

**Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

Agenda item: **7**

Wards: All

**Subject: Troubled Families Initiative**

Lead officer: Theresa Leavy, Interim Head of CSC&YI

Lead member: Cllr Maxi Martin, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Forward Plan reference number:

Contact officer: Gordon Murray, Transforming Families Co-ordinator

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**Recommendations:**

- A. That the CYP Scrutiny Panel note the work being undertaken internally and with partners; the proposed direction of travel to ensure the programme meets Merton's financial and other challenges; and that there may be need to further consider governance and or structural changes or new ways of working once proposals are fully developed.
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**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. To report on the progress of the development of the Troubled Families initiative in Merton.

**2 DETAILS**

- 2.1 Following discussions with DMT and Partners it was agreed that the Troubled Families initiative in Merton be given the name 'Transforming Families'. This reflects this Authority's approach, expectations and outcomes for this new service.
- 2.2 To enable L.B. Merton to progress the Troubled Families programme, a (Merton) definition has been drafted based on the DCLG outcomes guidance, see Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The DCLG's guidance and financial framework for the Troubled Families initiative was issued on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The emphasis for expected outcomes is targeted towards anti-social behaviour improvements, improved school attendance and tackling family worklessness. There is also a fourth 'filter' to be considered, where Authorities can use local discretion to identify other issues that incur high cost, see Appendix 2.
- 2.4 LB Merton is expected to target, intervene and support 370 families over three years from April 2012. However DCLG Payments by Results (PbR) funding will be for 40% of 308 families. It is expected therefore that the outstanding 62 families will be supported through existing provision but will be monitored and reported as part of the Transforming (Troubled) Families programme.

- 2.5 The expectations are from the DCLG that:
- we should work with in Year 1, 1/3 of the total number, ie:  $370/3 \Rightarrow 124$
  - we should work with in Year 2, 1/2 of the total number, ie:  $370/2 \Rightarrow 185$
  - we should work with in Year 3, the remainder of the total number  $\Rightarrow 61$
- As requested by the DCLG we have given a written commitment to the DCLG that we will work with 124 families in Year 1.
- 2.6 Through a collation of data from within the Authority's CSF department and partner agencies, based on the DCLG's guidance on the identification of families, an initial list of 507 families were identified From which for Year 1, 124 will be selected through referral criteria with 103 being eligible for the Authority to claim for the DCLG funding.
- 2.7 Although this list will be refreshed twice a year with the aim in Years 2 and 3 to take referrals from the MASH and a range of partner agencies. Given the number of variables that influence the referral criteria we will provide the opportunity, where issues arise throughout the year(s) for particular young people and their families, to be identified and referred.
- 2.8 Work is still underway to identify and establish the methods that we will use to identify a family's progress and success and how we will monitor and evaluate the programme against the set criteria and relate this to the Payment by Results process. However, discussions with the DCLG indicate that while they are still finalising their format, our current data collection can be similar to that of an Excel spreadsheet and we also intend to use the Outcomes Star tool for identifying needs and tracking progress.
- 2.9 The range of statutory and voluntary agencies across Merton have been contacted and engaged in the discussion, with multi-agency Troubled Families briefing meetings being held on 1/3/12 and 1/6/12.
- 2.10 The review of existing programmes is being undertaken and identifying where they match the Troubled Families criteria and also how we can deliver within existing resources. For example, including the work and the outcomes of the Family Intervention Programme (FIP) within the Troubled Families initiative.
- 2.11 It has been approved by the Merton Partnership (29/5/12) that the Phipps Bridge Project funded by the Performance Reward Grant, will be included as part of the Troubled Families initiative and line management structure. This will provide for targeted work within the area as part of the overall TF initiative.
- 2.12 LB Merton will use existing planned spend and resources to match the Government allocation to meet the 60:40 criteria. This will include:
- the PRG Phipps Bridge allocation, £593,100
  - £500,000 for Apprenticeships

- £250,000 for core project funding
- £250,000 for programme contingency funding

2.13 Once the programme of service delivery is further developed we may need to consider wider governance arrangements and/or structural changes as well as new ways of working across departments/services and with partners where services are commissioned.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1 As this programme addresses the priorities already identified through the Merton Executive Partnership, consideration will be given to what existing services can be aligned with this initiative.

### **4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

4.1 As part of the implementation of the programme it is intended to engage with young people and families to ascertain their views regarding the design and operation of the programme. This will be underpinned by a series of information briefing sessions for relevant managers and practitioners.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

5.1 The DCLG have indicated that they will provide their part of the initiative's funding from April 2012, for a period of three years. The Year 1 'Attachment Fee' based on working with the 124 families in Year 1, has been received.

5.2 It is expected that revised processes and procedures will be put in place during the second and third quarters of 2012 to integrate the Troubled Families initiative into existing systems.

### **6. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The indicative amount the DCLG expects to be spent on each troubled family is approximately £10,000. Therefore they will provide £4000 per family Payment by Results (PbR) based on successful outcomes.

6.2 The DCLG will provide Authorities with an advanced 'Attachment Fee' payment per family worked within each year. This will be:  
 Year 1 - £3200 with £800 PbR to follow in Year 2  
 Year 2 - £2,400 with £600 PbR to follow in Year 3  
 Year 3 - £1,600 with £2,400 PbR to follow in Year 4

6.3 As this initiative is based on PbR funding, project income from the DCLG is therefore predicated on successful outcomes and achieving the expected target number of 370 families over the 3 years.

- 6.4 As outlined in 2.8, LB Merton will use existing planned spend and resources to match the Government allocation to meet the 60:40 criteria. This will include:
- the PRG Phipps Bridge allocation, £593,100
  - £500,000 for Apprenticeships
  - £250,000 for core project funding
  - £250,000 for programme contingency funding

## **7. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Clarification of existing and current inter-agency information sharing protocols and practice is required to ensure Data Protection Act compliance.

## **8. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Troubled Families initiative will incorporate and adopt the guidance and underpinning ethos of the Merton Community Cohesion Charter and Strategy. It will also work to the shared multi-agency agenda of the Merton Partnership. This means that the Troubled Families programme will include as a core element, work with voluntary and community groups and faith communities to contribute to the development and delivery of this initiative.

## **9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 One of the priority aims of the Troubled Families initiative is to achieve a reduction in anti-social behaviour and criminal activity. The development of the programme will ensure that systems and processes will align with and be influenced by the Safer and Stronger Theme of Merton's Community Plan 2006-15

## **10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The development of the Troubled Families programme will ensure incorporation of current and existing Risk Management and Health and Safety procedures.
- 10.2 The PbR funding will be based on achieving the expected outcomes and meeting the target number of families specified by the DCLG. To ameliorate this funding risk we will ensure that the service delivery to the families and the monitoring and data collection of the programme is able to capture the relevant information and achieve those outcomes and targets.
- 10.3 Given the independent status of the Academies, consideration will be given to managing the risk of obtaining data, referrals and pupil support from those schools.

**11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

Appendix 1 - LB Merton Troubled Families Definition

Appendix 2 - discretionary factors

Appendix 3 - Excerpt from the DCLG Financial Framework

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## **Appendix 1**

### LB Merton Troubled Families Definition

The Troubled Families Programme provides and co-ordinates a range of services and support for families. The objectives of this service are to improve the family's quality of life and life chances, making significant contributions to the reduction of anti-social and criminal behaviours, ensuring children are attending education and enabling those of working age in the family into work. The service works in partnership to empower parents and children and to strengthen families. Interventions are targeted and will work with the Family until their life circumstances improve'

## **Appendix 2**

Those other added discretionary factors that we are considering including are:

- Families with a Child Protection Plan
- Families where there is an identified Child in Need
- Families who are known to the Authority's Adult Mental Health services
- Where there is a Prolific and Priority Offender in the family household
- Families that have a young person known to the Offender Management Panel and/or the Gangs diversionary scheme
- Where substance and alcohol misuse is identified in the family
- Where the family is known to our Child Sexual Exploitation Service
- Where the families reside in a particular geographical area within Merton
- Where the family is known to our Family Intervention Project
- Where the family is known to our Multiple Systemic Therapy service

## **Appendix 3**

Excerpt from the DCLG Financial Framework for the Troubled Families programme's payment by results scheme for local authorities - March 2012 (pgs. 5,6,7)

The total number of families on the list should match the indicative number of families that were sent to you in December 2011. In many areas this is a confirmation exercise of work that is already done or is underway.

### **1. Crime/anti-social behaviour (ASB)**

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<sup>1</sup>).

### **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<sup>2</sup>.

Criteria 1, 2 and 4 do not need to be conducted in any particular order. You may work with your local partners to identify any families, which meet at least one or both of these criteria. However, for data-sharing reasons, criteria 3 (identifying those on out of work benefits) should only take place once you have identified all families who meet one or both of criteria 1 and 2.

### **3. Work**

Once you have identified everyone who meets one of both of criteria 1 and 2, you may identify households which also have an adult on DWP out of work benefits (Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Income Support and/or Jobseekers Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance).

All families who meet all of criteria 1-3 in your area should automatically be included in the programme. The balance should be identified using your local discretion.

#### 4. Local discretion

Use this local discretion filter to add other families who meet any 2 of the 3 criteria above and are a cause for concern. It is up to you to consider with local partners, such as health, police and others what the range of issues is that you will use to prioritise and how to identify the families, but those who are high cost and those with health problems could include:

- Families containing a child who is on a Child Protection Plan or where the local authority is considering accommodating them as a looked after child
- Families subject to frequent police call outs or arrests or containing adults with proven offences in the last 12 months, such as those who have been in prison, prolific and priority offenders, or families involved in gang related crime
- Families with health problems (see below)

The experience of family intervention projects and other similar services is that many troubled families have underlying **health problems**. Often these are not fully recognised until intensive work with the family is underway. However, where these issues are known, they may be important factors in identifying your local troubled families. Particular priority health problems which you should consider include:

- Emotional and mental health problems
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Long term health conditions
- Health problems caused by domestic abuse
- Under 18 conceptions

#### Numbers to identify

While it is important that you are able to sign up to the overall number of families with whom you intend to work over the three years, it is not expected that you will have identified all the families on your troubled families list in April 2012.

You should aim to identify approximately one-third of your families in 2012/13 and the majority of your families in 2013/14. However, there is some scope for further discussions with individual local authorities about these figures, within the constraints of our budget.