

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	<b>Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
MEETING	<b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2014</b>	
TITLE:	Community Safety - 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).

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 For information only

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

- 3.1 There are no resource implications from this report.
- 3.2 Funding is provided by the Troubled Families Unit for all Local Authorities, initially for 3 years to 2015 and now extended to 2020, (phase two).
- 3.3 The expanded Troubled Families Programme or phase two, has ambitious service transformation goals and therefore differs from the current programme in how it will measure, and pay for, success. Rather than focusing on a small number of relatively tightly defined national results to be achieved with each family it asks local authorities and their partners to measure success in three main ways for which funding is available: Firstly, by demonstrating either significant and sustained progress or continuous employment with an agreed number of families in each upper-tier local authority, representing the area's share of the national 400,000 total. Each family's achievement of 'significant and sustained' progress will be assessed against a locally defined in the

Outcomes Plan / phase 2 outcome measures document. This will provide a new, more flexible approach to results measurement and will be able to be defined locally.

3.4 Funding for this is available for each family who achieves success and will be paid in two parts: an upfront attachment fee of £1,000 per family and a results-based payment of £800 per family. Once the programme is rolled out from 1st April 2015, payments of attachment fees will normally be made in the first quarter of each financial year, subject to satisfactory performance against the previous year's agreed commitments in regard to the number of families for which attachment fees were received.

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. 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 in Phase ) one 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.

5.8 Phase 2 (2015 to 2020), and as part of the pilot started on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. To be eligible for the expanded programme/ phase 2, each family must have at least three of the following six problems:

1. Parents and children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.
  2. Children who have not been attending school regularly.
  3. Children who need help.
  4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of worklessness.
  5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.
  6. Parents and children with a range of health problems.
- 5.9 Number of families

The numbers of families to be worked with will increase from 215 (phase 1-3 year programme) to 710 in phase 2.

## **6 RATIONALE**

- 6.1 Details of the rationale for preferring the recommendations made above are based on recommendations from the Government's Troubled Family Unit.

## **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 quotes from 3 different families:

"D said that she had been nervous about Connecting Families getting involved. She has managed all this time without support and she said she didn't want someone coming into her house to "drag her kids out of bed". However, she has found it really easy to talk to her worker and actually looks forward to her coming round. She feels she can ask her anything and has been surprised by what she can help with. For example she is looking forward to going out getting her son's new school uniform. D said that it is good to have someone who can find things out for you and you don't have to do it on your own. She feels supported and that

someone is listening to her. 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."

and

"There are still issues that are outstanding re housing. However, I feel much less stressed and able to deal with things more effectively. My relationship with my daughter has significantly improved and there is less conflict in the home. I feel clearer about what I need to do and have more hope for the future."

and

"Constant support, friendly advice, able to make contact at any time."

8.5 An Operational Group was established, made up of key partners. This group has met regularly 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.

## 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 with a Payment by Result element 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>	