

**Decision Maker:** Care Services  
Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013

**Decision Type:** Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

**Title:** **TACKLING TROUBLED FAMILIES**

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**Chief Officer:** Terry Parkin, Executive Director

**Ward:** Boroughwide

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1. Reason for report

1.1 This report provides an update on the Tackling Troubled Families initiative in Bromley.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 **The Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and comment on the content of the report.**

### Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
  2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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### Financial

1. Cost of proposal: n/a
  2. Ongoing costs: n/a
  3. Budget head/performance centre: 132563 – Troubled Families Grant
  4. Total current budget for this head: £476k
  5. Source of funding: Funding over 3 years from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on a payment by results basis.
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### Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 11 FTE
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Contribution for the hours spent by the Assistant Director for Children's Safeguarding & Social Care, the Head of Service for Referral & Assessment and Early Intervention, the Manager of the Bromley Children Project and the Bromley Children Project Early Intervention Assurance Officer.
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### Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable
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### Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 490 families over 3 years
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### Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

### 3. COMMENTARY

#### Tackling Troubled Families Programme

3.1 The report to the Care Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee in October 2013 provided an update and outlined a request for draw down of funding for year two of the programme. The Tackling Troubled Families project is a Government initiative based on payment by results focusing on local authorities supporting households who:

- **Are involved in crime and anti social behaviour (ASB)** - Household where a young person has a proven offence in the last 12 months and / or where one or more family member has been subject to an ASB intervention in the last 12 months.
- **Have children not in school, training or employment** - Household affected by truancy or exclusion from school where a young person has a history of school exclusions, is in a pupil referral unit or has 15 % unauthorised absences in the last 3 terms.
- **Have an adult on out of work benefits** - Once the above criteria have been identified, those who are out of work and claiming benefits.
- **Cause high cost to the public purse** - Local discretion to add families meeting any 2 of the above criteria and where there is a cause for concern. These may include families subject to child protection plans where there is a risk a child may be accommodated, families subject to frequent police call outs, families where there are health problems such as emotional and mental health problems, drug and alcohol misuse and health problems caused by domestic abuse. There is no payment by results award that can be claimed against these criteria.

#### 3.2 The Bromley Approach to Tackling Troubled Families

3.2.1 The Tackling Troubled Families programme is coordinated through the Bromley Children Project (BCP) and delivered through a number of work streams. These are cross cutting across council departments and agencies and require an integrated approach to working with partners. These include the Anti-social Behaviour Unit, Youth Offending Team, education support to children not attending school through the Education Welfare Service and services that support families not in work. This aims to ensure a multi-agency approach to families with multi faceted problems, build on systems and structures already in place and further develop innovative interventions with troubled families. The project is reliant upon verification against the criteria of large amounts of data provided to the Tackling Troubled Families Team by services. This is to verify whether families meet the criteria and to report outcomes achieved through intervention by these services.

3.2.2 LB Bromley will work with 490 families across 3 years. This has attracted revenue income as attachment grant funding to the Council for 163 families in Year 1 totalling £535,200, 245 families in Year 2 totalling £589,600, and 82 families in Year 3 totalling £208,800. Due to the nature of payment by results and the

necessity to provide evidence for outcomes for individual families, the final income total for the payment by results element for each year is not set or guaranteed.

### 3.3 Progress

3.3.1 The Project Board continues to meet quarterly and is chaired by the Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Social Care.

3.3.2 The operational steering group that includes the leads for the key work streams is chaired by the Head of Service for Referral, Assessment and Early Intervention and continues to meet monthly.

3.3.3 The identification of families continues. Bromley are required to identify and turn around 490 families over a 3 year period between 2012 and 2015. To date we have attached 442 (90%) to the project. This is higher than expected for year 2 and is encouraging

Year	Target	Achieved	%	490 target	%
2012/13	163	163	<b>100</b>	163	33
2013/14	245	279*	<b>113*</b>	442	90

\*Need to be verified with the Department for Work and Pensions

As of Oct 2013 Bromley were:

- 1st of 11 Statistical Neighbours for % of families worked with
- 2nd of 8 Geographical Neighbours for % of families worked with
- 8th of 11 Statistical Neighbours for % of families turned around
- 5th of 8 Geographical Neighbours for % of families turned around

The current National picture (Oct 2013) over:

- 92k troubled families have been identified
- 62k troubled families are being worked with
- 22k troubled families have already been turned around Source: (DCLG 2013)

3.3.4 Internal Audit has been integrated into the TTF programme in Bromley and completed an audit of the project in July 2013. This was positive and took place before we had submitted our first set of outcomes to DCLG. They have advised they intend undertaking a further audit sometime in 2014. Ensuring appropriate verification against the criteria is important as in one case a local authority had to claw back a significant number of the outcomes submitted following its audit and were unable to claim their expected payment by results. Within LB Bromley we have taken a cautious approach to ensure all submissions are valid and would pass audit scrutiny.

3.3.5 Submissions for payment by results are made at times arranged by DCLG. At the end of October 2013, Bromley submitted claims for 52 families. This earned an income of £30,900 as result payments. We are expecting to submit between 80-100 claims for February /March 2014. Based on the already confirmed 80 families this should provide at least a further £44,800 through payment by results. This is subject to change due to:-

- Increase in identified families
- Potential for some of those families to attract the £800 reward, rather than the £700 reward.

3.3.6 Families attached to the programme may benefit from family support. Using tackling troubled families funding we had initially recruited 4 family support practitioners and following agreement at PDS in October 2013, we have recruited a further 4 staff to fulfil this role. Between 150 –160 families have been referred for this support and the following examples provide practitioner accounts of what has been achieved against selected criteria:

***Anti-Social Behaviour/ Domestic Violence***

*1. 11+ Practitioner has 10 cases of children impacted by domestic violence. She undertook intensive 1-2-1 work with all the mothers and included referrals to the Freedom Programme/ Relate; discussing the impact of domestic violence on the emotional and physical well-being of the child. So far there has been a reduction in the instances of reported domestic violence due to this support, the children are now in a more caring and nurturing environment where each mother recognises and acknowledges the negative impact of domestic violence on children.*

***Not in Education, Employment or Training.***

*1. Practitioner reports working with a young person who had turned 16 and left school at this stage. The referral was from Children’s Social Care and all children within the family were subject to child protection plans. The practitioner supported the young person to enrol on a hair and beauty apprenticeship and has reduced the need for ongoing support.*

*2. Supporting children who were at risk of being excluded from school due to poor attendance where the decision was over turned as the family support practitioner attended professionals’ meetings to advocate for parent. This encouraged good school attendance/behaviour by allocating funding for child to purchase books, art and cooking materials. School attendance for 2 of the children improved, mother is now engaging and attending appointments and the eldest daughter is now attending college.*

***Adult not in Work***

*1. Practitioner supported father to find employment by attending the Job Centre where he was helped and eventually secured paid employment*

*2. Practitioner supported a mother in setting up her own business by referring to the Community Resource Centre in Mottingham.*

*3. Mother of one had not been receiving benefits for a period of 5 months and was relying on the charity of friends and food banks. Practitioner supported mother to update her CV, and source financial help for clothing for the family. As a result, mum was successful in securing full time employment, enabling her to buy food and clothing for the first time in 5 months.*

***Edge of Care***

*1. Practitioner reconciled mother and teenage daughter by working intensively 1-2-1 on their relationship, thereby no longer requiring statutory social work services.*

***Substance Misuse***

*1. Practitioner supported father with drug misuse by supporting him to attend the Bromley Drug and Alcohol Service (BDAS).*

*2. Practitioner encouraged mum to attend BDAS on a regular basis and the result of this has been very successful. Mum has not used drugs for 2 months, the house is calmer and routines are in place within the home. Mum is now engaging fully with the school to*

*improve the academic achievements of her boys. The attendance of her two boys has also improved steadily and the home is a happier and safer environment.*

*3. Mother was a chronic alcoholic living with her 17 year old son who has a life limiting illness. Both were living in privately rented accommodation that was unsuitable for such a sick young man to be living in. Mum was known to leave the home to collect her son's prescription and not return for days, having gone on a drinking binge. Joint work between children's social care and the tackling troubled families' practitioner enabled mum to take responsibility for her actions and not prioritise alcohol over her son. A housing application was made and the family were successful and provided with more suitable accommodation. Mum has stopped using alcohol and has continued to receive support from Stepping Stones. The family decorated their new home to a very high standard and recently moved in. Mother was proud to announce to me that it has now been 6 months alcohol free.*

### ***Mental Health***

*1. Practitioner encouraged and attended Stepping Stones with mother who has severe mental health problems and was previously not engaging in mental health services. She is now receiving regular on-going support. This has improved her ability to provide emotional / practical support regarding her parenting, self-esteem and confidence. She is now parenting better and more able to put boundaries in place for her family.*

- 3.3.7 Members have previously asked about the impact of the project and what savings to the Council the programme is expected to make. The Tackling Troubled Families Unit at the Department of Communities and Local Government has advised they are developing a model to be used by local authorities that should be available in April / May 2014. They have asked that local authorities await the publication of this tool to ensure consistency for measuring outcomes across England.

## **3.4 Risk Management**

- 3.4.1 Risks to the Council are minimal and have been raised in previous reports to the Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee. Although not confirmed the Tackling Troubled Families Unit has indicated that they would want to look closely at any local authority who failed to meet outcomes in phase 1 of the programme before committing funding to phase 2 after 2015.

## **4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The development of the tackling troubled families programme contributes to Building a Better Bromley priorities.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Bromley received the ring fenced grant allocation for 2012/13, totalling £535,200. The total grant allocation of £535,200 for 2012/13 was held in the central contingency.
- 5.2 The attachment funding to the Local Authority for Year 2 totals £489,600 with an additional £100,000 for coordination fees. Consequently, for 2013/14, Bromley received grant funding of £589,600 from DCLG. Based on a target to attach a further 82 families for Year 3, the attachment funding available for year 3 (2014/15) is £208,800.

- 5.4 Government have announced the continuation of TTF funding after 2015 but the financial details and attachment criteria have not yet been published. Following representations made by local authorities across the country it is likely these will change in order to focus on children at a younger age and local priorities.
- 5.5 In order to attract the Payment by Results funding each year it is essential that the local authority is able to clearly demonstrate the families it has supported, how they meet the criteria, the outcomes achieved and the impact on those families.

**6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Following the report to PDS in October 2013, the project has recruited a data analyst and 4 extra family support practitioners. All employees are on fixed term contracts as it was unknown whether the project would continue to be funded after 2015. Funding post 2015 has now been confirmed by Government.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Legal Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	CYP PDS 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2012. Department for Communities and Local Government Initiative – Tackling Troubled Families CYP PDS 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2012. Review of the Tackling Troubled Families Initiative for Bromley. Care Services PDS October 2013 – Tackling Troubled Families - Grant drawdown