

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
Report to the MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	20th June 2012
3.	Title:	Troubled Families Initiative
4.	Directorate	Children and Young People's Services

5. Summary

In December 2011 the Government announced that they had created a Troubled Families Unit within the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This unit will lead a national programme to address the needs of families with multiple problems and significantly reduce the demand that they make on public services; the work will be led from DCLG, but it is worth noting that the unit is funded from across 6 Government departments.

Rotherham has made a commitment to oversee and account for successful engagement with 730 troubled families over the next three years, and draw down funding based on outcomes achieved with 608 of these families, according to the payment by results framework.

This report seeks to provide background information about the payment by results framework and set out how Rotherham will respond to this at the same time as ensuring the delivery model meets the needs of local families and is aligned with other key approaches to address deprivation and health inequalities in the borough.

6. Recommendations

Agree that the response to delivering the Troubled Families Initiative in Rotherham should be aligned to the work to tackle inequalities in disadvantaged areas and implementation of the Early Help Strategy;

Agree the governance arrangements for the Troubled Families Initiative;

Agree the proposed approach to identifying Rotherham's named cohort of families in line with the Troubled Families Financial Framework;

Agree that the Troubled Families funding, provided by central government, should be ring-fenced to invest in additional services for families that will lead to long-term change for them and wider system re-design.

7. Proposals and details

Background

In December 2011 the Government announced that they would be making an investment of £448 million nationally into a programme to address the needs of 'troubled families'. Six Whitehall departments have contributed to this fund.

Previous government research has shown that there are at least 120,000 families fitting the description of a "troubled family" in England. These are families experiencing multiple problems and disadvantages, such as worklessness, truancy, drug and alcohol addiction and also causing problems such as anti-social behaviour. New analysis shows that these families are a significant drain on the public purse, costing the taxpayer over £9bn a year (on average, £75,000 per family per year).

Using the research referred to above, Government estimate that there are 730 such troubled families in Rotherham, at an estimated cost to the taxpayer of £54.750m per year.

Government propose to use this additional funding (they insist that this is new money) to offer local authorities up to 40% of the cost of interventions that can help turn around these families' lives, payable on achievement of successful outcomes. The guidance suggests that local authorities will want to work closely with local partners to re-design services in such a way that it will be possible to make dramatic changes to the lives of families in a relatively short space of time as well as avoiding existing cost and, potentially, making cashable savings.

Identification of Families

We have been asked to compile a list of 730 named families to fit the funding formula devised by the Troubled Families Unit. We have been asked to use three given criteria; a fourth filter may be applied at local discretion. The criteria are:

Crime/anti-social behaviour (ASB)

We need to 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 ASBO, ASB injunction, anti-social behaviour contract (ABC), or where the family has been subject to a housing-related ASB intervention in the last 12 months (such as a notice of seeking possession on ASB grounds, a housing-related injunction, a demotion order, eviction from social housing on ASB grounds).

Education

We need to 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.

Work

Once we have identified everyone who meets one, or both of the anti-social behaviour and education criteria, we can identify households which also have an adult on out of work benefits (Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Income Support and/or Jobseekers Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance).

It is expected that the number of families who meet all three criterion will be below the figure of 730. These families must be included on our local list.

It is expected that the number of families who meet two out of three criteria will be higher than the figure of 730. At this point, local authorities can apply a fourth filter, based on local discretion.

Identifying Rotherham Families

In Rotherham we are compiling a local list using attendance, anti-social behaviour and youth offending data. The next step will be to submit this data to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) who will confirm if a family member (member of the household) is claiming an out of work benefit. Rotherham has signed and submitted a Memorandum of Understanding with DWP that will allow them to share information regarding benefits claimants. At the time of writing this report DWP have yet to release any information.

Once the data analysis exercise has been completed we propose to apply local intelligence to agree the cohort of families that we will seek to engage. This work will be undertaken alongside the work to develop detailed baseline knowledge of the disadvantaged areas. The local knowledge of Ward Members, police officers, RMBC housing and anti-social behaviour officers, GPs and learning communities will be invaluable.

We have committed to working with 244 families in the first year (one third of the total cohort) but recognise that not all families will wish to engage with the support that is offered.

Engaging Rotherham Families

Once families have been identified we will pull together a clear assessment of their needs using a whole family assessment tool (the family CAF). This will include an analysis of all the agencies with whom they are currently involved, as well as identifying poor engagement and service gaps. The assessment process will also ask families about the changes that they would like to see in their lives; these may not be the same changes that are required by the payment by results framework, but often these outcome measures will be side effects of a more fundamental change. For example, showing families how to set clear boundaries in parenting and stick to routines should lead to better school attendance.

A key incentive for families and agencies alike will be to simplify the way that families engage with support by providing a key-worker or single point of contact. Family key-workers will be able to link with dedicated professionals who are leading change in the borough's disadvantaged areas.

Communicating with Rotherham Families

It is unfortunate that the Government has branded this work 'Troubled Families'. In Rotherham we will seek to respond with a more positive 'Think Family' / 'Families for Change' message that is aligned with the identity of the work in disadvantaged areas. If we get our communication with families right they are more likely to understand, respond and welcome the support that is on offer.

The family-focused work in Rotherham will adopt the same principles as the area-based work; it will be an approach that:

- Engages through local people leading change themselves
- Engages through motivating people to behave differently
- Engages through community leadership
- Engages through partnership: a collective commitment to respond differently in these areas
- Engages through action, with visible, accessible and empowered officers
- Engages in a smart way,
- Engages through the most appropriate agency to delivery change.

Payment by Results

The success measures, against which payments will be released, will be based on getting parents into work, children attending school, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and cutting costs for the State. The stated goal is to produce a framework which is simple and workable for local authorities, but also means something to the families themselves and which can contribute to a sense of personal aspiration.

DCLG will make available up to £4,000 for each troubled family in our area that is eligible for the payment-by-results scheme, with the expectation that the remaining investment (an estimated £6,000) required to fund interventions to turn around these families' lives is contributed by us and our local partners.

This funding methodology supports the commitment, identified in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, for RMBC and its partners to shift resources from high dependency services to early intervention and prevention.

A proportion of the £4,000 funding will be paid upfront as an 'attachment fee' for the number of families with whom we start working, and the rest will be paid once we have achieved positive outcomes with a family. For 2012-13 this attachment fee will be set at 80 per cent, reducing to 60 and 40 per cent in the next two years. In 2012-13, the attachment fee will be paid as a single grant payment.

In addition the local authority will be able to collect a payment for each eligible family if we achieve the results outlined in Appendix 1. Based on the average length of a successful intervention with a family and the time frame for showing

results, a payment should be available to be claimed around 12 months after the intervention has started.

It is our intention to target the funding to provide services to families in a different way. For example, allocating a keyworker who will coordinate a whole family approach to assessing and meeting the needs of the whole family has proved successful with families who have engaged with the Family Intervention Project and Family Recovery Programme.. This methodology supports the family with a dedicated and consistent resource and, in return, asks the family to commit to making long-term sustainable changes in their lives.

Verification of results

Results payments will be issued on the basis of self-declarations of results. In addition, DCLG will carry out a small number of 'spot checks' in a sample of areas. If the Troubled Families Unit feel that the funding has not been allocated appropriately or in the spirit of the programme, attachment fees in subsequent years will be withheld.

Families already funded and 'turned around' by existing or new programmes

Government analysis shows that schemes such as European Social Fund provision, Multi-Systemic Therapy pilots and Family Intervention Programmes should account for successfully turning around the lives of approximately 20,000 families across England for the period from December 2010 to March 2015. This leaves a further 100,000 troubled families where additional funding is now available from their payment-by-results scheme. This means that they will fund up to 40% of the costs of turning around the lives of five out of every six troubled families in each local authority area.

The Authority will be responsible for deciding the best way of identifying the one-sixth of troubled families who will achieve comparable results through other programmes.

Think Family Coordinator

Rotherham has appointed a Think Family Coordinator to lead the Troubled Families initiative. The Troubled Families Unit has been prescriptive about their expectations for this post, they want someone:

To lead the troubled families programme locally, as a senior level strategic coordinator, who will grip delivery and radically boost the pace and scale of work locally to turn around the lives of their population of 'troubled families'.

They have outlined that the main responsibilities of the coordinators will be:

- Taking responsibility for identifying the most troubled families - the numbers, names and locations of the families in their area;
- Using the extra money provided by the Troubled Families Programme to lever all the remaining money and resources needed for their local programme;
- Ensuring local agencies (e.g. police, Job Centre Plus, health organisations, schools etc.) work together to put a robust plan of action in place to deal with the families;

- Focusing local action on the right results for the target families – ensuring the local area has gripped delivery and is on track to deliver against the success criteria set by DCLG;
- Ensuring that the progress of their local programme is being monitored and fed back to the Troubled Families Team.

In addition to leading work at a local level, the coordinators will play a vital role as part of a national network of local leaders who can work with the Government to drive delivery of this national commitment. To ensure this post exists and its integrity is maintained, Government are also providing additional funding of £100k p.a. to explicitly fund this post.

Think Family Governance

Identifying strong political leadership, aligned with the governance arrangements proposed for the work in disadvantaged areas, is important to the success of the programme locally.

Rotherham has a prominent and mature local strategic partnership and it is proposed that the LSP's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Group will provide the top tier of governance for the this work.

While the CEO Group will maintain a high level overview of the implementation of the work outlined in this document the detailed monitoring of its roll out will be undertaken by the Think Family Steering Group. The Think Family Coordinator, advised by the Think Family Steering Group will have the ability to escalate issues to the CEO Group, which will have a role in removing barriers to progress, addressing blockages and identifying resources.

8. Finance

Rotherham will receive £100k each year to fund a dedicated post for the Troubled Families agenda over the next 3 years. In addition payment will be made to support the programme of action devised to support the families (see payment by results section above).

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Funding for the programme will be based on a payment by results framework. There are risks associated with this, not least due to the reporting mechanisms on which we will rely, for example the Police National Computer. We will also need to verify that where we have applied a local interpretation of the identification criteria, these can be reflected through the payment by results framework (e.g. offending rate reduced by 30%).

The programme of action is expected to continue for three years; there is a risk that it will not be possible to sustain activity if funding ceases at this time or replaces existing funding streams such as the Early Intervention Grant.

There is a risk that some partnership / political agendas may conflict with the implementation of the programme. For example, the increased independence of the schools sector and the election of Police Crime Commissioners who will be responsible for setting police priorities and cutting crime and anti-social behaviour in South Yorkshire.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Troubled Families agenda is underpinned by the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the work will support all six priorities with the emphasis on Prevention and Early Intervention being particularly strong.

The Rotherham approach to the Troubled Families agenda will be aligned with the operational delivery of the Early Help Strategy and the delivery of targeted support to Rotherham's most deprived neighbourhoods to narrow the gap in outcomes between these and the least deprived neighbourhoods in the borough. This will in turn progress interlinked strategies being rolled out in the borough, such as the literacy agenda and the volunteering strategy.

Contacts:

Jenny Lingrell
Think Family Coordinator
Children & Young People's Services
Telephone: 01709 (2)54836
E-mail: jenny.lingrell@rotherham.gov.uk

Joyce Thacker
Strategic Director
Children & Young People's Services
Telephone: 01709 (8)22677
E-mail: joyce.thacker@rotherham.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Results-based payments from central government

Result	Attachment fee	Results payment	Total
<p>They achieve all 3 of the education and crime/ASB measures set out below where relevant:</p> <p>1. Each child in the family has had fewer than 3 fixed exclusions and less than 15% of unauthorised absences in the last 3 school terms; and</p> <p>2. A 60% reduction in anti-social behaviour across the family in the last 6 months; and</p> <p>3. Offending rate by all minors in the family reduced by at least a 33% in the last 6 months.</p>	£3,200 per family	£700 per family	£4,000 per family
<p>If they do not enter work, but achieve the 'progress to work' (one adult in the family has either volunteered for the Work Programme or attached to the ESF provision in the last 6 months).</p>		£100 per family	
OR			
<p>At least one adult in the family has moved off out-of-work benefits into continuous employment in the last 6 months (and is not on the ESF Provision or Work Programme to avoid double-payment).</p>	£3,200 per family	£800 per family	£4,000 per family