

<b>Local Members Interest</b>
N/A

## **Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee - Thursday 07 November 2019**

### **Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme (BRFC)**

#### **Recommendation**

- a. It is recommended that the Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee scrutinises the content of this report regarding the Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme, notes the progress made to date and direction of travel for 2020-2021.

#### **Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People**

### **Report**

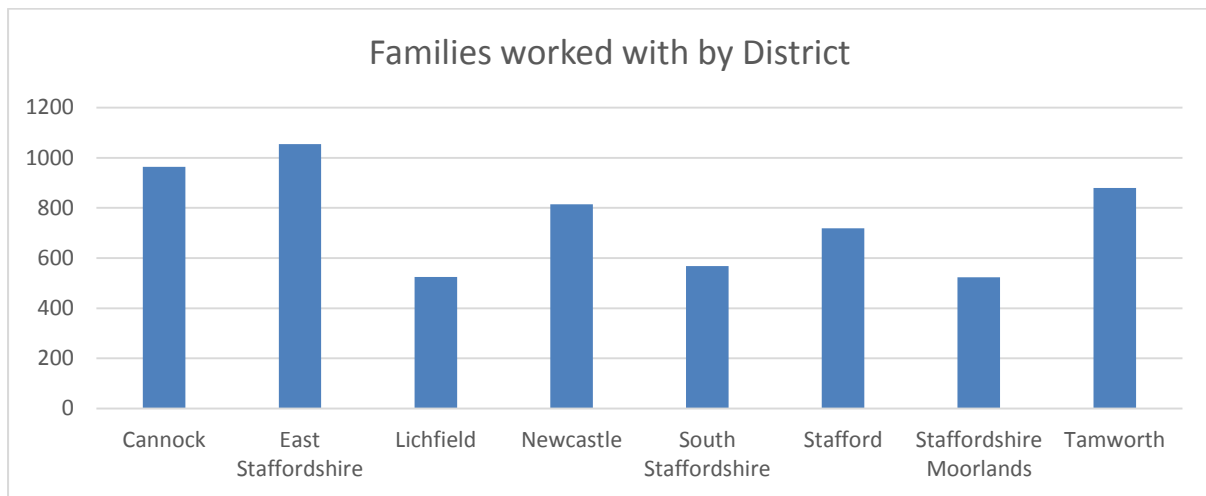
#### **Background**

1. The Building Resilient Families & Communities (BRFC) programme is Staffordshire's response to the Government's Troubled Families Initiative. Troubled Families was developed by the Ministry for Housing and Local Government (MHCLG) in 2010 to improve multi-agency responses to the needs of families who have multiple needs that result in a high cost to the public purse.
2. In April 2018, after evidencing positive performance in delivering the programme, Staffordshire were one of 14 local authorities who were successful in achieving 'Earned Autonomy' status. This moved funding from a Payment by Results model, to upfront funding with the aim of supporting accelerated service transformation for Early Help.
3. The funding for the programme was agreed until 2020. However, in September 2019, MHCLG confirmed that there will be continued funding for the Troubled Families Programme for 2020-2021.
4. This report is intended to update the Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee on progress to date in delivering the BRFC programme and to outline the MHCLG vision for ongoing delivery for 2020-2021.

#### **Performance to Date**

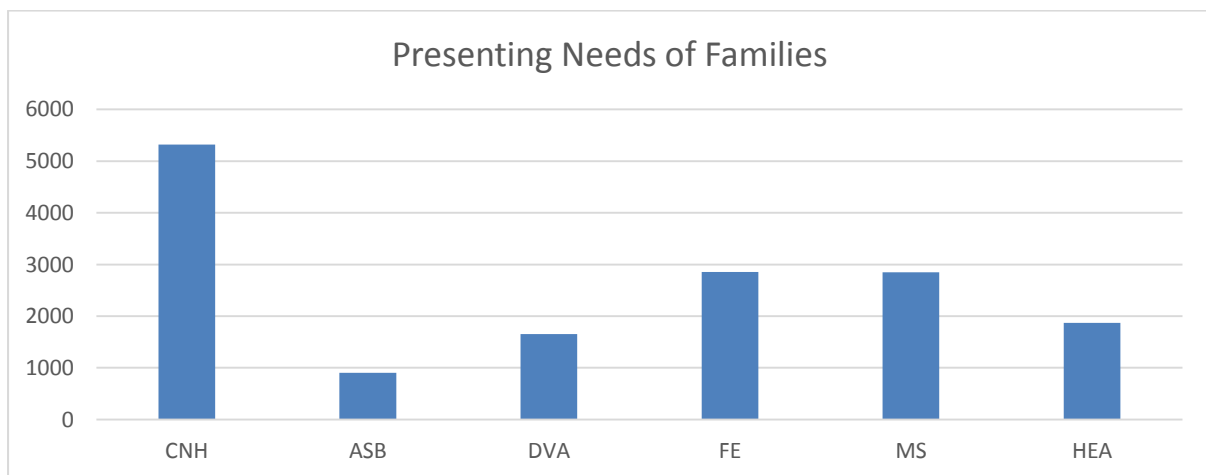
5. The number of families attached to the BRFC programme has been steadily rising. We have exceeded our original attachment target (4,680 families) and the programme has now worked with a total of 6,049 families, encompassing 23,667 people. This represents 3% of the Staffordshire population who are being worked with as part of the programme.

**Fig. 1: Families Attached to BRFC Programme by District**



6. The majority of families identified for BRFC meet the Child in Need of Help (CNH) criteria. Missing School (MS) and Financial Exclusion (FE) are the next predominant presenting needs of families worked with across Staffordshire.

**Fig. 2: Presenting Needs of Families**



7. 2,796 families have successfully closed, giving a conversion rate of 60% and we are on track to achieve our target of an 80% conversion rate by March 2020. Our conversion rate is based on the number of families achieving successful outcomes against our attachment target of 4,680 and following the achievement of our attachment target in January 2019 the rate of conversion for successful closures has started to steadily increase.

8. Successful outcomes are categorised as those achieving Significant and Sustained Progress (SSP) and those gaining Continuous Employment (CE). Of those families which have achieved successful outcomes (60%), the split across SSP and CE is 2,625 (94%) and 171 (6%) respectively.

9. Our recidivism rate (those families receiving a subsequent intervention from children's social care) was 2.5% of the families achieving successful outcomes as at January 2019.

### **BRFC alignment with Place-Based Approach**

10. The BRFC programme underpins the Place-Based Approach. It is delivered through locality-based partnership working, takes a whole-family approach, focusses on early intervention and prevention and aims to build lasting, sustainable resilience in families and communities.

### **Locality Governance**

11. Locality working is supported through district governance arrangements for BRFC, enabling local ownership and leadership. Each district has established a Family Improvement Board, with the purpose of bringing together partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors and families themselves to deliver the shared vision to improve outcomes for children and families in the Borough/District. They provide support and challenge for the delivery of the district BRFC programme.

### **Early Help**

12. Early Help improves a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse and it is a cornerstone of both BRFC and the Place Based Approach. We have revised early help processes to incorporate whole-family working.
13. In July 2018, the Local Government Association commissioned the Isos partnership to undertake research to explore the enablers of and barriers to developing and sustaining an effective partnership-based early help offer. The findings of this research were published in a final report March 2019.
14. The report identifies sixteen key enablers of developing an early help offer. Our BRFC programme demonstrates these key enablers of early help being implemented in practice.

**Fig. 3: Key Enablers of Early Help Offer and Examples of Staffordshire Practice**



Source: The key enablers of developing an effective partnership-based early help offer: final research report, March 2019  
Local Government Association / Isos Partnership

## Family Support

15. A Family Support offer has been commissioned on a countywide basis, but with a locality footprint. Commissioners worked with the VCSE infrastructure organisation (SCVYS) to develop the community and voluntary sector market in localities. This resulted in local community organisations being commissioned to deliver whole-family tier 2 support, which joins up services around the family to tackle root causes.
16. Family Support works across a range of outcomes identified and work alongside the families to engender positive outcomes. They do this by increasingly growing the family's ability to manage themselves within their own community, so that they know where to turn to in times of difficulty. To ensure that the service is delivered using a whole-family holistic approach, this has been built into the contract as a requirement.

## Earned Autonomy

17. The locality approach has been strengthened further by devolving Earned Autonomy funding to districts, enabling resources to be aligned to meet locally identified need. Districts developed investment plans using the Early Help Performance Framework, a tool which enabled the identification of key priorities in a district along with being the baseline for measuring impact over time.
18. The predominant priority for investment through monies devolved to districts through Earned Autonomy is the improvement of emotional and mental wellbeing which is being addressed in 6 of the 8 district investment plans. In addition,

financial exclusion and reducing issues associated with debt also feature highly as does the absence and exclusion of children from home, school and communities. The table below outlines the areas for investment of Earned Autonomy monies in each district.

**Fig. 5: Earned Autonomy District Investment Plans**

<b>Cannock</b>
Improving Children’s mental wellbeing and resilience
Reducing Anti-social behaviour and exclusions
<b>East Staffordshire</b>
Increase employment
Improve children’s good level of development (GLD) Early Learning Goals
Reduce families in debt
Improve collaboration between statutory organisations and communities
<b>Lichfield</b>
Improve children’s wellbeing and resilience
Tackle persistent absence and reduce exclusions
Improve financial understanding & responsibility to reduce cycles of debt and family conflict
<b>Newcastle</b>
Emotional and Well Being Support
Support for Financial Exclusion
Workforce Development
<b>South Staffordshire</b>
Improve the Emotional Wellbeing of Pre-school and Primary Age Children
<b>Staffs Moorlands</b>
Children and Young People Missing/Absence from Education Settings
<b>Stafford</b>
Improve the Emotional Wellbeing of parents/carers, children and young people
Increase the number of children achieving a Good Level of Development
Reduce the number of children missing school
<b>Tamworth</b>
Families in Debt
Absence from school and the impact on the local community
Emotional Wellbeing for children and young people
Anti-Social Behaviour

## Parental Conflict

19. Parental Conflict is a national programme hosted by the Department of Work and Pensions, supported by the Early Intervention Foundation research, to help local authorities firstly strengthen strategic leadership around parental conflict and secondly access training for frontline staff to identify and appropriately respond to parental conflict. It has been implemented via the BRFC programme.
20. Parental Conflict, which can range from a lack of warmth and emotional distance, right through to swearing and shouting, is known to be a risk factor for poor child outcomes, particularly when conflict is frequent, intense and poorly resolved. There is growing understanding and awareness of the need to address and reduce parental conflict that sits below a domestic abuse/ violence threshold.

21. In order to address parental conflict in Staffordshire, it will be incorporated into the wider Children’s System model that builds resilience in families and communities as well as partnerships, such as Community Safety Partnerships that have Domestic Abuse as a priority. We have also aligned this agenda with the Early Help, Place Based Approach and Earned Autonomy activity to reduce duplication and enable effective implementation.

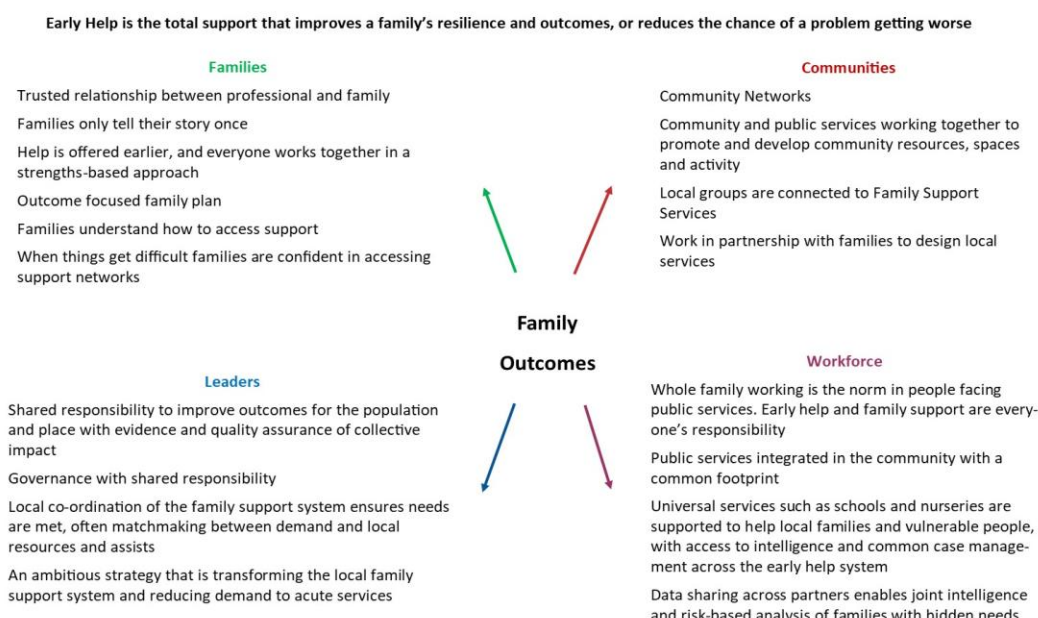
### Emerging MHCLG Vision for BRFC

22. As outlined above, MHCLG has committed to a further 12-months funding for the programme for 2020-2021.

23. There are also likely to be changes to criteria for inclusion on the programme. For example, the ASB criteria is likely to be adapted to recognise wider contextual risks which may include child exploitation through gangs, county lines etc.

24. While funding is secured for 2020/21, MHCLG are building a business case to inform the November 2020 spending review and will be bidding for further funding for 2021/22. They are currently consulting on the proposed focus of the programme moving forward. Fig. 6 illustrates the emerging areas of focus. Reassuringly, Staffordshire are already starting to embed many of these principles as part of our transformed ways of working.

**Fig. 6: Emerging Aspiration for Future Troubled Families Programme**



## **Link to Strategic Plan**

25. BRFC contributes to achievement of all of the County Council's strategic priorities, namely that the people of Staffordshire will:
- a. be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth;
  - b. be healthier and more independent;
  - c. feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

## **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

26. The BRFC programme links with a number of other key workstreams and activity including the Children's Transformation Programme, Early Help and Place-Based Approach.

## **Community Impact**

27. A Community Impact Assessment was completed at the outset of the BRFC Programme in April 2013.
28. Impact continues to be routinely monitored through audit processes and is reported quarterly to MHCLG.

## **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

**Appendix 1:** BRFC Performance Report (October 2019)

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