

Policy and Scrutiny

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Executive Director of Children's Services

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	07 March 2014
Subject:	Families Working Together

Summary:

To update on the progress of Lincolnshire's response to the Troubled Families' Programme

Actions Required:

The Committee is invited to consider and comment on the contents of the report.

1. Background

1.0 Background

"Families Working Together" (FWT) is Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) and its partners' response to the "Troubled Families Programme" led by the Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG).

DCLG has identified 120,000 'troubled families' nationally and has indicated 1370 such families within Lincolnshire. The expectation from DCLG is that these families will be "turned around" by 2015.

The Families Working Together Team consists of 1 Team Manager, 5 Practice Supervisors, 1 Performance & ICT Manager, 0.5 Project Manager, 1 Performance Officer and 38.9 FTE Key Workers. 51% are seconded staff from partner organisations.

Key Workers work intensively with the whole family, over an average of 12 months. Families are eligible for FWT support if they meet 2 of the following 3 national criteria:

- Families involved in anti-social behaviour or youth crime;
- Children excluded from school or not attending regularly;
- Families with one or more adults in receipt of out of work benefits

2.0 Identification of Troubled Families

"Identification" involves discovering households where data indicates these criteria overlap at an address.

Datasets from Lincolnshire Police and Children's Services are matched together and information about qualifying family members are submitted to Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) who undertake a check for adults in receipt of out of work benefits at that address. The FWT team collate this data and build family groups comprising the individuals who hit one or more of the national criteria.

Families are also directly referred to the programme. FWT Business Support staff verify that the information about family member eligibility can be evidenced and then eligible families can be allocated a key worker, as appropriate.

3.0 Working with Troubled Families

"Working With" a family involves allocating a FWT Key Worker (where appropriate) or identifying the services that are already working with that family.

Those families with the most complex needs are those that would benefit from a direct FWT key worker intervention. Typically, these families are referred in by other services working with the family who request support from FWT. Additionally, families which meet all 3 of the national criteria, as identified by data matching, are prioritised alongside those meeting local priorities such as families with children who have been permanently excluded.

It is recognised nationally that not all families meeting the eligibility criteria have complex needs and will require a direct intervention. In these cases, a "Lead Agency" may have involvement with the family around a particular issue (e.g. Education Welfare, Neighbourhood Policing team). Periodically, the FWT team will undertake matching exercises with other agencies supporting families in Lincolnshire to discover which are working with families alongside the FWT team in the county.

This patchwork of provision across Lincolnshire constitutes the "Worked With" figure reported to the national team.

4.0 Turning around Troubled Families

The government's key focus for the Troubled Families programme is to "turn around" families meeting the criteria. Achieving the set thresholds for this outcome is rewarded by a Payment by Results (PbR) framework.

This involves achieving the inverse of the eligibility criteria:

- Reducing families involvement in anti-social behaviour or youth crime;
- Getting children back to school regularly and reducing exclusion;
- Moving adults off out of work benefits and into employment.

In order to make a claim for a family, it must have simultaneously achieved the Crime/ASB and Education outcomes OR have achieved the work outcome. That is, there are two ways to turn around a family. The authority can also claim a smaller payment for achieving a "Progress to Work" outcome, granted on the family starting an involvement with the European Social Fund (ESF) "Support for family with multiple problems". This is being delivered in the East Midlands by Working Links.

The authority is targeted with turning around its entire allocation of Troubled Families and so will need to work with a larger number than this to achieve the required number of outcomes.

5.0 DCLG Financial Framework

The Financial Framework sets out the detail associated with identifying and making claims for families. It provides suggestions on where to source the data required to identify families for the programme and an overview of the legal gateways which allow for the sharing of this information between agencies. Finally, it provides a clear explanation of the circumstances under which the authority may make a claim for the impact made on the family following an intervention by one or more services.

6.0 February Claim 2014

The latest opportunity for submitting a claim for the number of families turned around was in February 2014. The previous was in October 2013 when a decision was taken not to, allowing for further development of FWT systems. Through engagement with other authorities since the beginning of the programme, an amount of best practice around claiming has been developed. The most significant aspect of this has been the development of systems to automatically calculate which families have met the criteria for payment, rather than the manual consideration of each family in turn.

When this extensive development is completed, it is expected that the process around submitting claims will be far more efficient and will maximise the opportunity to claim for families achieving success that might have otherwise been overlooked. This will make achieving national targets more likely and maximise the financial benefit that can be expected from the PbR framework. It will also allow for more capacity in supporting operational teams and better quality performance information.

329 claims were made in February, including 31 of which are for continuous employment.

7.0 National Comparison

Of the 152 Local Authorities, Lincolnshire ranks in the Top 15 in terms of the number of 'troubled families' we are expected to 'turn around'. DCLG requests management information from the 152 Local Authorities on a quarterly basis to ascertain their progress against key performance indicators, namely:

1. The number of troubled families identified in the area;
2. The number of troubled families that are being 'worked with' in the area;
3. The number of troubled families that have been 'turned around' in the area

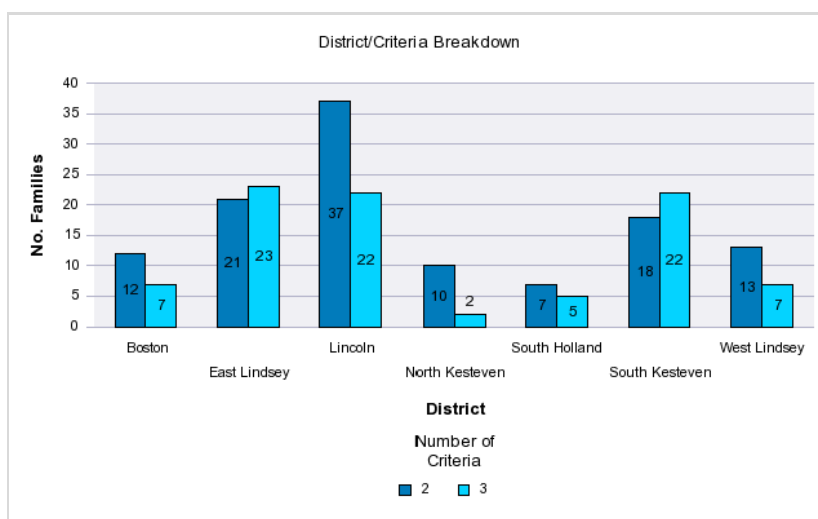
In both of the former two categories, Lincolnshire ranks well. The latest data – related to information to the end of September 2013 – published in November shows Lincolnshire is ranked 24th and 20th respectively in those two classifications. However, we are currently ranked 71st with regards to the final category, mainly due to our decision not to submit an outcome claim in October (see item 6.0 above). In the previous quarter's management information summary, Lincolnshire ranked 37th in this category.

We expect to make substantial progress in January and April in all three categories, but most particularly in terms of the number of families 'turned around' in Lincolnshire (see items 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 above).

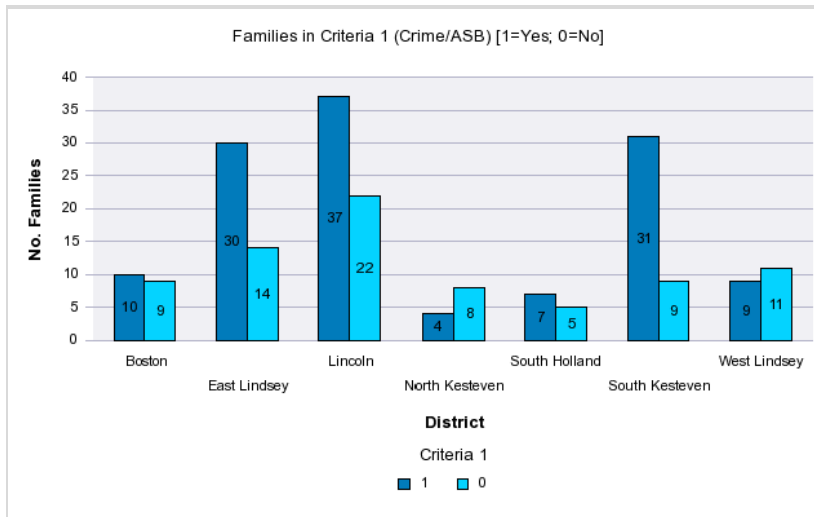
8.0 Referrals

Families Working Together is currently engaged with 206 families countywide. The following diagrams show how this caseload is broken down by locality area and the qualifying criteria for the programme.

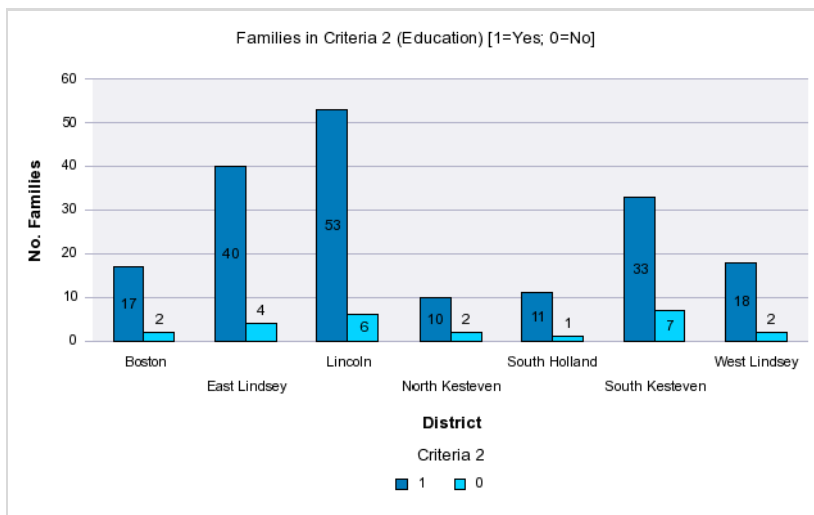
8.1 FWT Caseload by District and No. Criteria



8.2 FWT Caseload: Families in Criteria 1 (Crime/ASB)

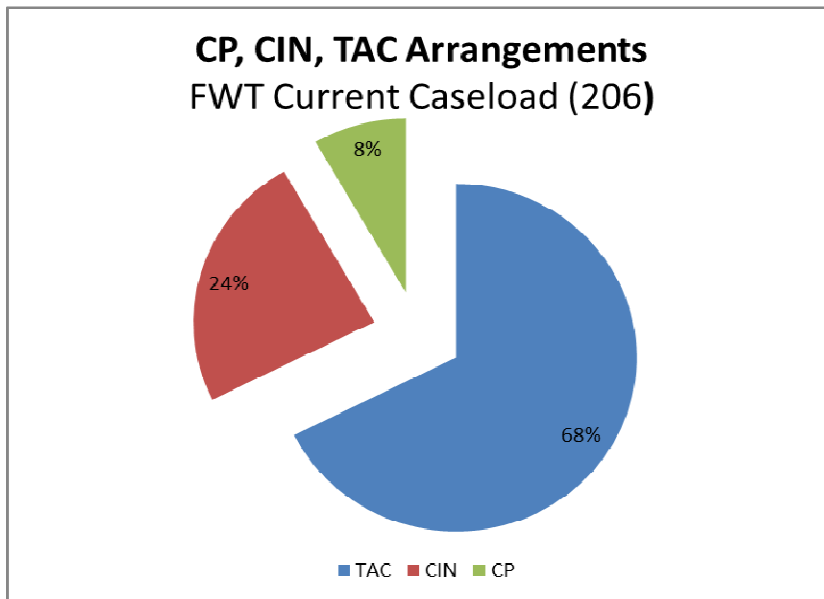


8.3 FWT Caseload: Families in Criteria 2 (Education)



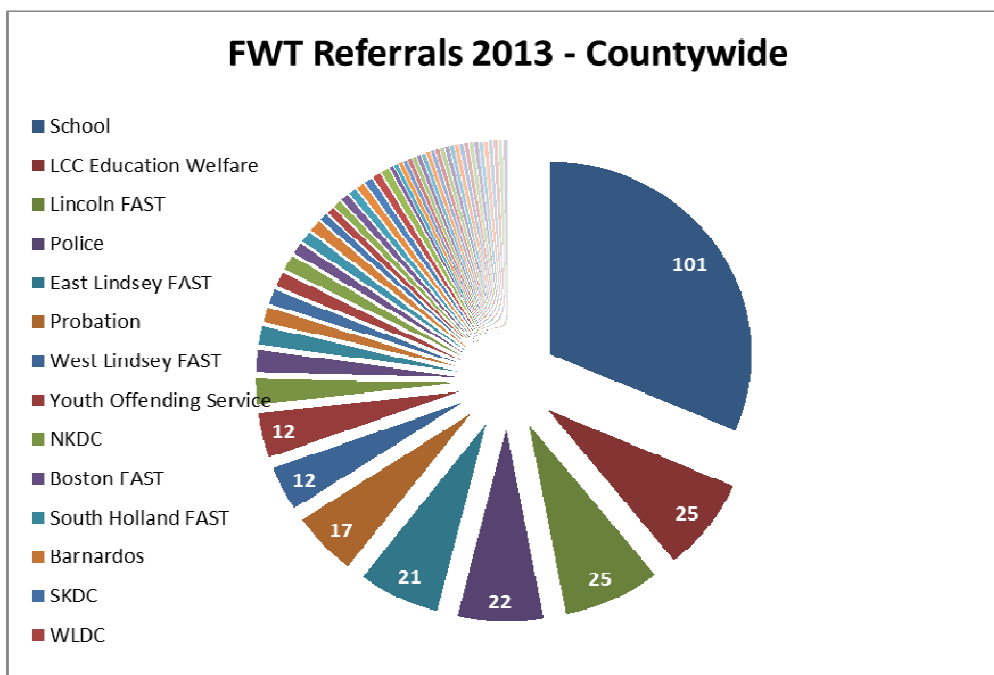
8.4 FWT Caseload: Complexity

The following chart describes case complexity by analysing the presence of Social Care involvement (and at what level: CIN/CP) or Team around the Child (TAC) arrangements.



8.5 FWT Referrals: 2013 (Successful and unsuccessful)

Families Working Together received 321 referrals in 2013. The following chart demonstrates the variety of agencies from which these are received and shows those agency groups which refer the highest numbers of families into the service.



9.0 Troubled Families (TF) Phase 2

At recent DCLG regional events, there has been a strong focus on Phase 2 of the TF Programme due to run from 2015 – 2020. There will be a consultation early in 2014 to seek views from local areas but it has been mooted that Phase 2 will

include new incentives for local services such as the police, health and social care to work more closely together. The key initial thoughts are that:

- 400,000 families will be targeted over the 5-year period
- The payment by results system will continue
- Central government will continue to fund up to 40% of the hypothecated cost of intervention
- Health targets will be added
- There will be a focus on earlier intervention
- The programme will be extended to a wider group of families including those struggling with health problems or parenting, children not in school or at risk of being taken into care
- Local agencies will have to produce a detailed plan setting out how they will join up and reform services to produce savings

10.0 Children's Centres & FWT

A leaflet has been designed to advertise support services to Job Centre Plus (JCP) clients and a questionnaire has been developed for JCP Advisers to complete and refer clients onto appropriate services. Support services currently include: FWT, Children's Centres (CCs) and European Social Fund (ESF) Families services. The location of JCP Advisers in Children's Centres was explored but this was not considered viable, primarily due to the low number of clients presenting. However, from a pilot of the leaflet and questionnaire delivered in Stamford, of 67 clients, 40% had 'issues', 2 referrals were made to FWT, 15 to CC's and 16 to ESF. Work to roll this out across the county is planned for March 2014.

11.0 Exclusion

FWT are working closely with the Out of Schools Team to identify young people who are at risk of exclusion with a view to providing support to families, to prevent permanent exclusions. A protocol is being drawn up to clarify the referral process for these young people to FWT.

All Teaching & Learning Centres consider referral to FWT at the first interview between the school, the young person and their parents/carers. Referrals are made where it is felt the family would benefit from long-term, holistic, intensive family support.

12.0 Youth Homelessness

In April, 2013, FWT set up a pilot service in Lincoln/West Lindsey to implement the single gateway for 16 & 17 year olds presenting as homeless. FWT rolled this service out countywide on 6th January 2014. Referrals are made from District Housing Authorities, where young people are now required to present. Once prevention work has been completed, including mediation to return the young person home, but this has not worked, a referral is made to FWT. FWT then find housing provision for the young person, often initially crisis accommodation; then support the young person to move into supported accommodation. Support work

continues for 1 – 2 months to ensure the young person manages this transition successfully.

Since the pilot, there have been 29 young people who have presented. The majority of those who have presented, were either unable to return home or had been evicted from supported accommodation by the housing provider. Of the 29 young people who have presented, the large majority have been accommodated in supported housing provision and are making good progress.

2. Conclusion

Lincolnshire is performing well and has chosen to dedicate the additional resource from DCLG through the PbR system, to funding staff to work intensively with families. In some other Local Authorities, DCLG funding has been used to fund “business as usual” including filling funding gaps created through a reduction in public service budgets. In Lincolnshire however, the approach of the FWT team will be used as part of wider developments to transform services for children, young people and families. This is in line with the DCLG requirement that local areas work towards service reform which will provide services which more fully meet the needs of “Troubled Families”. This will feature more strongly for Local Authorities and their partners, in phase 2 of the Troubled Families Programme, through the requirement to draw up a partnership plan which illustrates how service reform will be undertaken in Lincolnshire.

Financial Implications - None in 2013/14.

3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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