

Nottingham City Council Service Specification

Priority Families Local Evaluation

1) Introduction

This specification is an integral part of the contractual arrangements between the Provider and the Commissioner in relation to the evaluation of our locally adapted Priority Families service delivery model and provides the criteria by which the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of provision will be monitored by the Commissioner.

Background

The national government's Troubled Families programme aims to help families turn their lives around, giving the children in these families the chance of a better life whilst bringing down the cost to the taxpayer of working with these families. This will include getting children back into school, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and putting adults on a path into work. More national information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-troubled-families-turn-their-lives-around>

Local authorities take the lead on this programme, but work closely with other statutory agencies such as the police, NHS, schools and housing agencies. In Nottingham, the programme has been named 'Priority Families'. The Priority Families operating model comprises the 'Troubled Families' service delivery framework of coordinating and structuring integrated multi-agency support around the family, with the Signs of Safety approach used to deliver support once the family has been allocated and the support structure set up.

The scale of the challenge in Nottingham (to work with 1,200 families over 3 years), coupled with the fact that it is known locally that this is not all the 'Priority Families' who need to be worked with, has meant that Nottingham is viewing this as a model and framework to change practice in the city. Rather than recruiting a new team of Troubled Families Practitioners, Nottingham is trying to embed it into frontline practice so that the existing workforce gets up skilled and the benefits for the city are long-term and not just limited to the programme timescales.

For more information on Nottingham's Priority Families project, see

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ics/index.aspx?articleid=25866>

2) Strategic Relevance

The Priority Families Service Delivery Model is a new way of targeting Partnership support to those families who need it most in line with the government's eligibility criteria. The Priority Families model focuses on the whole family and unites the skills and expertise of all our frontline partners. The model supports the delivery of our key strategic partnership plans, in

particular, the Nottingham Plan, the Vulnerable Adults Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan

3) **Service Description – Aims & Objectives**

Reason for Evaluation

To provide independent and robust evidence of the effectiveness of the locally adapted Priority Families service delivery model to inform future systems change and workforce development plans.

Aim

To determine the effectiveness of the locally adapted Priority Families service delivery model in improving outcomes for citizens

Objectives

To ascertain the effectiveness of the model in relation to:

- Improving non identified outcomes, ie does the approach affect additional education, health or social outcomes?
- Empowering families to sustain their improved outcomes?
- Improving citizen perceptions and satisfaction with the service received?
- Achieving workforce cultural change to embed the locally adapted Priority Families service delivery model?
- Achieving system efficiencies through integrated partnership working, both internal and external?

NB: Information on the extent to which identified outcomes for citizens relating to the Priority Families Phase 1 criteria are met, is available through data and information submitted to the national programme team which will be made available to the appointed provider. A number of case studies of work with families are also available.

Nottingham City Council is looking for a Provider to carry out an evaluation of the Priority Families Programme to determine the following:-

a) Process / Implementation evaluation

- How have families found their experience of the Priority Families approach?
- How does it differ from their previous experience of engagement with the Council and other statutory services (where applicable)?
- Do they feel that they have received the right services and that their needs are being met?
- Do families recognise the co-productive approach and acknowledge that they have to take some responsibility for making changes happen?
- How have practitioners found the experience of delivering the new model?
- What has worked well and why, what has been less successful?

- Do practitioners feel that embedding this new way of working across the board (as opposed to establishing a team of specialist practitioners) has brought additional advantages for them, the families involved, or the wider community?
- To what extent has this model been embedded into practice?
- Has the new model improved system efficiencies for some partners?
- What improvements do practitioners and families feel are required to improve the effectiveness of this service delivery model?

Impact / Outcomes evaluation

- Have there been any unintended outcomes for families participating in this model? (positive or negative)
- Does achievement of intended outcomes vary depending on family structure, family circumstances etc?
- Are there specific family groups for whom this model is more or less beneficial?
- What differences, if any, do the families feel the programme has made to their lives?
- Is achievement of outcomes sustained over time?
- How does the locally adapted Priority Families service delivery model compare with other models or approaches used locally and nationally in terms of achieving positive outcomes?
- What does the new programme model cost and how does this compare to the previous model?

4) Service Specific Detail

Methodology

Applicants are required to set out the most appropriate approach to evaluating the locally adapted Priority Families service delivery model.

The evaluation requires a mixed methods approach and it is expected that any tender will include a range of data collection methods including for example:

Quantitative data collection:

- Use of routinely collected activity data plus additional data collection e.g. through newly designed questionnaires or other data collection tools
- Cost data
- Use of validated instruments, where available, to measure some outcomes

Qualitative data collection:

- Interviews with citizens, practitioners and stakeholders
- Observation
- Policy document review

A tender must demonstrate how the Provider will:

- incorporate into the evaluation that the scale and pace of the Project will develop over an 18 month period
- take account of the real world environment that this evaluation will be conducted within e.g. time and data constraints and the evolving environment.

- Outline any risks attached to this method of approach and justify the reasons for choosing this method
- gain citizen and practitioner views of the service delivery model and balance the need for pragmatism whilst ensuring the evaluation remains methodologically robust, in order to deliver timely and useful findings
- conduct the evaluation in accordance with ethical principles and standards of good governance

Accessibility

The Provider will ensure that any information and data produced by them to show to citizens will be in a minimum of point 12 in Arial font.

The Provider will ensure that research times, methods and venues are suitable for a variety of citizens' needs.

The Provider will outline a methodology agreed with the Authority to enable interviews with citizens where English is not their first language

5) Workforce

Staff employed to undertake this evaluation should have a range of knowledge and experience in the following areas:

- Experience of working with families, children and young people;
- Understanding of children's and young people's emotional development needs;
- An understanding of domestic and sexual abuse and the impact this has on individuals, communities and families;
- A good understanding of equalities and the barriers to accessing services; and safeguarding issues
- A good understanding of the different communities within Nottingham City Council boundary and the issues they may be faced with;
- Strong partnership skills;
- Ability to work with citizens on an individual basis or in a group basis;
- A good understanding of issues such as homelessness, substance mis-use, mental ill health, resettling into a new area, no recourse to public funds, and immigration issues, etc.

6) Partnership Working

The Provider will need to work with families and a range of partners which include stakeholders and practitioners from the following organisations:-

- Nottingham City Council

- Nottinghamshire Police
- Nottingham City Homes
- Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group
- Nottingham Schools and Academies
- Nottingham Voluntary and Community Sector
- Nottingham Probation Service
- Nottingham CityCare Partnership
- Nottingham City Crime and Drugs Partnership
- Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
- NHS England

7) **Safeguarding & Child Protection**

As the evaluation will require contact with local families, there will be a requirement for relevant members of the provider organisation to be DBS checked at an enhanced level.

8) **Quality Monitoring**

The Provider should apply vigilance to the project and identify any difficulties which may compromise the work. These should be communicated in a timely manner to the Priority Families Co-ordinator, whether they have logistical, financial, ethical or any other implications for the conduct of the evaluation.

Steering Group Meetings

The Provider will attend a quarterly Evaluation Steering Group meeting to provide on going feedback on the progress of the evaluation. This forum will provide opportunities for the Priority Families Co-ordinator (and group members) to raise and discuss any issues and for progress to be assessed and recorded.

Interim reports

The Provider will submit short informal reports by email for the duration of the contract, to be presented at the Priority Families Board which is currently held every 4 months. The report will provide information on the progress of the evaluation i.e. number of completed interviews, completion of milestones etc. There is no requirement for the Provider to be present at all of the Priority Families Board meetings, but they may be invited as appropriate.

In addition, the Provider must submit formal written interim reports at key milestones (to be agreed once the Priority Families Evaluation implementation plan has been finalised), to the Priority Families Board, to ensure early findings can be acted upon and implemented throughout the 18 month programme. A draft copy must be agreed with the Authority prior to final submission.

Final report – including executive summary

A full written evaluation report (with executive summary) is required at the end of the evaluation period to include the evaluation findings and recommendations. A draft copy must be agreed with the Authority prior to final submission.

Presentation of findings

The Provider will also be required to present the end of evaluation findings to the Priority Families Leadership Group

Receipt of copies of data sets

All data collected and the full evaluation report are to be treated as strictly confidential and are the property of the Authority not the evaluator. Full data sets must be transferred to the Authority at the end of the evaluation period.

Payment

Payments to the Provider will be made on a quarterly basis throughout the duration of the contract with first and second payments being made on commencement of the contract. Completion of the first interim report will trigger the third quarterly payment and additional payments will similarly be triggered by the completion of subsequent reports as detailed above.