

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

STRONGER FAMILIES PROGRAMME

This report summarises progress made on the Stronger Families transformation programme over recent months and outlines key activities undertaken.

FOR INFORMATION

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Stronger Families transformation programme is a coordinated portfolio of projects and activities, set to last approximately 2 to 3 years, with clear objectives:
- Deliver significant annual savings from the FCS budget by the closure of the programme. The first £2 million of these savings will be realised in the 2011/12 budget.
 - Change the nature and modes of delivery of services such that delivery is consistent with the stated policy goal of "stronger families at the heart of stronger communities", i.e. delivering services which enable families to help themselves and discourage dependence on the state.
- 1.2 Several projects and workstreams have been initiated to ensure progress towards the delivery of these objectives. These are:
- **business analysis:** looking at the true unit costs of services across the business group.
 - **commissioning:** developing a framework and resourcing a commissioning function to support decisions on the shape of future FCS services.
 - **future planning:** service prioritisation, overseeing the Imperatives and Opportunities process,
 - **change management and engagement:** garnering input and ideas from staff, preparing service areas for change, involving stakeholders, dealing with workforce implications of changes
- 1.3 A core team of a Programme Manager and Programme Support Officer (2 FTE) is in place to manage and monitor the programme. Detail of progress on these workstreams is provided below.

2 Business Analysis

- 2.1 With the support of an experienced external consultant, a team which includes secondees from RBKC is examining unit costs of delivery across the business group.
- 2.2 The purpose of this exercise is to:
 - identify services where unit costs demonstrate the potential for efficiency measures
 - identify areas where levels of charging or the management of thresholds might be reviewed
 - build a 'future operating model' of how the business group might operate in the future
- 2.3 This began with services in the Schools, Quality and Standards directorate. Costs are being fully loaded with, for example, management, recharges and premises expenditure. The analysis enables us to give a true picture of how much delivery is costing the Council and taxpayer based on current models. The cost analysis is now continuing with services in the Community Learning (e.g. Youth, Play) and Family Services (e.g. Children with Complex Needs) directorates. The exercise will be completed in October.

3 Commissioning

- 3.1 The first stage of work has focussed on examining current commissioning practice within the business group. This has been completed through interviews with existing staff from positions on the commissioning cycle, and a scored self-assessment of existing activity, supported by the Commissioning Support Programme. Meetings are being held with commissioners from other London Boroughs to assess examples of good practice with a view to informing plans for how FCS will develop its commissioning function.
- 3.2 A draft 'commissioning journey' has been developed, representing an exemplar process for moving through a commissioning cycle - from identifying and assessing a quantified need in the resident population, through a process of developing options for service delivery, procurement of services and contract management, to detailed service review. It is now proposed to test this 'journey' with two FCS Family services to fine-tune the process with a view to it then informing the resources required to sustain it and roll-out across the other directorates.
- 3.3 This process is expected to run through to March 2011. It is envisaged that FCS will then be in a better position to recommend how the existing FCS Strategy Commissioning and Performance directorate will need to be reconfigured to support an evolved

commissioning function, informed also by the developing work with Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster.

4 Future Planning

- 4.1 A consistent framework for prioritising discrete services has been developed with service managers. This framework uses a variety of criteria (such as level of statutory duty, extent of focus on the most vulnerable, service user feedback) as a transparent basis for identifying service priorities. This exercise, to be completed by the end of August, is being led by Directors with 'critical friend' challenge provided by the Programme and by senior officers. The draft outputs of this prioritisation are due to be presented to Lead Members in mid September.
- 4.2 It is intended that the general direction and themes and of the programme will be discussed with Cabinet Members in early September. Following this the service prioritisation work, the business analysis work and the conclusions from the Finance and Priorities sub-group will be input into the work through the Autumn and Winter months to develop a 'future operating model'.

5 Change Management and Engagement

- 5.1 This workstream initially delivered a series of workshops and round-table discussions, attended by over 1000 individuals from all services within FCS, Trade Unions, elected Members, partners from Health, headteachers and voluntary sector representatives. An internal 'change network' of staff who have expressed particularly high levels of interest and motivation regarding the programme has also been put into place to support communications and engagement.
- 5.2 A suite of 'masterclasses' is also under way, open to all FCS staff, delivered by professionals from a variety of sectors with relevant experience. This will include staff from an English county who have entered into a joint delivery arrangement with a private sector provider for services to schools and officers from a London borough that has attempted to transfer assets into community ownership. The purpose of these sessions is to raise understanding of and interest in alternative models of delivery amongst FCS staff.
- 5.3 Throughout periods of change, the Council remains committed, as expressed in its *Commitment Statement*, to offering staff the opportunity to have their say and input into matters which affect them. The change management workstream is also responsible for

managing the workforce implications of budget reductions or changes to service delivery (i.e. redeployment and redundancy in line with Council policy), and for ensuring line managers are equipped with the information and skills they need to manage changes within their teams.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The Family and Children's Service Scrutiny Committee is invited to note and comment on the report.

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