

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Support for Families and the government's "Troubled Families" payment by results programme

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 12 June 2012

Cabinet Member: Councillor Williams

CMT Member: Carole Burgoyne (Director for People)

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Ref:

Key Decision: Yes

Part: I

Executive Summary:

Consideration is given to our work with families in Plymouth and how the Government's "Troubled Families" programme could be used as part of this wider work, with a focus on our local priorities.

Plymouth has a history of successful multi-agency, early intervention work with families. There remain opportunities to expand and improve this work to deliver local priorities particularly jobs and young people into work, bringing crime down, tackling child poverty, and providing extra support for families who need it. The government is offering support for this through payment by results within its Troubled Families programme.

The Government describes a "troubled family" as one that has serious problems - including parents not working, mental health problems, and children not in school - and causes serious problems, such as crime and anti-social behaviour. Using such criteria, it has identified 745 families in Plymouth. National figures suggest each of these families is costing the tax-payer on average £75,000 a year. The council is being asked to sign up to the government programme to work with these families and deliver outcomes covering: adult into work; children at school (exclusions); and reduction in crime and ASB.

There is up front funding available to support the work plus an opportunity to secure further payment against successful delivery. By ensuring this dovetails with our larger package of on-going work to improve support for families we can meet those local priorities and save money

The cost of not providing support to families who need it, is much greater than the cost of providing that support at the earliest opportunity. Plymouth's on-going work to deliver positive outcomes for families recognises this, and could be enhanced by additional resources via the government's Troubled Families programme.

Corporate Plan 2012 – 2015:

The recommendations help support all four city priorities – growth, aspirations, reducing inequalities and value for communities; and in particular support measures associated with raising attainment, reducing child poverty, reducing NEETs, reducing anti-social behaviour and crime, reducing vulnerable families, reducing economic inactivity, reducing inter-personal violence and value for money.

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The Government is offering payment by results of £4k per family for 5 out of every 6 of our 745 families (the rest are assumed to be dealt with via the ESF Work Programme) There is an upfront “attachment fee” - 80% of the maximum payment by results in the first year, reducing in subsequent years. Based on working with 206 families in year one, this amounts to £659.2k attachment fee (non-recoverable) plus an opportunity to secure £164.8k in payment by results.

In addition the Government is offering £20K start up costs and £100K pa for three years, for a Troubled Families Coordinator.

It is estimated that each family identified via the government programme is currently costing public services £75k per annum.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

The work has a strong focus on reducing anti-social behaviour, crime and risk-taking behaviour and there are opportunities to expand and improve it to deliver other local priorities such as tackling child poverty, through providing extra support for families who need it.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and shows no adverse impact.

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

It is recommended that Plymouth City Council signs up to the government programme for “troubled families” by agreeing to:-

- oversee and account for successful engagement with 745 families in Plymouth over the next 3 years, 621 of which are eligible for payment-by-results funding;
- aim to start work with 248 of these families in 2012/13 and seek upfront attachment fees for 206 of them as per the government’s financial framework for the programme;
- work closely with European Social Fund and Work Programme providers to optimise use made from that provision;
- support and take part in research, learning and wider evaluation of the programme; and
- identify a co-ordinator to run the programme locally and inform it nationally.

The recommendations seek to maximise external resources to support our work with families.

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

The alternative is to not sign-up to the programme. This would deny the council an opportunity to receive payment for work with families that is consistent with our local priorities.

Background papers:

- Government financial framework for the Troubled Families programme’s payment by results, March 2012
 - Corporate Plan 2012-15
 - Equality Impact Assessment
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Sign off:

Fin	SRA/ PeopleF HC1213 001/9-5- 2012	Leg	Lt 146 84	HR		Corp Prop		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member Stuart Palmer											
Have you consulted the Cabinet Member(s) named on the report? Yes											

Support for Families and the government's "Troubled Families" payment by results programme

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers our work with families in Plymouth and looks at how the Government's "Troubled Families" programme could be used as part of this wider work, with a focus on our local priorities.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Plymouth has a history of multi-agency, early intervention work with families and Ofsted has judged our Children's Trust Partnership work as Outstanding and our Children's Services as Excellent. Interventions include: the Family Intervention Project; Children's Centres; the Intensive Support Team in Youth Services; detached outreach youth work; domestic abuse work, parental alcohol misuse interventions; family group conferencing and parenting programmes. Much of this work drives local priorities such as focusing on vulnerable young people and diverting them from care.
- 2.2 We use the Common Assessment Framework to identify needs of the whole family and have successful examples of using "key workers" who pull together multi-agency services around the child and family. Recent work locally in this area has been drawn together under a "Families with a Future" programme involving a range of partners
- 2.3 There remain opportunities to expand and improve on this work to deliver local priorities particularly jobs and young people into work, bringing crime down, tackling child poverty, and providing extra support for families who need it. The government is offering payment by results within its Troubled Families programme and this has the potential to support achievement of these local priorities.

3. Government Programme

- 3.1 The Government describes a "troubled family" as one that has serious problems - including parents not working, mental health problems, and children not in school - and causes serious problems, such as crime and anti-social behaviour. Using such criteria, it has identified 120,000 troubled families in England, costing £9b annually, of which 745 are in Plymouth. We have been asked to identify these families using local data.
- 3.2 The Troubled Families programme is described as a "step change" based on a locally-run plan of action for dealing with each family. It is a payment-by-results model to incentivise local authorities and partners to turn around the families' lives by 2015.
- 3.3 Government guidance was received on 27th March with a covering letter to our Chief Executive, inviting us to sign up to the programme (if possible by 30th April) including:-
- a commitment to oversee and engage with 745 identified families and to the payment by results model;
 - a figure for the number of families we will work with in year 1 (expected to be about a third of the total);
 - agreement to work closely with European Social Fund (ESF) Work Programme providers;
 - a commitment to taking part in learning & evaluation; and
 - identification of a "top quality" co-ordinator.

4. Success criteria

4.1 Success indicators within the families cover:-

- Adult into Work;
- Children at School (exclusions); and
- Reduction in crime and ASB.

Each has a detailed definition and to receive payment we would be required to meet either the adult into work indicator *or* the indicators covering school absence *and* crime / ASB. Success needs confirmation from our own Internal Audit, rather than external scrutiny.

5. Funding

5.1 The Government is offering payment by results, treating input by local areas as match-funding. Payment by results would be 40% of the assumed average cost of dealing with each family. This cost is identified as £10k, meaning a possible payment of £4k per family but only for 5 out of every 6 of our families. The rest are assumed to be dealt with via the ESF Work Programme and we would need to identify these families separately. There is a non-recoverable upfront “attachment fee” - 80% of the maximum payment by results in the first year, reducing in subsequent years.

5.2 In addition the Government is offering:-

- £20K start up costs; and
- £100K pa for three years, for a Troubled Families Coordinator.

6. Initial work

6.1 A local Coordinator has been appointed and initial work undertaken to scope Plymouth’s position regarding the programme offered. The Council has been working closely on this with a range of partners including DWP, Police, Health, and Probation, and discussions are underway with Schools and Plymouth Community Homes. Progress has been reported to the Children’s Trust Board and Joint Commissioning Partnership (JCP).

6.2 Links have been established locally with the ESF Worklessness Programme.

6.3 Data analysis so far has identified 645 Plymouth families who satisfy the government’s criteria – worklessness, school absences and crime / ASB. National figures suggest each of these families is costing the tax-payer on average £75,000 a year. The cost of permanently excluding a child from school can be £300,000 in alternative education, social care, probation services etc with further costs associated with escalating problems if things are not dealt with. If this results in residential care, the average cost per child per week is £3,325. Our approach is to deliver the right interventions as early as possible and avoid the problems which lead to such costs.

7. Future work

7.1 Whilst these families are only part of our wider early intervention and prevention work, there is an opportunity to work with them in an intense Families with a Future programme, using upfront payments and payments by results to secure positive outcomes against both government criteria and local priorities. By ensuring this dovetails with our larger package of on-going work to improve support for families we can meet those local priorities and save money by focusing on things like safeguarding, domestic abuse, alcohol and drugs problems, mental health issues, school exclusions, youth offending, special educational needs and poverty and worklessness.

7.2 Learning from our existing work suggests that key components of a successful programme should include – key workers (co-ordinating a team around the family), single, early assessments and multi-agency delivery. We are in discussions with partners about how this could be developed and further learning about system and process improvements arising from this has the potential to be applied more widely.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The cost of not providing support for families, who need it, is much greater than the cost of providing that support at the earliest opportunity. Plymouth's on-going work to deliver positive outcomes for families recognises this, and could be enhanced by additional resources via the government's Troubled Families programme. The recommendations in this report seek to secure commitment to this.