

## **2.9 Troubled families**

### **2.91 Background**

The Government launched the Troubled Families (TF) programme in 2012 with the aim of 'turning around' the lives of 120,000 families nationally for whom numerous, uncoordinated and largely unsuccessful interventions had come at a high cost to the public purse. To be eligible for Phase 1, families had to meet at least two of three national criteria; anti-social behaviour / youth crime, school absenteeism and worklessness. Local authorities were able to set their own 'fourth criterion' to reflect the needs of their local population.

### **2.92 Phase 2**

As a successful Phase 1 authority, we were invited to be an Early Starter for Phase 2, which we agreed to do in August 2014. Phase 2 aims to 'run round' another 400,000 families nationally by March 2020. To be eligible for Troubled Families Phase 2 (TF2), families must meet 2 of 6 much broader criteria, namely:

- parents and children involved in crime or antisocial behaviour;
- children who have not been attending school regularly;
- children who need help;
- adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness;
- families affected by domestic violence and abuse;
- parents and children with a range of health problems.

Claims can be submitted for progress against any combination of the problems listed; however, where school absenteeism persists or where there has been no progress toward resolving worklessness, claims will not be agreed, however successful outcomes have been in other areas. Getting a family member into work 'trumps' all other criteria.

### **2.93 TF2 governance and terminology**

Having managed to embed TF work in the mainstream of Early Intervention services, LBBD has moved away from the stigmatising terminology of 'Troubled Families' and now merely refers to this as 'TF2' work moving forward.

TF2 progress is now reported to the Children's Trust, which includes the stakeholders' key to successful TF2 development.

### **2.94 TF2 funding**

We receive an attachment fee of £1000 for each family with whom work is started, plus a further £800 on evidenced proof of 'sustained and significant progress. For 2016/17, work must commence with 498 families, there is an ambitious target of 700 successful claims. The vast majority of these will be delivered by the LBBB Early Intervention service; partners within and outside the Council have been reticent to commit to significant cohorts.

### **2.95 TF2 identification**

As of May 2016, we had identified 1,332 families that meet the TF2 criteria. Of these, 48% meet 2 criteria, 36% meet 3, 12% 4, and 3.5% 5 and 6. It should be borne in mind that these are presenting criteria and that in the process of working with families, other needs are often identified.

We have submitted 212 successful claims to date. Of these 52% include a worklessness element; in other words, 108 family members have been supported into work.

### **2.96 TF2 reallocation**

The DCLG is currently revising its target family allocations using updated deprivation indices. Some authorities will have their allocations reduced, others will gain. Given what we know about demographic change in LBBB over the last 5 years, this can mean only one thing for us; we are likely to be allocated an additional cohort of anything between 15-30%. We have stressed to the Department that whilst an increase of this size does not present an impossible challenge, generous lead-in time will be required to upgrade and upscale existing systems and staffing arrangements.