

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	<b>Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	<b>26<sup>th</sup> September 2013</b>	
TITLE:	<b>Community Safety - Connecting Families update</b>	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> Please list all the appendices here, clearly indicating any which are exempt and the reasons for exemption  Connecting Families Presentation		

### 1. THE ISSUE

#### 1.1. TO NOTE PROGRESS BEING MADE WITH CONNECTING FAMILIES STRATEGY.

#### 1.2. TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE NEXT STEPS

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 For information, to update the panel re progress to date following the presentation given in February 2013.

### 3. Budget

3.1 Funding is provided by the Troubled Families Unit for all Local Authorities.

3.2 The funding model is primarily based on a tapered and payment by results methodology. For each family identified it is anticipated that £10,000 will be spent on that family: consisting of £6,000 of Council resources and up to an additional £4,000 from the Troubled Families Unit for each family identified to work with (an 'attachment fee'). Each year for the 3 years of the programme, Local Authorities are required to submit the number of families they will be working with. For these identified families an attachment fee is paid Attachment fees can only be claimed for 5/6<sup>th</sup> of the total number of families worked with an taper for 80% in the first year (£3,200 in 2012/13) to 40% (£1,600 in 2015/16). Bath and NE Somerset connecting families team have

claimed for the maximum number of families that we are likely to work with in the first two years of the programme, leaving a very small number of claims to be made at the lower (40%) level.

3.3 Additional funding can be claimed for results achieved against the three national outcomes (employment, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and improving attendance at school). Payment by results is again on a tapering scale but increasing from 40% in 2012/13 to 80% in 2015/16. Claims can be made every 6 months and we have just made our first claim for results related to improved attendance and preparation for work totalling £8,400.00.

3.4 For 2013/4 total funding before any in year claims for payment by result is £360,000

3.5 Financial risks to the Council have been mitigated by having only a small core team funded from the Family Intervention Project and direct funding from the Troubled Families Unit. Beyond this core team all resources directed to the Connecting Families Initiative are from existing Council and Partner resources

3.6 On the 24<sup>th</sup> June the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Danny Alexander announced an additional £200 million for 2015/16 – the first of five years – to expand the Troubled Families programme. This is a welcome extension to the programme and will enable Connecting Families to embed the good work currently being undertaken with partners.

3.7 All of the above (tapered funding in the first three years; payment by results; uncertainty over the funding for the extension from 2015 to 2020) points to need to maintain the cautious approach to the funding. The current approach has been to create a small core team and embed ways of working and establish 'lead workers' for families through our partners. This will continue, with any additional funding targeted to commissioning additional support for families or supporting partners to enable workers to be seconded/linked to the Connecting Families team or supported to take on 'lead worker' role'.

#### **4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

4.1 Connecting Families aims to invest upfront in transforming service delivery and the leadership and culture which underpin it so that the Council and its partners will see a reduction in the costs of responding to these families as well as improvement in their lives and of those around them, including the wider communities. The medium term reduction in costs will contribute to sustaining the service transformation and re-design once the central government investment is withdrawn.

4.2 We continue to draw down grant from the Troubled Families Unit as part of its commitment to the Central Government initiative. The funding is a mixture of upfront payments, attachment fees per family and payment by results. The Council is committed to maximising this funding and contributing its own in kind and in cash funds for the benefit of the families.

## 5. STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

5.1 Central Government's Troubled Families Initiative is fully supported by Bath and North East Somerset Council. There is no statutory basis for Councils to be part of this specific programme, but it supports a large number of statutory duties to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable residents, for example to safeguard young people.

5.2 Central Government has estimated that nationally 2% of families are "troubled". This equates to an indicative number of 215 families in Bath and North East Somerset. Families with complex issues place significant demands including financial demands on criminal justice, education, health, welfare benefits, housing and social services. Adopting the Connecting Families Initiative will make a major contribution to reducing those demands and providing better services to these families.

## 6. THE REPORT

6.1 Please see the attached presentation for the main body of the report.

6.2 This programme of service transformation is running hand in hand with Central Government's Troubled Families Initiative, which the Council fully supports. Connecting Families will streamline services that are working with families, by co coordinating the services they are receiving and compiling information to give a full assessment of needs so the right services are involved with the family. This approach maximises resources and avoids duplication.

6.3 A core team has been appointed consisting of an operational lead reporting to the Divisional Director for Preventive Services, 2 Team Leaders each with 3 Key Workers. In addition to this core team the team leads will support a wide range of Council Services, Commissioned Services and partners beyond the Council will work in a co-ordinated way with identified families.

6.4 The connecting families approach is underpinned by a conviction that families can change, and people must take responsibility for their lives and all people are worth persevering with.

6.5 Five key strategies have been identified as being crucial to the success of the new way of working and these are the foundation of the work with the families: -

1. Named workers to named families – each family will have a dedicated worker. The relationship will be based on honesty, authority and an assertive working style.
2. Persistence backed up by sanction – key workers will not give up. They will be straight with families about the consequences of their continued behaviour patterns and they will follow through.
3. Understanding families as a whole – not just looking at each issue in isolation.
4. One plan for the family with clear outcomes agreed at the outset.

5. Practical hands on support - rolling up sleeves and working alongside the family members to achieve agreed goals.

6.6 An Operational Group has been established with a programme of regular meetings of wider partnerships to maintain good progress.

6.7 140 families have been identified, to date. The service will work from this set of identified families and will not take referrals except for Families at risk identified through the social care duty team.

6.8 The core staff team are currently working intensively with 35 Families.

## 7. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

## 8. CONSULTATION

All aspects of this programme have been widely consulted on with a range of workshops for wider partners and Council Staff. This panel and the Early Years, Young People and Youth Panel have previously received updates on the Connecting Families Initiative.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

<b>Contact person</b>	<i>Paula Bromley – Connecting Families Manager</i>
<b>Background papers</b>	<i>None</i>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	