

**16 September 2013****Agenda Item: 12**

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE**

### **THE TROUBLED FAMILIES PROGRAMME IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides information on the development of the Government's Troubled Families programme in Nottinghamshire and seeks approval for the establishment of two full time equivalent Business Support Administrators to support the programme.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. The Department of Communities and Local Government describes "Troubled Families" as "those that have problems and cause problems to the community around them, putting high costs on the public sector". The Government states that it is "committed to working with local authorities and their partners to help 120,000 troubled families in England turn their lives around by 2015". The aims of the programme are to:
  - get children back into school
  - reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour
  - put adults on a path back to work
  - reduce the high costs these families place on the public sector each year.
3. Each top tier local authority is expected to lead a local Troubled Families programme alongside local partners and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The programme has partial integration with the DWPs "Work Programme" and European Social Fund progress to work programme and shares responsibility for success and access to financial reward with these schemes. The programme was initially scheduled to end in 2015 but an announcement in June 2013 extended the programme by an additional five years with funding identified in the Comprehensive Spending Review for the 2015-16 financial year. The aims and eligibility may change from Year 4 with adult offending, drug and alcohol use and parental mental health cited as possible additions to the criteria.
4. In April 2013 Nottinghamshire County Council begin to take a proactive approach to identifying families with multiple and complex problems by creating a 'Troubled Families List' which matches hitherto separate information about children, young people and their families. Families are identified through data matching and then a proactive approach is taken to engage with the family to address their specific concerns. Nottinghamshire County Council agreed to work with 1,580 families within the initial three year programme.

5. In the first year, 542 identified families were offered a service and the engagement rate was 64%, with 1,110 children engaged. This figure included some refusals but as historical data was used and the population is highly transient many of the families identified were no longer resident in Nottinghamshire and so could not be engaged. When families refuse to engage, the County Council and partners will consider whether sanctions are appropriate. This might include the use of anti-social behaviour powers (Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, ASBOs, Parenting Orders and Contracts) or prosecution for non-school attendance. In some cases housing related powers can be used such as the threat of eviction. In Year 2 the Local Authority has agreed to deliver the programme to 790 Families. During Year 2 the programme is accepting referrals from professionals for families meeting the eligibility criteria.

6. Central government funding for the programme consists of two separate streams:

**An infrastructure grant** - this pays for the coordination function to allow the relevant data and support to be provided to make the programme viable.

**An attachment fee** - which is paid on a sliding scale with an element paid by results on the declaration of agreed outcomes. The attachment fee plus the payment equal £4,000 per family and the element that is on a results basis will increase over time. Local agencies are expected to contribute the additional resources required to fully fund interventions. The payment by results methodology is currently assessed as creating a manageable financial risk for the Council.

### **Delivery of the Troubled Families Programme in Nottinghamshire**

7. From April 2013 the Troubled Families programme and the delivery infrastructure has been integrated into the Targeted Support and Youth Justice (TSYJ) Service. TSYJ already takes the lead in relation to youth crime and anti-social behaviour and school attendance and has significant links in relation to skills and employability, having responsibility for those aged up to 18 years who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). This has also allowed the Troubled Families programme to become an integral part of the Council's "Early Help" offer as often interventions are provided early in the life of a child or early in the emergence of a problem. The holistic whole family approach inherent in the programme provides a model that is being replicated across Early Help services.

8. Whilst the identified "troubled families" are already known to and using a variety of publicly funded services, they often use these in an ad-hoc and uncoordinated way. This can lead to missed opportunities to address the underlying issues which cause families to have multiple problems. As a consequence, families often receive long-term and expensive interventions rather than targeted, holistic, planned services which improve outcomes and reduce public spend.

9. Delivery to these families is aimed at achieving the outcomes set out in paragraph 2 above. There are two identified methods of delivering change. The majority of families will have services delivered by three locality based County-wide Supporting Families Teams, which offer a targeted whole family approach either by:

- providing a Lead Professional for the family who will then coordinate the delivery of existing services and engage additional services as required. In some cases, this role may be taken on from a worker from Targeted Support or a Youth Offending Team who are already involved with a young person within the family; or
  - by providing a Family Intervention Project (FIP) intensive programme of work with the family with a worker spending considerable amounts of time in the family home to challenge and support the family to achieve change. The Troubled Families programme has absorbed the former FIP teams; or
  - commissioning a package of support from a voluntary or private sector provider. There are currently three contracts for support, one with a private provider and two with the voluntary sector.
10. Teams are based in the north (Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood), west (Mansfield and Ashfield) and south (Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe) of the County.
  11. In addition to those staff employed by the Council, the three Supporting Families Teams each have a full-time secondee from the Department of Work and Pensions. These post-holders assist family key workers in achieving goals around a return to work or entry onto a work programme for adults in the families. They are also supporting some families through the changes to the benefits system.
  12. The programme has good support from local partners, including the Police, Fire Service, Probation Services and District Councils. Aside from management time spent in the partnership governance, some District Councils provide accommodation for the teams and, in two cases, former FIP members of staff previously employed by District Councils have been seconded into the teams. Partners are responding quickly when their services have been required to engage with families in the programme. The role of partners may be more prominent should the eligibility criteria for the Programme change in Year 4.
  13. During the initial set up of the programme an Executive Group, reporting into the Safer Nottinghamshire Board, oversaw the development of the programme. Having successfully completed the planned programme of work, the Executive Group has passed governance to the Targeted Support and Youth Justice Partnership Board, which is chaired by the Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services and includes representation from all of the main partners. The Targeted Support and Youth Justice Partnership Board reports to both the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and the Children's Trust Executive.

## **Performance**

14. The performance of the Troubled Families programme is currently reported to Government quarterly and it is this data that is used to authorise the 'payment by results' element of the funding.
15. A full 'claim' can be made if at least one adult in the family has moved off out-of-work benefits into continuous employment in the last six months or if a family achieves all three education, crime/ anti-social behaviour and progress to work measures those being that:
  - each child in the family has had fewer than three fixed exclusions, less than 15% of unauthorised absences in the last three school terms;

- and a 60% reduction in anti-social behaviour across the family in the last six months;
- and offending rate by all minors in the family reduced by at least a 33% in the last six months)
- one adult in the family has either volunteered for the Work Programme or attached to the European Social Fund provision in the last six months.

Where selected elements are met a partial claim can be made.

16. The first performance return was made in June 2013. For Nottinghamshire, the claim made was as follows:

Claim Category	Claim Type	Number of Claims
Improved youth crime / anti-social behaviour/ education	Partial	35
Improved youth crime / anti-social behaviour/ education/ progress to work	Full	9
Return to work	Full	29
	<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

17. Claims must be fully audited and have supporting evidence to verify the claim. Currently there are a significant number of cases where it is believed that the result has been achieved but no claim has been made as the verification has not been completed. These will be claimed at the next data submission in October 2013. It is assessed that we will eventually claim for 40% or more of engaged families although the timescales will be longer for more complex families.
18. Under the rules for Troubled Families, once a claim for payment by results is made against a family then the case must be closed as a Troubled Families case. In many instances, there will remain a lead professional or key worker in another agency who will continue to work with the child and/or family as part of the Council's wider Early Help offer.

### **Business Support to the Troubled Families Team**

19. The Troubled Families programme relies upon effective Business Support in order to maintain accurate data on service users using the Careworks database. The Business Support team is well placed to ensure processes are used consistently and effectively, in line with existing good practice deployed elsewhere in Targeted Support. Previously some of the administrative duties have been undertaken by Social Workers within the team, thereby impacting on other aspects of front line delivery.
20. The Business Support Services Review in Children's Social Care established with effect from 1 October 2012 1.0 FTE post of Business Support Administrator at grade 3, based at Sherwood Energy Village, to support the Troubled Families programme. The existing post supports activity in the Bassetlaw and Newark & Sherwood locality. In April 2013 approval was given through the vacancy control process to engage three full time agency workers to provide Business Support to the remainder of the County, pending the formal establishment of additional posts at Committee.

21. In the intervening period between April and September, it has been demonstrated that 2.0 FTE additional posts of Business Support Administrator at grade 3 will be sufficient to service the programme across the rest of the County. Approval is sought to establish these posts on a fixed term basis, initially until 31 March 2015. These posts will be based within the Business Support Service within Children, Families and Cultural Services.

### **Other Options Considered**

22. In respect of business support, consideration has been given to the delivery of these tasks by practitioners or managers but this does not deliver value for money and the tasks are more appropriate for this type and grade of staff.

### **Reason/s for Recommendations/s**

23. The recommendation in respect of business support delivers the best value for money in ensuring that tasks essential to the smooth running of the Troubled Families programme are completed.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Human Resources Implications**

25. There are no HR implications arising directly from this report. If approval is given for the establishment of 2.0 FTE posts of Business Support Administrator at grade 3 then these posts will initially be advertised internally and will be initially available for any staff at risk in other service areas.

### **Financial Implications**

26. The annual cost of establishing 2.0 FTE posts of Business Support Administrator grade 3 is £43,176 (pay award pending). Funding for the additional posts has already been identified within the overall budget for the Troubled Families programme.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That:

- 1) the development of the Government's Troubled Families programme in Nottinghamshire be noted.
- 2) the establishment of 2.0 FTE additional posts of Business Support Administrator at grade 3 on a fixed term basis, initially until 31 March 2015 based within the Business Support Service within Children, Families and Culture, be approved.

**Derek Higton**

## **Service Director, Youth, Families and Culture**

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### **Constitutional Comments (LM 20/08/13)**

27. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

### **Financial Comments (KLA 20/08/13)**

28. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraph 27 above.

### **Background Papers and Published Papers**

None.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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