
Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services)

Date of Meeting: 20 November 2012

Subject: Troubled Families Programme

Report of: Director of Young People and Families **Wards Affected:** All

Is this a Key Decision? Yes **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** Yes

Exempt / Confidential No

Purpose/Summary

- (1) Members can determine the issues around the Troubled Families Programme.
- (2) Members can determine the merits of conducting a review into the Troubled Families Programme.

Recommendation(s)

1. Members note the content of the report and early programme progress.
2. A review of the programme would be welcomed; however a review may be more productive mid-way through the programme in Q4 of 2013.

How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?

	<u>Corporate Objective</u>	<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	X		
2	Jobs and Prosperity	X		
3	Environmental Sustainability		X	
4	Health and Well-Being	X		
5	Children and Young People	X		
6	Creating Safe Communities	X		
7	Creating Inclusive Communities	X		
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy	X		

Reasons for the Recommendation:

The Troubled Families programme has been running in Sefton since July 2012. A review at this stage would scrutinise programme set-up and project development activity. A review later in the programme would be more productive as outcomes are delivered and learning becomes apparent.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

Troubled Families is a ring-fenced, three-year DCLG directly-funded programme of work. Funding is by way of a payment by results framework. Income is determined by the number of families identified in Sefton that meet Government and local criteria each year. A payment of an “attachment fee” is made for each family incorporated into the programme. A second, “results fee” is payable when pre-determined outcomes are achieved for that family. The PbR is on a sliding scale, with reductions in upfront attachment fees in years 2 and 3.

Any redundancy costs at the end of the programme will be met from core budgets for any staff employed on the TF programme.

(B) Capital Costs

No Capital costs are associated with this programme.

Implications:

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Legal: Good practice and guidance - The Troubled Families programme - Financial framework for the Troubled Families programme’s payment-by-results scheme for local authorities.		
Human Resources		
Equality		
1.	No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>

Impact on Service Delivery:

A review at this time is unlikely to have any impact on service delivery.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Finance & ICT Strategy (FD1936/12) has been consulted and has no comments to make on this report as it is to update Members on the Troubled Families Programme, the costs of which are fully met from DCLG direct funding. The Head of Corporate Legal Services (LD 1254/12) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Are there any other options available for consideration?

An option is to review programme at a later stage, when outcomes are being achieved and learning becomes apparent

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet/Cabinet Member Meeting

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Background Papers:

The following papers are available for inspection by contacting the above officer(s).

Troubled Families Action Plan _October 2012
Case Study – Family Intervention Project

1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 In December 2011, Government announced a three-year programme to radically transform the lives of the country's most troubled families. Almost £450 million has been made available in a cross-government drive to turn around the lives of 120,000 of some of the country's most troubled families by the end of this Parliament.
- 1.2 Sefton Council was provided with an indicative figure of 650 troubled families in the Borough. The figure represents the number of families that local services will be required to work with and turn around. 220 families would be identified in Year 1 of the programme
- 1.3 While the operational focus of Troubled Families is tackling the harms caused by dysfunctional families, the programme is designed to introduce and test new ways of working, develop new relationships between partners, and ultimately deliver a reduction in overall cost related to dealing with these families' difficulties.

2.0 Identifying Families

- 2.1 Troubled families are defined as households that:
 - Are involved in crime and disorder
 - Have children not in school
 - Have an adult in receipt of out-of-work benefits
 - Result in high costs to public finances
- 2.2 Many, if not all, of these families will be already known to Sefton Council and its partners. These families will have been receiving services, benefits and interventions for long periods, and in some cases, over generations. This programme represents an opportunity to take a systemic and strategic approach to the most challenging families that have concerned public agencies for years.
- 2.3 The first stage is to compile a list of those families that will be part of the programme. This consists of several steps, checking familial behaviour against criteria that include crime and antisocial behaviour, education and work. Any families that meet all three of these criteria will be automatically included in the programme. These families will also experience many other problems, and a fourth set of *locally derived* filters will provide Sefton Council and partners the ability to target families with known local risk factors.

3.0 Criteria

The nationally determined criteria being used are outlined below.

1. Crime / Antisocial Behaviour

Identify young people involved in **crime** and families involved in **anti-social**

behaviour, defined as:

Households with 1 or more under 18-year-old with a proven offence in the last 12 months

AND / OR

Households where 1 or more member has an anti-social behaviour order, anti-social behaviour injunction, anti-social behaviour contract, or where the family has been subject to a housing-related anti-social behaviour intervention in the last 12 months (such as a notice of seeking possession on anti-social behaviour grounds, a housing-related injunction, a demotion order, eviction from social housing on anti-social behaviour grounds).

2. Education

Identify households affected by **truancy** or **exclusion from school**, where a child:

Has been subject to permanent exclusion; three or more fixed school exclusions across the last 3 consecutive terms;

OR

Is in a Pupil Referral Unit or alternative provision because they have previously been excluded; OR is not on a school roll;

AND / OR

A child has had 15% unauthorised absences or more from school across the last 3 consecutive terms.

3. Work

Once families have been identified using one or both of the criteria above, a third filter can be used to identify families which also have an adult on Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) out-of-work benefits (Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Income Support and/or Jobseekers Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance).

4. Local Discretion

Partners in Sefton have agreed that domestic violence and alcohol misuse will be *interim* local criteria. Criteria for inclusion into the Troubled Families cohort will be reviewed in March 2013.

3.1 In summary:

- Any household matching criteria 1 (crime / antisocial behaviour) **and** criteria 2 (truancy / exclusion) **and** criteria 3 (receiving out-of work benefits) will be automatically included on the programme.
- Any household identified as having a family member meeting criteria 1 **or** criteria 2 will be checked to discover whether an adult of working age is receiving out-of-work benefits. If a claimant is identified within the household, then the family will be included on the programme.
- Any household identified as meeting **two of the three** criteria outlined above **and** criteria 4 (local risk factor) will be included on the programme.

4.0 Progress

4.1 Since Cabinet approved the programme in September 2012, the following progress has been made:

- A multi-agency Steering Group has been established and meets to steer and provide strategic guidance for the programme of work. This Group reports to the Children’s Trust Board.
- A multi-agency Operational Group has been established and meets to share information about families, agree action plans to tackle the issues faced by families and monitor progress.
- 162 families have been identified as meeting the criteria set by Government. More families will be added to this cohort through further benefit checks by DWP and use of the two local criteria.
- All 162 families are already being worked with by Sefton Council and / or partners.
- A visit to Sefton by the DCLG Troubled Families Team was highly successful. Services and practitioners were praised for their effectiveness in dealing with families with significant and complex needs.
- The approach being taken in Sefton to deliver the programme closely matches the guidance provided by DCLG. This guidance suggests the development of a tiered profile of families with different levels of need. Services will be designed to provide the appropriate level of intensity to “turn the family around.”
- Analysis of a range of data sets to increase understanding of the family situation – for example the impact of welfare reform; changes in housing benefit and an early spatial analysis that has identified geographic areas of need and the phenomenon of “clustering.”
- A training plan is being developed to provide individuals with improved skills to work in a “whole family” way, not just discretely with individuals, without reference to the family and social environment in which they live.
- Families are responding positively to interventions, with reductions in crime and disorder and adults moving into work and training.
- Wider partnership working continues to improve, for example a cohort of individuals recovering from substance misuse issues are now benefiting from specialised work to help support them into work and training.

4.2 The Troubled Families programme will continue to inform and be part of the wider review and restructure of Early Intervention and Prevention and influence the relationship with Children's Social Care.