

**TO: THE EXECUTIVE**  
**31 March 2015**

---

**FAMILY FOCUS UPDATE REPORT**  
**Director of Children Young People & Learning**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's progress and successful delivery of Phase 1 the Family Focus Programme (known nationally as the Troubled Families programme), and to seek agreement to the proposals being made in respect of delivering Phase 2 of the programme.

**2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Phase 1 of the National Troubled Families Programme is due to conclude in May 2015. Bracknell Forest (BFC) has been extremely successful in completing the target set, of turning around the lives of 115 families at an early stage. This achievement resulted in our performance being in the top quartile of local authorities nationally. During this process systemic changes to practice have been made and new ways of working introduced that have improved the effectiveness of working holistically with families and have produced significant and sustainable outcomes.
- 2.2 The Team's achievement has been formerly acknowledged by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who as a consequence have invited BFC to engage with the second phase of the programme at an earlier stage.
- 2.3 As an 'early starter' BFC will continue to work with partners to develop Phase 2 of this programme that will run for 5 years and has cross party support. The first year's funding has been approved and further funding support has been allocated to those early starters.
- 2.4 The expansion of this programme will focus on the existing areas of concern e.g. school attendance, youth crime and anti-social behaviour and adults out of work, but it will also incorporate the learning from the first phase and reach out to families with a broader range of problems such as domestic abuse, physical and mental health and younger children that need help.
- 2.5 The new programme will be a key element of the early help strategy and provide a significant component of the tier 2 offer. The programme represents a key challenge and will require a consistent approach across partners and multidisciplinary teams.

**3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 **That the progress and success of Phase 1 of the programme is noted.**
- 3.2 **That the progression into Phase 2 of the potentially longer, five year programme, on the proposed basis set out in the body of the report is noted.**
- 3.3 **That the outline budget plan set out in Annex 2 is agreed.**

## **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 This programme is a high priority nationally and it represents a key component of the Borough's Early Intervention Strategy.

## **5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The alternative is to continue with the current pattern of service delivery with escalating costs for specialist and acute services and increasing demand for those services. These are areas of statutory expenditure, which will drive up costs to the Council. This is particularly acute in the areas of children's social care, excluded pupils and youth crime. This will result in additional financial pressure on demand led services being placed on already stretched budgets all of which impact on the department's work on Prevention and Early Intervention.

## **6 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### Background

- 6.1 Phase 1 of Troubled Families was a three year programme that commenced in 2012, part funded by the government on a payment by results basis. The programme aimed to improve outcomes for those children and families with complex needs. In addition, the programme was expected to lower costs and reduce future expenditure by lowering dependency on Council funded services.
- 6.2 The Prime Minister confirmed his intention to ensure that 120,000 troubled families would be 'turned around' by the end of this Parliament. Those families were characterised by there being no adult in the family working, children not being in school and family members being involved in crime and/or anti-social behaviour.
- 6.3 These families almost always have other, often long-standing, problems which can lead to their children repeating the cycle of disadvantage. Estimates suggest that over half of all children who are permanently excluded from school in England come from these families, as do one-in-five young offenders.
- 6.4 Other problems such as domestic violence, relationship breakdown, mental and physical health problems, substance misuse, poverty and isolation make it incredibly hard for families to start unravelling their problems. Therefore the issues tend to remain unresolved and can become entrenched.
- 6.5 The cost of these families to the public purse is significant – approximately £9 billion a year, the vast majority spent on reacting to their problems. Most importantly, the majority of that money is not necessarily providing lasting results and changing lives.

### Prevention & Early Intervention

- 6.6 BFC is committed to invest in prevention and early intervention. The key purpose is to put in place the systems and processes which will channel the Council's resources and investment to identify needs early and take swift action to prevent family needs from escalating and requiring high cost specialist and statutory services. It will also have other direct benefits for example reducing the incidence of school exclusion and truancy; improving school attendance; promoting safer behaviour and less risk taking behaviour and reduction in anti-social behaviour and youth crime; reducing

## Unrestricted

substance misuse; reducing teenage and unwanted pregnancy and reducing worklessness.

- 6.7 BFC's Approach to Prevention and Early Intervention sets out the Council's commitment to improving outcomes and well-being of residents, as well as aiming to achieve better value for money. The Family Focus programme aligns with the Council's stated approach and represents a key delivery strand of the overarching strategy. It is also a key deliverable within the early help offer.
- 6.8 The key aim of the BFC programme was to avoid families progressing to requiring high cost, statutory children's social care services and providing ongoing support to those families that can be stepped down. In this respect, the programme has been very successful. BFC has been working on the original programme since January 2012. Its key objectives were to:
- Improve timely access to holistic support for families with complex and multiple problems
  - Ensure a clear process to get the right level of support for families
  - Improve the range and quality of services for families
  - Ensure improved transition at each key stage in a child's/young person's life
  - Drive systemic change
- 6.9 The government has estimated that the average unit cost of intensive interventions that are known to work with families facing the most complex needs is around £15,000 per annum. In this programme, the government has made available up to £4,000 for local authorities to deliver an agreed package of support for each troubled family, up to a maximum agreed target number, which for BFC is 115 families, with local partners required to make up the rest of the investment.
- 6.10 Funding for Phase 1 of the programme has mainly comprised grant from the DCLG for which there are 4 elements; a one-off start up grant of £0.020m, an annual Transformation Grant of £0.075m to finance co-ordination and management of the programme; guaranteed attachment fees for each family being worked with; Payment by Results grant paid only on successfully meeting the targets. To provide a greater financial incentive to achieve success, amounts of attachment fees reduce over the course of the programme, with payments by results grants increasing. In addition to the grant income, the Council agreed to invest £0.1m in the programme from the Prevention and Early Intervention Reserve
- 6.11 Annex 1 sets out the actual and forecast financial performance of Phase 1. This shows forecast spend of £0.623m, DCLG grant income of £0.6m and £0.023m draw down from the BFC Prevention and Early Intervention Reserve.

### Establishing a new way of working

- 6.12 A multi-agency project team was established from a range of professionals across the council and voluntary and public service partners, this multi-agency approach greatly improved service delivery.
- 6.13 One of the key changes included each family having a named Lead Professional, an individual support plan which was delivered by a named key worker and a multi-agency team. The process looked at the barriers faced by the whole family, building on the family's strengths and providing support tailored to meet assessed need. This successful model of working is transferring to other family support services to strengthen outcomes and further develop value for money.

## Unrestricted

- 6.14 One of the key challenges was the sharing of confidential and sensitive information across partners and agencies. This was particularly acute in relation to Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) information. To address this a memorandum of understanding has been developed with each local authority that allows local information to be shared monthly. The Council has secured a dedicated DWP worker to work directly with the most complex families to reduce the risk of financial exclusion.

### Achievements to date

- 6.15 BFC's most recent payment by results return demonstrated a 100% success rate (115 families). These cases have now been closed, however the key workers will maintain in contact via monthly telephone calls, where appropriate, to ensure that they do not re-enter the system and incur ongoing costs.
- 6.16 The development of the Council funded Early Intervention Hub has also been instrumental and has played a critical part in the success of the whole programme. A range of multi-agency professionals triage each case for the best focused intervention. The new family CAF has supported this activity and professionals send appropriate referrals to the Family Focus team for immediate action.
- 6.17 The project was externally audited by the DCLG and no significant issues were identified and a strong handle on data was demonstrated. No follow up actions were required and it was recommended that BFC would not need to be spot checked again during this phase of the programme.
- 6.18 A range of other key activities are supporting the work of Family Focus:
- Using complex case discussions for those families that have been through many services, over many years, and still not turned around has had some remarkable results. In one case this has resulted in a managed move back into mainstream education for the young person. Mum's general wellbeing and mental health has improved dramatically and the relationship between mother and son has become more 'normalised'. This example was used as a case study for the South East Strategic Leaders Report.
  - The credit union is rolling out their full range of services in Bracknell Forest to provide a low cost debt management solution to families and prevent them and others from falling into further debt by turning to door step lenders that charge very high interest rates. Additionally *Money Matters* programmes are being offered to all secondary schools.
  - In partnership with Public Health a new specialist nurse post has been developed to work across the BFC area in a range of community settings and homes. This expert practitioner, in contraceptive sexual health, will deliver services to women at high risk of unintended pregnancy and poor sexual health and optimise their holistic sexual health care. They will also assess and provide wider health information, advice and support to targeted vulnerable families and refer onto specialist services if/where appropriate
  - A Family Intervention Team is now in place and working more effectively in meeting the needs of complex families. This results from a re-organisation of existing Teams and roll-out of the new, improved ways of working.
  - Training and Development of all family workers across a range of teams and organisations has been central to this programme. Most of the staff within existing teams have achieved a minimum level 3 NVQ 'Working with Complex

## Unrestricted

Families' and many have a level 4 or are working towards. Other training includes; risk assessments, relationship training through Relate, benefits training, etc.

### Future Programme and Funding Mechanism

- 6.19 The DCLG have confirmed that the government's Troubled Families programme will continue into a second phase with a further £200 million in funding from the treasury in 2015-2016. This is expected to be year one of a further five year programme, with a 45% increase on the annual funding provided for Phase 1. Funding beyond 2015-16 will be dependent on outcomes from the next spending review. However, it is planned that this additional funding will extend the intensive support to 400,000 high risk families to prevent problems spiralling out of control.
- 6.20 In the 2014 budget the Government announced two important next steps:
- Firstly, the Government has set out the requirement about the types of families they want to be reached in the expanded programme. In order to attract funding programmes must continue to reach families affected by poor school attendance, crime, anti-social behaviour and unemployment; reach families with vulnerable children to help them when they are younger; plus focus on big concerns such as domestic violence and mental and physical health.
  - Secondly only those local authorities that have successfully met the targets and requirements of the phase 1 programme will be eligible to commence phase 2 and receive the appropriate funding.
- 6.21 The DCLG confirmed that BFC's success and excellent progress in delivering the current Troubled Families Programme means that it is now eligible to join the second wave of 'early starter' areas for the expanded Troubled Families Programme. The early starters are considered to be the best performing areas in the country.
- 6.22 The DCLG has estimated that the total number of families eligible in BFC for inclusion in the five year expanded programme is approximately 380, a significant increase on previous targets. This figure is subject to change as further data analysis will inform the assessment of the distribution of families across the country and for BFC specifically.
- 6.23 The early starter aspect of the programme will commence at the beginning of 2015 and 19 (5% of the total estimated allocation) additional families are required to be signed up in this period. An attachment fee of £0.019m will be given to the LA for targeted work specifically with these families together with £0.019m as a supplement to the existing Transformation Grant.
- 6.24 During Phase 2, the DCLG will be focusing on the following:
- The development of an independent national evaluation for the expanded Troubled Families Programme
  - The completion and continued improvement of the Troubled Families online cost savings calculator
  - The design and implementation of a new system of Family Progress Data
  - The refinement of the indicators suggested to identify families and the development of best practice approaches to measuring significant and sustained progress with families

## Unrestricted

- The design of the 'spot check' process for results and engagement of local authority Internal Auditors in the approval of local results claims; and
  - The introduction of a model of transparent local accountability for the success of the programme as a tool to drive greater service transformation, using streamline data collection tools
- 6.25 The Early Intervention Hub remains a central element of the Family Focus work and will be key to the ongoing success of Family Focus by providing an important pathway to targeted support and early intervention with families in need. The Hub has provided an effective mechanism to implement the Family CAF, to undertake triage of those families that have met the criteria for Family Focus support, and to facilitate the coordinated support around families that have stepped down from Tier three services with the aim of preventing them stepping back up to Tier three services. This process will continue to improve with the next phase of the programme developing a stronger interface with tier 3 enabling appropriate step down cases to be targeted for support and tracked on their progress.
- 6.26 As the project grows there will be a greater requirement on services to share information. There is an expectation that data bases will be accessible and many authorities are already investigating the options to join up their existing databases into one accessible function.
- 6.27 Each local authority will be required to develop a Family Outcomes Plan which will record each family's achievement of 'significant and sustained' progress that will be assessed against a locally defined Troubled Family Outcomes Plan that will be signed off by the DCLG. The Plans should be agreed as a local authority wide set of expectations, although they should be based on outcomes which may then be applied on a per family basis. This will provide a more localised flexible approach to measuring results.
- 6.28 Funding for Phase 2 will be different to Phase 1. Each LA can expect to receive around double the level of Transformation Grant currently being received, which equates to £0.15m for BFC. The increase reflects the greater challenges from a bigger programme, wider service transformation and increased requirements on the provision of data and information on progress. Attachment fees and payment by results will remain but are simplified and remain constant throughout the programme at £1,000 and £800 per family respectively. Should all the targets be made, then over the 5 year period, including the early starter funding, a grant of £1.453m will be received. To fully fund the intended programme, it is recommended that the balance of funding allocated to Phase 1 of the programme from the Prevention and Early Intervention Reserve, currently estimated at £0.077m, is carried forward for use in Phase 2.
- 6.29 Annex 2 sets out a draft budget plan for Phase 2 which is recommended for approval. The key components of the budget are:
- Staffing, including management, co-ordination, data collection and verification, Education Psychology, Family Workers, Children In Need step down
  - General running costs, including office expenses, training and ICT
  - Externally commissioned external services, including Relate and the Credit Union
  - Direct family interventions

## Unrestricted

- 6.30 Separate to the Family Focus work, Bracknell Forest Council has secured one of just 24 government grants available to local authorities, to help re-design local delivery of its services. The £87,500 funding is part of the DCLG 'Delivering Differently in Neighbourhoods' programme which is supporting successful councils to transform services at a neighbourhood level to meet the challenges of reduced public expenditure and increasing customer demand. The successful bid is focusing on very early help for families, the funding will see council staff working with local people and voluntary and community organisations to develop and pilot new approaches for delivering services at neighbourhood level. This project will align with the Troubled Families programme and strengthen the very Early Help Offer.
- 6.31 The current Troubled Families Programme has driven significant changes in the ways that local authorities, government departments and local partner agencies systematically share information to identify and work with troubled families. This is specifically the case in BFC. The expanded programme offers an opportunity to build and extend upon this area of important public service transformation.

## **7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The contents of this report are noted

### Borough Treasurer

- 7.2 The anticipated financial implications arising from this report are set out in the supporting information. Due to the unpredictable nature of dealing with Troubled Families, and with significant elements of grant funding yet to be confirmed, or dependant on meeting success criteria, there is a risk that costs could ultimately exceed income. The budget will be closely monitored to evaluate the need to take management actions.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 N/A

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 If indicative funding allocations from year 1 are lower than anticipated or DCLG targets for Troubled Families are not met this will result in less income being received than included in the current budget. This will be managed by regular budget monitoring and recruitment of staff on temporary contracts to allow for managed reduction in expenditure, if required.
- 7.5 Environmental and economic factors increase pressure on acute and specialist services, increasing the number of families stepped down to tier 2 services creating a capacity issue.

## **8 CONSULTATION**

### Principal Groups Consulted

- 8.1 DASC, DAT, CSC, Voluntary Sector, Community Safety, LCSB Executive, CYP Partnership Board, Schools and Families.

### Method of Consultation

- 8.2 Meetings, focus groups, partnership boards, face to face discussions

### Representations Received

- 8.3 Included in the report.

### Background Papers

Financial Framework for the Expanded Troubled Families Programme November 2014

### Contact for further information

David Watkins: Chief Officer, Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention  
01344 354061  
David.watkins@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Karen Frost, Head of Prevention and Early Intervention  
01344 354024  
[karen.frost@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:karen.frost@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)



### Troubled Families Project Overview

	PILOT	PHASE 1 - 2012 to 2015			Total
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	
<b>B/Fwd</b>		-10,000	-78,793	-75,687	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
<b>Staffing</b>		91,162	196,346	242,513	530,021
<b>ICT</b>	10,000	17,944	2,129	14,480	44,553
<b>Bought in Services</b>		4,698	2,191	13,183	20,072
<b>Direct Interventions</b>		1,222	8,200	7,353	16,775
<b>General running costs</b>		3,181	4,340	4,526	12,047
<b>Sub Total Expenditure</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>118,207</b>	<b>213,206</b>	<b>282,055</b>	<b>623,468</b>
<b>INCOME</b>					
<b>DCLG Grant Income</b>					
Start-up grant	-20,000				-20,000
TF Co-ordinator Grant		-75,000	-75,000	-75,000	-225,000
Attachment Fee		-112,000	-110,400	-24,000	-246,400
Payment by Results			-24,700	-83,883	-108,583
<b>BFC Prevention and Early Intervention Reserve</b>				-23,485	-23,485
<b>Sub Total Income</b>	<b>-20,000</b>	<b>-187,000</b>	<b>-210,100</b>	<b>-206,368</b>	<b>-623,468</b>
<b>Total (c/fwd)</b>	<b>-10,000</b>	<b>-78,793</b>	<b>-75,687</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>

### Troubled Families Project Overview

	PHASE 2 - 2015 to 2020						
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
<b>B/Fwd</b>		<b>-36,500</b>	<b>-9,648</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>							
<b>Staffing</b>	1,500	241,540	246,371	251,298	256,324	261,618	1,258,650
<b>Training &amp; Conferences</b>		2,000	2,020	2,040	2,061	2,081	10,202
<b>ICT</b>		7,000	7,070	7,141	7,212	7,284	35,707
<b>Bought in Services</b>		19,750	19,993	20,237	20,485	20,221	100,685
<b>Direct Interventions</b>		21,812	22,030	22,250	22,473	22,698	111,263
<b>General running costs</b>		2,550	2,576	2,601	2,627	2,654	13,008
<b>Sub Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>294,652</b>	<b>300,059</b>	<b>305,568</b>	<b>311,182</b>	<b>316,555</b>	<b>1,529,515</b>
<b>INCOME</b>							
<b>DCLG Grant Income</b>							
Start-up grant							0
TF Co-ordinator Grant	-19,000	-150,000	-150,000	-150,000	-150,000	-150,000	-769,000
Attachment Fee	-19,000	-57,000	-76,000	-76,000	-76,000	-76,000	-380,000
Payment by Results		-60,800	-60,800	-60,800	-60,800	-60,800	-304,000
<b>BFC Prevention and Early Intervention Reserve</b>		0	-3,611	-18,768	-24,382	-29,754	-76,515
<b>Sub Total Income</b>	<b>-38,000</b>	<b>-267,800</b>	<b>-290,411</b>	<b>-305,568</b>	<b>-311,182</b>	<b>-316,554</b>	<b>-1,529,515</b>
<b>Total (c/fwd)</b>	<b>-36,500</b>	<b>-9,648</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Note: The expenditure and income cash flows across years are illustrative and will vary depending on the actual timing of costs and the receipt of grant, most notably the reward element. Any year end over or under spending will need to be dealt with through the normal budget and accounts closedown processes to ensure that over the life of the project, the costs and income align, subject to any variance at the conclusion.