
Community Safety Scrutiny Committee – 1 November 2012

Report of the Chief Executive

“TROUBLED FAMILIES” IN DUDLEY

Purpose of Report

1. To provide information about the Department for Communities and Local Government Troubled Families initiative and its implementation in Dudley. This Report is an up-dated version of one which was considered by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in September 2012.

Background

National Context

2. The Troubled Families programme is for the period 2012 to 2015 Nationally, it is led from the Department of Communities and Local Government and Louise Casey is the national programme director.
3. The initiative is a three year funded programme. It defines “Troubled Families” as being households who:
 - Are involved in crime¹ and anti-social behaviour;
 - Have children not in school;
 - Have an adult on out of work benefits;
 - meet a locally agreed definition or criteria. For Dudley, this has been agreed as “families with children on the edge of care”
4. Nationally and locally these themes cut across the responsibilities of government departments; public sector agencies such as the Police, Public Health, Councils and Job Centre Plus; the public and private sectors e.g. worklessness. Overall, these themes have been identified as ones which incur high cost to the public purse and should therefore be addressed to minimise cost to the public purse.

¹ Crime/anti-social behaviour (ASB) is defined as:

- Households with 1 or more under 18-year-old with a proven offence in the last 12 months *AND/ OR*
- Households where 1 or more member has an ASBO, ASB injunction, anti-social behaviour contract (ABC), or where the family has been subject to a housing-related ASB intervention in the last 12 months (such as a notice of seeking possession on ASB grounds, a housing-related injunction, a demotion order, eviction from social housing on ASB grounds¹).

5. National work states that there are 120,000 families who are defined as "troubled." "Troubled" is taken to mean that they experience two or more of the themes which are the aim of the programme i.e. to address truancy, worklessness, anti-social behaviour, a high cost to the public purse or the locally agreed theme of children on the edge of care.
6. In addition, it is argued that significant resources are already allocated to addressing the challenges of these themes in the funding of Councils or national agencies such as the Police, Public Health or Job Centre Plus. For this reason, it is argued that the initiative is also aimed at inviting reflection and action over time to change or re-design services and systems which are costly and for which there may be a better, more efficient alternative.
7. Locally, using the Government's figures, it is believed that we have 740 families whose experience reflects the situation as defined by the Government. In year one of the programme Dudley Council is committed to begin working with 250 families.
8. The Troubled Families (Attachment Fee) Grant determination 2012/13: 31/2046 Section 31 sets out the funding allocation for Dudley as given below. In addition there is some co-ordination funding and a system of Payment By Results.

Year One: (250 families)

- Coordination 2012/13, £100,000
- Attachment Fee 2012/13, £665,600 (32% currently allocated to posts. Further commitments being considered which will take commitment up to 58% with plans for remaining allocation to be completed shortly. Recognising the complexity involved in the implementation of the programme, the Government's rules allow this budget to be carried forward if needed.)
- Maximum £167,000 available as payment by results associated with the year one cohort of 250 families

Year two funding 2013/14 (250 families):

- Coordination, £100,000
- Attachment Fee, £499,000
- Maximum of £333,000 available as payment by results associated with the year two cohort of 250 families

Year three funding 2014/15 (240 families):

- Coordination, £100,000
- Attachment Fee, £320,000
- Maximum of £480,000 available as payment by results associated with the year three cohort of 240 families

9. Dudley Council has committed to work with the identified 740 families over a period of three years with the aim of supporting them to avoid their involvement in anti-social behaviour, truancy or worklessness. In this way, it is believed that the families can avoid or minimise being users of publically provided services through these and so reduce burden on the tax payer.
10. The Troubled Families programme is also linked to other programmes such as the national "Work Programme " of which the European Social Fund Support for

Families Contract 2012-15 is a part. The West Midlands contract holder for this is EOS Ltd.

11. The Trouble Families initiative has been supported through the publication of national guidance *The Troubled Families Programme - Financial Framework March 2012* and email updates from the national Troubled Families Unit. Dudley Council's Troubled Families Coordinator feeds into the national Network of Coordinators. Meetings are facilitated by Department for Communities and Local Government officials.

Action in Dudley

12. Local planning based on developing national understandings has been underway since December 2011.
13. Steering Group: a multi-agency Steering Group, chaired by Brendan Clifford, has been established comprising the following Agencies:
 - Dudley Council's Directorates of Children's Services; Adult Community and Housing Services; Urban Environment; and Chief Executive's
 - West Midlands Police
 - EOS Ltd
 - Department for Work and Pensions
 - Dudley Council for Voluntary Services
 - Dudley Community Partnership
 - NHS Dudley Public Health Service
 - Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group

Data / information

14. Dudley staff have worked to ascertain the relevant sources of data which would be used to confirm which families have been using services connected to anti-social behaviour, truancy and worklessness.
15. Significant effort has been made to source and check the information. Through an agreed process, data has been shared with the DWP who are responding to confirm that the data is correct thus creating a cohort to whom action can be directed in Dudley. Appendix 1 to this Report presents a graphical arrangement of the outcome of the data trawl as at the end of August 2012. This shows the numbers of families to whom each of the qualifying criteria apply as relevant. Work is on-going as more information items are validated through the agreed process.
16. The influence of the issue of the cost to the public purse was noted above and detailed analysis is required on this. Guidance on what is a positive outcome for families is awaited as well as a suggested national approach to costings so that there is consistency in approach. Understanding the costs of working with the families identified is a vital factor in the initiative so that we can measure the success of the intervention undertaken. At the time of writing, work is underway to identify the costs.

17. Information Governance: a Memorandum of Understanding for the sharing of information has been signed between the Council and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Model of working with the "troubled families"

18. Guidance states that an effective model of working with "Troubled Families" is based on a "Keyworker" approach. The Keyworker role is based on the allocation of an individual member of staff who works closely with the Family, and assists them to face the complexities of their contact with public and private agencies and to alter their behaviour in terms of worklessness, truancy and anti-social behaviour. The term "Keyworker" is a general one and may refer to someone from a range of professional backgrounds such as social care, police or health.
19. This approach is being adopted in Dudley. However, it is recognised that related activity is already underway in the Borough via the Children's Services Directorate Family Intervention Project, The Youth Offending Service, Children's Social Care Services, the Education Investigation Service, Job Centre Plus, Housing Services and for example the work of Health Visitors and Voluntary Services. Therefore it is important that all relevant strands of work are properly integrated and coherently managed when addressing the needs of our identified families within the "troubled family" definition. An advertisement has been made for more staff and interviews have resulted in the appointment of 5 Family Support Workers and 1 senior worker to work on this initiative as Keyworkers. These posts are in addition to existing staff in the relevant team who it has also been agreed will work on the Troubled Families initiative. As employees of the Council, staff will be entitled to training and development to support them in this activity and will use all the established systems for working e.g. lone working policies.
20. Similarly, with regard to worklessness, the Government had already initiated activity through the Department for Work and Pensions whereby a private company, EOS Ltd, has European Social Fund money to work with families in order to help adults back into work. This enables EOS Ltd to appoint their own Keyworkers who will add to the cohort of staff working with the identified families.
21. In addition, it is recognised that testing a range of models which add value to the initiative will be worthwhile and so approaches of working with partners such as the police service, health services and the voluntary and community sector are also currently being evaluated.

Systems change / service re-design

22. Systems change / service re-design is a longer-term aim of the Troubled Families initiative. It is argued that public funds are already being used to address anti-social behaviour, truancy and worklessness, but sometimes in an inefficient manner. Therefore partners are also asked to consider whether organisational changes can be made that will provide greater value for money. This is an aspect of the programme that we recognise as important but our immediate priority is to start engaging with our year one cohort.

Finance

23. The Prime Minister has made available £448 million over three years from 2012 to 2015, drawn from the budgets of six government departments. This represents 40 per cent of the average cost of turning 120,000 families around using proven intervention techniques, with the remaining 60 per cent coming from local budgets.
24. The relevant Department of Communities and Local Government grant funding details are included in the main body of the report within the background section at para 8. Funding received from DCLG for 2012/13 for work with 250 families is as follows:
- Troubled Families Coordination - £100,000
 - Attachment Fee to support 250 families £665,600
 - Total Funding **£765,600**
25. Results Based Payments are only available for claiming when successful outcomes are achieved with the 250 families. The maximum Results Based funding potential for a 100% success rate with all the families in 2012/13 is £166,400; it has been assumed that this funding will be claimed after financial year ending 2013.
26. Payments for subsequent years and the level of such grants will be subject to agreement between the Troubled Families Team and the Chief Executive and very much dependant upon Dudley's 2012/13 successful outcomes.

Law

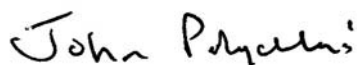
27. There is no statutory requirement to comply with the Troubled Families project as initiated by the Department of Communities and Local Government. However all local authorities, including Dudley, have committed to work on this agenda and in return are in receipt of the grant funding as described.

Equality Impact

28. The purpose of this programme is to improve the long term life experiences and chances of some of the most disadvantaged families in the borough, thereby helping to close some of the most significant equality gaps in areas such as school attendance and education attainment, rates of offending and household incomes.

Recommendation

29. That Committee note and comment on the content in the report.



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John Polychronakis
Chief Executive

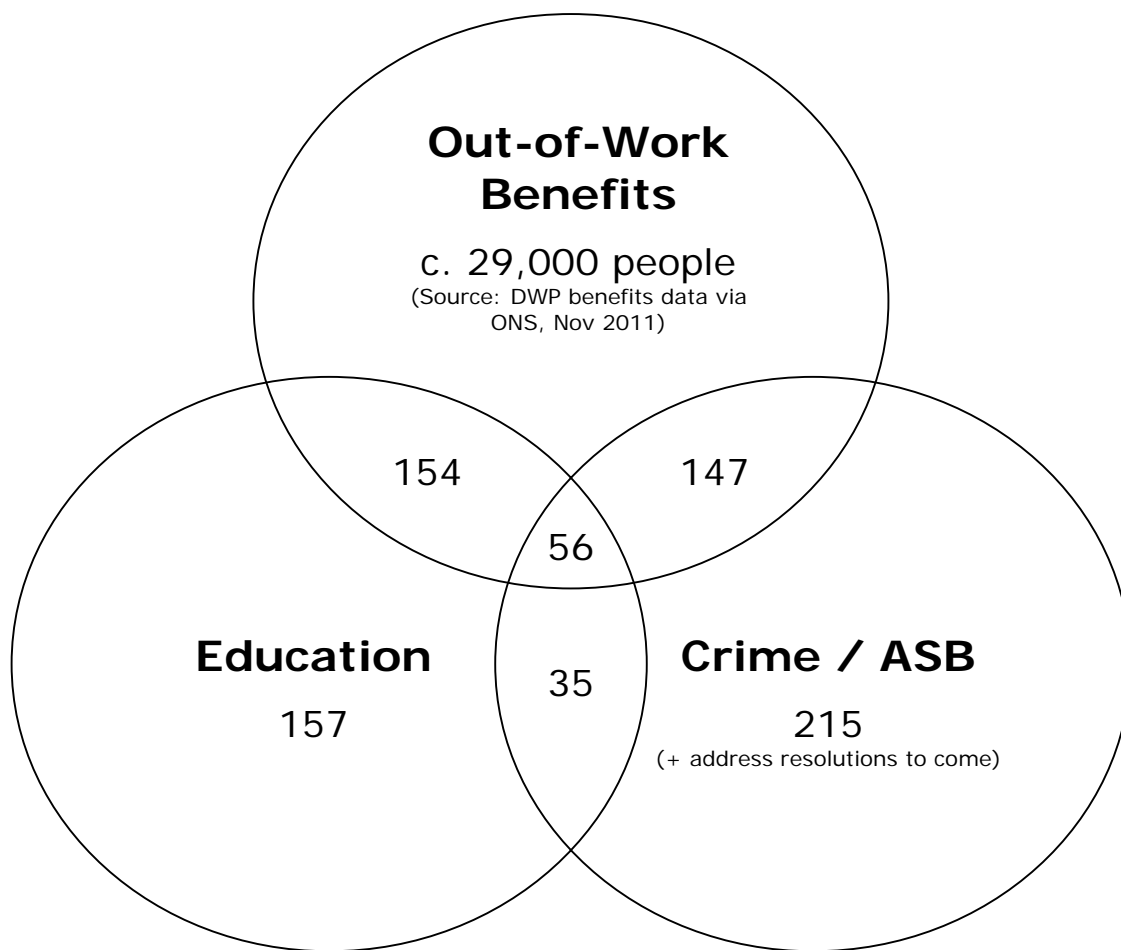
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Number of Families in First Data Trawl



Total Meeting Education Criteria = 402 Total Meeting Crime / ASB Criteria = 453

NB. Numbers correct as at mid-September 2012 but up-dating work continues. As of 18/09/12, there are 69 families who meet all three criteria. Data trawls will be done three times per year to fit with availability of term-time data – the next one is planned during November 2012.