

DCLG Trailblazer Funding bid

Darlington Borough Council was successful in their application to be part of DCLG's £20m Trailblazer fund. The fund was to establish a network of ambitious areas across England to work with all eligible households, whether in priority need or not to prevent them becoming homeless as early as possible.

Darlington's Concept

Our concept is to prevent an escalation of needs which can result in homelessness – the focus is on very early intervention and prevention which will reduce the impact, not only on the Individual, but also on the costs associated with supporting a chaotic person which the statutory agencies – Police, Health, DBC etc. incur.

Clients

It was identified that a high percentage of safeguarding/Vulnerable adult alerts which are put into DBC from the Police are given an No Further Action status (NFA) (70%, 904 out of 1288 referrals over the last 6 months), as they do not meet the Adult Social Care eligibility criteria or safeguarding thresholds. A large percentage of these referrals are for incidents where the police have attended a property due to ASB, mental health concerns or alcohol abuse. The NFA comments are mainly 'referred to GP to note' or 'Open to NECA/West Park – have passed information on'.

So although the concerns are being classed as NFA due to their engagement with other services, there are no overarching linkages in place to ensure that the Individual is actually engaging with those agencies which whom they are linked and the available data to date is identifying significant levels of repeat referrals for the same individuals.

Trailblazer Service

The Service will work alongside Adult Social Care to identify clients who have been the subject of a safeguarding/Vulnerable adult alert which has been given a NFA status.

The client will be approached, at the earliest opportunity, following receipt of the alert to see if they will engage in support. The service will work with the client to signpost, 'hand hold' to attend appointments to re-engage them with specialist services, address any housing issues, rent arrears and address any underlying issues which resulted in the alert being made.

Support will be short term (approx. 6 weeks) and where it is identified that longer term support would be of benefit, the client will be referred into a relevant Housing Related Support service.

The service provider will contact the clients at 3,6 and 12 months post support ending to ensure they are sustaining all that has been put in place. They will be able to re-engage with the support service if they are in further crisis.

The service will look to achieve VFM outcomes for statutory services (primarily Health, Police and DBC) which will inform future commissioning intentions and look to measure the effectiveness of earlier intervention to prevent a further cohort of High Impact Users - key

indicators will be around mental health, substance misuse, homeless prevention, benefit maximisation and moving the clients towards the job market.