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

Date of Meeting: 31 March 2015

Subject: Troubled Families Programme

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

Is this a Key Decision? No **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** No

Exempt / Confidential No

Purpose/Summary

To provide information to Members regarding the Troubled Families Programme nomination and assessment process undertaken in the identification of a Troubled Family.

Recommendation

That Members note the content of the report.

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	√		
2	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
3	Environmental Sustainability		√	
4	Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Children and Young People	√		
6	Creating Safe Communities	√		
7	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy	√		

Reasons for the Recommendation:

Members requested a report describing the process by which Troubled Families in Sefton are identified.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The first phase of the Troubled Families programme is a three-year Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) directly-funded programme of work. Funding is by way of a payment by results (PbR) 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 up front attachment fees, but increases in reward fees in years 2 and 3.

In June 2013, HM Government announced that the Troubled Families programme is to be extended for a further five years from 2015. Funding has been agreed for the programme until 2016. The financial elements of the expanded programme remain stable over the lifetime of the programme – a £1000 attachment fee for identification and incorporation of a family into the programme; a £800 reward payment for outcomes associated with significant and sustained progress. A target of 2070 Sefton families will be identified and “turned around” over the five year span of the programme.

(B) Capital Costs

No capital costs are currently 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	
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:

The Troubled Families programme is designed to improve the lives of families with multiple and complex needs. A significant element of this work is to enhance service delivery to better meet the needs of families and reduce the costs associated with dealing with issues raised by families.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Finance and ICT (FD 3481) comments as follows:

Any unspent funding for this successful programme has been carried forward for use in the following year.

The Head of Corporate Legal Services (LD 2773) has been consulted and comments have been noted.

Are there any other options available for consideration?

No. Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

Contact Officer: Michael Hanrahan
Tel: 0151 934 3972
Email: michael.hanrahan@sefton.gov.uk
Troubled Families Coordinator

Background Papers:

Financial framework for the Troubled Families programme's payment-by-results scheme for local authorities (DCLG, 2012)
Financial Framework for the Expanded Troubled Families Programme (DCLG, November 2014)
Presentation to Overview and Scrutiny November 2014

1.0 Introduction / Background

- 1.1 In December 2011, HM 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. In 2014, following the success of the initial programme, HM Government announced an additional 5 year expanded programme to work with an additional 400,000 families across England.
- 1.2 To date, the Troubled Families programme has resulted in income to Sefton Council of over £2.5M since July 2012. The breakdown is as follows:

Phase 1

Attachment fees and reward monies	£2,132,900
Coordination grant	£300,000

Expanded programme

Attachment fees	£104,000
Interim coordination grant	£25,000

Total **£2,561,900**

2.0 Identifying Families – Phase 1 (Original Programme)

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.

3.0 Identification Criteria

The nationally determined criteria were altered slightly in March 2013 in recognition of learning gained from the first nine months of the programme, in particular the role that schools can play in identifying the early onset of dysfunction and family issues.

1. Crime / Antisocial Behaviour

Identify young people involved in **crime** and families involved in **antisocial 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 antisocial behaviour order, antisocial behaviour injunction, antisocial behaviour contract, or where the family has been subject to a housing-related antisocial behaviour intervention in the last 12 months (such as a notice of seeking possession on antisocial behaviour grounds, a housing-related injunction, a demotion order, eviction from social housing on antisocial 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 or has been placed in specialist provision within a mainstream school for the purposes of improving behaviour which is comparable to the use of alternative provision;

AND / OR

Has had 15%+ unauthorised absences from school across the last 3 consecutive terms or evidence of a pattern of poor attendance that gives the Head Teacher an equivalent level of concern. Authorised absence may be taken into account where there is a comparable attendance problem masked by recording practices.

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

Families that meet the threshold level 2 or above of the Local Safeguarding Children Board Threshold Model.

4.0 Identification Process

Step 1a - All young people that had been convicted in the previous 12 months were identified using Youth Offending Team records.

Step 1b - Households and the names of residents that have been subject to an antisocial behaviour intervention were identified from records held by Sefton's Antisocial Behaviour Unit, Riverside Housing and One Vision Housing.

Step 2 - Children who had met one or more of the education criteria above were identified through records produced by schools and held centrally by the Attendance and Welfare Service.

Step 3 - Following these "local" searches, the names and addresses of families identified in the steps above were forwarded to the Department for Work and Pensions and households with adults in receipt of out-of-work benefits identified.

- 4.1 Households that met a minimum of two out of the three criteria were included in the programme.
- 4.2 In Year 1 of the programme, 220 families were identified; in Year 2, 330 families were identified; and in Year 3, 100 families were identified. This was in line with the guidance provided by the DCLG.

5.0 Identifying Families – Phase 2 (Expanded Programme)

5.1 The Expanded Programme is a five-year programme due to run until 2020. As a result of the learning gained by LA areas across England, the Expanded Troubled Families programme includes a much broader set of criteria that can be used to identify Troubled Families. To be eligible for the expanded programme, each family must have at least **two** of the following **six** problems:

- Parents and children involved in crime or antisocial behaviour
- Children who have not been attending school regularly
- Children who need help; children of all ages who need help are identified as in need or who are subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness
- Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
- Parents and children with a range of health problems.

5.2 This range of problem areas allows for a level of discretion in selecting families for the programme. Sefton Council is currently consulting with partner agencies to consider the key issues that affect families locally in order to generate a balanced cohort of families that represent the different intensity and type of need, especially where this would allow alignment with Sefton Council's strategic priorities of supporting the most vulnerable families, ensuring the health and wellbeing of residents and building resilient communities.

5.3 With this in mind, partners are refining the use of a "Vulnerability Ladder" to develop a formula to prioritise families that meet the criteria set out above. The ladder is strongly linked to Sefton's Local Safeguarding Children Board Threshold model, linking levels of family need to the tier of support required. This further embeds the use of this approach across Early Intervention and Prevention and Social Care.

- 5.4 The DCLG has also indicated that families should be prioritised for inclusion on the following basis:
- Families with multiple problems who are most likely to benefit from an integrated, whole family approach; and
 - Families who are the highest cost to the public purse.
- 5.5 In addition to these key drivers, a pragmatic approach will also have to be adopted that allows Sefton Council to draw down the income available for the programme. In common with the original programme, the expanded programme is based on payment by results - £1000 per family identified, with an additional payment of £800 when a range of family outcomes are achieved.
- 5.6 Those selected will represent a balance of families that are difficult to engage and have deep-seated, difficult to resolve problems; families that will engage willingly and actively work with family workers to resolve their problems; and families that will require a relatively “light-touch” to achieve the required outcomes. This blend is necessary to maintain the flow of reward monies into the programme for continued investment into services and resources designed to support families with complex and multiple problems.
- 5.7 In total, over the predicted five-year period of the expanded programme, Sefton and its partners will work with a minimum of 2070 families. Initially, 104 families meeting the new criteria will be identified and be worked with by June 2015. The use of the developing selection tools will provide useful learning in identifying and incorporating families into Sefton’s Troubled Families programme.