



Brent

**One Council Overview and
Scrutiny Committee**

10 July 2013

**Report from the Director of
Children & Families**

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Update on Working with Families Programme

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the Working with Families (WwF) One Council Programme.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be considered and noted.

3. The objectives of the Working with Families Initiative

- 3.1 The WwF Initiative was established as a One Council Programme in 2012 aiming to:
- Successfully work with 810 'Troubled Families' under the CLG programme (increase educational attainment, decrease crime and anti-social behaviour, and reduce unemployment)
 - Mainstream the Troubled Families approach/principles to put in place whole systems change for a broader cohort to ensure that all families in Brent receive the 'right support, from the right agencies at the right time'
 - Embed a partnership approach to tackling the intergenerational cycle of family dysfunction by sharing (and maximising) expertise and resources and shift the culture of professionals towards being more family focussed
 - Put in place multi-agency management data and monitoring systems to track families and better understand outcomes that are being achieved, including understanding how better intervention with families avoids cost in 'acute' and reactive services
 - Reduce the numbers of young people coming into care by providing targeted, preventative early help

4. Brent's approach to the delivery of the national Troubled Families Programme

4.1 Brent started the Troubled Families (TF) Programme without an existing Family Intervention Programme or Early Help Service in place. Rather than using the TF Programme solely to set up a TF Team, the WwF programme took the approach of wider systems change targeted at reducing the pressures on the social care placement budget, enabling social workers to do better quality work with those who need it most and addressing the concerns raised by Ofsted at the lack of early help service for stepping up and stepping down from social care. The WwF Programme aims to achieve 'whole systems change' with the aim that all agencies would work in a more family-focused way. This approach has been made very explicit to CLG on their visits and they have been very positive about our approach.

5. Organisational change brought about through Working with Families?

5.1 Through the Working with Families programme and utilising the Troubled Families funding as well as General Fund and DSG, the programme has established the following services in Children and Families Directorate:

5.2 **Early Help and Family Support Team:** This is a team of 27 staff who work with 'troubled families' already identified, support the identification of further troubled families and co-ordinate the team around the family. The staff have all been trained in the assertive and persistent key worker methodologies advocated by Louise Casey, national Troubled Families lead. The team was recruited during late 20/02/13 and has been fully up and running since May 2013. CLG (Ian Brady and Robert McCullough Graham) were impressed with the quality of the team and how they have been trained. In addition to working with the troubled families cohort, the team also receives all CAF referrals and works on a step up/step down basis with the social care teams to improve the range of support available to families and relieve pressure on Locality Social Care Teams. The key worker is able to access and co-ordinate support for troubled families from aligned services and some spot purchased services, such as mentoring support, relationship support and counselling. Children's Centres play a key role for those with younger children.

5.3 **Family Front Door:** This is the Brent version of 'MASH' (multi agency safeguarding hub) which is due to 'go live' in July 2013. It is a new multi-agency team that will act as a first point of contact for all referrals that are received by the Council relating to children and families with additional needs. As a multi-disciplinary team they will:

- Receive all initial referrals from concerned practitioners and members of the public (including those relating to potential 'Troubled Families');
- Where necessary carry out a thorough information gathering process across partner agency data systems to build a picture of the whole family circumstance (i.e. via a 'MASH' process);
- Reach a joint decision about the most appropriate onwards referral route for the individual family.
- Ensure that the family are put in contact with the services that they require.

5.4 **New Edge of Care Services:** This includes the **Family & Adolescent Support Team (FAST)** which gets involved with a family at point of crisis with the objective of diverting an adolescent (10 years and over) from the care system whenever safe to do so. The other component is the **Family Assessment and Intervention Resource (FAIR team)** which addresses the gap in assessment and intervention services for families with younger children where care proceedings are under active consideration, working to ensure as far as possible that the family can be supported to stay together. This service partly is a response to the new duties under the Family Justice Review, with the requirement to complete care proceedings within 26 weeks. It is upon the success of these new 'edge of care services' that the planned savings of £852k in the children's placement budget is partly dependent.

6. Partnership involvement

6.1 Governance of the project has been through a Strategic Board consisting of CMT members and senior representatives from health and the police. More recently to implement the Aligned Services Strategy, an Operational Board has been set up with middle management representatives from all agencies, including the police, voluntary sector, education, health and which is well supported and attended.

6.2 Alongside setting up of the Brent Family Solutions team, an 'Aligned Services Strategy' was developed to establish an action plan for multi-agency working around the family. The majority of the actions in the plan have been implemented or are being implemented. It is monitored and progressed through the WwF Operational Board.

6.3 The Brent Family Solutions team is co-located with social care colleagues, YOS, Education Welfare and the Family Front Door while a domestic violence worker, a substance misuse worker and a JCP adviser are integrated into the team. The Family Nurse Partnership will also be aligned closely with the team when it is established. In order for work with troubled families to be really successful, there needs to be adoption of a family oriented approach to work across relevant agencies, with the 'lead worker' role adopted in teams beyond the Brent Family Solutions team where appropriate. Guidance for agencies on how this works has been signed off by the Operational Board and has been used with the YOS, EWOs, Health Visitors and others. This has resulted in information being shared appropriately and some families being worked with in a family-focused way, as opposed to an individual child or young person approach. More work and training is in place over the next few weeks to extend this.

7. Progress in delivery of the Troubled Families Programme

7.1 Brent has committed to working with 810 families over the three years of the Programme. These can be broken down as follows:

	Target	Actual
Year 1 (12/13) number of TF identified	300	303
Year 2 (13/14) number of TF identified	405	100 to date
Year 3 (14/15) number of TF identified	105	-

Year 1 number of TF being worked with	303	101 reported as at April 2013 303 to be reported at 8 th July 2013
Year 1 number of TF where outputs have been achieved	75	*75 to be reported – 24 th July 2013

*Outputs achieved: regular school attendance and no reoffending. Employment outcomes awaiting DWP data match.

7.2 The introduction of the Family Front Door is key to better identification of troubled families and identifying the next cohort.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The Project Initiation Document (PID) agreed by the Strategic Board in October 2012 set out funding sources and proposed use of funding. Total cash funding for the project is between £2.155m and £3.105m over three years depending on the extent to which Troubled Families targets are hit.

8.2 Troubled Families grant of between £2.05m and £3m consisting of:

- £300k over three years toward co-ordination of the Troubled Families Programme;
- An estimated £1.75m over three years as attachment fees for working with 810 families¹;
- A potential additional £950k total reward grant if all Troubled Families targets are hit.

8.3 The PID set out proposed use of £2.3m funding as follows:

- £300k toward the cost of setting up the Working with Families project
- £200k as a one-off contribution to costs of setting up the Family Front Door
- £1.2m over three years (£400k per annum) to fund additional Family Support Workers;
- £600k over three years (£200k per annum) to fund other additional interventions. This is funding the edge of care services and the initial costs of locating social workers in the Family Front Door.

¹ Attachment fee is £3,200 per family in 2012/13, £2,400 per family in 2013/14, and £1,600 per family in 2014/15 and applies to 5/6ths of the total number of families. The £1.75m total is based on the current profile for working with families in the Troubled Families cohort

8.4 The project budget made the modest assumption that Brent would receive a minimum of £145k reward grant with any further reward grant above £145k being recycled into further interventions as part of the Working with Families Programme.

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 The work being undertaken through the Troubled Families project is compliant with the requirements to achieve the relevant funding. Advice has been taken in respect of the protocol for sharing information and agreement has been reached between all the relevant organisations for the information to be shared. Advice will be provided as required.

10.0 Diversity Implications

10.1 A predictive equalities impact assessment has been carried out in respect of the WwF programme. Clearly the Troubled Families are from groups who are socio-economically vulnerable and are often led by women who have been subject to domestic violence or other problems. Given the very diverse nature of Brent's population, the Family Solutions Team has to take account of widely varying family issues and needs and show considerable understanding of cultural issues.

11.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

11.1 The programme has recruiting additional staff. Part of the programme's work is to develop the future sustainability of the programme to avoid the work with complex families ending when the project funding ends.

Contact Officers

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