Troubled Families: Next stages and how to get involved

This note is aimed at colleagues with operational or policy responsibility for work with offenders, including YOT managers, probation managers and offender managers, chief executives, managers and staff of voluntary organisations working with offenders. It can be circulated to stakeholders who may be interested and have views on how these proposals will be implemented.

On 15 December 2011 the Prime Minister announced that the Government would be making £448m available to fund a major new programme to turn around the lives of the country’s 120,000 most troubled families by the next election in 2015.

“People in troubled families aren’t worthless or pre-programmed to fail. I won’t allow them to be written off. So we must get out there, help them turn their lives around and heal the scars of the broken society.”

The Prime Minister, 15 December 2011

The Troubled Families programme begins in April 2012 and is a major opportunity for the criminal justice sector. Many of these families are already well known to justice sector workers such as Youth Offending Teams, Probation Trusts, prisons and the courts. They cause significant costs to local areas and the state as a whole. We also know that stable families can play a significant role in supporting an offender to make and sustain those changes which reduce re-offending.

It is vital that frontline criminal justice sector staff are fully involved with local delivery partners as part of this programme. This note provides you with more information on the programme and how you can get involved.

Overview

Under the programme, local authorities will be responsible for delivering interventions which focus on the family as a whole to tackle entrenched problems.

The £448m will be provided to local authorities to fund up to 40% of the cost of these interventions, with local authorities contributing the remaining 60%. An element of the funding will only be provided to local authorities when they and their partners achieve success. Funding will be available for the next three years until 2015.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is an important element in identifying the families and achieving results and youth offending is one of the prescribed criteria used to identify the families. Guidance to local authorities also encourages them to include families with other high cost factors, such as adult offenders and children on the edge of care. Local authorities will receive an outcomes payment if youth offending is reduced as well as other success criteria on education, ASB and employment.

The new programme will also fund a national network of Troubled Family Co-ordinators who will be appointed by local councils. The co-ordinators will oversee the programme of action in their area. Their responsibilities will include making sure the
right families are getting the right type of help, that sanctions are in place when needed, and that positive results are being achieved with the troubled families in their area.

**Next Steps**

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has written to all upper tier local authority chief executives with further details on the Financial Framework. This document can be read at:

http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/troubledfamiliesframework

Using locally held data, local authorities will need to identify the families they intend to work with that meet the criteria and guidance provided by CLG.

Local authorities will then be expected to work with their partners, including CJS partners, to put in place and deliver a programme of interventions to turn around the lives of these families. It will be up to local authorities to decide which interventions to use and how these will be delivered. For example, they could decide to deliver the interventions directly or in partnership with the independent and/or voluntary sectors, potentially setting up their own results incentivisation models.

Once the families have been identified, local authorities will need to apply to CLG to provide funding. Each local authority will be offered a total of £4,000 for each troubled family that they work with. In the first year of the programme, the majority of this will be provided as an upfront attachment fee, with a proportion being made available if the family satisfies specified success criteria. In subsequent years the value of the results-based element will increase relative to the upfront payment, as set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attachment fee</th>
<th>Outcomes payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLG have specified the criteria which need to be satisfied in order for local authorities to receive the outcomes-based element of the payment. Further details are provided in the Financial Framework document.

**How can I get involved?**

The criminal justice sector already has extensive experience of working with and turning around the lives of troubled families through delivering whole family approaches. For example, Youth Offending Teams are piloting use of Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy, and NOMS has funded an extensive programme of work including, family support workers for children and families of prisoners. There are many examples of good practice in this field and of probation and prison partnership with local authorities.
There are some steps that all local criminal justice managers who work with families should take now:

- Names, job titles and contact details for those leading on the troubled families agenda in each local authority are provided in the annex A to this note. If you have not already done so, we recommend that you contact this person. Please note that CLG do not yet have confirmed Troubled Families Co-ordinators for every local authority. However funding is in place from early April and local authorities were informed about recruiting the co-ordinators in December, so they should be in place very shortly. In the meantime, annex A provides the named contacts for every local authority with whom front line contacts should liaise. It is likely that many of these people will become the Co-ordinators from the start of the new financial year. However, in some cases the nominations are very senior and this suggests that the council have yet to decide on who should lead this agenda on a daily basis.

- Youth Offending Teams and Probation Trusts are advised to discuss with their local authority whether they are able to provide data on offending to assist in identification of the families. You are probably already aware of the troubled families in your area.

- Provide the troubled family co-ordinator or other named contact within your local authority with details of the work you currently undertake with offenders’ families and any data or evidence you have for its effectiveness. Consider the opportunities under the programme to extend proven interventions and build on existing good practice.

- Consider the opportunities the programme affords to establish new, family level interventions within your area. Annex B contains further evidence on the links between child and adult offending. The Troubled Families Team in DCLG will have a role in helping to build up and share information on effective practice with troubled families, how to develop effective services and business cases for local authorities and other local agencies pulling together resource. The Troubled Families Programme is intended to support wider service reform, not just new projects. We do not expect all the families to need a place on a Family Intervention Project or similar very intensive interventions, but evidence from past work with families including Family Intervention Projects and Family Pathfinders should be helpful and relevant. The links below may be helpful as you work with colleagues in other agencies on your plans to develop local services for troubled families:

The Family Savings Cost Calculator
http://www.c4eo.org.uk/costeffectiveness/edgeofcare/costcalculator.aspx

Evidence on Family Intervention Projects

The Youth Justice Board also provides guidance on effective practice. NOMS has a dedicated Children and Families of Offenders team within Commissioning Strategies Group and has recently conducted a good practice
review. Guidance in relation to work with families will also be issued to support the Commissioning Intentions Document 2012/13.

- Contact local partners from the sector as soon as possible to establish capacity and a plan of delivery. Local authorities have already been asked to do this and you may already be linked in to their agenda. In particular, we encourage you to consider making links with local partners such as the family courts and family judiciary; the local discretion filter includes families with children on a child protection plan or where the local authority is considering accommodating them as a looked after child.

- If you require further advice or guidance, please feel free to contact the officials named below:

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