

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	20 October 2015
Subject:	Gloucestershire Families First Update
Report of:	Val Garside, Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager
Corporate Lead:	Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor R E Allen
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

Families First Plus, formerly Families First, is the local name for the national Troubled Families programme. It was initially a three year programme aimed at turning around the lives of the estimated 120,000 troubled families in the country. The government has announced an expansion of the programme reaching out to a further 400,000 families over a five year period from April 2015. The programme is overseen by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which has an agreement from the County Council that an estimated 900 families can be worked with in Gloucestershire; 10% of this total i.e. 90 families, are within Tewkesbury Borough.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the progress made in delivering the Families First programme.

Reasons for Recommendation:

'Progress the Families First Programme to deliver a multi-agency response to the issues faced by families in challenging circumstances' is an action within the Council Plan under the priority theme 'Provide customer focused community support'.

An update of the programme was first presented at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 October 2013. It was resolved at that meeting that six monthly updates on progression of the programme should be brought back to the Committee.

Resource Implications:

None directly resulting from this report.

Legal Implications:

None directly resulting from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Council does not attain its target then there is a reputational risk.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Delivery of the programme is monitored by Overview and Scrutiny Committee every six months.

A high level overview is also included in the Council Plan Performance Tracker which is reported on a quarterly basis.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 Families First is the local name for the national Troubled Families programme. It was initially a three year programme aimed at turning around the lives of the estimated 120,000 troubled families in the country. The government has announced an expansion of the programme reaching out to a further 400,000 families over a five year period from April 2015. The programme is overseen by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which has an agreement from the County Council that an estimated 900 families can be worked with in Gloucestershire; 10% of this total i.e. 90 families, are within Tewkesbury Borough.

2.0 THE PROGRAMME

2.1 'Troubled Families' were originally, in the first phase of the programme, defined by DCLG as those families which are high need and are of high cost to the public purse. They meet 3 main criteria :

- An adult on out of work benefit.
- Children not attending school.
- Family members involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

In addition, there was an option to use local discretion to include families who are experiencing other issues that are high cost to public services, for example mental health issues, drug and alcohol misuse and domestic abuse.

2.2 The overall aims of the Gloucestershire Families First programme are to:

- Get children back into education.
- Reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour.

- Put adults on a path back to work.
- Scale down the amount of public service spending required to assist these families. This will include better coordination of support and a reduction in the number of agencies working with the family.

Through this work there is an expectation that the programme will:

- Change the way services are delivered to families – re-designing them for the longer term.
- Work to address entrenched issues within the family unit.
- Look to create a lasting difference in communities.
- To enable families to be more resilient, independent and self-supporting.
- Work collaboratively with local communities to develop community solutions giving people a stronger sense of belonging, ownership and control over their lives.

3.0 TEWKESBURY BOROUGH - THE DELIVERY MODEL

3.1 The Families First programme in Tewkesbury Borough is overseen by the Locality Partnership Group which acts as the delivery group for the programme. The Families First team is line managed by Emma Trigwell (GCC Families First Plus Team Manager). The team is based here in the Families First Plus office and they also spend time in other locations such as Children's Centres.

4.0 DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

4.1 The programme is proving to be a great success with the target to engage with 90 families by March 2015 being achieved a year early. Detailed figures for the third year of the programme by district were not available at the time of writing this report but overall figures for Gloucestershire payment-by results claims for over 900 'turned around families' have been made to DCLG.

4.2 From April 2015 Gloucestershire has a target to work with 3,000 families, but there is currently no breakdown of district targets as the outcomes framework is still being developed, it is hoped this will have been produced by Autumn 2015

5.0 NEXT STEPS

5.1 As noted above, due to the success of the programme in Gloucestershire the county was chosen as an 'early adopter' for the next phase of the programme which started nationally in April 2015. In response to this Families First Plus has been embedded within our local network of support for vulnerable families, children and young people as part of our Early Help offer in localities.

5.2 Families First Plus will build on the existing multi-agency partnerships in Tewkesbury Borough in order to improve the way we work together to provide early help and support to families, children and young people. The Tewkesbury Families First team will provide a focus for:

- Building community capacity –working with partners to support families to help themselves and identify community resources to meet need early. This will build

on the Tewkesbury Public Service Centre approach which has been key to bringing together the range of local partners.

- Building capacity in universal services - acting as an enabler and supporting links across services and teams. This will ensure that effective advice and guidance is available to support and enhance the positive early help work that takes place in the range of local settings including schools, health services, children centres, youth support, housing, VCS etc. The role of community social workers and CAF coordinators will continue as part of the team in order to provide advice and support to practitioners, including a focus on safely managing risk.
- Targeted support – providing a coordinated response to need where a specific intervention is required. This will involve providing a whole-family approach across the continuum of need. Building on existing good practice these workers will work with local partners in order to ensure a coordinated multi-agency response to complex family issues including mental health, substance misuse and domestic violence.

Revised Criteria:

The referral criteria have changed from those detailed in 2.1. There are now six criteria as follows:

- Parent and children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.
- Children who have not been attending school regularly.
- Children who need help.
- Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of 'worklessness'.
- Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.
- Parents and children with a range of health issues.

Families First Plus will depend on an effective local partnership that works together to offer support families as a whole; building on their strengths and fostering resilience. It is proposed that the Tewkesbury Borough Locality Partnership Group will provide local governance for the pilot, meeting regularly to ensure a robust joined up approach, sharing resources and reducing duplication.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 None

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 None

8.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

8.1 The delivery of the programme is an action within the Council Plan.

9.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

9.1 DCLG Troubled Families programme (launched 2011)

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

10.1 None directly

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

11.1 The programme has significant social impact and in some cases, community safety issues may arise. A key aim of the programme is to create a lasting difference in communities.

12.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

12.1 There is a value for money element to the programme as any financial outturn claimed as a result of turning families around can be recycled back into the programme.

13.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

13.1 <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/extra/article/114462/About-Families-First>

Tewkesbury Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 8 October 2013 – first presentation on the progress of the programme.

Tewkesbury Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 8 April 2014 – six monthly update.

Tewkesbury Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 2 December 2014 – six monthly update.

Background papers:	None
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Appendices:	None