

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**COMMUNITY, LEISURE SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report prepared by Ellie Kershaw

1. MAIDSTONE FAMILIES MATTER PROGRAMME UPDATE

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the Maidstone Families Matter programme and provide information on Phase 2 of the programme.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Housing and Community Services

1.2.1 That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 Maidstone Families Matter is the local project name for the government's Troubled Families programme. Across the country, this programme aims to turn round the lives of 120,000 families with multiple problems including; a family member out of work, poor school attendance or exclusion and anti social behaviour among the under 18's. Kent has been tasked with working with 2560 families by March 2015, with 189 families identified in the Maidstone borough area.

1.3.2 There are now 264 families who have been accepted on to the programme in Maidstone. This is above the target for Maidstone, which is positive as it should enable more families to be supported through the work with partners. This has also helped to achieve the overall Kent target. These families were nominated by a range of partners including schools, the Community Safety Team, Community Wardens and Social Services. Of these families, 52 are currently working with a Family Intervention Project (FIP) worker who offers intensive support to the family for up to approximately 12 months, helping them identify barriers that prevent change and learn new methods of coping with issues that arise.

1.3.3 The programme aims to seek innovative projects that can help families. Examples of this are;

Young Lives Foundation mentoring scheme

The young lives foundation provides support to young people on the Maidstone families matter project through trained volunteer mentors. To date

- 21 young people aged 10-18 have been referred for a mentor.
- 11 are waiting to be matched with a suitable mentor.
- 10 are engaged with a mentor

J is a young person with behavioural difficulties open to the early help team; he has been supported by his mentor to access social groups that will assist with normalising his behaviour. The mentor has also linked him into services and courses that have improved his confidence.

D has achieved a lot since meeting his mentor. He is being supported in looking for a work experience placement, completing homework and has given a radio interview explaining his experience of mentoring.

S has been identified as involving herself in risky behaviour. Her mentor has supported her through discussing positive relationships, arranging a meeting with the sexual health nurse and enrolling her on a course for vulnerable girls.

Challenger troop

Maidstone Families Matter and the CSU have run two Challenger troop courses, which are military boot camp like sessions which teach team building and responsibility whilst the young people learn new skills. These have proved popular with the young people attending them, with many parents noticing a difference in behaviour. This was funded through a successful bid to the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

"Both sets of parents whose children I have referred have said they would recommend Challenger Troop to others and feel that their children not only enjoyed but benefited immensely from the opportunity to participate in such a well organised event (one child has attended twice)." Early help Practitioner

Schools have indicated that the discipline and attitudes learned on the course have improved pupils' confidence in their ability and therefore their behaviour.

"for the young people who may only have been praised in school for accomplishments, they are able to succeed at something quite separate from any academic achievement. All the young people who completed the course enjoyed it, and while being very tired were proud of themselves." Family support worker.

1.3.4 The most recent figures for families turned around, that is, having found employment, no longer committing anti social behaviour or with children now having returned to school were sent to the DCLG in October this year. The figure across Kent was 66.7% families turned around, with Maidstone hitting 78.7%.

1.3.5 As a result of over 65% families being turned around at this stage, Kent will now be funded by DCLG to move into Phase 2 of the national Troubled Families Programme. For this next phase, the number of criteria has been significantly extended to allow work to take place with more people. For example, domestic abuse, substance misuse and not taking up and new mothers with mental health problems all become criteria that will allow the programme to offer support. A full list of criteria is attached at Appendix A, Financial Framework for the Expanded Troubled Families Programme. This Phase will be adopted from January 2016.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could choose not to receive update reports. However, given the importance of the programme to vulnerable families, this course of action is not recommended.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Maidstone Families Matter programme impacts on all corporate objectives.

1.6 Other Implications

1.6.1

1.	Financial	X
2.	Staffing	
3.	Legal	
4.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6.	Community Safety	X

- 7. Human Rights Act
- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

1.6.2 Funding for the project is provided by KCC.

1.6.3 The Community Safety Unit is a key partner in the project, as one of the criteria for the families worked with is anti social behaviour.

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>	<u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u>
Yes <input style="margin-left: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" style="margin-left: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, this is a Key Decision because:	
Wards/Parishes affected:	