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To: Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny
Committee – 19 January 2012

Subject: **EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION – A PROGRESS
REPORT ON THE COMMISSIONING OF NEW SERVICES**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The purpose of this report is to inform and update Members about the progress on the commissioning of Early Intervention and Prevention Services.

Introduction

1. (1) On 17 November 2011, a paper was presented to Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the development of an Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy and the commissioning of services to meet the needs identified.

(2) The paper outlined an approach to put in place a Multiple Supplier Framework Agreement, move from grant funding to service contracts within a commissioning framework and an intention to ring fence or centrally manage budgets in relation to these services. This would ensure:

- Consistency across districts
- Robust contract and performance management
- Clear specifications and outcomes

(3) The Framework agreed has four categories: Safeguarding; Family Focus; Children and Young People Vulnerable to Poor Outcomes and Emotional Health and Wellbeing. Within each of these categories there are several 'lots', each defining in greater detail the outcomes and types of services expected.

Update on the Commissioning Process

2. (1) Expressions of interest and invitations to tender were invited in June through the South East Business Portal. Evaluation of the tenders for all categories has been completed. Mini competitions for services are now planned to begin in January 2012 with an expectation that services will be commissioned to start with a phased approach from April 2012.

(2) Through the consultation process with providers, it was identified that many of the services currently funded were seeing an increase in the levels of need being referred to them. In some cases, services had refocused their activities although some providers had concerns that the levels of knowledge and skills within the provider sector were insufficient to meet the presenting needs. Initial analysis of data, which is available from initial assessment referrals and Single Point of Access (SPA) meetings, supports these issues.

(3) Providers, on the whole, were supportive of change but there is a risk of adverse publicity if those who have hitherto received funding from Children's Services are unsuccessful. There was a concern from the market that the timetable was too short (particularly with bank holidays) to submit tenders for mini competitions and therefore a rolling programme has been developed and grants will be rolled over a 3 to 5 month period to allow transition to the new services.

(4) An additional £2.75m has been invested to save. This funding will support additional commissioning activity e.g. a crisis intervention service for 11-15 year olds and intensive support for homeless 16-17 year olds (Southwark) to:

- Reduce number of teenagers becoming looked after
- Reduce number of 16-17 year old Southwark LAC
- Increase adoptions
- Reduce the number of LAC in high cost placements

Update on The implementation of the Framework

3. (1) The services to go out to mini competition have been designed as a package of preventative measures building on expectations of universal and specialist services. The overall design is intended to encompass the full range of Early Intervention and Prevention Services that Preventative Services Managers (PSMs), District Children's Services Managers and the SPA meetings/Team Around the Child (TACs) are likely to need to commission in order to meet key strategic objectives. Some funding will remain centrally as a Community Chest to enable local commissioning of small grant funded projects.

(2) The proposed service areas to meet the needs identified in the Early Intervention and Prevention strategy in the first phase are:

- Family Support Service
- Adolescent Service
- Teenage Pregnancy Prevention
- Young Carers
- Domestic Abuse
- Emotional Health & Wellbeing

A more detailed description of these services, including key outcomes and Performance Indicators is provided in Appendix 1 & 2.

(3) There is a presumption that most services will be countywide although there will be a need to reflect local need. The allocation of resources by District will be based on a formula developed by Business Strategy & Support, and will relate to population and deprivation factors relevant to the focus of the service.

(4) The decision to recommission services afresh from 2012 has given FSC a rare opportunity to look objectively at what was being provided and start from a virtual clean sheet. This opportunity is balanced by the risk of the “big bang” approach overloading services and PSMs as they all try to manage the transition between contracts at the same time. Discussions with sector providers have identified that they also feel this to be a major risk and hence the proposed phasing of mini competitions.

(5) The move to a more centralized and robust commissioning framework will require some readjustment and realignment of commissioning and purchasing responsibilities and the relationship between the Commissioning Unit/Families and Social Care Managers and service delivery functions.

(6) In addition, the package of services we are putting in place requires a high level of collaboration and coordination between services and agencies. There is a clear need for a functional role within localities to coordinate access to commissioned services, utilising the SPA processes, and to manage the relationships between commissioned services in a locality in order to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people and their families.

(7) Members are asked to note that providers have demonstrated an understanding of equality duties as part of inclusion in the framework.

Implementation of the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy

4. (1) The strategy is being taken through key partner sign off processes and is being discussed at Local Children’s Trust Board meetings. The priorities set out within the strategy have informed the commissioning framework and will also inform the current review of preventative services staffing and resources to ensure that improved outcomes for the priority areas can be achieved.

(2) A review of the Single Point of Access and an in depth analysis of the Common Assessment process and Team Around the Family approach has been undertaken in order to inform action to simplify processes and ensure that all underpinning processes are supporting and enabling appropriate early intervention for children, young people and families.

(3) The Children and Young People’s Joint Commissioning Board will be agreeing to focus on 3 to 4 top priority areas within the strategy where their joint efforts are vital to achieving improved outcomes.

Recommendations

5. (1) Members of the Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to NOTE the progress so far with regard to the commissioning of Early Intervention and Prevention Services.

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Background Information:

- Kent Early Intervention & Prevention Strategy
- Early Intervention & Prevention Report