

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

DECISION

Agenda Item No

meeting date: 28 JULY 2009
title: HOME START
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: TRUDY HOLDERNESS

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the extension to the contract between the Home-Start Pendle & Ribble Valley and Ribble Valley Borough Council.
- 1.2 To provide committee with a year-end report for Home-Start Pendle & Ribble Valley 2008/2009.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Home-Start schemes provide emotional and practical support to parents with at least one child under the age of 5, who are facing difficulties, enabling them to cope with the pressures they are facing and reduce the potential for family crisis and breakdown.
- 2.2 In November 2007 a report was submitted to this committee informing members of the closure of Home-Start Ribble Valley on 31 October 2007, after it had struggled to obtain the funding to continue.
- 2.3 Prior to the committee meeting, Councillor Sherras and the Director of Resources met with East Lancashire PCT representatives and Christine Fish from the Hyndburn and Ribble Valley CVS.
- 2.4 The PCT were keen to resurrect Home-Start Ribble Valley in some form and had some funding available. Various options were discussed and the PCT promised to look at these in more detail and have discussions with Lancashire County Council to ascertain their support for Home-Start within Ribble Valley.
- 2.5 In July 2008 a service level agreement (SLA) was agreed between East Lancashire PCT, Ribble Valley Borough Council (the commissioners) and Home-Start Ribble Valley (the Provider) for the period 1st July 2008 and 31st March 2010.
- 2.6 The purpose of the agreement was to authorise the funding contribution to the core costs of Home-Start Ribble Valley by the Commissioners to provide those services as detailed in the service specification.
- 2.7 The Commissioners and Home-Start Ribble Valley agreed the sum of £28,100 for the delivery of the core services broken down as follows:
 - East Lancashire Teaching Primary Care Trust - £25,000
 - Ribble Valley Borough Council - £3,100
- 2.8 In May 2009 an end of year report for 2008 / 2009 was received for information, a copy of which is attached at annex 1

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The existing jointly commissioned contract with RVBC and the East Lancashire PCT ends on 31st March 2010.
- 3.2 The East Lancashire PCT would like implement a new contract from April 2009 to March 2012 to bring it inline with other Home-start contracts and have uplifted the grant of £25,000 by 1.7% to £25,425.50.
- 3.3 They have drafted a service specification for the new contract, which has been implemented due to the new Voluntary, Community, Faith, Sector contracting guidelines. It would be attached to the current SLA template, with no changes made to the SLA apart from the period and funding amount with the added uplift.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Approve the implementation of a new contract from April 2009 to March 2012.
- 4.2 Agree to uplift the grant of £3,100 by 1.7% to £3,152.70 in line with East Lancashire PCT.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT
PF29-09/TH/AC

17 JULY 2009

Home-Start Pendle & Ribble Valley Report to East Lancs. PCT
 End of Year Report 2008 – 2009

Ribble Valley Project

Home-Start Pendle was awarded a contract in the spring of 2008 to start family support in Ribble Valley in July 2008. Part of the expectations of the panel in awarding the contracts were as follows:

1. A change of Name
 2. Premises in Ribble Valley
 3. Ribble Valley Board members
 4. Management and Financial structure to include two projects within one organisation
 5. Ability to meet the required SLA.
1. The change of name and change of governing document to reflect the new geographic area was agreed at Management Committee and we became Home-Start Pendle & Ribble Valley formally on 28th January 2009. Companies House and Charity Commission have been informed and are happy with the changes.
 2. The Ribble Valley project is based within Ribblesdale Children's Centre in the heart of Clitheroe and this has not only proved to be excellent premises and location but a very good working partnership which we believe can develop further.
 3. We have to date recruited two new Board members from Ribble Valley who both bring a very different perspective to the work. One was a previous Home-Start volunteer for 5 years and also a previous Mayor of the area so brings a wealth of knowledge of the whole area and potential support needs of families within this rural area. The other is Chair of a neighbouring Children's Centre, involved in local business and involved in a number of strategic groups in Ribble Valley and again brings a different perspective. She is very proactive and has taken on the marketing mantle with great success so far. She will also bring knowledge and experience of negotiating SLA's with local Children's Centres across Pendle & Ribble Valley. We are planning a Charity Ball at Mytton Fold in July and aim to recruit other potential Trustees at this event.
 4. The Organisation is managed as one with two distinct projects, managed and staffed separately and finances kept separately. As part of our capacity building to manage this we have purchased Sage Financial Management system in order to keep accurate records and allow for a more diverse funding mix.
 5. Whilst we knew that working in this new area had a number of challenges we were and are confident that we are placed to meet them. We have targeted resources appropriately and having started with no staff in place, no families

and no volunteers we knew it would take time to get off the ground. We are happy with our performance in the first 9 months of the project and we hope that you are pleased with our progress, recognising that we have laid some firm foundations for the future.

Statistics

Staff in post: One part time organiser and one part time administrator and a smaller part of one manager.

We have been successful in being awarded a contract with Lancashire County Council to appoint a full time Parent Support Advisor and she starts in June. Her role will be to look at how all agencies deliver Family Support in Ribble Valley and where the gaps are and report to LCC. This is a new post available across East Lancashire and is quite strategic and will hopefully also raise our profile within the area.

We continue to raise funds to appoint another part time worker to the family support team.

Volunteers

We started without any and there was confusion amongst potential recruits as to who we were and if we were part of the previous scheme. Initially this was very worrying as we wondered if we were going to be able to recruit new people. The first prep course started with 4 and we have just recruited another 9 so within our first 12 calendar months we will have 13 volunteers ready. (Pendle recruited 11 new volunteers this year.) This is a slow, steady progress and will continue to be so. Volunteer training lasts 10 weeks and we insist that they cover every session of the course, so it takes time.

Families

Staff have meant a lot of time networking and getting out to potential referrers. We have agreed a three way approach between ourselves, Ribblesdale Children's Centre and the Health Visiting team. We will sit down monthly and discuss potential referrals and which agency should start working with them.

Initially we did not chase too many referrals as we did not want to disappoint people by not providing a service until volunteers were trained.

Between November and end of March we have worked with 12 families. Some have attended joint activities at RCC and some attended a joint Pendle & Ribble Valley family trip to Eureka Science Museum recently. Of course Santa visited at Christmas.

Publicising the Service

We have run a coffee morning in the Emporium, various adverts in local press constantly and have managed to get a few articles into the Clitheroe Advertiser and Northern Life. We have targeted villages with potential volunteers and tackled local shops, post offices, doctors surgeries, village halls and notice boards, anywhere we could that seemed to be the heart of that village and would either put up a poster or take some publicity. We have n part of local initiatives and joined in bed pushes up Pendle Hill and Comic Relief pram walks through Clitheroe. As I mentioned earlier one of the new Trustees has taken marketing under her wing and meets monthly with staff to move this forward.

Quality Assurance

The same policies, systems and standards operate in Ribble Valley as they do in Pendle. The administrator in Clitheroe is also championing quality control across the organisation, helping us to move forward with the Home-Start Quality Mark and PQASSO (which the HS quality system is based on).

Service Development

We believe our priorities are to ensure that our foundations in Ribble Valley are strong and then develop the project from there. Currently we have good (though slightly cramped) premises, newly trained and enthusiastic staff and a strong Board of Trustees. There is obvious need for the service from the feedback we are getting from Ribblesdale and from the Health Visiting team and we have a small, but growing, group of trained volunteers.

Our priorities are to train more volunteers throughout the year, aiming to have a team of at least 30 volunteers by the end of the three year contract.

Our next priority is to ensure they have group support and our aim is to have this up and running in the short term. Ribblesdale Children's Centre would like us to run a group from their premises and invite Home-Start families and a few families who are linked with tem but not needing intense family support but are isolated.