identified need

Strand 2: Identifying Local Need and Informing Commissioning

- Develop a good understanding of the needs within the locality
- Have a clear understanding of which agencies are involved with children, young people and their parents / carers to ensure a co-ordinated approach which meets the needs of all family members (Think Family)
- To share across agencies indicators about children and young people who may be vulnerable to poor outcomes to ensure early identification of need and that services are provided to address these both at an individual and community level.

Basic Principles

- Early identification of need and intervention with children and young
- Holistic support in partnership with a range of service providers including Health, Children's Social Care, Adult Services, voluntary, independent and private sectors (Think Family Model)
- Development of 'CAF Plus' model through support to universal support
- Multi agency commitment to provide a targeted continuum of support, especially to those children who are vulnerable to poor outcomes, to ensure that we deploy our collective resources in the most efficient way possible

3.3 There are a number of drivers that point to the need to develop locality working in Halton as a way forward towards an integrated preventative way of working with children and families.

- a. A report commissioned by Halton Safeguarding Children Board in 2008 – The Halton Level of Needs Framework – The 3b Cases found that there were a cohort of cases that moved in and out of the children in need system quickly and which often lead to re-referrals to Children’s Social Care but where a coordinated response is not available once the family is no longer an open case to Children’s Social Care.
- b. A review of the Common Assessment Framework carried out in 2009 found that the joined up multi agency working associated with the role out of the CAF was only evident in some areas of the borough and not in others. Within all the key agencies there were very differential levels of acceptance of CAF as a way of working and overall there were many fewer CAF’s than referrals to CSC.
- c. The findings of the localities pilot undertaken within an area of Runcorn which has piloted a supported CAF approach to meeting needs.
- d. The DCSF published it’s guidance Early Intervention – Securing Good Outcomes for All Children and Young People in March 2010.
- e. “Think Family” guidance which is asking LA’s and other key partners to improve the identification and support of adults experiencing problems who are parents or carers; and to co-ordinate the support that is provided by different agencies to each family, especially those experiencing significant problems.
- f. The findings of Serious Case Reviews in Halton over the last two years have in some instances highlighted the absence of a coordinated response to children and family needs below the level of Children Social Care involvement.
- g. The increase in demand for specialist services that followed the Baby Peter case points to a need to manage demand for specialist social work services by managing demand much further down the system and having mechanisms designed to meet need at the lowest possible level within the levels of need framework.

3.4 We know from the consultative work undertaken as part of the CAF review that there is a general willingness to address needs via the CAF within agencies but that there is a general lack of confidence within the potential pool of lead professionals around their own skills and knowledge. The development of locality teams addresses the very limited support that has been available to lead professionals and as much as anything will be addressing whole children’s workforce development issues as well as ensuring that the Think Family element is embedded in work around children and young people.

- 3.5 Children's Centres are closely tied into the localities structure and the development of localities will be looking at enhancing the role of Children's Centres in working with more targeted families. This may lead to some changes in the menu of support currently on offer from Children's Centres. Most if not all of the localities work will be based out of Children's Centres.
- 3.6 A further objective of the development of localities is to better manage the interface between lower level interventions and statutory interventions managed by Children's Social Care. There are often disputes about whether cases can and should be managed via a CAF or need to be dealt with as Children in Need. Indeed one of the reasons given for some agency staff being reluctant to be CAF lead professionals is that they are worried that they will be left holding cases that they don't feel able to manage. One of the principals that it is hoped to establish through locality working is that movement up and down the levels of need for children and families will be seamless. To this end the locality teams will contain social workers seconded from Children in Need who will review cases where the level of need and or risk is increasing and these cases will be moved into the Children in Need system without requiring referral. Equally where cases are coming down from Children in Need the locality teams will put together support for those families so that we avoid the situation where once a case is closed the support ceases and the family ends up being re-referred down the line.
- 3.7 The localities workforce will be drawn from within the current Children's Centre / Children & Young People Area Network (CYPAN) workforce. There is a balance to be struck between these new developments and ensuring that Children's Centres are well managed and meeting their core offer particularly as Children's Centres will be subject to OfSTED inspections. In addition we will be exploring with some of our key partners at the Children's Trust what staffing contribution they are able to make to the locality team in each area.
- 3.8 A number of groups of staff who work at level 2/3 within the levels of need will be based within the localities teams namely the Young Carers workers who have been TUPE'd over to the LA following the insolvency of HIT's and the Family Intervention Project staff who are currently located within Community Safety.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policy implications

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

No other implications

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

These developments are aimed at securing better outcomes for Children and Young People by addressing additional needs sooner

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The Children Centre core offer includes Job Centre plus and activity to increase employability

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The delivery of the core Children Centre offer as well as the locality support element is closely linked to the PCT and health outcomes

6.4 A Safer Halton

The inclusion of the Family Intervention Project within these arrangements addresses issues of anti-social behaviour and crime

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Not applicable

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The key risks are associated with the financial climate as most of the funding in this area is central government grant

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The nature of this work is to support equality and diversity

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

| Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| HSCB Report The Halton Level of Needs Framework – The 3b Cases | CYPD | Sheena Doyle |
| Review of the Common Assessment Framework 2009 | CYPD | Jonathan Potter |
| The findings of the localities pilot | CYPD | Julie Karmy |
| Early Intervention – Securing Good Outcomes for All Children and Young People in March 2010 | DCSF | Available online |