

## Warwickshire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board

13 November 2012

### Priority Families - Update

#### Recommendation

The Shadow Health and Well-Being Board is requested to note the progress being made with this initiative

#### 1.0 Overview

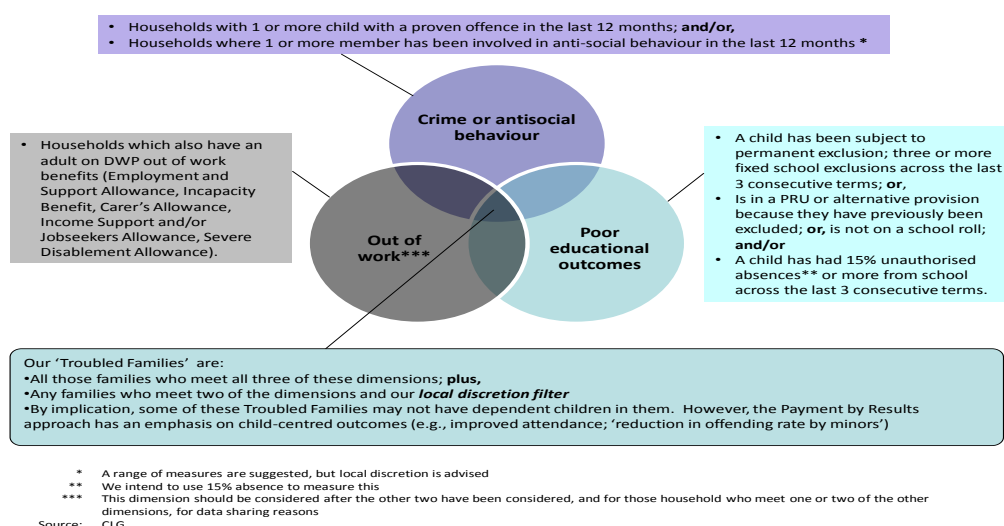
- 1.1 Government, largely in response to the riots, through the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), informed all local authorities of the need to 'turn around' the lives of 120,000 families in the UK.
- 1.2 Based on the Government's calculation from 120,000 nationally, the Government has indicated that there are 805 Troubled Families in Warwickshire.
- 1.3 At present the Priority Families Programme will seek to integrate and deliver 3 programmes:
- 1.4 **DCLG:** This programme will address the needs of 5/6 of the 805 families. 671 families will be identified and their needs addressed principally through the allocation of a key worker who will 'grip' the family and make sure that the input of all agencies with that family is coordinated well and that between them the family has the support that it needs. This project will run until March 2015. The programme is being delivered through multi agency arrangements led by the County Council. In terms of resources the Government has calculated that each intervention costs approximately £10,000 per family. Of this amount 60% of resources are to be provided locally from within existing budgets whilst £4000 is being received from Central Government through a combination of an up-front allocation (based on the number of families that will be worked with in any given year) and payment by results (where a portion of the allocation is released upon evidence of demonstrable change).
- 1.5 **Local Family Intervention Projects:** Notwithstanding recent Government initiatives, Board Members may be aware that Warwickshire already has a track record of work in this area. Two Family Intervention teams are currently in operation in the County addressing issues that overlap significantly with the DCLG Programme. The projects are funded (through LPSA 2 monies) to operate to March 2015 by which time 180-200 families will have participated in the programme.

1.6 **DWP-ESF Supporting Families Programme:** 671 families are anticipated through the DCLG programme. The remaining 134 families will be referred to the DWP Programme. This initiative has been developed independently by the DWP who have contracted delivery of the programme to EOS- a Birmingham based Company. The role of the County Council and its partners is to act as a referrer of families who would be eligible for the programme which is essentially removing barriers to sustained employment. In addition to the external dimension of delivery, the project differs from the preceding two in terms of intensity (there is a presumption that families at the lower end of the spectrum of need will be most suitable) and its focus on individuals within families rather than a 'whole family' approach. On this, negotiations with DWP have since clarified that Care Leavers would be eligible for the programme. This programme is scheduled to operate until December 2014.

## 2.0 Identification

2.1 This diagram shows the 3 DCLG National Criteria :

**Figure 2: Government criteria for identifying 'Troubled Families'**



2.2 If a family meets all three of these criteria then it must be included in our work. Although the Programme is technically voluntary, the likelihood is that the family will be facing a number of sanctions – e.g. through the Courts, or through Social Care, so they may well feel that it is their interests to 'volunteer' for the scheme.

2.3 If a family meets two of these criteria (say Crime / ASB and Education) then the Council can introduce a third 'Local Criterion' to get the family on the programme. In Warwickshire, the Local Criteria have been agreed as:

- Child Protection / Safe Guarding
- Health/ Emotional/ Physical Well Being
- Economic Well Being and Housing
- Reduce Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour / Promote Rehabilitation

2.4 In terms of existing local family intervention projects the DCLG criteria (plus local filters) will ensure that there is congruence between the two.

2.5 In terms of DWP eligibility:

- At the start of the provision at least one member of the family must be on a DWP working age benefit (it is not, however, a requirement that this family member participates in the provision at any point). This family member passports all other eligible family members; and
- Either no one in the family is working, or there is a history of worklessness across generations of the family.
- Where an eligible family includes an individual who is working, or taking part in the Work Programme, that individual will not be eligible for ESF provision. Other eligible family members will still be able to participate.
- Only family members requiring support moving into work should be attached to the provision.

### **3.0 How can a family benefit from the Programme?**

3.1 In short in a number of ways – the needs, difficulties and issues that the family may have faced for years (even for generations) will be identified and a range of support arranged for them. Often the families will be living in chaos, with really serious issues affecting their well-being (e.g. poverty / debt, mental health problems, domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse, housing problems).

3.2 The programme will provide them with the chance to ‘turn their lives around’ and, most importantly for children and young people in the family the chance to escape from the things that may have stopped their parents from having a decent life – for example think of the benefits to the child of regular school attendance, better access to counselling services and no longer being branded as ‘a trouble maker’

### **4.0 The Role of Health and Wellbeing**

4.1 The delivery of the programme is very much dependant on consultation with existing services and interventions in order to build on existing good practice, identify gaps and barriers and thereby ensure that we do not create a silo based service of key workers operating independently of service provision within Warwickshire. What the consultations have revealed is that whilst the national criteria focus on crime, education and worklessness, a large proportion of these families will also have deep rooted health and emotional wellbeing issues. This is supported locally and nationally by statistics that suggest that up to half of these families will have mental health or other emotional wellbeing issues. It also supports the original criteria for the identification of the 120,000 national figure (from which 805 was derived) where 2 of the seven criteria related to mental health and ‘at least one parent has a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity’.

4.2 The Health and Well-Being Board thus has an important role in overseeing delivery of the programme. Particular areas of benefit could be:

- **Identification and Referral:** Ensuring that health sector professionals are 'plugged' into the programme and aware of the process for identifying and referring families whom they think may be suitable for the programme.
- **Commissioning and Delivery:** Delivery of the programme will help the Board deliver its aspirations in the Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy. It therefore has an important role to play in ensuring that health dimension is entrenched within work of the Priority Families Programme and that the work around Priority Families is equally evident within the future direction of the services that fall within the Board's remit.
- **Adding Value:** Linked to above, the Board is well placed to identify synergies across the spectrum of health and social care delivery and its suggestions for improvement would enhance the delivery of the programme. This may for example relate to suggestions that the key worker for particular families be a health professional as they are best placed to deal with the entrenched issues.
- **Areas of Exception:** The effectiveness of a partnership body in part should be measured by the extent to which it can resolve those issues which require collective rather than individual consideration. The Board could perform a valuable role in this respect where 'blockages' are being encountered during the delivery of the programme.
- **Progress and Evaluation:** Delivery of Government targets should not detract partners in Warwickshire from the outcomes that we are seeking to achieve and the Board could play an important assurance role.

## 5.0 Further Information

A Website presence is currently being developed alongside other communications. In the meantime please contact Nick Gower Johnson on 01926 742642 [nickgower-johnson@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:nickgower-johnson@warwickshire.gov.uk)