

OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES	AGENDA ITEM NO. 7
16 NOVEMBER 2015	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of the Corporate Director, People and Communities		
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IMPACT OF EARLY HELP (INCLUDING CONNECTING FAMILIES)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline to scrutiny the approach taken to Early Help in Peterborough and the way in which phase 2 of the Troubled Families agenda (known locally as Connecting Families) is being driven through this arena.
- 1.2 The report draws together performance data on Early Help and its impact on children and families in Peterborough.
- 1.3 The report also outlines the details of the phase 2 Connecting Families Programme including the number of families with whom we have committed to work over the five years of the programme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the committee notes the contents of the report and in particular endorses the General strategic approach being taken in respect of Early Help and the phase 2 Connecting Families agenda.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 Creating Opportunities – Tackling Inequalities

- Supporting Vulnerable People

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Early Help

- 4.1.1 Early Help is the term used to describe arrangements and services that provide help for children, young people and families as soon as problems start to emerge, or when there is a strong likelihood that problems will emerge in the future.

4.1.2 The Early Help Services in Peterborough were recently inspected as part of the Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Inspection date: 13 April 2015 – 8 May 2015. Report published: 18 September 2015.

4.2 **Inspection Findings** – taken direct from the above report.

4.2.1 'Early help to families is well coordinated, with a good range of responsive services available and these make a positive difference to children's lives. Early help assessments are good and local multi-agency safeguarding groups (MASGs) ensure that children and families receive the support they need.' As per the full Ofsted inspection report.

4.2.2 'The local authority has commissioned a wide range of early help services which are effective in reducing the need for statutory intervention. Early help to families is well-coordinated and partners have worked well together to improve the quality and effectiveness of services. The local authority has recently negotiated with children's centre providers to implement a more targeted approach and extend their offer to include work with families where there are children up to the age of 12 years. This promotes a more holistic approach to the needs of families. There is a good quality assurance process, informed by feedback from parents and carers, which evaluates the quality and impact of support provided. An electronic system for recording early help assessments, introduced 18 months ago, works well and assessments are good. They provide a detailed picture of the needs of children and families and how they will be met.' As per the full Ofsted inspection report.

4.2.3 'The three locality-based, multi-agency support groups (MASGs) are effective in mobilising and coordinating partners' responses to assessed need. Meetings are chaired well, information about children's and families' needs is shared appropriately and MASG members challenge each other effectively. MASGs ensure children and families receive the right level of support in a timely way and are 'stepped-up' appropriately from early help to children's social care when needs or risks increase.' As per the full Ofsted inspection report.

4.2.4 'When concerns about children and families are raised with children's social care, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) provides a timely and effective initial response. An early help worker, based in the MASH for part of each day, offers advice on whether the needs of families can be met by early help services and supports the early help assessment process. Since this arrangement started four months ago, over 200 contacts that have come into MASH which do not meet the threshold criteria for children's social care services have been diverted to early help. Case sampling by inspectors showed that these decisions to divert contacts to early help are appropriate.' As per the full Ofsted inspection report.

4.2.5 'Early help services are well established and offer a range of evidence-based programmes for families. In early help, robust service planning arrangements, strong management oversight and a clear focus on outcomes, allied to effective monitoring and evaluation systems, mean that resources are used to best effect to support children and their families. By reinvesting payment-by-results money from the Troubled Families programme into early help services, the local authority has succeeded in increasing capacity and is able to demonstrate improved outcomes for children and families.' As per the full Ofsted inspection report.

4.3 Connecting Families

- 4.3.1 The Connecting Families Programme is the name given in Peterborough to the national Troubled Families agenda. We are now in the first year of phase 2 of the programme which is planned to run for five years.
- 4.3.2 In July 2015, Peterborough City Council was delighted to host a visit by members of the Department for Communities and Local government (DCLG), which provided opportunity for us to showcase the work we have completed on phase 1 and our plans as we move forward on phase 2 of the programme. DCLG were very complementary of the work to date and extremely impressed by our commitment to effective multi-agency working. Throughout the day, DCLG were able to meet with senior leaders and partners to hear of our strategic vision and gain first-hand from partners their involvement and contribution to the programme – with a real commitment to make a difference to families as early as we possibly can.
- 4.3.3 The phase 2 programme has broadened the eligibility criteria and now includes:
- Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
 - Children who have not been attending school regularly
 - Children who need help
 - Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion including young people at risk of worklessness
 - Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
 - Parents of children with a range of health problems
- 4.3.4 Peterborough will be driving the phase 2 Connecting Families programme through the Early Help service to ensure a consistent and high quality multi-agency response is provided with a focus being on:
- One lead professional
 - One assessment
 - One plan
- 4.3.5 Funding from the programme is being used to build capacity with those services and providers who are best placed to meet the needs identified through the assessment process.

4.4 Case Studies

Case study 1 - Support has been provided to a single mum of an 8 year old child who was struggling to manage following the ending of a domestic abusive relationship. Mum, originally from Latvia was feeling very isolated and suffering low mood and depression, and was finding it hard to provide any kind of emotional comfort to her daughter or to know how to develop the relationship effectively. Mum worked part time and had previously not engaged with support for fear of losing her job which she needed in order to remain financially stable. Connecting Families funded transport to enable her to attend a group-based parenting programme run by the children's centre. In addition, mum was supported at home with a dedicated family support worker to help her embed the learning. Mum engaged with Women's Aid, helping to build her resilience and the relationship with her daughter is much improved and continues to develop. Mum has gained in confidence and self-esteem and built up a good network within her community. The daughter was supported by a children's worker from Women's Aid and the school have noticed a marked improvement in the emotional health and well-being of the

child who is now much more engaged and learning. Mum has been supported to retain her employment status and is now being supported to engage in some voluntary work within the local community.

Case study 2 - Support has been provided to a family consisting of two parents and three children. Two of the children have significant learning difficulty and mental health conditions, with one parent having physical health difficulties and the other having mental health difficulties. Two of the children were at risk of being permanently excluded due to challenging behaviours being displayed at school. There were few boundaries in place at home and the household was fairly chaotic. High level family support was provided alongside support from school, housing and youth in localities. Routines and boundaries were established in the home and this has had a positive impact on the children's behaviours at school. The amount of violence in the home has reduced and is now under control and the children's emotional needs are being better met. The family have been supported to de-clutter some parts of the home to make a calmer and more usable environment. One of the children's bedrooms has been re-decorated and refurnished, and school, who previously describe this young person's behaviour as being unmanageable, describe her as being transformed. The family continue to be supported through a range of services in order to sustain the progress made to date.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 Work continues on further integrating Connecting Families within Early Help. A new process for screening families for eligibility and actively monitoring their progress has been agreed and is being phased in.
- 5.2 Discussions regarding the development of a data solution for Connecting Families are progressing. It is planned to have a bespoke system to tie in with the council's digital strategy.
- 5.3 Work has continued on refining the Outcomes Plan which defines the specific qualification criteria across the broad categories set by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and the positive outcomes which need to be achieved in order to claim 'significant and sustained progress'.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Funding for the Connecting Families Programme is through an up-front transformation grant and through payment by results (PBR) for those families on the programme where we can evidence significant and sustained improvement on all areas of need identified through the programme.
- 6.2 The success of the programme will be partly dependent upon the production and use of an appropriate data solution to provide the opportunity for data matching, case management, tracking and report writing. The eligibility criteria for the programme and subsequent data collection, analysis, tracking and monitoring is considerably greater than in phase 1 and we will be unable to adequately manage the size of the programme without a suitable data solution.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with senior officers within the People and Communities Directorate and with key partners including Police, Health, Registered Social Landlords, Community, Voluntary and Charitable organisations involved in delivering and contributing to the programme.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Completion of information sharing agreements with partners.
- 8.2 Procurement of the data solution to support the data management required for the programme.
- 8.3 Further promotion of the programme with partner agencies.
- 8.4 Continuation of support to practitioners and Lead Professionals supporting families through the programme to improve outcomes for all.
- 8.5 Continuation of the tracking and monitoring of families on the programme and addressing areas where progress is not being made.

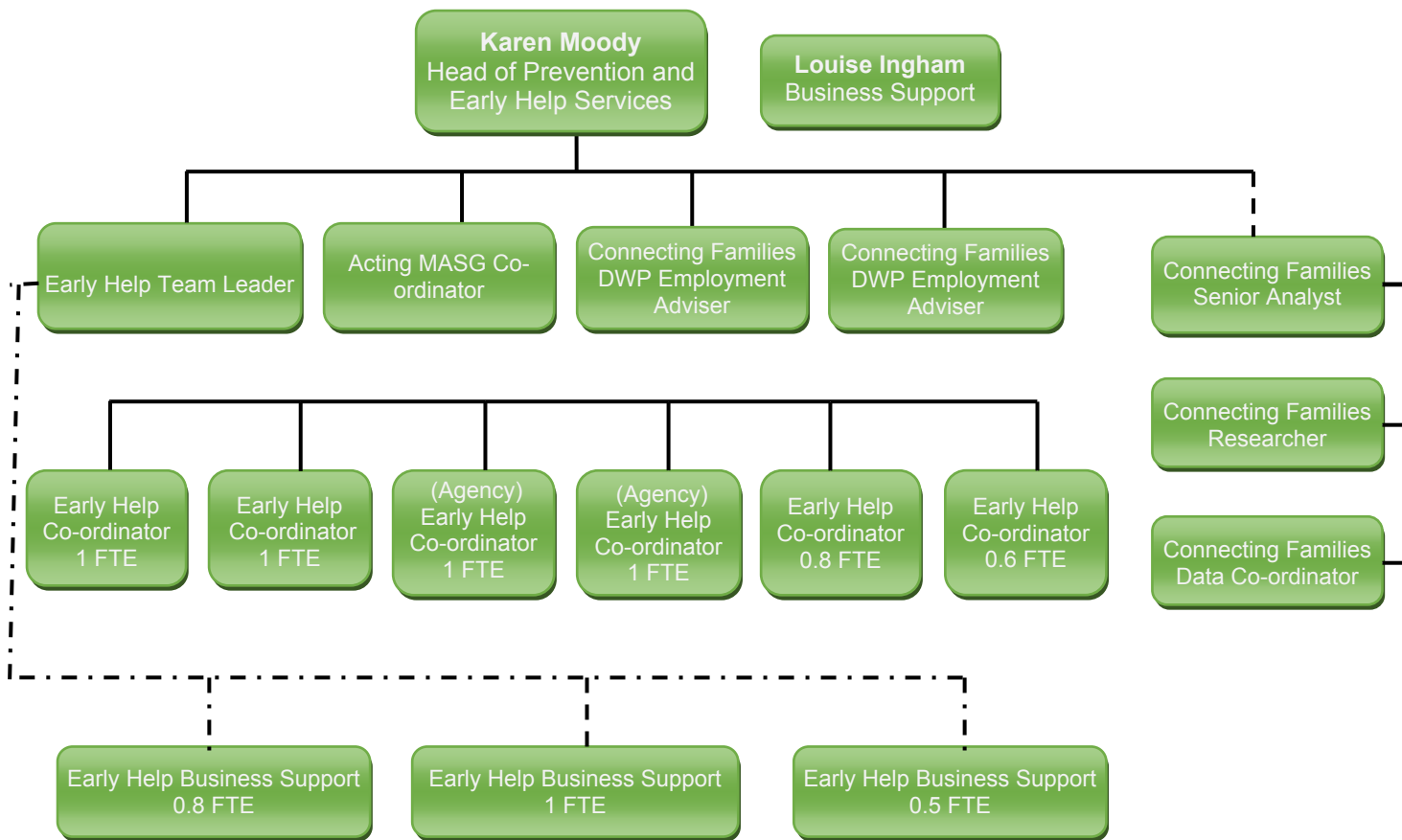
9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 9.1 Financial Framework for the Expanded Troubled Families Programme March 2015, Department for Communities and Local Government.
- 9.2 Ofsted Report: Peterborough City Council Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Inspection date: 13 April 2015 – 8 May 2015. Report published: 18 September 2015.

10 APPENDICES

Annex 1 – Early Help Service Staffing Structure
Annex 2 – Early Help Performance Management Report. October 2015
Annex 3 – Connecting Families Performance Report. October 2015

Annex 1



Responsibilities	Targets
Strategic and operational responsibility for Early Help across the city, including responsibility for oversight of the Connecting Families agenda.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To directly manage the team of 6 x Early Help Co-ordinators. Provide supervision on all case work. Oversee quality assurance of all Early Help Assessments. Oversee and ensure momentum and appropriate closure of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) contacts passed to Early Help. 	
To provide direct support to the three Locality Multi Agency Support Group panels; agree / challenge cases put forward for hearing at panel; complete research on all cases presented; advise and support three Heads of Services who fulfil the roles of Chairs of the panels; contribute to strategic development of the panels.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide information, advice and support to practitioners and professionals in the field supporting families at a targeted level through Early Help Assessments and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings. Develop and deliver training to practitioners to upskills the workforce; mentor and coach practitioners in managing and supporting cases/families; model the 	147.9 Early Help Assessments per 10,000 children / young people in Peterborough

<p>chairing of TAC's and completion of Early Help Assessments and use of other change management tools such as Outcome Star; provide direct Early Help support in the Peterborough MASH; identify and support Lead Professionals to work with families on contacts submitted to Children's Social Care that do not meet threshold where it is considered the family would benefit from an Early Help Assessment.</p>	
<p><u>Connecting Families Programme – employment advisers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively assist eligible adults in gaining employment or progress to work through work experience and training. • Screen employment status and track return or progress to work of all adults on the Connecting Families programme. • RAG rate and identify adults for targeted support. • Assist the MASG process by informing the panel of employment information and support available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively assist 120 adults per annum in gaining sustained employment • Actively assist an additional 120 per annum in achieving progress to work • Assist in verifying and tracking employment and Pathways To Work status for all adult members of 2,565 eligible families by Dec 2019
<p><u>Connecting Families Programme - general</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and manage performance management systems which track and monitor the eligibility, goals and targets for individual families and provide evidence of successful and sustained outcomes • Management of the Payment by Results Scheme, National Impact Study and Family Progress Data • Develop and implement the Outcomes Framework • Ensure compliance of processes with data sharing and data protection legislation and protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, document and monitor 2,565 eligible families by Dec 2019 • Evidence Significant and Sustained Progress for 1,640 families by May 2020 • Oversee the development of a bespoke IT solution by March 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen all current and incoming Early Help Assessments for eligibility against the Connecting Families Outcomes Plan • Track and document progress of all engaged families against the Outcomes plan • Liaise monthly with lead professionals to identify instances of drift or obstacles to meeting success criteria; identify additional support to be put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, document and track 2,565 eligible families by Dec 2019 (equals 50 families per month) • Evidence Significant and Sustained Progress for 1,640 families by May 2020

Annex 2

EARLY HELP PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT OCTOBER 2015

1. A web-based case management system (eCAF) was introduced in January 2014 with in excess of 500 practitioners having been trained in its use since that date. This system shares the same database and software provider as Children's Social Care case management system enabling transition of information for cases that are escalated to Children's Social Care or those stepped down from Children's Social Care for support in Early Help.
2. The number of Early Help Assessments has increased from approximately 112 per 10,000 children and young people in 2013 to 250 per 10,000 children and young people in 2015.
3. It is difficult to compare performance in relation to the completion of Early Help Assessments across Local Authorities, as each area is able to determine their own criteria for the completion of an Early Help Assessment. However we are confident there has been an increase in the number of Early Help Assessments completed year on year in Peterborough and we are confident in the engagement of partner agencies in completing assessments as can be evidenced through eCAF records.
4. There is an established and highly regarded team of Early Help Co-ordinators which offers support to schools and other partners in completing Early Help Assessments, training and attendance at Team around the Child meetings where this is needed.
5. There is a rigorous quality assurance process in place for Early Help Assessments with a safeguarding check conducted on all Early Help Assessments.
6. A quarterly Analysis and Impact report is produced by the Early Help Team which includes information about presenting needs, a summary of evidence relating to the impact of the Early Help Process and a summary of the QA process undertaken by the team.
7. Under the QA process, a small number of Early Help Assessments are selected at random and benchmarked against the National Quality Assurance Framework for Early Help Assessments. Within the last year we have introduced the outcome of the audit being fed back to those practitioners who completed the original assessment with marked improvements in quality on subsequent assessments where recommendations for advice and improvements have been taken on board.
8. Questionnaires are sent to Lead Professionals 6 months after the initiation of an Early Help Assessment in order to establish whether there has been positive impact as a result of the intervention. The combined evidence from the questionnaires is that progress is made following completion of the Early Help Assessment.
9. Parents, carers, children and young people are asked to actively contribute to the assessment and support package put in place. Their views are actively sought throughout the process and following closure of the episode to determine if success was achieved and sustained. An annual report examining responses from

parents / carers is produced. The quality and quantity of feedback is variable, but of those parents / carers who responded to questionnaires in 2014, 81% indicated that since completing the Early Help Assessment and attending TAC's, the original issues have improved.

- 10.** Cases that require extra help within the Early Help arena can be supported through one of three locality based Multi-Agency Support Group (MASG) panels which have been in operation since September 2012. The MASG panels are able to galvanise the support of a wide range of agencies to create a needs-led package of co-ordinated support above and beyond what is available within the community. An annual report is produced on the impact of the MASG panels with two having been produced to date, both of which demonstrate positive impact for the majority of families concerned.
- 11.** An independent annual audit is conducted of our Early Help Offer and the operation of the Multi-Agency Support Groups. The September 2014 audit assessed that the Early Help offer by the Early Help Team was graded as good with some outstanding features. Some areas for improvement were noted including the need for assessments to more clearly include the voice of the child; and the variability of the quality of Early Help Assessments audited, which ranged from good to adequate. The audit found that attendance at the MASG panels was excellent, with a real multi-agency focus on outcomes for children and families where the intervention had become 'stuck' and needed added impetus. As a result of the audit, an action plan was put into place, which has now been completed with all areas requiring improvement having been addressed.
- 12.** An Early Help Co-ordinator is now part of the Peterborough Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Indications are that this involvement is already having a significant impact and in particular is supporting more children and young people to access Early Help Assessments where contacts have been submitted that do not meet the threshold for Children's Social Care support, but where it is apparent that a multi-agency targeted support plan would be likely to improve outcomes.

Annex 3

CONNECTING FAMILIES PERFORMANCE REPORT OCTOBER 2015

1. The Connecting Families Programme is the name given in Peterborough to the national Troubled Families agenda. The first Troubled Families Programme led the way for systematic identification of families with multiple problems. By the end of 2014 the programme nationally had worked with nearly all 120,000 troubled Families of who, 85,000 had been 'turned around'.
2. Peterborough submitted the final claim for phase 1 Connecting Families at the end of May 2015, claiming payment by results for the full 100% of 450 families targeted.
3. Phase 2 of the Connecting Families Programme will retain the first programme's focus on families with multiple high cost problems and will continue to include families affected by poor school attendance, youth crime, anti-social behaviour and unemployment. However, the eligibility criteria has been broadened and inclusion into the programme will be based upon a cluster of six headline criteria. Below each criteria sits a range of indicators with considerably more flexibility in terms of information sources and success criteria than in phase 1.
4. To be eligible for the phase 2 Connecting Families Programme, families must meet at least two of the following criteria:
 - a. Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
 - b. Children who have not been attending school regularly
 - c. Children who need help: children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan
 - d. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion of young people at risk of worklessness
 - e. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
 - f. Parents or children with a range of health problems
5. Some issues that the families face may initially be hidden from view until work begins with the family and the full extent of their needs is uncovered, resulting in many families then meeting more than two criteria.
6. Local Authorities have been asked to identify families from all six areas and ensure the programme's resources are being used to best effect. Families will be prioritised for inclusion in the programme on the basis of the following:
 - a. They are families with multiple problems who are most likely to benefit from an integrated, whole family approach
 - b. They are families who are the highest cost to the public purse
7. A number of 'early starter' local authorities began delivery of the expanded programme in September 2014, with the second 'early starter' authorities beginning in January 2015. Peterborough was selected as part of the second group and therefore families who meet the eligibility criteria from January 2015 can be considered as part of Peterborough's delivery commitments. As part of the wave 2 'early starter' programme we committed to start to work

with 82 families by April 2015, with an additional 275 families by April 2016 taking this to a total of 357 in the first year.

8. The new programme will see Peterborough identify and work with 1640 families over the five years of the programme.

MAINSTREAMING THE CONNECTING FAMILIES PROGRAMME

9. The breadth of the criteria for the new programme lends itself to the philosophy of early intervention with families and the obvious link between the programme and the Early Help agenda. Peterborough is therefore aiming to align the Phase 2 Connecting Families programme with Early Help. This will ensure consistency and quality of response and support to 'troubled families', and help ensure that the most appropriate multi-agency response is agreed.
10. The Early Help process recognises that some children, young people and their families face complex difficulties which may require the support of more than one agency to resolve. Most of these families are successfully supported through the 'Team around the Child' approach, following an assessment of their needs using the Early Help Assessment framework.
11. Funding from the programme is being used to build capacity with those services and providers who are best placed to meet the needs identified through the assessment process.
12. The Multi-Agency Support Group (MASG) panels that operate in three localities across the city will continue to be used to assist the most complex families in developing support plans and identifying additional resources to provide effective support to families. The MASG panels already co-ordinate appropriate resources to meet the needs of children, young people and families according to an evidenced based assessment captured by engaging in an Early Help Assessment.
13. The Early Help Team will ensure that families identified for the programme have an identified and appropriate Lead Professional to support the family and co-ordinate service delivery. Should additional resources be needed to help the family make changes that are not available through universal or targeted services within the community, these can be accessed via a MASG panel.
14. Families identified as eligible for the programme through Early Help will be tracked regularly to ensure progress is being made and further resources provided where needed.

MEASURING SUCCESS

15. Success for the phase 2 programme will be measured in 3 ways:
 - a. By demonstrating either significant and sustained progress or continuous employment. Each family's achievement of 'significant and sustained' progress will be assessed against a locally defined Connecting Families Outcomes Framework. This is currently being developed with partner agencies. It outlines the aims and ambitions we intend to achieve with

each family, with regard to the six problems the programme aims to tackle and how this supports wider strategic objectives. The Outcomes Framework will provide a basis from which to determine when significant and sustained progress has been achieved and, therefore, a payment by results claim may be made for a family. The Framework will also be used in conjunction with the Local Authority's Internal Auditors to establish whether a result is valid. The new programme continues to be incentivised on a payments by results basis: for every family identified as qualifying for the programme, worked with and subsequently turned around, an £800 claim can be made by the Local Authority to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). As far as possible, our payment by results revenue will be invested in preventative work. We will use the intelligence gathered through the programme to stimulate ongoing service transformation through transparent local accountability

- b. By capturing a much richer understanding of the profile of families being engaged in the programme and progress across a broader range of outcomes. This will be obtained by our participation in the programme's National Impact Study and supplemented by Family Progress data
 - c. Provision of information about local investment in our Connecting Families Programme together with comparative pre-programme 'business as usual' costs
- 16.** Funding to support the second two measures is provided within the programme's Service Transformation Grant. This forms an essential part of the new programme's increased focus on driving public service transformation across all relevant local services.
- 17.** We have worked with governance and Legal Services to update our privacy notice, website and FAQ's and created posters to comply with data sharing regulations and raise the profile of the Connecting Families Programme within the community.
- 18.** In line with fresh Department for Communities and Local Government guidance we have tightened up our definition of 'families worked with'. We are currently on target to be working with the required number of families as defined by the programme in April 2016. As of 2 September 2015, 210 families are being worked with according to the new definition – this is 58.8% of the April 2016 target. We are on track to meet this target if we engage with 24 additional families per month.
- 19.** Information Sharing Agreements have been drawn up with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, who will grant the team access to police systems for the purpose of monitoring criminality and anti-social behaviour, and with Cross Keys Homes, who will provide data on financial exclusion and risk of homelessness amongst their tenants.