

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EDUCATION DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	1 JULY 2013	AGENDA ITEM:	12
TITLE:	TURNAROUND FAMILIES PROGRAMME		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an up-date on the Turnaround Families Programme, Reading's title for the Government's national Troubled Families Programme which aims to turnaround the lives of 120,000 'troubled families'.
- 1.2 The report provides a summary of the national context and Reading's ambition for the Turnaround Families Programme and services working with families with multiple needs. It then outlines the key developments and progress made to date.
- 1.3 In Reading, significant progress has already been made to deliver integrated 'early help' services providing support to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families at the earliest stage possible. Multi-disciplinary locality based Children's Action Teams (CATs) are well established and provide a range of preventative support to families with multiple needs. A Family Intervention Project (FIP) in Reading has also been effective in working very intensively with high need families and has recently been developed into an Edge of Care Service delivering short term intensive interventions to reduce the numbers of children coming into care and to help ensure swifter placement in care when this is the appropriate solution.

- 1.4 A consultation is about to be launched on Reading's first Early Help Strategy. This sets out plans to further develop the services which support those families who don't meet the criteria for Children's Social Care Services. Turnaround Families is one strand of a work programme contributing to service improvement in this context. Reading's ambition is that the programme will reshape services to better meet the needs of *all* local families with multiple needs. We aim to reduce the numbers of children and families needing higher tier more specialist services, and to achieve improved outcomes and lasting change for families.
- 1.5 The Government identified that Reading has an estimated 345 'troubled' families and the Council has committed to working with this number of families by 2015 under the programme. Although criteria for identification and inclusion in the programme are specified nationally, there is some flexibility to prioritise locally. At March 2013, 341 families had been identified who met two or more of the Government's criteria. The level of need of these families was then prioritised and at the end of May the Council had started to work with 105 families under the programme.
- 1.6 The Council is working with partners across a range of services and agencies to develop the key elements of the Turnaround Families approach, which are explained in more detail below. These also contribute to the action plan arising from the March 2013 Ofsted inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children.
- 1.7 A performance framework is currently being finalised that will enable a more robust and consistent approach to evaluating the impact of interventions for families through a range of outcome measures. This will be implemented across the majority of 'early help' services in Reading, not solely for the Turnaround Families cohort.

## 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note the report and endorse the development of the Turnaround Families Programme.

## 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Government's Troubled Families Programme aims to ensure that 120,000 troubled families in England are 'turned around' by 2015. It estimates that the annual cost of these families to the public purse is approximately £9 billion, £8 billion of which is spent on reacting rather than solving difficulties. The Government has estimated that Reading has 345 'troubled' families.

- 3.2 The Government is investing £448 million over 3 years, the majority of which will be made available to Local Authorities through a payment-by-results (PBR) scheme, to encourage and incentivise local authorities and their partners to develop new ways of working with families that focus on lasting change. The programme is led by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) but has a strong emphasis on cross-departmental working.
- 3.3. In April 2012 the DCLG published the Financial Framework for the Programme. This clearly sets out the expectations of the programme including the criteria for identifying troubled families, the outcomes to be achieved and the arrangements for payment-by-results.
- 3.4 The nationally set criteria for troubled families are households who:
- 1) Are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB)
  - 2) Have children not in school
  - 3) Have an adult on out of work benefits
  - 4) Cause high costs to the public purse (local discretion)
- 3.5 There are very specific definitions within each of the first three criteria. However, there is some flexibility afforded by the fourth criteria to prioritise locally in recognition that additional problems such as domestic violence, mental and physical health, relationship breakdown problems and isolation can make it very difficult for families to unravel problems and result in high cost to the local public purse.

#### 4. LOCAL CONTEXT

- 4.1 In response to the national Troubled Families Programme many local authorities are setting up integrated prevention teams or Family Intervention Projects where these have not previously existed in their authorities. In Reading, significant progress has already been made to deliver integrated 'early help' services. Multi-disciplinary locality based Children's Action Teams (CATs) are well established and provide a range of preventative support to families with multiple needs with the majority of referrals coming from Children's Social Care and schools. A Family Intervention Project (FIP) in Reading has been effective in working very intensively with families with complex needs and has recently been developed into an Edge of Care Service delivering short term intensive interventions to reduce the numbers of children coming into care and to help ensure swifter placement in care when this is the appropriate solution.
- 4.2 Opportunities remain however to ensure more seamless, clearer and efficient pathways into and through services; to prevent the revolving door syndrome and improve tracking of cases across services; and to develop more integrated approaches to screening, assessment, planning and service delivery.

- 4.3 A consultation is about to be launched on Reading's first Early Help Strategy. This sets out plans to further develop services which support those families who don't meet the criteria for Children's Social Care Services. The Turnaround Families programme is one strand of a work programme to deliver service improvements in this context. Reading's ambition is that the Turnaround Families programme will reshape services to better meet the needs of *all* local families with multiple needs. We aim to reduce the numbers of children and families needing higher tier more specialist services, and to achieve improved outcomes and lasting change for families.
- 4.4 Both the Early Help Strategy and the Turnaround Families Programme address issues arising from the recent Ofsted inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children. The Ofsted report noted that children and young people in the borough are benefiting from a diverse range of preventative services, and practitioners across the council and in partner agencies such as health are working together to ensure that more vulnerable children and families have more access to high quality early help. However, they highlighted the need to simplify pathways for families into and through services, and for ensuring greater joining up and consistency across teams in assessment and support planning. The report also noted that there was no clear system in place to judge the overall impact of early help services in improving outcomes for children. As detailed below, the Turnaround Family programme is driving service improvements in these key areas.
- 4.5 The Programme is being steered by the multi-agency Think Family Steering Group, a partnership group which includes Probation, Health, the Voluntary and Community Sector, Police, Housing, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and other relevant RBC services. The Steering Group reports into the inter-agency Next Generation of Children's Services Programme Board.
- 4.6 The Turnaround Families Programme is closely aligned with the development of the Edge of Care Strategy. A joint approach is being taken to the development of connected areas of the strategies to prevent duplication.
- 4.7 A Management Group with Service Manager representation from Children's Social Care, Children's Action Teams and Adult Social Care and Housing has been driving forward operational development of the programme. Work with the ASB team, Health, Probation, Police, Job Centre Plus, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and schools is also taking place to progress the programme.
- 4.8 The approach taken in Reading means that systems and approaches developed through the Turnaround Families programme will be applied across preventative services to meet the needs of families with multiple needs - regardless of whether they meet the Government criteria. However, a pragmatic approach to ensure swift implementation of the Government's Troubled Families Programme is also being taken.

## 5. PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENTS

### Identification of Families

- 5.1 Work has been carried out by the Council and key agencies to identify and prioritise families who the LA should be working with in the context of the programme. This has included the collation of information about the issues that families may be dealing with such as child protection, adult mental health issues, domestic violence, adult and youth substance misuse, adult crime and other health issues in line with priorities agreed by the Think Family Steering Group.
- 5.2 Taking a more proactive and coordinated approach to sharing information across services and agencies is enabling us to build a better understanding of families' needs and targeting of families who most need access to services rather than relying on referrals.
- 5.3 At March 2013, 341 families had been identified who met two or more of the Government's Troubled Families specified criteria relating to i) youth crime/anti-social behaviour; ii) education criteria (non-attendance/exclusion from school/at a pupil referral unit); iii) worklessness (and in receipt of benefits). The additional information described above about the range of challenges families are facing has been used to identify and prioritise those families eligible for support through the programme.
- 5.4 The Council had started to work with 87 families at March 2013 in the context of the programme. This increased to 104 at the end of May 2013. The aim is to have worked with 230 families by March 2014.
- 5.5 The process of identifying families is not 'static' or a one-off exercise. The cohort of families will change over time. There will be an annual refresh to ensure that new families eligible for the programme are identified. The first refresh has commenced and will be complete by end of July 2013. Services may additionally identify families meeting the criteria throughout the year.
- 5.6 The majority of families have been referred to one or more of our services at some stage but many were not in receipt of a targeted service at the point at which they were identified as eligible for the programme.
- 5.7 Managers have worked together across services to review individual cases, and have prioritised families and identified the level of action needed to support families in achieving sustainable positive outcomes.
- 5.8 This screening process has enabled the identification of patterns and issues 'bubbling under' in families to anticipate potential problems and prevent escalation. An example would be a family where a 16 year old was previously involved in crime and has completed their intervention with the Youth Offending Service (YOS), but younger siblings are also beginning to show signs of disengaging such as reduced school attendance. It has also enabled the identification of emerging themes across families. For example the

unmet needs of adults in relation to mental health issues particularly when they do not meet thresholds, are not always addressed (see below).

### Development of Key Approaches

- 5.9 A range of services and agencies are working together to develop key strands of an approach that will underpin the development of the full continuum of children and families support services in Reading including: key-working; single family assessment; 'team around the family'; and a Family Enablement (complex cases) Panel. A work stream focused on family and community engagement is being set up by July 2013. Partner agencies including representation from Voluntary and Community Services are linked into work streams as appropriate.
- 5.10 Key-worker Approach: We are building on existing good practice to strengthen and clarify expectations of the lead professional role. This ensures that families with multiple needs are allocated a key-worker who will actively co-ordinate the right support package for the family to help them achieve positive and sustained change, and will monitor progress against the Troubled Families outcomes. A range of professionals may act as a key-worker responsible for coordinating the plan for a family.
- 5.11 A rolling workforce development programme commenced in February 2013 to help practitioners to further develop skills and share and review good practice. The first three cohorts in the induction programme have included 55 colleagues from across housing, health, adult and children's services. A further 2 cohorts will run in 2013/14.
- 5.12 Single Family Assessment: In line with the new Working Together statutory guidance, Reading is rolling out the Signs of Safety model to form the basis of the assessment framework for all of Children's Services. A more consistent approach to undertaking assessment to ensure that all family members needs have been addressed is being developed.
- 5.13 Team Around the Family Approach: Strong foundations are in place in Reading going some way towards a holistic approach to family support. The 'Team Around the Family' approach is to be more widely developed and embedded across services at all tiers. Current work with Housing, Probation, ASB Teams, Police, Adult Social Care Services, Special Education Needs/ Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Services, Health services, Job Centre Plus, Children's Action Teams aims to strengthen links and establish clearer pathways between services and agencies who will contribute to assessments or the family support plan when needed.
- 5.14 The aim is that information sharing between agencies will be supported by one integrated plan and one key worker, reducing duplication and providing more seamless responses between agencies to the family.
- 5.15 Family Enablement Panel: A multi-agency Family Enablement Panel for families with complex needs has been set up. Selected cases are being

brought to the Panel where there is non-engagement in the plan or the plan is not working; risks are escalating; and solutions have not been found via service management escalation processes.

5.16 The Panel's key function is to provide a creative, solution focused multi-agency approach to ensure an effective support plan is put in place for a family and to help identify resource to deliver the plan if needed.

5.18 Community Engagement:

This work stream will focus on:

- building on community based and parent-to-parent peer support schemes already established such as the Parents Supporting Parents scheme in Sure Start Whitley, the Community Mums and Dads scheme commissioned by RBC, and work with the Voluntary and Community Sector to develop models that maximise volunteering and community support for more complex families;
- using mapping analysis of the Turnaround Families to consider the use of targeted locality-based responses (such as a 'Team Around the Street' approach, already successfully deployed by the former FIP team and the Anti-Social Behaviour team) as part of the wider Turnaround Families agenda;
- ensuring the ongoing engagement of families in service design and evaluation.

### Emerging Needs and Developments

5.19 We have appointed an additional three Family Workers to increase capacity to work intensively with families identified through the programme.

5.20 Case reviews carried out in 2012/13 also identified a gap in resource to assess and support parents who do not meet Adult Social Care thresholds but have issues relating to mental health. An Adult Mental Health Worker post has been appointed, funded by the TF programme, to help address the gap. The post will carry a small caseload and will offer advice to other professionals. Although adult services are already robust at identifying Safeguarding concerns within families, the earlier identification of children who may be impacted by parental mental health issues will be strengthened leading to better outcomes for children.

### Welfare Reform and Employment Support

5.21 There is recognition that the impact of welfare reform will present additional challenges for many families with complex needs. Cross-service a proactive programme of targeted outreach work led by Housing is taking place to ensure that families understand the impact and are offered support in how to prepare for the benefit cap and other changes.

- 5.22 This work is being undertaken in conjunction with a more assertive and wider offer of support to families to encourage engagement in skills for work programmes and entry to employment.
- 5.23 A new agreement with DWP, announced in March 2013, outlined new expectations for Councils and local Job Centre Plus offices to work more closely together on the Trouble Families Programme to enable Job Centre Plus to contribute to and support the plan for the family. Nationally led arrangements to enable better information sharing are expected to be in place by August 2013.

### **Housing and Anti-social Behaviour**

- 5.24 As part of a wider commitment to integrated working across the Council, Housing Services and Childrens Action Teams are now holding regular joint case consultation meetings and opportunities for further co-locating some services are being explored. A nominated lead person in Housing for key workers to link with has been established.
- 5.25 Work is underway to improve joint working to encourage Housing Providers to identify families with ASB issues or rent arrears at an earlier stage and enable access to family support services to improve outcomes and prevent issues escalating. This will reduce ASB and prevent negative and costly interventions such as court action and eviction.

### **Service or Resource Directory**

- 5.26 There is a wide range of services available to support families across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors in Reading, but the map of these services is complex. Whilst there are a number of directories in use currently and a range of sources for finding information available, these are often incomplete, difficult to navigate or contain out-of-date information.
- 5.27 A project has been established to address this gap, by developing the options for a comprehensive resource directory that covers services across agencies and tiers of support, and that enables both families and professionals to easily search and access relevant and up-to-date information on a broad range of services and support. An interim professionals' directory of key services has been developed and the link disseminated in May 2013. The development of a directory of children and family support services also underpins the development of a number of children's centres as family advice and support 'hubs' and the development of a single telephone number or 'one front door' for all children and families services. RVA are involved in this project group.

### **Monitoring of Outcomes**

- 5.28 One of the key challenges is the number of systems that are being used to record information about families and the services they are accessing. Children's Social Care is moving across to a new electronic recording system



in 2013/14, and the vision is that all services working with families within RBC will use the same system in the longer-term - subject to system capability.

- 5.29 A system is in place to monitor outcomes in line with the Government's Troubled Families Financial Framework. Short term solutions have been found to ensure that a wider performance framework can be implemented in 2013/14 that will include a more consistent approach to the monitoring of outcomes relating to education, employment, crime and ASB, housing, health and well-being for families accessing services across Turnaround Families, Edge of Care and CATS.

### **National Developments - Evaluation and Demonstrating Savings to the Public Purse**

- 5.30 The DCLG have commissioned Ecorys (UK) to lead on a consortium to carry out an evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme. This will include developing a secure system to collect a broader range of family indicator monitoring information on a minimum of 10% of each authority's TF cohort. We are ensuring that the wider performance framework we are developing, referred to above, includes the indicators required for the national evaluation.
- 5.31 The DCLG will provide a model for cost calculations for the Programme in 2013. The purpose is to provide local authorities with a model that will take into account unit costs, activity and services costs and is able to identify both cost avoidance and cost savings. The Think Family Steering Group will consider the model to ensure it will meet Reading's needs when it becomes available.

## **6. FINANCES**

- 6.1 The DCLG estimates that the average cost of a successful intervention with a family will be £10,000 per family. The DCLG will pay up to 40% (that is £4,000 per family) - the Council and its Partners are expected to contribute 60% of the cost of an intervention. Part of the £4,000 is paid 'up-front' and an incrementally increasing element year on year is paid on a payment-by-results (PBR) basis (20%, 40%, then 60%). The Government assumes that one sixth of the families identified will be participating in other Government funded programmes and so only 288 of the total will be eligible for Payment-By Results.
- 6.2 The PBR element will be claimed retrospectively based on the achievement of outcomes and therefore cannot easily be calculated on a year-by-year basis at this stage of the Programme. The authority will submit the first claim for PBR for families in July 2013.
- 6.3 Funding has been used to provide additional capacity to support families not currently engaged in services as detailed above in Section 5, and to support

specialist services supporting these families including the Edge of Care and Multi-Systemic Therapy teams.

## **7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

7.1 The Turnaround Families Programme aims to enhance the quality of life for families in Reading who have multiple needs. Through supporting families in addressing a range of issues such as youth crime and anti-social behaviour; positive parenting; improved school attendance and reduced school exclusions; health issues; and increased engagement in education, employment and training the programme contributes to the Children's Trust Vision and priorities and in particular:

### **Intervening early**

- Work with families in greatest need as early as possible to build emotional well-being and improved health
- Help young people to have high aspirations and be healthy, active citizens, making positive life choices

## **8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

8.1 An underlying principle of the Turnaround Families Programme is that we work alongside and in partnership with families to support them in identifying their needs and developing their support plan. Processes are currently in place to enable families to give direct feedback on the service they receive. This will be strengthened through the introduction of an outcome based framework that provides a more consistent approach to ensuring that families are fully engaged in the process of identifying their needs, planning and progress against outcomes. This information will be aggregated and used to inform service development.

8.2 In line with our draft 'Early Help Strategy', a community engagement work stream is being set up by July 2013 with a specific focus on ensuring the ongoing engagement of families, including children and young people, in service design and evaluation. A particular focus will be to ensure that services are designed to meet the diverse needs of families' in Reading and that families with multiple needs from BME backgrounds and those with English as an Additional Language are able to access the support they need.

8.3 Key partners are engaged in the development of the programme through membership of the Think Family Steering Group and through participation in relevant work streams. Key partners include the Voluntary and Community Sector, Police, Health, Probation, schools. A Turnaround Families Newsletter has also been produced to share information about the progress of the programme periodically.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

No implications from this report.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.