

Local authority child poverty innovation pilot evaluation: third synthesis report

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This research report was commissioned before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DFE).

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

Contents

- Key Messages 1**
- Executive Summary 2**
- 1 Introduction..... 6**
 - 1.1 The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot..... 6
 - 1.2 The National Evaluation 6
 - 1.3 The Structure of this Report 7
- 2 Child Poverty Innovation Pilot Logic Models 9**
 - 2.1 Programme Theory Evaluation 9
 - 2.2 Establishing Innovation Pilot Programme Theory Logic Models..... 10
- 3 Outputs and Outcomes 21**
 - 3.1 Cornwall 21
 - 3.2 Hammersmith and Fulham..... 22
 - 3.3 Islington 22
 - 3.4 Kent 23
 - 3.5 Knowsley 24
 - 3.6 North Warwickshire 24
 - 3.7 Sefton 24
 - 3.8 Tyne Gateway 25
 - 3.9 Waltham Forest..... 25
 - 3.10 Westminster 26
 - 3.11 Summary 26
- 4 Messages of Effective Practice..... 28**
 - 4.1 Targeting and Engaging Parents and Families..... 28
 - 4.2 Increasing Employment and Employability 29
 - 4.3 Alleviating the Impacts of Poverty 30
 - 4.4 Addressing Barriers..... 31
 - 4.5 Innovation and Sustainability 32
 - 4.6 Summary 34
- 5 Conclusion 35**
 - 5.1 Synthesis Evaluation Key Findings..... 35
 - 5.2 Pilot Learning: the Four ‘Child Poverty Building Blocks’ 35
 - 5.3 Evaluation Next Steps..... 36

Key Messages

The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP) was established by the Child Poverty Unit (CPU) in 2009 and ends in March 2011. The LAIP is a programme that trials locally appropriate and innovative ways of addressing child poverty, to provide local and national learning. The national evaluation is structured to provide a local evaluation to each of the ten unique local authority programmes, with a synthesis evaluation to CPU. This is the third synthesis evaluation report, based upon fieldwork undertaken in, and monitoring data provided to, October 2010. The key messages in the report are:

- The ten pilot programmes continue to develop in response to local context and to learning from development and delivery. Although established by the previous government, the aims and objectives of the LAIP programme mean that it is well placed to offer valuable learning for Coalition Government priorities and the national child poverty strategy as well as the local strategies required by the Child Poverty Act 2010.
- This local focus and responsiveness supports the rationale that effective activity to address child poverty should be rooted in local context, in terms of: the local socio-economic context – what are the demographic, labour market, education and other issues for families and that impact upon levels of child poverty; and, the local practice context – what partnerships, structures and services are in place in the local area and what is the history of provision.
- When targeting parents and families for support, towards employment or with broader familial issues, a combination of approaches is required. Effective techniques include: publicity; outreach; data-led approaches; persistence; and, work with partners to develop referral routes. Once parents and families are engaged, needs assessment is an ongoing process for support that goes beyond signposting; as more is revealed as trust relationships are developed. Addressing family-based barriers and building on strengths does not always require a ‘whole-family’ approach, but it does require an understanding of the family as a unit and the individuals within it and an approach that takes account of this.
- There is a high demand for employment support for parents that is holistic, flexible and responsive. Effective approaches are delivered by a case-worker supported by, or with access to, flexible resources; flexible resources are money funds but also the in-kind or other contributions of partner agencies and colleagues who can provide a range of specialist support. In this way the different barriers that different parents face can be addressed in a co-ordinated way.
- The provision of resources to families in poverty brings an immediate relief of that condition or circumstance; addressing barriers to engagement with services and to entering and sustaining employment brings more sustainable change. Stakeholders in the pilot programmes consistently identify access to affordable childcare as a key barrier to parental employment.
- Workforce development can embed new ways of working, new understandings and therefore enhance capacity for addressing child poverty. One feature across the local programmes is new partnerships between local authority children’s services and economic development and employment directorates.
- There are some examples within the pilot of community capacity building approaches. These are well supported locally and the evaluation evidence to date indicates the potential for transformational change in these models. The evaluation also highlights how these approaches take dedicated time and resources to develop and support.

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

This is the third report of the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). The programme trials locally appropriate and innovative approaches to addressing child poverty, to provide local and national learning.

There are ten local authority pilot programmes, successful in their proposals for funding to address at least one of the following themes:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Raising family income;
- Narrowing the outcome gap between children in low income families and their peers; and
- Building community capacity to tackle child poverty.

The pilots also link to many of the priorities of the Coalition Government, including:

- Addressing poverty and increasing parental employment;
- The 'Big Society';
- Local delivery; and,
- Strengthening families.

There are four phases of evaluation activity. Each phase produces a local evaluation report for each pilot programme and a synthesis report for CPU. This report presents a synthesis of the third local evaluation reports. It presents summary evidence of pilot outputs and outcomes to support and illustrate the messages of effective practice identified previously and confirmed in the third phase of evaluation fieldwork.

The third report builds on previous ones and is based on a programme of interviews with: 113 individuals and partners managing and delivering the pilot programmes; 67 professionals engaged with pilot provision; and, 170 parents. It includes the analysis of the monitoring and information (MI) data provided by each pilot to the evaluation team.

2 Child Poverty Innovation Pilot Logic Models

The evaluation is following a 'programme theory evaluation' approach. This involves identifying:

- The context for the ten individual pilots;
- The money and in-kind inputs into the programme;
- The target group(s) for the programme;
- The activities of the programme;
- The rationale for the programme and these activities;
- The outputs of the programme; and,
- The medium and long term outcomes of the programme.

In this way the theory of why these activities are expected to achieve these outcomes for this target group in this context is identified. A logic model then provides a summary that makes this explicit. At the start of the evaluation logic models were designed for each of the pilot programmes, which formed the basis of activity to support the development of an outcome and indicator framework for each. The evaluation team then developed five overarching outcome areas:

- Increasing parental employment;
- increasing parental employability and wellbeing;
- Increasing family wellbeing;

- Increasing children's wellbeing; and,
- Building capacity to address child poverty.

Section 2 of the report provides updated logic models for each pilot. They include the outputs and outcomes achieved to date. Final versions will be provided in the final report.

3 Pilot Outputs and Outcomes

Section 3 summarises the latest pilot output and outcome data provided. It shows that the pilot programmes have made good and in many cases excellent progress. The outcomes evidenced are expected to increase as parents and families engaged by the pilots exit their support.

The data shows that each of the pilots have successfully engaged their intended target groups, with female parents and lone parent households headed by a female being the most common beneficiaries. In addition, qualitative evidence suggests there is a high level of commitment to returning to work amongst the parents engaged. It also indicates that emotional and practical support is key to engaging parents in pathways to employment.

Across the evaluations of the pilot programmes, there is both qualitative and quantitative evidence of: increased parental employment; increased employability; increased family and child wellbeing; and, increased capacity to address child poverty through partnerships developed and learning from local pilot provision.

4 Messages of Effective Practice

The third synthesis report confirms the messages of effective practice discussed in previous reports. It provides some illustrative case studies in support of them.

Targeting and Engaging Parents and Families

The evaluation evidence indicates that combinations of approaches are required to identify targeted parents and families and to promote referral and self-referral. These include: publicity; outreach; data-led approaches; persistence; and, work with partners. Although time consuming, developing relationships with partners is important as they can take time to develop confidence in new provision. This is demonstrated by evidence from the Hammersmith and Fulham pilot, for example. This shows how parents have been recruited through both postcards delivered to target estates (40% of engaged parents) and referral from local services (35%). An individualised, open-ended, welcoming and flexible approach is identified as an effective way of engaging 'hard to help' families.

A key lesson is the importance of understanding the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have, and not seeing them as adults who may or may not have children. Family based approaches do not necessarily engage the whole family, but they do take each of the individuals and the family as a unit into account (as in the example of the Knowsley pilot).

Increasing Employment and Employability

The ten local evaluations continue to show that a high demand exists for flexible and holistic approaches to supporting parents towards employment. For example, the Sefton pilot has worked with almost double their target of parents (77 in total) and is working with a broad range of parents in response to demand.

Effective approaches to increasing employability are delivered by a caseworker, who can access resources and co-ordinate multi-agency responses to an action plan 'owned' by a parent or family. This means that barriers are not addressed in isolation by different agencies, for example as in the Islington pilot.

Alleviating the Impacts of Poverty

The ten pilot programme evaluations continue to evidence how the provision of resources to parents and families can bring immediate relief to those experiencing poverty. These impacts can relate to family material circumstance – for instance housing, clothing, or positive activities for children – or to parents' ability to seek or engage with employment or pathways towards employment.

Mainstream funding is often reported as: being difficult and time consuming to access; restricted in terms of use; and, often requiring turnaround times that limit their use in cases of crises. Flexible

funding can therefore provide useful resources to relieve the immediate effects of poverty and enable progression towards employment and other positive outcomes, as the Cornwall Enabling Fund illustrates.

Signposting and supporting access to local provision can help families engage with services for the first time – for example support with debt and money management, as exemplified by the North Warwickshire pilot – which can significantly reduce personal and family stress.

Addressing Barriers

To address the range of barriers that *families* can face in accessing provision that supports improved wellbeing outcomes, and that *parents* can face in moving towards and returning to the labour market, flexible and resourced packages of personalised support that are coordinated through a casework or case-management approach are required. For example, Waltham Forest's multi-agency approach to provides a flexible, personalised and holistic service through a Family Partnership Model, with the support of, and interventions from, a range of agencies coordinated by a Family Support Adviser.

Access to affordable and flexible childcare continues to be reported as a key barrier to parental engagement in employability activity and employment itself. Three issues are identified – parents may perceive the available childcare poorly; the costs may be prohibitive for those starting work; and the availability of local and flexible childcare may be limited. Identifying and funding appropriate childcare is a key element of the Westminster pilot, where 'Keyworkers' across the authority area who are supporting parents provide pilot resources for those entering employment.

Innovation and Sustainability

Each of the ten pilot programmes display innovative features – including new models of delivery, the modification of existing approaches for individual circumstances or target groups involved, and by developing new partnerships for delivery. Stakeholders report that pilots providing flexible parent- or family-focused employment and employability support are particularly innovative.

Some pilots (Sefton, Tyne Gateway and Westminster) are engaging employers and their experiences suggest a willingness and interest amongst them in supporting family-friendly employment. There are also examples of innovative community capacity building approaches. These are well supported by local communities and the professionals that work with them – for example as in the case of the Tyne Gateway entrepreneur model – but they are resource intensive.

Workforce development activities are also a focus for some of the pilot programmes – either through awareness raising and training activities or by introducing new working approaches. Learning from across the programme indicates that innovation can cause tension and meet resistance as it challenges established practice, and that embedding new practice requires dedicated time and resources, sustained and targeted activity and high level leadership and commitment.

Finally, the local pilots have established strategic structures and are investigating how approaches trialled and found to be effective can be sustained or mainstreamed. In some cases promising progress had been made towards mainstreaming pilot services. For example: in Cornwall where funding has been secured to continue two main pilot activities; and, in Islington where a dedicated sustainability strand is embedding new practice and informing further (community budget) piloting. However, at the time of the evaluation fieldwork considerable uncertainty remains over local authority budgets and priorities for the future.

5 Conclusions

The report provides an overview of the findings from the third stage of the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). Summaries of the ten local programmes are provided through programme theory logic models. An overview of the outcomes achieved to date is included. The messages of effective practice identified in previous reports are confirmed and illustrated with examples.

Key findings of the third synthesis evaluation report are:

- The ten pilot programmes are in the final stages of delivery. They continue to reflect a true pilot ethos by adapting to changing circumstances and to learning from their provision and evaluation;

- Pilots providing longer-term packages of support are exiting increasing numbers of beneficiaries as these come to an end and therefore employment and employability outcomes are expected to increase;
- The local evaluations of the pilot programmes, and a synthesis of them, continue to highlight:
 - The need for a range of techniques to reach and engage targeted parents;
 - The effectiveness of packages of flexible and resourced employment support, that understand their beneficiaries as parents rather than adults who may or may not have children;
 - The need for flexible, accessible resources that can provide immediate alleviation from the impacts of poverty;
 - The demand for money and debt advice and the impact that this can have on individual and family wellbeing;
 - The importance of partnership working and the resources that this requires;
 - The challenges of developing new and innovative practice; and,
 - That community capacity building approaches are well supported and can have a transformational impact on those involved in delivery in their communities, although supporting this development requires dedicated resources.
- The pilot programmes are well supported by their strategic and other local stakeholders. However the current context for local authorities of reduced budgets and the increased ability to plan and prioritise locally creates both opportunities and challenges for sustainability and mainstreaming.

Pilot Learning: the Four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks'

The evaluation findings confirm the pilot learning for the four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks' that support local authorities' and national government's planning for the Child Poverty Act 2010. Learning from the pilot for each building block includes

- 'Employment and skills' – it is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children. There is a demand for flexible employment support delivered by case-workers that can recognise and address the range of barriers that parents can face. Emotional as well as practical support is required.
- 'Life chances and families' – packages of support bring a range of benefits for individual and family wellbeing. Parents are motivated to engage with interventions that are accessible, non-threatening and in progression pathways that are developed with them.
- 'Financial support' – there is high demand for quality advice and support relating to benefit entitlement and to debt. There is also a demand amongst professionals working with parents and families for flexible funds to: support parents towards employment; help achieve broader welfare and wellbeing outcomes; and, alleviate the impacts of poverty.
- 'Place and delivery' – provision is effective when it is appropriate to local context and the characteristics of the local community. Involving local communities in developing and delivering services can be effective, but must be carefully supported and resourced. Voluntary and community sector partners bring expertise in working flexibly with local communities. Local authorities can embed effective practice by engaging their directorates and partners in a structured approach to promoting child poverty as a priority.

1 Introduction

This is the third report from the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). The LAIP is a programme that trials locally appropriate and innovative ways of addressing child poverty, to provide local and national learning. The national evaluation is structured to provide a local evaluation to each of the unique local authority programmes, with a synthesis report to CPU. This report presents a synthesis of the third local evaluation reports, provided to LAIP authorities in November 2010.

The first synthesis report (February 2010) described how the ten pilot programmes were beginning to develop and deliver their services and activities. The second report provided early messages and emerging lessons for practice based on qualitative research, as pilot provision progressed. This third report presents summary evidence of outputs and outcomes to further illustrate and complement those messages. A comprehensive and final report will be produced when the pilot has come to an end.

1.1 The Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

The Innovation Pilot began in March 2009 and ends in March 2011. Ten local authorities were successful in their proposals for funding. LAIP programmes are expected to address at least one of the following themes:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Raising family income, including through the improved take-up of tax credits and benefits, including local authority administered benefits;
- Narrowing the outcome gap between children in low income families and their peers;
- Promoting economic regeneration focused on families and tackling regeneration at a community wide level; and,
- Building the capacity of communities to address child poverty.

The ten pilot authorities are:

- Cornwall; Hammersmith and Fulham; Islington; Kent; Knowsley; North Warwickshire; Sefton; North Tyneside and South Tyneside (in partnership); Waltham Forest; and, Westminster.

The second evaluation report describes how the Innovation Pilot will provide learning for the Coalition Government and how the pilots link to its key priorities on:

- Addressing poverty and increasing parental employment;
- The 'Big Society';
- Local delivery; and,
- Strengthening families.

1.2 The National Evaluation

The national evaluation of the LAIP was commissioned in April 2009¹. The evaluation provides each local authority with a local evaluation and a synthesis of these reports to CPU. There are four stages of fieldwork, analysis and reporting. Our first report (February 2010) described the evaluation methodology² and the key characteristics of the ten LAIP programmes, established through our first fieldwork (November 2009) as the programmes

¹ The evaluation is led by GHK, working with Prof. Mike Coombes and colleagues at the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS) at Newcastle University; and, with expert advice from Prof. Jonathan Bradshaw (University of York) and Dr. Tess Ridge (University of Bath).

² GHK (2010a) *Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot: First National Evaluation Report*, London: DCSF/CPU

were developing or in the early stages of delivery. The second report³ (September 2010) presented evidence from fieldwork conducted in March 2010. That evidence was predominantly qualitative, as pilot programmes continued to develop their monitoring (MI) systems.

The pilot programmes provided monitoring and information (MI) data to the evaluation team in October and November 2010 for the outputs and outcomes that they had achieved since delivery began. Some issues remain with the quality and coverage of this data in a minority of the pilots, and the evaluation team continue to provide advice and support to help ensure that comprehensive data is available for the final evaluation report (to be completed in March 2011).

The third evaluation stage involved:

- Interviews with those managing and delivering pilot programmes, including those at a strategic level;
- Interviews with parents who are engaged in pilot provision, including a sample of parents who had participated in previous evaluation fieldwork and thus building a longitudinal sample;
- Analysis of pilot MI data submitted, in some cases for the first time, in October and November and covering activities to the end of September 2010; and,
- Improved and refined programme logic models to reflect the changes of the pilot programmes as they mature.

Table 1.1 below summarises the number and range of individuals interviewed in the third round of evaluation fieldwork, the focus of which was to:

- Establish progress with pilot development and delivery since the second stage of fieldwork and reporting; and,
- Further explore the messages for effective practice identified in the second evaluation report and the identification of any additional learning.

This third report presents some quantitative evidence of outputs and outcomes to support and illustrate the messages of effective practice identified previously and confirmed in the third stage of evaluation fieldwork.

Table 1.1 Evaluation Interviews

Interviewee Group	Total interviews
Strategic Stakeholders	16
Pilot Teams	76
Partners	21
Beneficiaries (parents) ⁴	170
Total	283

The final evaluation report will present a comprehensive analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, including a cost effectiveness analysis and a mapping analysis as described in previous evaluation reports.⁵

1.3 The Structure of this Report

This report is structured by the following sections:

³ GHK (2010b) *Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot Evaluation: Second Synthesis Report*, London: DfE/CPU

⁴ A further group of ten professionals who received training were interviewed in Cornwall. A further 138 professionals were asked to complete a survey in Kent, with 57 completing this.

⁵ For more information, please see GHK (2010b) op. cit.

- Section 2, Child Poverty Innovation Pilot Logic Models: provides background to the use of 'programme theory logic models' in evaluation and then introduces and presents the models for the ten Innovation Pilots;
- Section 3, Innovation Pilot Outputs and Outcomes: provides an overview of some features from the analysis of output and outcome data;
- Section 4, Messages of Effective Practice: provides some illustrative examples of effective practice, evidenced through pilot outcome data; and,
- Section 5, Conclusion: presents the learning for the Child Poverty Unit and for Local Authorities, organised by the four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks'.

2 Child Poverty Innovation Pilot Logic Models

In this section we:

- Provide background information on the use of ‘programme theory logic models’ in evaluation;
- Outline how and why they are being used within the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot; and,
- Present a model for each of the ten local Innovation Pilot programmes.

2.1 Programme Theory Evaluation

‘Programme theory evaluation’ has become the dominant approach to evaluation in the US, the UK and Europe. It is used by the UN and a range of agencies supporting development programmes across the globe. It is an approach to evaluation that is referred to in a variety of different ways. Examples of the terms used to describe the approach include: ‘theory of change evaluation’; ‘theory-based evaluation’; ‘programme logic evaluation’; ‘intervention logic’; and, ‘theory-led evaluation’. Despite these different terms, these approaches each entail:

- Evaluation activity that identifies the *theory* (or ‘*theory of change*’) inherent in a programme; which involves establishing;
- *What* has been put in place, in order to achieve the *outcomes* that are intended, and *why* these activities are expected to achieve these outcomes for this *target group* and in this (policy and practice) *context*; and then uses; and,
- A logic model that makes this theory, and the way in which the programme is structured, explicit.

“The concept of grounding evaluation in theories of change takes for granted that social programmes are based on explicit or implicit theories about how and why the programme will work.”⁶

In the evaluation of the Innovation Pilot, GHK have taken a ‘programme theory logic model’ approach that involves:

- Identifying the **context** for the programme – what are the circumstances in which it operates? This is important as the context can influence what happens in the programme, particularly if any features change;
- The **inputs** into the programme – what are the money and in-kind resources allocated to the programme? This is important for supporting a value for money assessment;
- The **target group(s)** for the programme – what are their characteristics and how are they targeted? This is important as understanding who is targeted and how is central to understanding programme effectiveness;
- The **activities** of the programme – that are used to engage the target group and that form the basis of the programme intervention. This is important as it is essential to understand what activities are expected to deliver the outcomes required for the target group engaged;
- The **rationale** for the programme – why are these activities in place? This allows us to understand, and then test, the assumptions that underpin and inform the programme;

⁶ Weiss, C.H. (1995) ‘Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families’, in Connell, J. P., Kubisch, A. C., Schorr, L. B. and Weiss, C. H. (Eds) *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods and Contexts*, Washington DC: The Aspen Institute

- The **outputs** of the programme – that will be delivered from the programme activities. This enables an assessment of what the programme has delivered (against targets);
- The **medium term outcomes** of the programme – that we can expect to result from short term impacts; and,
- The **long term outcomes** of the programme – that are expected to be achieved and which may be broad and ambitious. Identifying the short, medium and long-term outcomes requires the identification of the indicators that will evidence these and the tools and techniques that will provide this data.

2.2 Establishing Innovation Pilot Programme Theory Logic Models

At the outset of the Innovation Pilot evaluation GHK developed a logic model for each of the local pilot programmes, which formed the basis for activity to support the development of an outcome and indicator framework. The national evaluation then developed five outcome areas, which the intended outputs and outcomes for each local pilot programme were mapped against. The five overarching outcomes are:

- Increasing parental employment;
- Increasing parental employability and wellbeing;
- Increasing family wellbeing;
- Increasing children’s wellbeing; and,
- Building capacity to address child poverty.

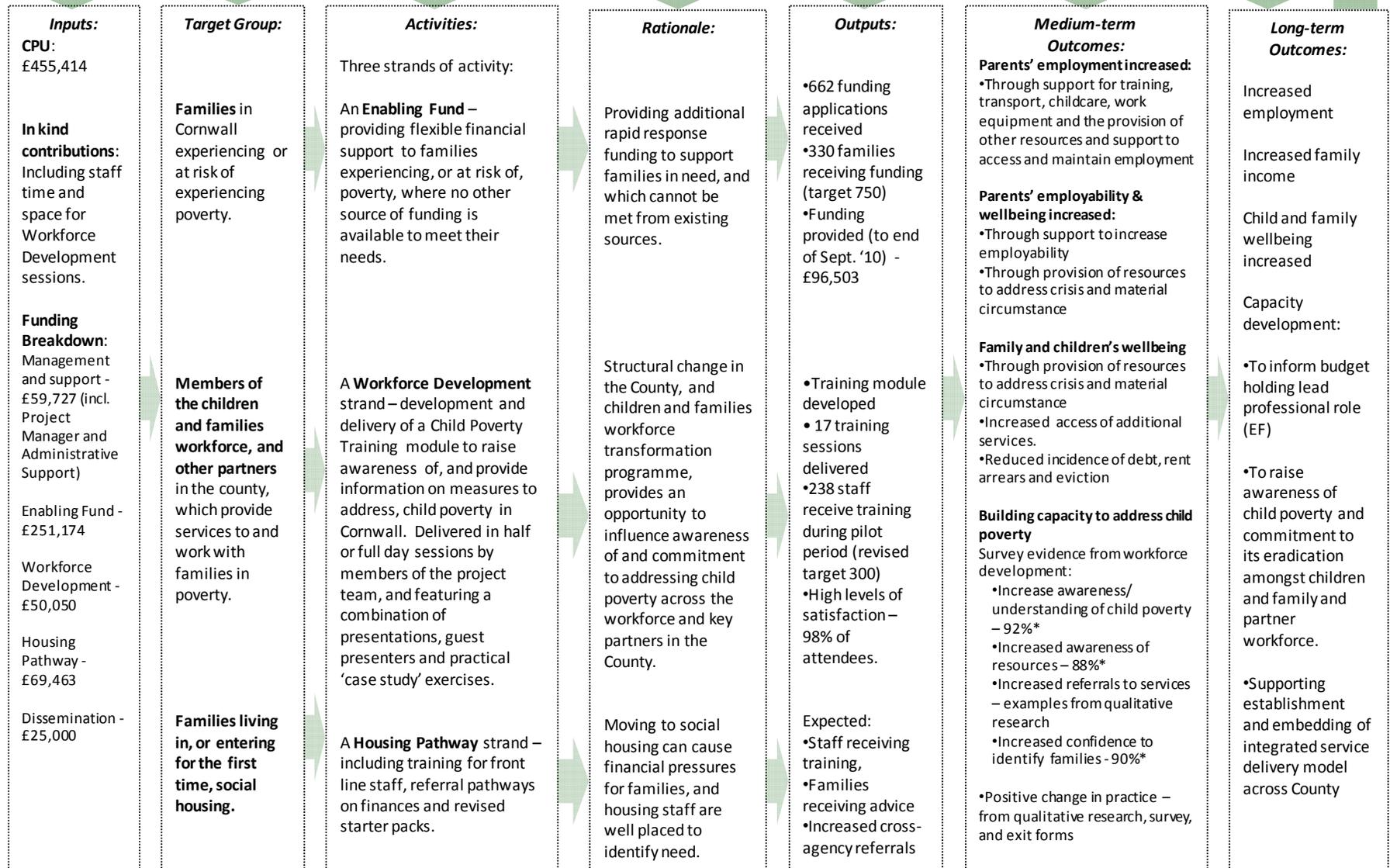
The final evaluation report will present final versions of the models, with final outcomes and features of effective practice. The models will also be used as the basis for the cost effectiveness analysis that will be reported.

The models on the following pages provide an overall summary of each pilot programme. They are supported by more detailed models provided in local evaluation reports, which include a narrative to establish the detail of local programmes that models can only summarise.

Section 3 provides a summary of the outputs and outcomes that each pilot has achieved. Section 4 provides an illustrative example of each pilot’s approaches.

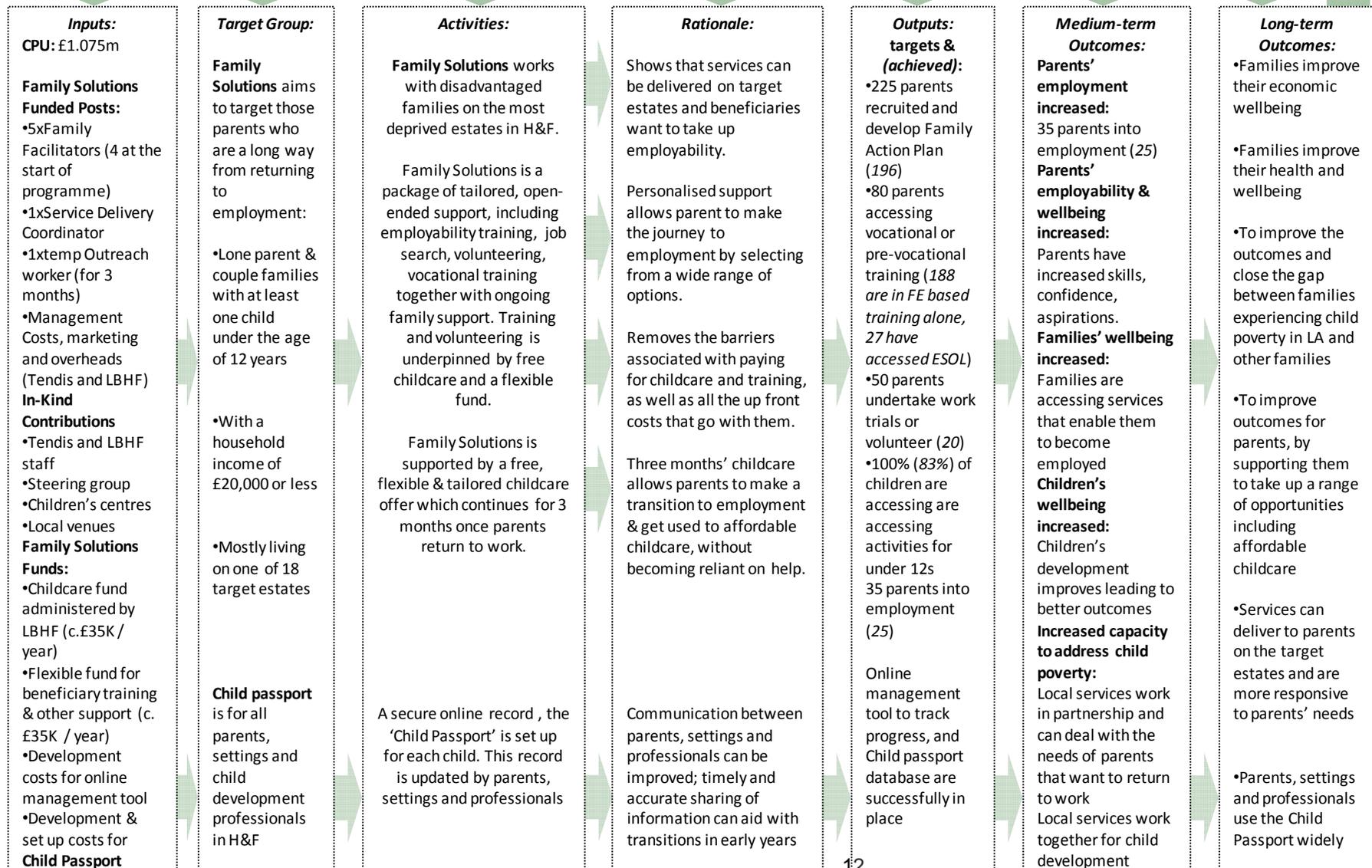
Cornwall Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: Cornwall is a predominantly rural county with small towns and rural areas meaning that the deprived areas are scattered between localised neighbourhoods. Since 2005 Cornwall has followed a co-ordinated approach to preventative/early intervention services for children and families, supporting the development of integrated, multi-agency and new ways of working. This innovative approach led to Invest to Save (Cabinet Office/ Treasury) funding for the 'Real Choices' project, following a partnership model as the most effective means of breaking the cycle of poverty. The partnership employs a Child Poverty Coordinator who is tasked with making child poverty 'everyone's business' and acts as the interface between the County, agencies on the ground and families. This led to the County receiving Beacon Status for child poverty. At the start of the pilot period the County was implementing two major change programmes: first a move to a single tier Cornwall Council with a strong focus on localism; and the Children's Services Transformation Programme – which places children and families' needs centrally and supports increased local delivery and has three elements - 'locality' based work with multi-agency teams, a move to common systems, and a focus on responding to need with a focus on prevention.



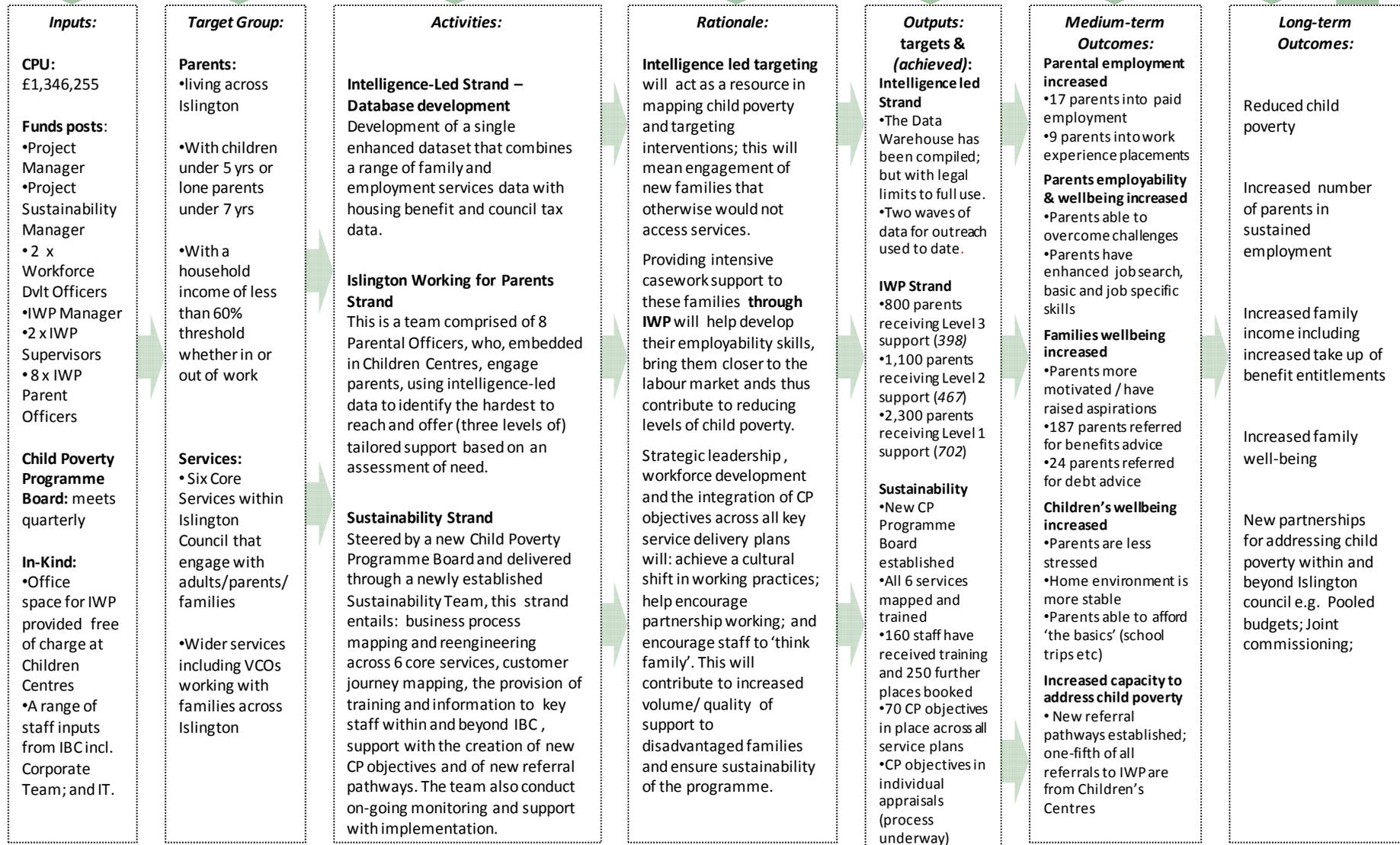
Hammersmith & Fulham Local Authority Innovation Pilot

Context: The borough of Hammersmith and Fulham is the 38th most deprived local authority in the country, and has the 16th highest level of child poverty among the 32 London boroughs. There are many 'pockets' of extreme deprivation with very high out of work benefit rates as high as 32% in particular estates, both large and small, in the borough. Poverty is entrenched in these estates. Local policy is focused on giving unemployed residents a route into work by fostering more integrated services, creating incentives to work and maximising the employment opportunities from local economic development. It was also well known that high quality, affordable childcare was a prerequisite for many benefit-dependent lone parents being able to gain and sustain employment. It was also known that local employment services needed to offer better support for parents and families in order to address the high cost of childcare as a barrier to work. Communication between parents, settings and professionals is important in the effort to improve the quality and appeal of childcare.



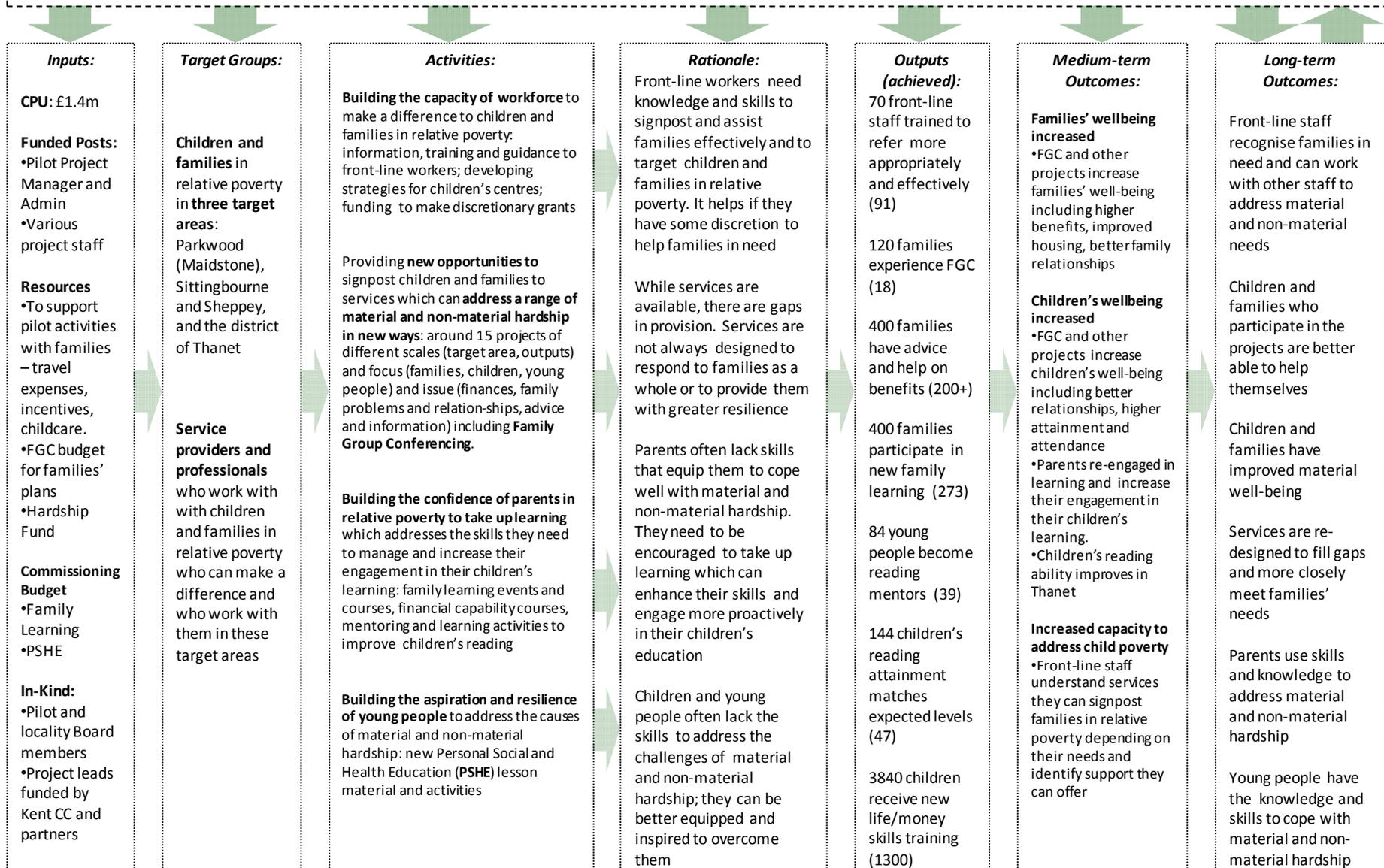
Islington Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: The Islington Strategic Partnership (ISP) has a history of addressing child poverty through strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement. Tackling worklessness is a central strategic theme. The LAIP programme itself is seen as part of a step change towards an integrated model of service delivery for children and families and builds on previous initiatives aiming to understand and target communities. More than 4 in 10 children in Islington are living in poverty, the second highest level of child poverty in England. The Pilot Board has now been subsumed into a broader Child Poverty Programme Board; in practice integrating Pilot activities into a wider programme of activities aimed with eradicating child poverty. Legal Issues experienced with the use of the new combined data warehouse have limited use of the data for targeting to date – unlikely to be fully resolved by end of Pilot. Some delay was experienced in recruiting to full complement of Parent officer staff – all now in place, but may mean not reaching target number of parents by end 2010. New Place Based Budgeting opportunities offer potential for Islington to continue its focus on child poverty from April 2011.



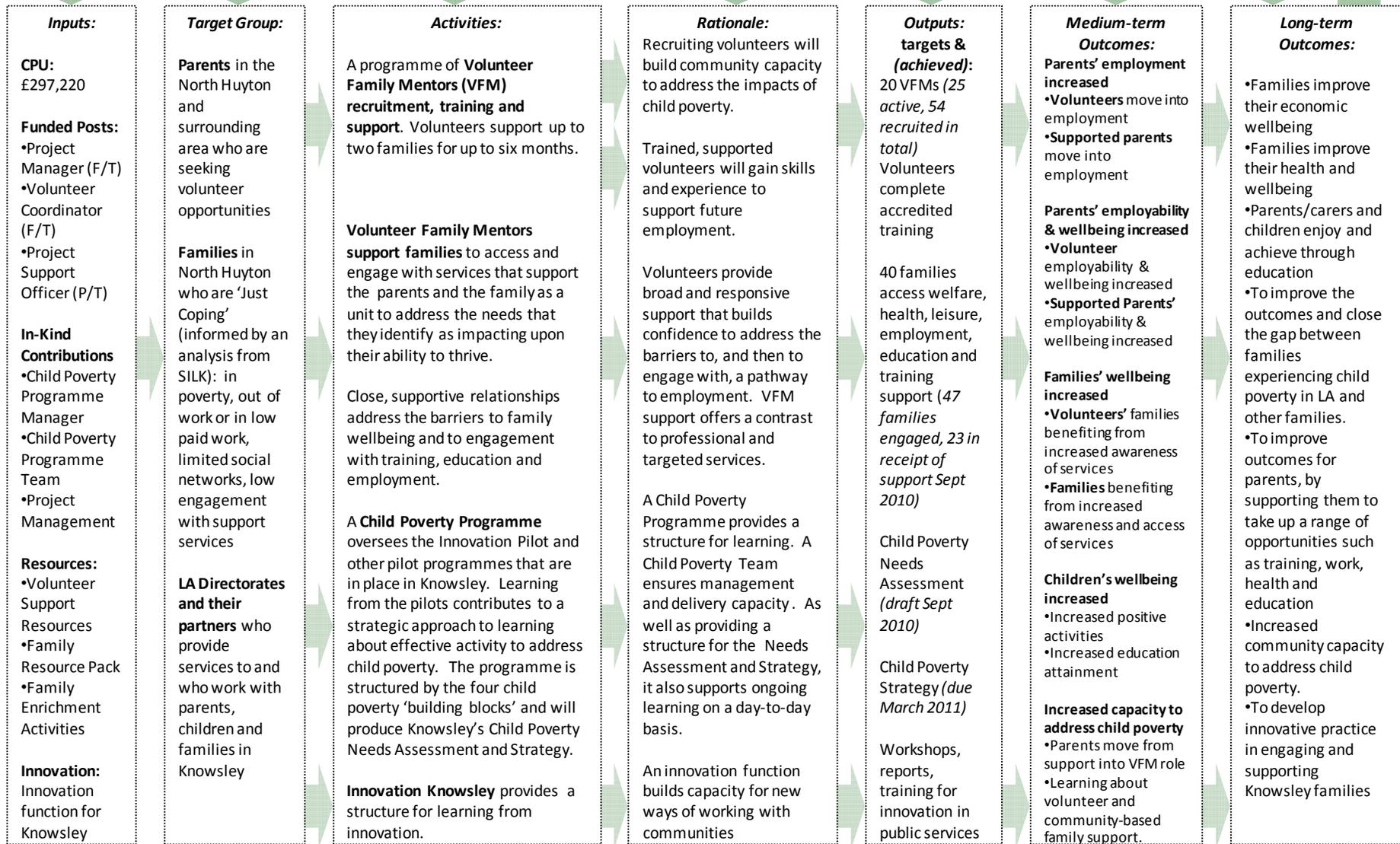
Kent Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: Previous to the award of LAIP funding, Kent Children’s Trust had included tackling child poverty as one of the key aims in its Children and Young People’s Plan. Kent is a large County Council with a devolved structure for service delivery and partnership working. Over the last few years, the Council has developed a network of 23 Local Children’s Service Partnerships (LCSPs) covering the entire county. The LCSPs have partnership boards made up of all the key service providers in the area, and are led by a partnership manager who oversees a team of co-located children’s and families’ services staff working in the area. The pilot was informed by learning from the Social Innovation Unit for Kent (SILK) that promoted co-production in service delivery to help families build the capability, resilience and optimism to improve their own outcomes. Four problems were identified for the pilot to address: a) there is a complex matrix of services available to provide help but families and workers find it difficult to navigate and access b) workers do not focus on the family in the round and provide a holistic service c) non-material hardship is not addressed (emotional, social and cultural resources) even though this can pave the way to families addressing material hardship, d) service providers neglect to engage families in decision making and service design and this does not result in services that meet their needs.



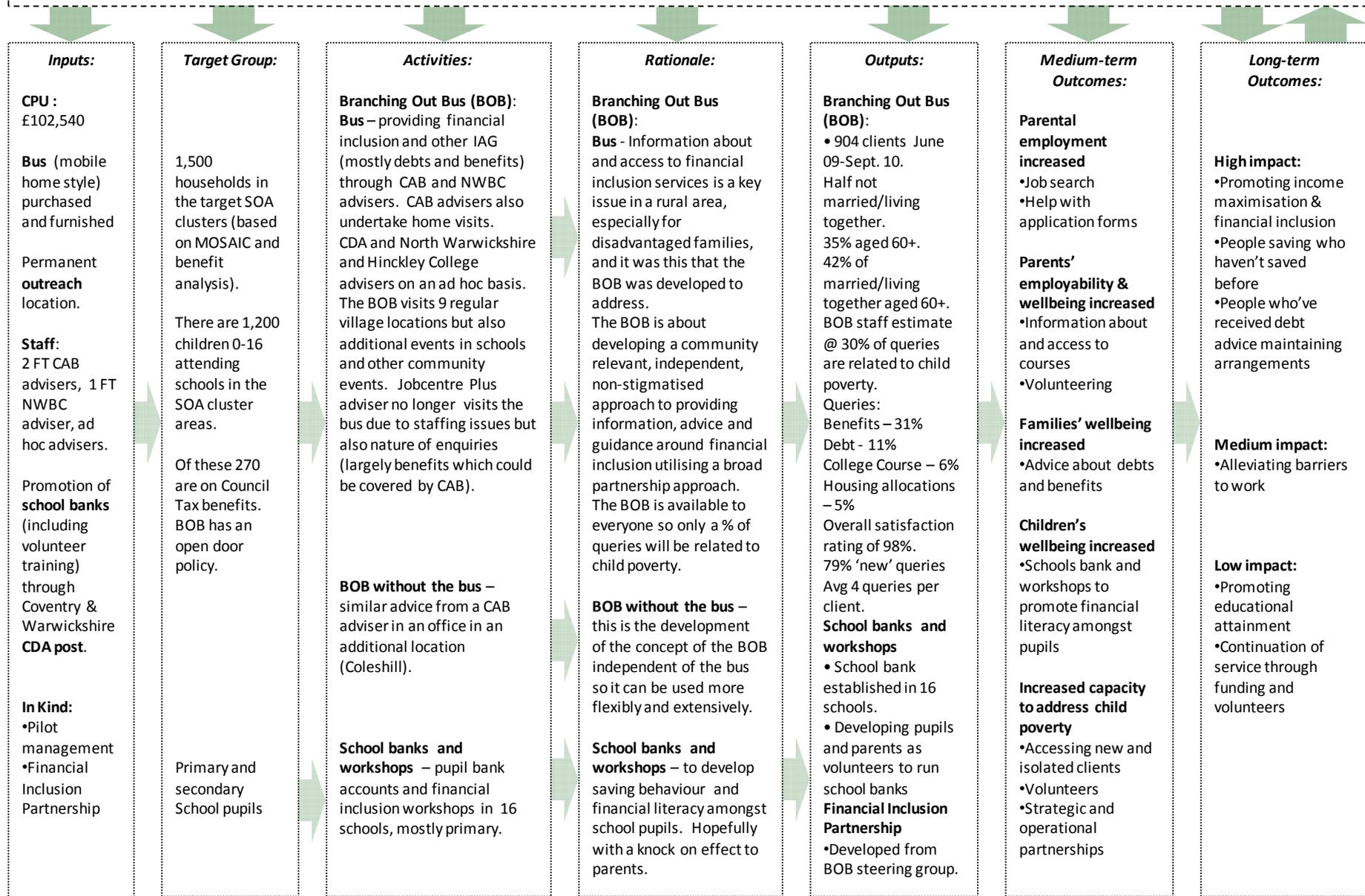
Knowsley Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: In the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Knowsley is ranked 5th most deprived and 2nd for localised hot spots of deprivation. Although this represented an improvement from 2004, 58% of all children in Knowsley live in poverty and levels of worklessness are persistently high. North Huyton is one of the most deprived areas of Knowsley. Knowsley has been the lead authority for child poverty for the Liverpool City Region since its inception in 2007 and was a pilot for Child Poverty Action Group's Child Poverty Toolkit (2008-2009). The children and family services directorate (DCFS) has explored innovation in public service delivery since 2006 when they worked with DEMOS in North Huyton. A primary education 'Parent Pals' volunteer support project was developed through community engagement. The authority also worked with the Cabinet Office Innovation Unit (2008-2009) and used innovation in their approach to the Building Schools for the Future Programme (with NESTA). DCFS began to explore Kent council's Social Innovation Lab Kent (SILK) as part of this commitment to innovation and they commissioned the Innovation Unit again (now an independent not-for-profit organisation), with the support of the Chief Executive's Policy and Strategy Team, in 2009 to develop an 'innovation function' for Knowsley. Child poverty is an early focus of this work, exploring innovative practice and how new approaches to service provision (through co-production and radical efficiencies, for example) can be developed and capacity for, and commitment to, innovation sustained.



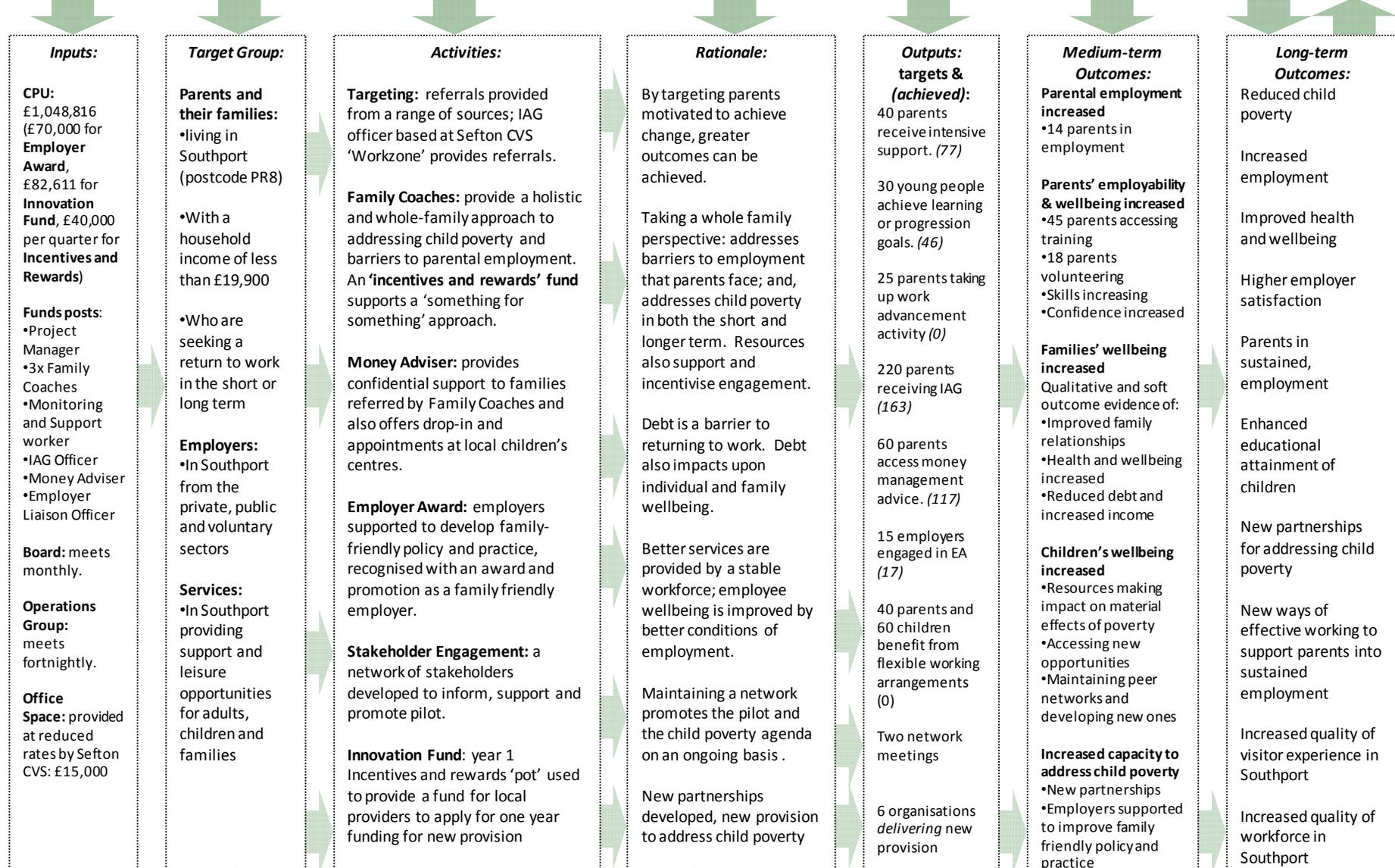
North Warwickshire Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: North Warwickshire is a rural area and a former mining area with pockets of deprivation. The Branching Out Bus (BOB) is based on a public, private, and third sector partnership which underpinned the development of the One Stop Shop based at the Council's Headquarters in Atherstone. The Pilot's Steering Group has developed into the borough wide Financial Inclusion Partnership. The original membership included senior officers from North Warwickshire Borough Council (NWBC), Warwickshire County Council (WCC), Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), New Way Credit Union (within Coventry and Warwickshire Cooperative Development Agency (CDA)), North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Jobcentre Plus, Family Information Service, and Warwickshire Welfare Rights. It has since developed to include Severn Trent Water. The Pilot has clear links with Warwickshire County Council's Child Poverty Strategy.



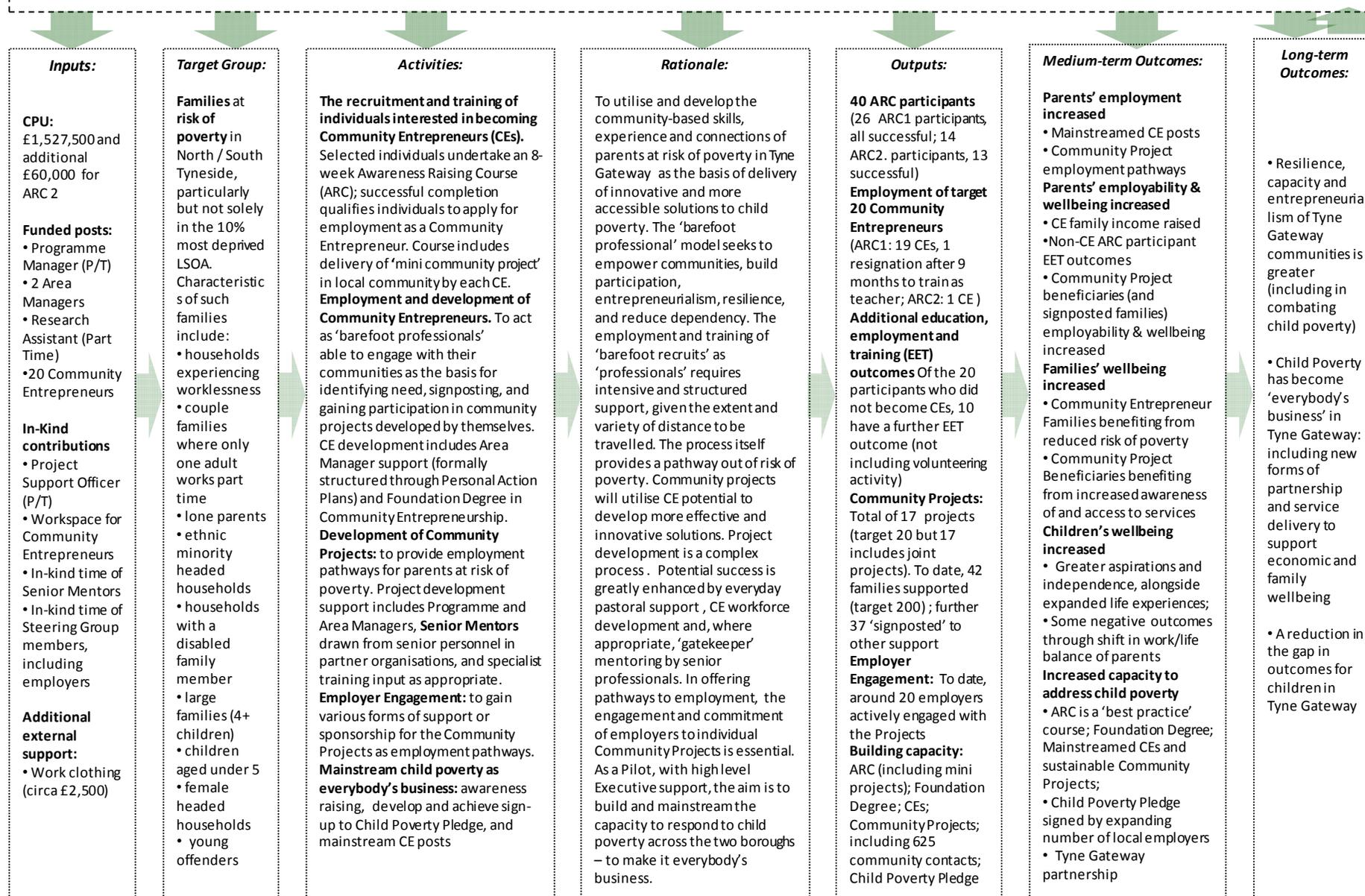
Sefton Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: The Sefton pilot targets the coastal town of Southport, which has a distinct visitor economy. There is a history of joint working between the council and its partners to regenerate the town. The geography of the Sefton borough means that Southport is at the opposite end of the locale to the main administrative centre of Bootle and transport links mean the town is isolated from the main conurbations of Merseyside. Southport contains pockets of child poverty that are concealed within the overall prosperity of the town. Sefton council has a history of delivering employment advice and provision and of delivering job brokerage through a labour market intermediary service (Sefton@Work), in partnership with Sefton CVS (Workzone). These services have become increasingly aware of the need to provide a family-focused approach to address family-based barriers that parents face in returning to or entering the labour market. The pilot offers the opportunity to explore these barriers and how they can be effectively addressed.



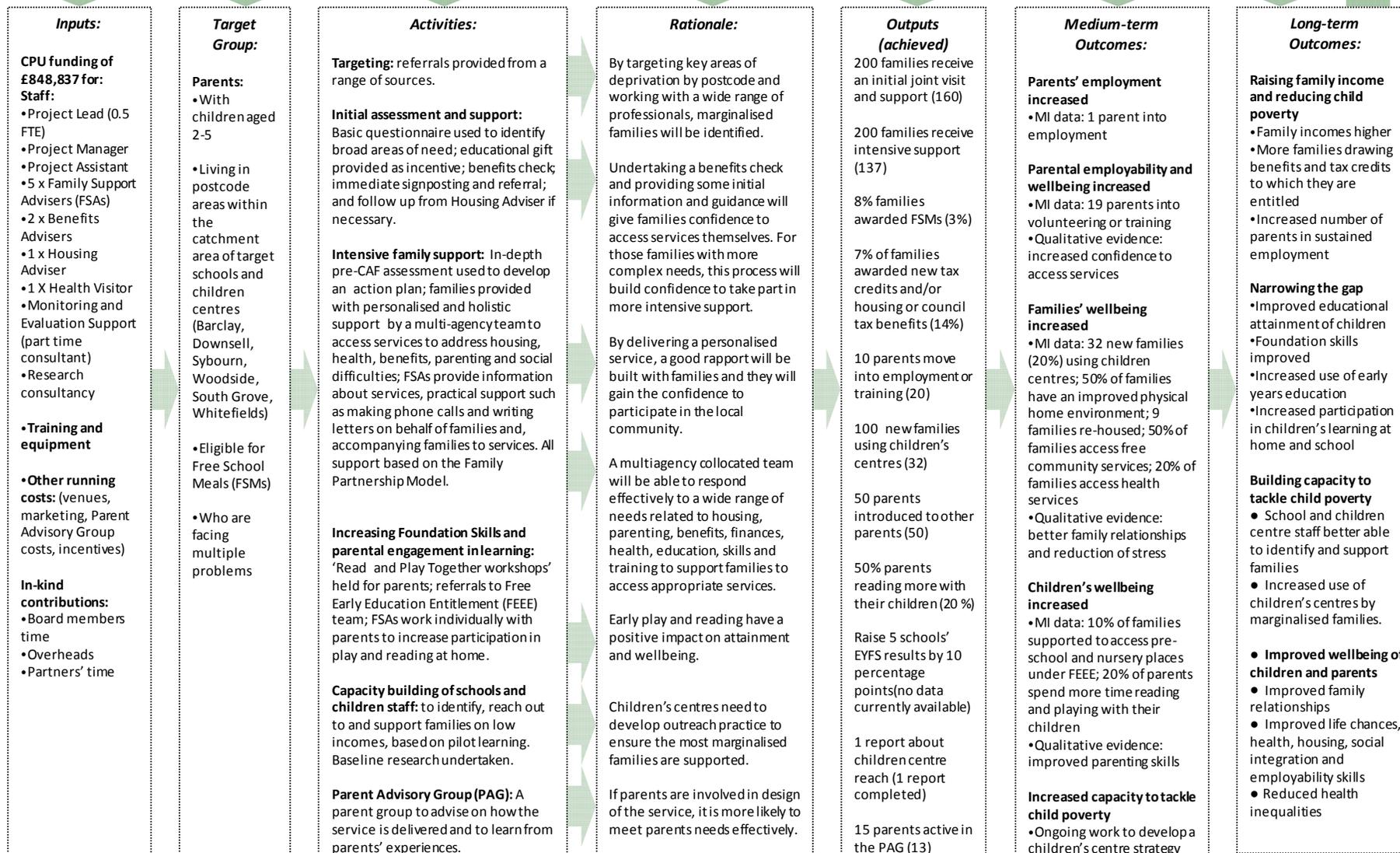
Tyne Gateway Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

In 2007 the boroughs of North Tyneside and South Tyneside jointly contained 21 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) ranked amongst the 10% most deprived areas in England (IMD, 2007). All of these areas contained significant numbers of under 16s. This ranking represented an improvement since 2000, with both North and South Tyneside closing the inequality gap with the rest of the country over the period yet, in 2007, there remained a consistent and persistent geographical distribution of deprivation around the mid-Tyne riverside areas (and that crossed the borough's joint boundaries). Recognising this, and the recent history of innovative projects on child wellbeing by both Borough Councils, the Tyne Gateway Pilot is a joint initiative by the councils, alongside partners, to tackle the shared priority of childhood poverty within their boroughs. Tyne Gateway will do so through a two-stage approach: the training and employment of parents at risk of poverty to become Community Entrepreneurs, who will then develop community-based projects in partnership with local employers and as the basis for offering employment pathways for parents from families at risk of poverty in the Tyne Gateway area. This approach of Community Entrepreneurs draws from the 'barefoot professional' model of community action whereby local people are empowered to undertake development work in their own communities.



Waltham Forest Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: A high proportion of Waltham Forest's residents experience multiple factors of deprivation: there is a high level of long term intergenerational unemployment; the average income of residents is the lowest in London; there is a high take-up of benefits; and there is evidence of low aspirations about learning, skills, jobs and working outside the area. To address the impacts of poverty on children, the Local Strategic Partnership has established a Child Poverty Strategy Board, made up of senior managers in the council, Primary Care Trust, voluntary sector and JobCentre Plus. The Board recognises that impacts of poverty can be alleviated: in the short-term by take-up of available services such as health, education, childcare, positive activities, parenting support; in the long-term by getting parents into work and addressing problems around debt, housing and health; and, that there is a need for a family-focused approach to achieve this. The pilot offers the opportunity to develop the Borough's existing work on using whole-family, holistic support models to increase access to mainstream services and to focus on those areas with persistent unemployment.



Westminster Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot

Context: Westminster is a central London borough with extremes of wealth and poverty; it has the 14th highest level of child poverty among the 32 London boroughs. There are 9,940 children under 15 living in households dependent on workless benefits, almost double the national average; 17,000 residents of working age have no qualifications and an estimated 33% of parents are out of work, with 3,285 lone parents claiming Income Support in the borough, mostly concentrated in a few wards. However, there are 50,000 employers in Westminster, and half a million people work there. The Westminster Pilot uses a keyworking model to bring together different agencies which are already offering employability services in the borough to disadvantaged parents (including the CPU funded Work Focused Services in Children's Centres (WFS) Pilot), to offer a personalised package of support along the journey to employment. This support is coordinated by a central team and aims to bring about long term cultural change, bringing together local residents with local jobs. There is a focus on partnership working and improving the skills and awareness of keyworkers or employability advisers; as well as filling in gaps in services by linking up the employability offer for parents with childcare support, financial advice and other support that families in poverty need.



3 Outputs and Outcomes

Since the last synthesis report the pilots have continued to deliver their programmes of activity, following the activities proposed in their initial delivery plans. Analysis of the monitoring and information (MI) data provided across the pilot demonstrates that the local programmes have made good and sometimes excellent progress against their targets. In addition, the outcomes evidenced can be expected to increase as the parents and families that are engaged by the pilots exit their support. Section 4 provides an illustrative example from each pilot programme.

3.1 Cornwall

- There are three strands to the Cornwall pilot. The Enabling Fund has received 662 applications and 330 families have received financial support to date, with the number of applications received and organisations submitting them continuing to increase, and the initial target of 750 families participating being expected to be reached. Two thirds of applicants were female and one third were male, with 44% of applications being received from lone female parents. Over 70% of applications were from families in workless households.
- Most of the awards (88%) are below £500 in value, with two thirds below £300, and an average value of £292. The funding awarded has been used for a range of purposes, including:
 - Supporting progression towards employment – for example removing barriers by funding transportation and new equipment, and providing gap funding;
 - Increasing protective factors for families – through funding a range of positive activities such as outdoor activities for children and families;
 - Supporting additional service provision – for example by funding training and other family services; and
 - Addressing crises and alleviating the immediate impacts of poverty – for example by providing household items for families entering emergency accommodation, and paying for fuel, food and clothing.
- The Fund also has a preventative element, for example providing funds for individuals to sustain existing employment, and to pay for items following a reduction in a parent's salary.
- A total of 238 staff have been trained through the 'Workforce Development' programme, which aimed to raise awareness, and deepen understandings, of child poverty in Cornwall, and the resources available within the County to address it. Continued delivery of the training means that the target of engaging 300 participants will be exceeded. To date over 30 statutory and third sector organisations have been involved, including staff from the local authority children and families workforce, schools, the PCT, housing associations and a range of other partners.
- Feedback from participants is overwhelmingly positive in terms of increased awareness of child poverty and the resources available to address it. Exit and follow-up surveys and the qualitative fieldwork provide evidence that indicates the training is having an impact on individual practice – for example through the use of new resources, new collaborative working and a heightening of the profile of child poverty.
- A strand supporting new and existing social housing tenants (the 'Housing Pathway') has been developed through the pilot, and is in the early stages of delivery. Good progress is being made, including 23 families in housing association accommodation receiving debt and financial advice, with delivery beginning in September 2010.
- Funding has been secured from mainstream funds to continue the Enabling Fund and Workforce development strands beyond the pilot period. The third strand, the Housing Pathway, began delivery in September 2010 and will report on the outcomes achieved for the final local evaluation report.

3.2 Hammersmith and Fulham

- The pilot's core 'Family Solutions' employability and support strand has made excellent progress against targets for: parents engaged (196 against a target of 225); parents in training (188 against a target of 80); and, parents in employment (25 against a target of 35).
- Monitoring data indicates that the pilot is successful in engaging lone parents and those from minority ethnic communities, reflecting the borough's population. Accessing 'English as a second language' (ESOL) provision is a frequent output for the pilot. Of the parents engaged:
 - 93% were female and 7% male;
 - 72% were lone parents, with 26% being from couple families;
 - 84% belonged to an ethnic group other than White British, compared to 39% of the borough's population according to 2007 ONS resident population estimates; and,
 - The majority (73%) were aged between 25 and 44.
- Of the 25 parents achieving employment outcomes, 15 had attended vocational training in an FE setting, in most cases receiving at least one type of training or a work placement. Each of the remaining 10 had: experienced other types of training via the pilot (including parenting, ESOL and money management); participated in a work placement; or, received help with childcare. While there are too few employment outcomes to make meaningful comments on their characteristics at this point, it appears that parents are more likely to have achieved employment outcomes where they:
 - Had a better starting level of English language skills;
 - Started with higher qualification levels; and,
 - Were younger parents in the 16-24 age group.
- The main focus of the pilot is increasing employability and there is a wealth of evidence of this being achieved. Advice with debt and money management is an area of support that has developed during the pilot. There has been a high take up of the pilot's subsidised childcare, supporting employment, increases in employability and reported child and family wellbeing.
- The pilot also funded the development and implementation of a 'Child Passport', which is being piloted for roll-out from March 2011. The passport enables parents and the early years settings that their children access to record information about the child. For instance, developmental progress and any concerns as well as information such as likes and dislikes.

3.3 Islington

- The pilot's parent support strand (Islington Working for Parents) has made good progress towards the target of supporting 2,700 low-income parents (737 achieved) and towards engaging and supporting 800 low-income parents intensively support (377 achieved). Parent Officer support has placed 17 parents in employment and soft-outcome data indicates increased employability for those who have exited support.
- Though there are gaps in the data, management information shows that service users had the following characteristics:
 - Parents in receipt of support are mostly female (91%). The remaining 9% of beneficiaries for whom gender data is available are male, though data is missing for almost one third of all beneficiaries (32%).

- Three quarters of all beneficiaries are lone parents (75%). Almost half of the total cohort have one child (49%), 30% have two children, 12% have three children and 7% have four; the remaining 3% have between five and eight children. This reflects the fact Islington has one of the highest proportions of lone parent households in London, where approximately 40% of children in the Borough live in a one parent household, headed largely by women (93% of lone parent households).
- There is a mix of ethnicities, with White (40%) and Black or Black British (41%) the most common; a further 9% are Mixed, 6% are Asian or Asian British, and 6% classified themselves as belonging to a Chinese or Other Ethnic Group. It is worth noting that ethnicity data was also missing for almost four in ten beneficiaries (39%). Though reflective of the diversity of the population across the Borough as a whole, the precise spread is weighted more heavily towards Black or Black British (which account for 11% of the total population) and less towards White (which make up 59% of the population as a whole).
- The pilot has contributed to the development of a 'Data Warehouse' that brings together housing benefit and council tax benefit data with demographic data and data relating to service use. This has been technically challenging. However now that these issues have been resolved, its use in targeting delivery to enhance parental engagement is expected to increase (the 'intelligence-led approach'). Outcome evidence will increase as parents currently engaged exit their six months of support.
- A sustainability strand has established high level commitment to a strategic approach to addressing child poverty, with 70 child poverty objectives agreed across local authority directorates and six local authority service area processes mapped and staff trained to increase capacity to address child poverty. After initial resistance, linked to apprehension about what this might entail, feedback from those involved in these activities has been very positive.

3.4 Kent

Kent's broad and ambitious programme involves a range of different activities. Key activities that have been explored by the evaluation are:

- Building workforce capacity – with good progress made in reaching more than the total number of front-line staff the pilot aims to train to increase their knowledge and understanding to work better with children and families in relative poverty. Broadly the majority of the staff have found the briefings to be useful, but for many it has not yet made a significant difference to their practice.
- New programmes to address child poverty – families are being referred to the pilot's Family Group Conferencing (FGC) model which is being used to build families' resilience and tackle a broader range of problems than FGC is generally used for⁷. There are indications of positive impacts being achieved for families, such as improving child care, increasing income and access to services, and improving housing conditions. However, in this project engaging front-line staff in schools and children's centres to be active referrers continues to be a challenge because many do not see it can be of value to the families they support and associate the process with children at risk. As a consequence the number of families who have experienced FGC remains small.
- Enhancing family learning – high numbers of families are participating in family learning events in excess of the target. Feedback from participants and referral agencies suggest that free, accessible and fun events are attractive and in some cases are effective in re-engaging parents in their children's learning and play activities.
- Adapting the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum – with modules developed to improve life skills particularly in managing money and career aspirations aimed at primary and secondary school age children in Years 5-8. Around 1300 children and young people are engaged so far. Feedback from the learners in

⁷ It is the approach that Kent uses to support families with children at risk.

2009-10 indicates that the new materials cover areas that have not been included in the curriculum and that it has improved their knowledge and understanding of financial matters which will better prepare them for the future.

3.5 Knowsley

- Knowsley have exceeded their target of parents engaged as Volunteer Family Mentors (VFMs) and have 25 active VFMs. Distance travelled data indicates increases in skills and wellbeing and this is further evidenced by qualitative data. 87% are female. Key to the learning identified by stakeholders in the pilot is ensuring volunteers are supported to provide support that is safe and of high quality requires a high level of resources. As the number of VFMs has increased, additional supervision and support capacity has been created through new volunteer peer support posts.
- The pilot has also exceeded the target of 40 families supported by VFMs, with 47 in total and further recruitment expected. This follows quite significant delays in the development of the service and represents excellent progress. Soft outcome data indicates increased skills and wellbeing, and qualitative data highlights the effectiveness of the mentor model in supporting parents to access and engage with services, including those that are targeted at high levels of need. 95% of parents supported are female, and 80% of families are headed by a lone parent.
- The Knowsley pilot contributes to a wider Child Poverty Programme that itself is part of a commitment by the local authority to exploring innovation in public services. The pilot is providing learning about the contribution community volunteer mentors can make to authority services, and further piloting will now explore how children's centre access and parental literacy can be supported with a similar model.

3.6 North Warwickshire

- The Branching Out Bus (BOB), providing information and signposting across locations dispersed across this rural area, has seen over 900 clients. The pilot does not collect detailed information about the family structure of those who access BOB (for instance, how many are parents) but we do know that 42% are married and aged less than 60 years. 31% of enquiries are related to benefits and 11% to debt. 46% relate to the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) services provided as a core element of BOB, and 79% of all these are new clients to CAB.
- Qualitative evidence indicates that the mobile and thus local nature of the provision is essential to those who access it. The experience of BOB has evidenced the importance of outreach to the local authority and their Financial Inclusion Partnership. 'BOB without the bus' provides targeted outreach under the BOB brand but in a range of other locations and with a broader range of other partners (for instance, utilities) in order to support financial inclusion and provide these services in rural areas.

3.7 Sefton

- Sefton's Family Coaches have supported almost twice the number of parents (77) than their target (40). They have supported 14 parents into employment, 45 into training and 18 into volunteering opportunities. Soft outcome data and qualitative data provides evidence of the success of the pilot in increasing parents employability and wellbeing. It also indicates how the family unit has benefited from the whole-family approach that is taken to identifying and addressing issues. 49% of families are female lone parents and 34% couple families.
- The Incentives and Rewards package that is at the heart of the pilot's model of support – incentivising commitment, facilitating engagement and rewarding and supporting progress – has been used to support employment and work towards long term alleviation of poverty as well as to make immediate impacts. Examples include: support with transport costs associated with employment; equipment required for training courses; assistance with the costs of positive activities for children and young people; childcare for children to support parental education, employment and training.

- Sefton's Employer Award strand is also ahead of target (15) with 17 employers from the public, private and third sectors engaged in this pilot scheme to support and evidence progress towards, and then achievement of, family-friendly employment practice. There has been interest expressed amongst employers outside of the Southport target area, as well as by the local authority and its regional partners, in continuing the award once the pilot has been completed.
- An Innovation Fund was established by the pilot, utilising funds from the Incentives and Rewards package and a total of £82,611 has been awarded to six new projects that are supporting the wider aims of the pilot: an afterschool club at a project targeting young people with problem behaviour; a family learning worker at a housing support project; an employment support worker for a local carers organisation; a fund for housing repairs for Sefton MBC's energy team; and, two projects for a healthy living organisation – one extending an existing fruit and vegetable co-operative and one offering cookery books and classes to local parents.

3.8 Tyne Gateway

- The Tyne Gateway pilot has involved the employment of 20 Community Entrepreneurs (CEs), learning from a 'barefoot professional' model. Community Entrepreneurs were employed from a cohort of parents, generally with low skill and confidence levels, recruited from target communities across the two authorities of North and South Tyneside to undertake a pre-qualification Awareness Raising Course. Once employed, the Community Entrepreneurs have been supported to develop as barefoot professionals and create innovative community enterprises and service delivery models (Community Projects) to address child poverty. Support has included enrolment in a newly developed Foundation Degree qualification. Data shows that the impact of employment on each of the CE families is, on average, being £99 per week better off (taking in to account income and expenditure) alongside qualitative evidence that this ambitious programme has had a *transformational impact* upon the employability and wellbeing of those involved as CEs and their families. The Pilot won a national award for good practice in 2010.
- A total of 17 Community Projects are in the final stages of development, including initial consultations with over 600 individuals in the target communities. Several projects are being considered as possible social enterprises and four projects have just begun with 42 parents engaged to date.
- The pilot has brought together in partnership stakeholders from both local authorities and from employers across both areas, and who provide very senior personnel as Mentors to support CEs in the development of Community Projects. Tyne Gateway has also developed a 'child poverty pledge' that most of the partners have now signed, to commit to addressing child poverty.

3.9 Waltham Forest

- The Waltham Forest pilot has found a high level of demand for its intensive family support provision with good progress towards their target of 200 parents engaged (137). Their target is expected to be met as families exit support and referrals continue. The pilot targets some of the most marginalised families (including Gypsy, Roma and Travellers) and MI data indicates that 77% of families engaged are from minority ethnic communities. Their multi-agency, intensive approach that is family-led, through a 'Family Partnership Model' is regarded as essential by all those involved and qualitative evidence from parents indicates how the model is effective in supporting increases in a range of parent, child, and family outcomes.
- The pilot has moved 19 parents into training and an additional 20% of all parents have been supported to access employment provision. Families have been supported to access a range of provision, and according to pilot MI around half have had housing issues addressed.

- The pilot has also developed a 'Parent Advisory Group', attended by 13 of the parents supported and bringing their perspectives to the management of the pilot. Qualitative evidence indicates the positive outcomes for these parents, including reduced social isolation.

3.10 Westminster

- The Westminster pilot has engaged 245 parents, just short of the original target of 300. The pilot is now 'closed' to new referrals, in order to ensure that those engaged receive six months of support. The achievement of 245 parents should be regarded as a success, following delays in developing the pilot model of 'Keyworkers' from existing agencies and posts and the difficulties in developing a common set of pilot processes including reporting across agencies. There are 32 Keyworkers from across four partner organisations (JCP, two third sector organisations, plus the Westminster Works employment partnership) and their multiple settings.
- 43 parents have been supported into work, and in-work support is the pilot's key feature. In order to meet demand, more employability support than was originally envisaged has been provided. Nonetheless, central to the pilot model remains the provision of childcare and housing costs support. 59 parents are engaged in training and a further 13 are volunteering. Qualitative evidence highlights the impacts for parents and their families from increased confidence and wellbeing as they move towards, as well as once in, employment.
- The beneficiary group is highly ethnically diverse. Accessing ESOL provision is a frequent output for the pilot. Pilot beneficiaries are most likely to be female (94%), lone parents (67%) with one child (42%). However, the data collection for the pilot is undertaken by the pilot team and this is time consuming and demanding as they gather this from across Keyworkers. This means that the data may be partial. For 43% of those registered by Keyworkers we do not have data about the support that they have received.
- The final element of the pilot is employer engagement. Additional employer liaison capacity created by the pilot has engaged 58 employers and led to 42 family-friendly jobs being made available to parents supported across Westminster's employment provision (and not just the Innovation Pilot). It is not yet known how many Innovation Pilot parents have accessed these brokered opportunities.

3.11 Summary

We have seen in this brief overview that good progress has been made across the pilot following significant delays with many of the programmes' early development (from April – October 2009), as detailed in previous evaluation reports. These delays were commonly due to difficulties in recruiting staff, and the time it is widely accepted was necessary to develop new and innovative provision. Pilots providing packages of support to parents and families are reaching their latter stages of delivery, with beneficiaries beginning to exit pilot support. Ensuring that this takes place in a timely manner is important, both for the transition and experience of those exiting support but also to ensure that capacity is available to more recent referrals and for the final stages of pilot support.

Each of the pilots has successfully engaged its intended target group, including minority ethnic groups. Across the pilots targeting parents for support, female parents and lone parent households headed by a female are the most common beneficiaries. This may reflect changes to benefit entitlement for this group that have taken place during the pilot, and which will continue. Indeed, supporting this group in the context of these changes was central to the pilot rationale in Hammersmith and Fulham and Islington. Qualitative evidence indicates a high degree of commitment to returning to work amongst those parents that are engaged. It also indicated the importance of emotional as well as practical support in accessing and engaging with provision that supports progression pathways to employment. Across the evaluations of the local pilot programmes, there is quantitative and qualitative evidence of:

- Increased parental employment;
- Increased employability and progress towards employment, through increased skills, volunteering experience, and confidence;
- Increased family wellbeing, through reduced stress, increased family activities and raised income;
- Increased child wellbeing, as a result of familial outcomes but also related to children and young people being supported to access positive activities and provision that supports education and learning; and,
- Increased capacity to address child poverty, through partnerships developed across authority service directorates and locales, and learning from local innovation pilot provision.

Full discussion of pilot contribution to these five outcome areas will be provided in the final report from the evaluation. Some examples of effective practice that are supported by existing evidence follow in the next section.

4 Messages of Effective Practice

Previous synthesis evaluation reports have discussed messages of effective practice that emerge from the local evaluations of each of the ten Innovation Pilot programmes. The third evaluation stage confirmed these messages, and this section presents them in summary here and provides some illustrative examples, including the MI data that was not available for earlier reporting.

4.1 Targeting and Engaging Parents and Families

The evaluation evidence indicates that combinations of approaches are required to identify targeted parents and families and to promote referral and self-referral. Techniques include: publicity; outreach; data-led approaches; persistence; and, work with partners. Although it is time consuming, developing relationships with partners is important as they can take time to develop confidence in new provision.

Hammersmith and Fulham use a range of approaches to target parents

Evidence from the evaluation of the Hammersmith and Fulham Innovation Pilot illustrates how a range of approaches are required in an effective approach to target parents.

The pilot targets particular estates across the borough. The largest proportion of parents who have accessed 'Family Solutions' did so as the result of receiving one of the postcards that the pilot has delivered to publicise the new service (40%). In contrast, the second highest proportion (35%) has accessed the pilot following referral from another organisation. Finally, the third most frequent route (14%) is word-of-mouth.

The earliest stages of the pilot relied on postcards and publicity. As the pilot's 'Family Facilitators' worked with local organisations and agencies there was a high level of interest in the new provision. As a result a temporary outreach worker was employed for three months to establish and embed links with local providers and to increase referrals.

The Hammersmith and Fulham evaluation describes how individualised, open-ended, welcoming and flexible support is an effective way of engaging 'hard to help' families. For many parents it takes time and persistence to persuade them that services can help them.

Previous reports highlighted how needs assessment is an ongoing process when working with parents and families to provide support beyond signposting. As parents and families engage, more is revealed over time as trust develops.

Family-based approaches do not necessarily engage the whole family, but they do take each of the individuals and the family as a unit into account. It is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children. Support for individuals within the family brings benefits for them but the consequences can also bring benefits for the whole family as a unit. Personal change can bring family outcomes through, for example, improved family relationships.

Knowsley Volunteer Family Mentors support parents and families

Knowsley Volunteer Family Mentors (VFMs) provide parents and families with broad, peer-based support. Parents from the target community and the surrounding area who are seeking volunteer opportunities receive training and support and are asked to commit two hours a week for a minimum of six months.

Following referral, families are 'matched' with a VFM. The pilot has purchased the 'Rickter Scale' tool that uses a set of ten adaptable questions to enable parents to identify the areas of personal and family life that they would like support with. VFMs provide supported signposting to services, agencies and sources of support and do not themselves provide an intervention to address any issue.

The pilot intended to support parents who were not in receipt of targeted interventions and were 'just coping' without the support of statutory agencies. Nonetheless, the pilot has found that a large number of the parents and families who are referred to and assessed by the project are in receipt of such levels of support. Yet, these parents have described how the interventions and services that

they are engaged with address particular issues, for example a child's behaviour at school, but they do not provide support to the parent or more family-focused support. The pilot therefore supports these parents and families '*along the journey*' as they engage with and receive interventions and services.

As parents' personal and family related needs are addressed, they can begin to address the employment and training needs and aspirations. Pilot MI indicates that the most frequent support provided by VFMs is emotional support, across (Rickter Scale) outcome areas: stress; health and lifestyle; community; confidence; employment; and, child's education. Qualitative evidence also indicates the centrality of a trusting relationship that builds confidence.

4.2 Increasing Employment and Employability

The ten local evaluations continue to highlight how there is a high demand for the flexible and holistic approaches to supporting parents towards employment that many of the pilot programmes provide. Where pilots have trialled longer-term and intensive models of support, often working with parents and families for six months or more, parents and families are beginning to exit this support as it comes to an end.

Sefton provide family focused employment and employability support

The Sefton pilot includes a team of 'Family Coaches' who provide family-focused and holistic support to move parents into employment. An 'Incentives and Rewards' package provides a flexible resource to support parents and families' engagement in a 'progression plan' agreed with them at the outset of their engagement.

Family Coaches have engaged almost double their target of 40 families (77), despite minimal publicity and careful work with referral partners, intended to enable the pilot model to be explored within the limited capacity of the team (of three). The pilot has also supported parents with more complex needs than the 'motivated and close to the labour market' group that was their initial target. This has confirmed the demand for the model of support provided by the pilot. It is also in recognition that many of those who are motivated to engage with employment progression support have a range of barriers that are not always revealed until relationships develop; thus, the pilot has supported parents with a range of needs and demonstrated how a broad group of parents can benefit.

In addition to the employment and employability outcomes achieved – 14 parents into employment, 45 into training and 18 into volunteering opportunities – there is a wealth of evidence of family wellbeing increasing due to reduced stress and increased family participation in positive activities. Children have been supported to access opportunities and provision, with evidence of direct benefits for them.

Effective approaches are delivered by a caseworker who can access resources and co-ordinate multi-agency responses to an action plan that is 'owned' by a parent or family and that demonstrates progress. These coordinated approaches mean that the barriers faced by parents can be addressed together and not in isolation by different agencies.

Islington Working for Parents

The 'Islington Working for Parents' pilot has a team of eight 'Parent Officers' based in children's centres across the borough. They act as a source of advice and support to parents providing information and advice about, and to engage with, pathways to work. All of the officers are operating at, or very close to, their caseload target of 40 parents at any one time. Some report oversubscription for their services and waiting lists have been created in some areas. Over 700 parents have been engaged, with almost 400 receiving the highest level (Level 3) of support.

Data from the pilot illustrates the range of interventions provided to parents engaged. These include:

- 402 Action Plans agreed;
- 187 referrals to the Income Maximisation Team;
- 90 parents assisted with CV preparation;

- 236 referrals to training;
- 55 parents interviewed for local authority posts.

Data referring to the issues that parents themselves identify as the reason for their engagement demonstrate the employment support that they are seeking, including:

- General help getting into work: 266
- Assistance with preparing CV: 262
- Assistance with interview technique: 211
- Assistance with job applications: 211
- Access to basic skills training: 202

4.3 Alleviating the Impacts of Poverty

The ten Innovation Pilot local evaluations continue to evidence how the provision of resources to parents and families can bring immediate relief to those experiencing poverty. These impacts can be related to family material circumstance – for instance housing, clothing, or accessing positive activities for children and young people – or related to parents’ ability to seek or engage with employment or pathways towards employment. Existing, mainstream, funds are often reported as being: difficult and time consuming to access; highly restricted in terms of use; and often requiring turnaround times that make their use in cases of crises limited. Some may also require repayments to be made, which can deepen debt and sustain poverty. Flexible funding can therefore provide useful resources to relieve the immediate effects of poverty and enable progression towards employment and other positive outcomes.

Cornwall’s Enabling Fund provides a wide range of resources for short and long term impacts

The Enabling Fund that is one of three strands of the Cornwall pilot. It is a flexible resource that aims to: address crises; prevent families moving into poverty where they are at risk; sustain employment; and, support progression into employment. All professionals working with families across Cornwall are able to support applications to the fund.

Examples of applications where awards of funding were made include:

- A lone parent unable to afford repairs to her car, which she needed to travel to work (£378);
- A father recently made redundant who was unable to afford the costs of a course, which was required for a job he had been offered (£400);
- A family with three children receiving £100 for school uniforms, following a reduction in the father’s income;
- A lone parent receiving £288 for furniture having fled domestic violence; and,
- A lone parent receiving £100 so that the eldest of her five children could attend the summer Girl Guide camp.

Signposting and supporting access to local provision can enable families to engage with services for the first time. This includes support with debt and money management, which can create significant personal and family stress.

North Warwickshire takes information and provision to rural communities

The 'Branching Out Bus' (BOB) that is the central element of the North Warwickshire pilot provides a mobile base for information from the local authority and its partners. Core staff are provided by the Citizen's Advice Bureau alongside more general advice provided by the driver who is trained for this dual role.

BOB visits different locations at the same time each day of the week. These locations are altered on a quarterly basis, building a new presence in each locale for the following months. They include locations in particular housing areas, indicated by data mapping as having high levels of child poverty, and at children's centres and other community facilities and events.

The core of the service is financial inclusion; the bus is branded as a general advice service so as experiences of previous provision in the authority have suggested that there is a stigma associated with debt, money or benefits advice that acts a barrier to access. BOB collects minimal data about those who access the advice as part of an open and accessible approach.

Information, advice and sign-posting is provided on a drop in or appointment basis. Staff will also visit people in their own homes. In addition to the pilot MI data indicating that a high number of new clients access information in this way (79% of CAB clients), qualitative evidence illustrates that friendly branding of the bus and its proximity in local areas is an important factor for those who access BOB. This qualitative evidence also illustrates how signposting to training and support can lead to employment outcomes, with the associated long –term benefits for families.

A wide range of partners support BOB. Their engagement with the pilot has led to 'BOB without the bus': a wider recognition of the need to take provision out to rural locations for more effective access of and signposting to the services available in the county's towns and conurbations.

4.4 Addressing Barriers

To address the range of barriers that *families* can face in accessing provision that supports improved wellbeing outcomes, and that *parents* can face in moving towards and returning to the labour market, flexible and resourced packages of personalised support that are coordinated through a casework or case-management approach are required. Where resources are provided to alleviate poverty, more sustainable outcomes will be achieved where these address barriers in a supported way.

Waltham Forest provide a multi-agency approach to addressing family barriers

The Waltham Forest pilot targets families with children aged 2-5 years in deprived areas of the borough and aims to engage the most marginalised families. The pilot provides a flexible, personalised and holistic service through the 'Family Partnership Model', which is coordinated by a Family Support Adviser (FSA) and supported by a multiagency team of benefits and housing advisers (the pilot have been unable to recruit to their health visitor post). A FSA and a Benefits Adviser undertake an initial home visit and assessment, ensuring prompt action with benefits and family needs. Where families are reluctant to engage, the team take a persistent approach. Just 13 families of the 160 referred have not engaged and just 10 have left following assessment.

An initial action plan is developed, and this is amended over time as the relationships between the family and the FSA develop and new issues emerge. A Hardship Fund is provided so that any one-off payments can be met. FSAs ensure that immediate family needs and familial barriers to parents engagement with employment are addressed. Pilot MI demonstrates that the primary areas that families receive support to address are:

- Improved family environment (including housing): 23%
- Accessing community services: 14%
- Reducing financial stress: 11%

The pilot has referred to forty agencies and services, with the most common being the local employment service (Worknet). One parent is in work and twenty are accessing training (the majority being ESOL provision). These outcomes are expected to increase as families exit FSA support. The local evaluation concludes that the pilot's success in addressing a wide range of barriers related to benefits, housing, health, parenting and social circumstances has meant that

parents have been able to move to focus on employment and skills as a greater priority.

Partnership working is required for effective packages of support. Developing effective partnerships takes an ongoing commitment time and resources, as awareness, confidence and working relationships develop.

Access to affordable childcare that is flexible and available is described by stakeholders as a key barrier to parental engagement in both employability activity and employment itself. This has three dimensions: parental perceptions of the childcare that is available; the cost of childcare being prohibitive for those entering employment; and, the availability of childcare that is local and flexible to employability activity such as training and job search provision.

Westminster Keyworkers provide access to in-work support

The Westminster pilot has two strands of support that are available to parents once they are supported into work by the pilot's 'Keyworkers'.

Keyworkers act as case-managers and broker parents' access to local employability support including basic skills and other provision. The pilot promotes partnership working amongst Keywork agencies and common approach to registering, assessing, action planning and supporting parents into work.

Pre-work support is one strand of the pilot, focusing upon providing access to training and financial advice and support. Advice and support is provided about the transition to work. This is supported by two additional strands of the pilot: access to affordable and flexible childcare; and, help with in-work housing costs.

- Of the 245 parents engaged by the pilot, 81% who require childcare have had their needs met (and the pilot continues to broker access to the remaining parents). 43 parents have entered employment through Keyworker support, but childcare is also provided for some training and employability activities
- There has been a lower than expected take-up of the housing support (21 of the 43 parents who have entered work), although as the pilot moves more parents into work access of this provision is expected to increase.

Coordinating activity across 32 Keyworkers in the sites of four partners has taken considerable resources. The pilot team continue to collate evidence from across Keywork agencies and to encourage and facilitate effective Keyworking.

4.5 Innovation and Sustainability

All of the pilots have developed programmes of provision that display innovative features – including new models of delivery, the modification of existing approaches for individual circumstances or target groups involved, and by developing new partnerships for delivery. Where it is being delivered, parent- or family-focused flexible, resourced employment and employability support is identified by stakeholders as particularly innovative. A smaller number of the pilots are engaging employers, and these experiences (Sefton, Tyne Gateway, Westminster) suggest a willingness and interest amongst employers in supporting family-friendly employment; these developing approaches will be further explored in the final evaluation report. There are also examples of innovative community capacity building approaches. The local evaluations confirm that these are well supported by local communities and the professionals that work with them, but they are resource intensive.

Tyne Gateway's Community Entrepreneur model

Tyne Gateway's pilot builds upon notions of the 'barefoot professional' from community work in developing countries, whereby local people are trained and empowered to undertake developmental work. The pilot has developed a new 8-week Awareness Raising Course in partnership with Sunderland University and from the first cohort of 26 participants, 20 Community Entrepreneurs (CEs) were employed. This is a new role and CEs are supported by the pilot and by 'Senior Mentors' from the public, private and third sectors to work in the neighbourhoods of greatest need across the boroughs of North and South Tyneside to develop community projects that aim to deliver

employment outcomes for local people and address poverty.

Examples of local projects include:

- Community Energy Advisers – training parents for employment within the energy industry (7 at September 2010); 2 Energy Advisers employed (Future Jobs Fund) to address fuel poverty.
- Piggy Bank – school-based savings scheme; and 'CU Next Week', a doorstep collection Credit Union. Parents employed by both elements.
- Unity Calls – training for call centre employment, including within a new social enterprise being established for the purpose.

Pilot 'distance travelled' data for the CEs indicates their increased skills and confidence. It cannot capture what the local evaluation describes as the 'transformational' impacts that the qualitative evidence reveals. Such was the impact of the training developed that it has been repeated for a second cohort of local parents, but without the CE post as a possible outcome for participants. This second cohort has acted as a pool of appropriately trained volunteers or staff for CE community projects (and as a reserve, one parent from this cohort replacing a parent who resigned from their CE post) as well as for community action more broadly.

Nonetheless reaching this stage of delivery, with community projects engaging local parents and other projects moving from inception, has taken a great deal of time and resource. Implementation has placed substantial demands upon the pilot management team. The CEs have developed from parents committed to supporting their communities to professionals in new innovative roles working in disadvantaged communities to identify and deliver new community projects. The success of the pilot has been recognised by national awards, and by the two local authorities who have pledged to support the pilot beyond their two year funding. One option being explored is the creation of a new social enterprise to deliver community entrepreneurship through training, consultancy and delivery.

Workforce development is a focus of some of the LAIP programmes. Learning from these particular pilots and from broader activity to develop new provision across the programme, indicates that innovation can cause tension and meet resistance as it challenges established practice. Embedding new practice requires dedicated time and resources and sustained and targeted activity. It also requires top level leadership.

The challenges of developing new Family Group Conferencing provision in Kent

Kent's Innovation Pilot involves a range of new provision and activities aimed at increasing local activity to address child poverty and to build the resilience of families, enabling and empowering them to affect change. One element of this approach is the trialling of a new form of Family Group Conferencing (FGC). FGC was developed as a technique to engage families where there is a safeguarding concern. The pilot has developed a new FGC model that supports families to identify a progression pathway based upon their strengths and needs and resources and supports that they require from professionals and local provision.

24 families have been referred and 18 conferences have been convened, with the remainder planned. However this is far below the pilot's target of 120 families engaged. Although the new model of provision was developed at an early stage of the pilot, it has taken a long time for referrals to begin. Just four families had been referred at the time of the second evaluation report.

The pilot team have undertaken an extensive programme of awareness raising amongst professionals working with families. Dedicated training for 109 front-line staff has taken place, supplemented by additional attendance by pilot and FGC staff at team meetings across the four areas of the county that the pilot is targeting.

The pilot has found it difficult to promote such new and innovative provision without ongoing activity to engage potential referring agencies. Referrers are anxious about the workload associated with a referral and subsequent support work. A great deal of face-to-face work has been required, and referrers report difficulty in understanding the new application of the FGC model.

Referrers of families that have participated are positive about the model and the additional support if provided. The families who have participated are also positive about their experience and the outcomes that have been achieved. It is hoped that referrals will continue to increase, providing more evidence and associated learning, as confidence in the model develops.

The local pilot programmes have established strategic structures and are exploring ways in which effective pilot practice can be sustained or mainstreamed. In some cases promising progress had been made towards the potential mainstreaming of pilot services. In Cornwall, funding has been secured to continue the two main activities delivered to date. In Islington the top level leadership of the pilot and a dedicated sustainability strand is embedding new practice and informing further (community budget) piloting. Yet, at the time of the evaluation fieldwork (October 2010) there was a great deal of uncertainty about local authority budgets and priorities and the prospects for some of the pilot provision in many of the ten localities.

4.6 Summary

The third evaluation stage has confirmed the messages of effective practice that were identified and discussed in previous evaluation reports. This section has provided a summary of those learning points, with short illustrative examples from across the ten local Innovation Pilot programmes. Some of the findings from the analysis of pilot MI data have been included to support them.

The local evaluation reports provide a rich source of data and within a concise summary it is impossible to do justice to all of the detail that they contain; this section presents in outline the main themes that emerge from a synthesis of them. The final evaluation report will provide a more comprehensive discussion, similar in breadth and scope to the previous synthesis reports.⁸

⁸ For a detailed discussion of the pilot programmes, their features and the emerging messages of effective practice that are outlined here, see GHK (2010a; 2010b) op.cit.

5 Conclusion

This report has presented an overview of findings from the third stage of the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot (LAIP). The report has provided a summary of ten local programmes in the form of individual programme theory logic models, which illustrate their activities and rationale, and their targets and achievements to September 2010. An overview of the outcomes achieved to date by each pilot has also been presented, and the messages of effective practice identified in previous reports confirmed, with brief illustrative examples being provided.

5.1 Synthesis Evaluation Key Findings

- The ten LAIP programmes are in the final stages of delivery. They continue to reflect a true pilot ethos, adapting to changing circumstances and to learning that is emerging from their provision and its evaluation.
- Pilots providing longer-term packages of support are exiting increasing numbers of parents and families as periods of support come to an end. Although this creates challenges for local programmes, LAIP employment and employability outputs and outcomes can be expected to increase.
- The local evaluations of the ten pilot programmes, and a synthesis of them, continue to highlight:
 - The need for a range of techniques if targeted parents are to be reached and engaged;
 - The effectiveness of packages of support for parents seeking to enter or re-enter employment that are flexible, resourced, and understand them as parents rather than adults who may or may not have children and caring responsibilities;
 - The need for flexible, accessible resources that can provide immediate alleviation from the impacts of poverty;
 - The demand for money and debt advice and the impact that this can make on individual and family wellbeing;
 - The importance of partnership working and the resources that this requires;
 - The challenges of developing new and innovative practice, and of workforce change; and,
 - Community capacity building approaches are well supported and can have a transformational impact upon those engaged in delivering provision in their communities, but supporting this development requires dedicated resources.
- The pilot programmes are well supported by strategic and other local stakeholders. The emerging context for local authorities of reduced budgets and the increased ability to plan and prioritise locally creates opportunities and challenges for the sustainability and mainstreaming of pilot practice that has only reached full maturity in the last six months.

5.2 Pilot Learning: the Four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks'

This evaluation stage confirms the learning that the pilot provides for the four 'Child Poverty Building Blocks' that have been developed by the Child Poverty Unit to support local authorities' and delivery partners' planning under the duties of the Child Poverty Act 2010. The final evaluation report will explore these in full, as well as revisiting the priorities for the Coalition Government noted in section 1.

The learning from the pilot for each building block is summarised below.

5.2.1 Employment and skills

This building block is intended to ensure that 'more families are in work that pays and have the support they need to progress'.

- It is important to understand the responsibilities and perspectives that parents have and not to see them as adults who may or may not have children. There is a demand for employment support that is delivered from this perspective. It enables the range of barriers that parents can face in engaging with employment and employability support to be recognised and thus addressed. Flexible resources are required to support a coordinated case- or key-work approach. Emotional support as well as practical support is required for more intensive support.

5.2.2 Life chances and families

This building block is intended to ensure that 'poverty in childhood does not translate into poor experiences and outcomes'.

- Packages of support bring a range of benefits for individual and family wellbeing. Although work with parents brings benefits for all the family, there remains a need for direct work with children and young people.
- Parents are motivated to engage in pathways towards employment, in family learning and in broader family support in order to bring personal and familial benefits when this is accessible, non-threatening and developed with them.

5.2.3 Financial support

This building block is intended to ensure that 'financial support is responsive to families' situations'.

- There is high demand for high quality advice and support relating to benefit entitlement and to debt.
- There is high demand amongst practitioners supporting parents towards employment, or supporting parents and families towards broader welfare and wellbeing outcomes, for flexible funds that alleviate the impacts of poverty. Mainstream funds are often restrictive, difficult to access, slow to process and can require repayment. Flexible funds can enable progression and contribute to sustainable outcomes.

5.2.4 Place and delivery

This building block is intended to ensure that each 'child's environment supports them to thrive'.

- It is important when developing provision to address child poverty that it is appropriate to local context: the local history and landscape of provision; and, the characteristics of the local community.
- Involving local communities in developing and delivering services can be effective - but it must be carefully supported and appropriately resourced; for example, that sufficient measures are in place to ensure safeguarding procedures are adhered to.
- Voluntary and community sector partners bring expertise in working in local contexts and with local communities, and bring flexibilities in management and administration.
- Local authorities can embed effective practice by engaging their directorates and their partners and promoting child poverty as a priority; achieving change requires a structured, resourced approach.

5.3 Evaluation Next Steps

This report has provided evidence from the third stage of the national evaluation of the Local Authority Child Poverty Innovation Pilot, which builds upon the detailed and substantial reports provided in earlier stages of the evaluation prior to the final report. It has provided summary, illustrative and outline evidence and discussion.

The final stage of the evaluation will be comprehensive and will build upon the detailed understandings developed through the ten local evaluations and summarised in this report. The final stage of the evaluation will be concluded in March 2011, once pilot delivery has

been completed and final outcome data is available. As the pilot moves to the end of the funded period (March 2011) each of the ten local evaluation teams will conduct a final and comprehensive round of fieldwork, focusing upon long term outcomes and learning for sustainability. The evaluations will explore the final detail of each model of provision, providing final programme theory logic models for others to learn from and enabling a focus upon the key features of effective practice. There will also be a focus upon the final data in relation to costs and other resources and a cost-effectiveness analysis will be undertaken across the pilot. The evaluation's locality mapping will be realised, bringing further depth to the analysis of pilot outcomes. The final evaluation report, with accessible summaries for local authorities and their partners, will be provided to CPU in June 2011.

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