

9 February 2016		ITEM: 6
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Troubled Families Programme		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Teresa Goulding, Service Manager, Troubled Families		
Accountable Head of Service: Andrew Carter, Head of Care & Targeted Outcomes		
Accountable Director: Carmel Littleton, Director of Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Board with an update on the progress and performance of Thurrock's Expanded Troubled Families Programme, which aims to turn around 1160 more families by May 2020.

The positive progress, reported in March 2015 has continued to gather momentum, demonstrated by surpassing the estimated families turned around total and reaching the 100% target set by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) a financial quarter in advance. This secured Thurrock's place in the next phase of the programme and generated a substantial payment by result.

A transformation grant was awarded to successful local authorities to enable the design specification of the Expanded Programme to be realised, in line with the national roll out in April 2015. Thurrock is using these monies to expand the core team and implement innovative solutions to meet Central targets and local demand.

The DCLG carried out an Audit against Phase 1 in March 2015, which ran concurrently with the development of Phase 2. The results of this highlighted that Thurrock Council had fully adhered to the Financial Framework 2012, and had demonstrated outstanding practice and knowledge of families worked with under the programme. Ensuring full confidence moving into Phase 2 under the new Financial Framework 2015.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the committee scrutinise the work completed on the Troubled Families programme and acknowledge the impact the programme has had on turning around the lives of children and adults in Thurrock.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The DCLG expect quarterly reviews, demonstrated via robust performance data analysis. The Troubled Families team have appointed an analyst to manage this function. Enhancements made to Insight have ensured that the data analyst is now capable of meeting the more comprehensive criteria for Phase 2. An innovative solution was identified and has now been tried, tested and it is highly recommended that Thurrock commits to the use of this software, in order to continue delivering to task.
- 2.2 The Expanded Programme aims to increase the number of families turned around by 222% (when compared with Phase 1). This represents a 3.2 recurring rise in demand. Therefore, in order to manage increased demand effectively, we have recruited a further Programme Manager, which will enable cases to be managed appropriately and ensure that Thurrock meet target deadlines set by DCLG. Not meeting targets will create a financial loss for the authority as it would reduce the amount of payment by results claimed.
- 2.3 In addition to the rise in the number of families, there's twice the number of themed criteria used in order to identify and work with Thurrock's troubled families. This is a positive change in this new phase as it allows for families with wider needs to gain the support needed to turn around. However, to ensure the right intervention can be provided, accredited training is recommended, tailored around Thurrock's Troubled Families Outcomes Plan (TFOP) and aimed at effectively designing and delivering bespoke interventions.
- 2.4 The Troubled Families Programme was first launched in December 2010. The main purpose was to identify families with a high cost on the public purse, and for Local Authorities to work systemically, and sustainably 'Turn-Around' such families and reduce fiscal spending. When achieved and evidenced, a payment by result (PBR) was awarded. Thurrock's target, as set by the DCLG, was to 'Turn-Around' 360 families by May 2015, and was achieved by February 2015.
- 2.5 The coalition Government announced as part of their spending review in June 2013 a further £200 million would be invested in expanding the Troubled Families Programme for local authorities working to target. In November 2015 it was announced that there will be no reduction in the number of families the programme will target, and that our results payments and the overall Service Transformation Grant budget have been protected. As outlined in 2.2 and 2.3 of this report, the volume of families as well as the criteria used in order to identify Phase 2 Troubled Families has dramatically increased.
- 2.6 While retaining its focus on reducing truancy, crime and anti-social behaviour, the expanded programme will apply this approach to a larger group of families with a wider set of problems including domestic violence, debt and children at risk of being taken into care. Furthermore, as well as expanding from working

with school-age children to those under 5, the wider programme will also have a particular focus on improving poor health, which new published data highlights is a particular problem in troubled families, with 71% having a physical health problem and 46% a mental health concern.

- 2.8 The programme will continue to prioritise getting adults into work, with the Department for Work and Pensions providing 300 specialist Troubled Families Employment Advisers (TFEA) who will also work with young people at risk of becoming unemployed. In Thurrock, this has resulted in an additional seconded member of the core team (please see 3.1 for staff structure)
- 2.9 The headline criteria, underpinned by the DCLG Financial Framework 2015 for identifying families is as follows:
- Parents and children involved in crime or anti-social 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 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
- 2.10 Whilst the headline criteria had been set nationally, the composition of the criteria was to be decided locally by each participating local authority. This motion has enabled Thurrock to work closely with partners since February 2015 in order to establish the key areas of need affecting local families and set these against mutual strategic goals to produce a set of significant and sustained outcomes by which an untroubled family could be measured and payment by result achieved.
- 2.11 Thurrock's TFOP captures the indicators and outcomes as detailed in 2.9 and 2.10 and in doing so, provides key-stakeholders with a local framework in which information governance is adhered in order to effectively gather the right information on the right families at the right time from programme entry through to exit. The TFOP was presented at the last convened Troubled Families Board in December 2015, where it was agreed and signed off and this has now been shared with all partners.
- 2.12 In addition to the points raised in 2.11, the Troubled Families team, fall within the Early Offer of Help (EoH) level of service; enabling the team to not only work with families with many issues but also reduce recidivism and increase cost savings. In taking a family centred approach and delivering bespoke intervention, joined-up with key partners, this aims to reduce the duplication of services involved at any one time, without compromising essential information sharing, to also ensure the right partners are involved at the right time. The EoH and TF continue to work together and processes have now been firmed up to ensure that TF receive the amount of nominations that they should. TF now screen families directly from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

before passing to EoH and all step downs from Social Care Teams are screened by TF before referring on to EoH. Those cases that do not meet the criteria for TF are managed via the EoH processes.

In 2014/2015 710 EOH services worked with 710 children and from April 2015- Dec 2015 the current number of children is at 752 children. There is a marked increase in overall referrals to the service since September 2014, when the re structured service began.

Out of these interventions in 14/15 20.3% needed to be escalated to Children's Social Care and the current percentage for 15/16 is 19.5%.

- 2.13 Analysis of the success of interventions at pre-statutory levels (EoH) and once children are registered as a child in need or subject to a child protection plan shows a variation in successful outcomes as shown in the table below. Individual cases that were closed between May and October 2014 were reviewed in July 2015, nine months following the last closure of a case at pre-statutory level or nine months after a commissioned service had closed or the case had been closed to Social Care, whichever came sooner, in the case of statutory intervention. Whilst the sample size at statutory level is small, there is evidence that cases referred at the earliest opportunity evidence improved outcomes in a shorter timeframe.

Source cases referred from	Sample analysed	Number of cases that evidenced a successful/ improved outcome	% success rate
Pre-statutory	164	161 ⁵	98%
Social Care - statutory	19	13 ⁶	68%

1. 161 of 164 cases were not referred back to either pre-statutory or statutory services
2. Number of cases that evidenced a de-escalation or closure with Children's Social Care i.e. child protection plan reduced to a child in need or case closed

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Structure and Staffing

- 3.1 The Troubled Families' team currently consists of 16 core staff.
- 1 x Service Manager
 - 4 x Programme Managers
 - 1 x Quality, Performance and Data Analyst
 - 1 x Frontline Support Officer (supporting the Analyst)
 - 1 x TF Employment Advisor (seconded from Department of Work and Pensions)

- 2 x Family Support Worker
- 2 x Parental Outreach Workers
- 1 x Youth Work Lead
- 1 x Trainee Youth Support Worker
- 1 x Business Support Officer
- 1 x Team Administrator

3.2 The programmes design continues to be based upon the strategic plan for early help: children and families. The operational implication of this means the Troubled Families team oversees and supports the Lead Professional throughout intervention delivery. Cases identified as high risk and/or intensive will continue to be picked up by a social worker/internal statutory body or referred to the outsourced Family Intervention Programme (FIP). It is recommended that less intensive cases will be picked up and worked with by other professionals, such as pastoral leads from within schools (current), housing sector providers (current), Police (recommended/discussions ongoing) and voluntary and community sector providers (current). In this way, the programme builds on the existing early help model and demonstrates its commitment to a systemic and innovative approach to whole family intervention practice.

3.3 Thurrock Council has also match-funded Troubled Families, not in terms of direct money, but in resources including all services and staff supporting Troubled Families. However, in order to maintain momentum, consideration must be given to resource implications in the current structure, against the increased number of families and central demands over the course of the next five years. Please refer to 2.2 to this point.

Funding

3.4 Thurrock Council received £760,000 in attachment fees from Phase 1. DCLG has since awarded further attachment fees against 17% of total number of target families in the Phase 2 cohort (1160), which amounts to £197,000. In addition to this, £225,000 (under Phase 1) has been received to cover the costs of the Troubled Families Co-ordinator. Under Phase 2 - £150,000 Service Transformation Grant has been received. To date Thurrock has achieved £398,700 in PBR claims from Phase 1. The total amount received from the DCLG to date (for Phase 1 and 2) is £1,332,000.

3.5 Funding has enabled access to FIP, which currently case manages up to 20 Troubled Family cases at one time. However, this may increase in line with demand, subject to contact. Furthermore the TF team have developed strong partnerships with the voluntary sector to commission a consortium of voluntary services that gives priority to referred troubled families, including such services as; South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (Sericc), Mind and Open Door. The TF team has also identified a number of positive links with local charities that offer white goods and furniture to troubled families who need it, with minimum or no cost to the authority or the family. This has continued from Phase 1 into Phase 2.

- 3.6 Using monies awarded through the programme, the TF team trained and appointed two volunteers who had previously been identified under Phase 1 of the Programme, and successfully completed their intervention. The volunteers have been instrumental in their ability to engage hard to reach families. One of those volunteers is now employed through Open Door as a Family Support Worker for the team. The TF team are now scoping more ways to build on this success as Phase 2 moves forward. One such idea is the recruitment of a Youth Work Lead, trainee Youth Support Worker and the recruitment/training of youth work apprentices, from young people known to TF services or previously/currently a looked after child forming part of the core and/or auxiliary functions of the TF team.

Diversity and Equality

- 3.7 The current list of Troubled Families does not have over or under representation of Thurrock's Black, Minority and Ethnic community and this measure is now being implemented as part of the teams' innovative quality, performance and data management.
- 3.8 Thurrock's identification of troubled families as set out in the DCLG Financial Framework 2015, sets out concessions for adults in receipt of working related benefits due to a disability or illness.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Due to the developments of Insight the quality of performance and family data has been vastly improved. This includes data on Youth Offending, Children's and Adult's Social Care and attendances at school. Work is ongoing to be able to reach agreement to obtain further data from the Police, Housing, Health and some other agencies. This will enable at least 40 extracts of internal and external family/individual/community data to be securely and seamlessly aggregated to identify and monitor Financial Framework 2015. This point is also included in recommendation 2.1. Every participating local authority Chief Executive signed an agreement with DCLG, stating that robust family data and cost savings analysis would be provided quarterly or as otherwise agreed. The risk implication of being unable to deliver on such data requirements, is categorically stated in the Financial Framework and DCLG correspondence; 'If areas do not fulfil this commitment the future Service Transformation Grant funding may be withheld'. This specifically relates to the following functions:

- National Impact Study
- Family Progress Data
- Cost Savings Calculator
- Evidencing Significant and Sustained Progress (PBR) - TFOP

- 4.2 The resource implications covered under Recommendations (2.2) and under Staffing and Structure (specifically but not wholly 3.1) demonstrates the need

for additional resource/buy-in from key stakeholders. By not taking further action, there is a high risk of the programme being unable to identify and/or deliver intervention to Thurrock troubled families, which has a direct impact on families turned around figures, which are regularly monitored by DCLG via the information provided as outlined in 4.1. As such, payment by result criteria as well as central targets will not be satisfied.

- 4.3 The TF team work in partnership with a range of services (internal and external) to ensure that information on identified troubled families is accurate, and updated where necessary. Family data held within MASH plays an essential role in the identification of families across the breadth of the themed criteria (see 2.9), given the level of sensitive information passing through this service area, robust information sharing agreements (ISA) have been drawn. At the time this report was written, this ensured that a select number of the TF team had a continuous rotation based directly within the MASH team. This approach to identifying families is unique; however, the need for robust information governance and ISA's is an essential component to the programme. As such, the TF team are working closely with the relevant service area to ensure compliance is adhered.
- 4.4 For Phase 2 the number of families has increased from 360 over three years (2012-2015) to 1160 over five years (2015-2020). The authority has committed to working with 197 in the first year (2015-2016). As mentioned, this represents a 3.2 increase from Phase 1. However, the overall payment by result and attachment fee total will be significantly less, moving from £4,000 to £1,800 (£2,200 difference). This reduction clearly indicates the need for SMARTER working, and this has been addressed across the range of recommendations as set out in section 1.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not Applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 Although not a statutory agency, the success of Troubled Families Programme in Thurrock aims to positively impact on the outcomes and resources of other services and agencies, to significantly and sustainably improve the quality of life for families and communities.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**
Finance Manager

The immediate financial implications of the programme are included in the main body of the report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Principal Solicitor Children's Safeguarding

At present there are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

This is an update report that refers to the council's Troubled Families support service and the provision provided for those families affected by domestic violence, relationship breakdown, mental and physical health problems and isolation. The Children's Services directorate maintains data on service users to date and notes no specific equality and diversity implications arising from this information.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

No other implications.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Financial Framework for the Troubled Families Programme (2015)
- Troubled Families criteria and nomination details, finance details sent from DCLG

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: DCLG Financial Framework 2015
- Appendix 2: Thurrock Troubled Family Outcome Plan (for information purposes only)

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