

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	<b>Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
MEETING	<b>25<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b>	
TITLE:	Connecting Families - update	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> None- although Connecting Families web site can be found via <a href="http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/connectingfamilies">www.bathnes.gov.uk/connectingfamilies</a> which has a variety of useful information. The Connecting Families latest newsletter is available here as well.		

### **1 THE ISSUE**

1.1. To note progress being made with Connecting Families Team.

1.2. To give an update about phase 2 (a new five year programme 2015 to 2020) and brief the panel about the suggested new criteria, especially those linked to health.

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 For information only

### **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

3.1 There are no resource implications from this report. Funding is provided by the Troubled Families Unit for all Local Authorities, initially for 3 years to 2015 and now extended to 2020.

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 5/6th 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 family's 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).

3.4 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. Although no confirmation Re: the amount of funding for 2015 to 2020 has been announced to date.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

4.1 Central Government's Troubled Families Initiative is fully supported by Bath and North East Somerset Council. All of the Connecting Families work is voluntary however, we work with key partners to enforce statutory duties required e.g. Social Care/YOT/Social Housing Landlords/The Police.

## **5 THE REPORT**

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

5.2 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 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: -

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. Understanding families as a whole – not just looking at each issue in isolation.

D. One family action plan with clear outcomes that are SMART and agreed with the family at the outset.

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

5.5 What we have learnt one year on is that the relationships are crucial, time to listen and respond to need, intensive support with regular contact in the family home helps the families to achieve set outcomes.

5.6 263 families have been identified, to date.

5.7 The core staff team have worked intensively with 55 Families in their 1<sup>st</sup> Year of operation.

## **6 RATIONALE**

6.1 Details of the rationale for preferring the recommendations made above including details of other options considered and reasons for rejecting them, if applicable.

## **7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 None

## **8 CONSULTATION**

8.1 During the initial phase all aspects of this programme have been widely consulted on with a range of workshops for wider partners and Council Staff.

8.2 Now the team focus on family feedback via an evaluation & monitoring process.

8.3 100% of families asked said that they felt listened to and that the key workers kept them informed and up to date. We asked the families to score the worker out of 10, the average score was 9.5

8.4 Examples of family quotes:

I have found it very useful- in the past I told people stuff but they didn't write it down then it gets forgotten or not done, with my worker he got everything in the profile/action plan so it won't get missed.

The key worker has a down to earth approach; she makes me feel relaxed and comfortable. She does not judge, my son has taken to her and he doesn't take too many.

The key worker's relaxed approach, sense of humour, fits in well. All round dude, accepting e.g. the washing. He challenges in a non-judgemental way.

8.5 An Operational Group was established, made up of key partners. This group has met every 3 months over the last year and attendance to date has been very good. The team have consulted this group on its approach and feedback learning and results to date.

Connecting Families regularly seek input from the families we provide intensive support to, informally via their family key worker and more formally via team leads at Team

Around the family meetings. We review this feedback quarterly at a Managers meeting and discuss changes that we may need to make to improve etc.

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

9.2 As Connecting Families is grant funded from Government and 50% of the funding is via a Payment by Result method the team is regularly audited to ensure that all the processes and procedures are high quality and meet Government and Council's standards. We therefore have an additional risk report to support this process

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<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>	