

Department for Communities and Local
Government
1 NW Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Telephone: 030 3444 2366

Mr Steve Crossley
University of Durham
by email

Date: **14 August 2015**

Dear Mr Crossley

Freedom of Information Act 2000: reference 1239015

Thank you for your request for information which was received on 16 July 2015.

You requested:

I would like to know how (when, where and by whom) local authorities involved in the delivery of the Troubled Families Programme (TFP) were, or have been, informed that they would only be able to access funding for Phase 2 of the TFP once they had 'turned around' 100% of the families allocated to them under Phase 1 of the programme.

If this was communicated via a letter to local authorities, or during a speech or presentation at a conference or in any other way, I would like to receive a copy of any such communication, speech, presentation, or similar. If the initial (perhaps informal) communication was followed up with a more formal method of communication, could you please also send me a copy of the formal communication?

Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

It has never been a condition of entry to the expanded programme that local authorities should turn around 100% of the families allocated to them under Phase 1. However, we did communicate with local authorities regarding thresholds for eligibility, and we are able to provide you with this information.

We wrote to update the Chief Executives of local authorities who were not part of the first wave of expansion of the Troubled Families programme in the summer of 2014. These letters from Director General Louise Casey were tailored for each recipient authority. We have detailed the standard paragraphs provided to authorities at Annex I of this letter.

We wrote to Chief Executives of local authorities again in November 2014 providing a further update of the programme. This letter from Director Joe Tuke is provided at Annex II. Again, the letters were tailored for each recipient authority.

Additionally, Deputy Director of Troubled Families Ian Brady sent an email to all troubled families coordinators and to strategic and operational contacts, dated 5th November 2014. The text of this email is provided at Annex III.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review which should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of this letter and should be addressed to:

Department for Communities and Local Government
Knowledge and Information Access Team
1st Floor NW, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF
dclgia@icasework.fcgs.gsi.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the internal review procedure provided by the Department.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:
The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow,
Cheshire, SK9 5AF.
Phone: 0303 123 1113
Website: ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Anna Canning
Knowledge and Information Access Team

Annex I: Letter from Director General Louise Casey to Chief Executives of Local Authorities

Louise Casey CB
Director-General, Troubled
Families Team

August 2014

EXPANDED TROUBLED FAMILIES PROGRAMME- EARLY STARTERS

I'm writing to update you on plans for the expansion of the troubled families programme and opportunities for you to become part of this next phase of the work. The principle components of the expanded programme are set out in the annex to this letter.

As you may already be aware, Councils who have exceeded performance thresholds on the current programme are eligible to become 'early starters' on the expanded programme so that they can start working with additional families during the remainder of 2014/15. This, though, is of course on the condition that they don't let up on their efforts with the current programme. We're planning to announce the names of our first wave of early starters next week.

Though your council is not one of those in the first wave, there is an opportunity to be part of a second wave of early starters later this year. And we hope that *all* remaining areas will be in a position to participate in the expanded programme by April 2015.

To be included in the second wave of early starters for the expanded programme areas will need to be 'working with' *all* of their current allocation of families by 30th September 2014 and have 'turned around' at least 65% of them by 31st October 2014.

If you miss out on this second wave of early starters then we very much hope you will be part of the national roll out of the expanded programme from 1st April 2015. To be eligible for this we will need sufficient assurance that areas are likely to hit their existing commitments to turn around *all* of their current allocation of troubled families by May 2015. The last opportunity to make results claims for the current programme ahead of that deadline will be during April and early May 2015; as this is after the start date of the expanded programme we will need to make an assessment of your area's performance following the penultimate results claim window which will be open from mid-January to mid-February 2015. Areas who are working with all of their troubled families at that time and who have turned around at least 75% of them will be eligible for participation in the expanded programme from the date of its national roll out – 1st April 2015.

If your area does not meet either of the above thresholds then we do hope that there will be an opportunity for you to join the expanded programme at a later point but, at this stage, I am unable to reassure you that this will be the case. This, in part, is why I am writing to you directly at this point in the programme.

I would strongly urge you to check with your Troubled Families Coordinator and review whether you think your area is progressing quickly enough to ensure participation in the expanded programme. My team is, as ever, available and keen to offer continued support and advice so please don't hesitate to ask if there's anything you'd like from us.

Over the last two and a half years, I have heard from many Chief Executives and Leaders across local government that the current Troubled Families Programme has provided an important opportunity for them to not only transform families' lives, but also reshape local public services.

The expanded programme will take this to the next level and will help shape the future of mainstream public services for a generation of families to come. This programme is as important for the public purse as it is for the families being helped.

Although some areas will be delivering the expanded programme earlier than others, we very much want it to be a *national* programme so that families from across England have the opportunity to benefit from the improvements in services which I'm confident it will help achieve.

I very much look forward to working with you and thank you for your continued commitment to the Programme.

LOUISE CASEY

ANNEX A- DETAIL OF THE EXPANDED PROGRAMME

The main elements of the expanded programme are as follows:

Eligible families (400k families nationally over its planned 5 year term) will have multiple high cost problems. However, rather than focussing on a relatively small number of defined national criteria, the expanded programme will be based on a cluster of six headline problems, below which will sit a basket of indicators and referral routes. The six headline problems are:

1. Parents and children involved in crime or antisocial behaviour.
2. Children who have not been attending school regularly.
3. Children who need help.
4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of worklessness.
5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.

6. Parents and children with a range of health problems.

We will pay an upfront attachment fee of £1,000 per family for all families each area commits to include within their local programme and a results payment of £800 per family for positive outcomes achieved with those families.

In addition, we'll pay a 'Troubled Families Coordination Grant', which we expect will be approximately double the amount each area currently receives. This grant is in respect of costs associated with:

- the development and implementation of plans for local service transformation and delivery of this programme
- the collection and provision of family progress data for a minimum 10% representative sample of families, and
- the completion of the troubled families 'cost savings calculator' (recently made available to all upper-tier councils) to an agreed national standard

Annex II: Letter from Director Joe Tuke to Chief Executives of Local Authorities

Joe Tuke
Director, Troubled Families
Team

November 2014

[Tailored information about council's delivery of the Troubled Families Programme to date]

I'm writing to you, however, to urge that you maintain your support for this work because I remain worried that your council may not meet the levels of performance required in the current Troubled Families programme that will allow it to participate in the *expanded* Troubled Families programme when it is rolled out nationally from April 2015.

The expansion of the Troubled Families Programme to reach an estimated additional 400,000 families across England was announced back in June 2013 with £200 million secured to fund the first year (2015/16) of this five year programme. In the Budget 2014 we were able to announce that the highest performing areas would have the opportunity to get started on the expanded programme early, during 2014/15.

Fifty one (out of 152 upper-tier) councils have been early starter areas since September, collaborating with us on the design of the expanded programme. A larger group will join them in our second wave of early starters from January. For the remaining councils, of which [name of council] is one, the next set of results claims for families turned around represents the last chance to ensure that they can become part of the expanded programme from April 2015.

As previously advised (see Louise Casey's letter of August 2014), areas that are not yet early starters must have reached the threshold of having turned around 75% of their families by the end of the claims window that will run from January 19th to February 20th 2015. In [name of council] you've claimed for turning around just [percentage of families turned around to date] % of your families to date.

If you do not reach the 75% threshold then we certainly hope that there will be opportunities to join the expanded programme at a later point in 2015/16 but, ahead of the General Election in May 2015, can offer no guarantees or give you a sense of what performance thresholds might apply.

I'm sure you'll be aware of the considerable efforts we've made to support your team's efforts on this programme, as we have done with all other areas, both individually and alongside other areas. We very much want the new expanded programme to be a national programme with no areas, and no families, left behind.

So my team's priority over the next few months will be to do all we can to help you:

- meet, if at all possible, the February performance threshold so that you can be part of the national roll out of the expanded programme from April 2015; and
- deliver on your commitment to turn round all of your remaining families in the current programme by May 2015.

With your personal leadership and support I believe there is still a chance for you to achieve both these goals and, in so doing, maximise the funding that's still available to you from outstanding results payments and from the new funding on offer for participation in the expanded programme.

JOE TUKE

Annex III: Email from Deputy Director of Troubled Families Ian Brady to all troubled families coordinators and to strategic and operational contacts

The input and advice we've received from our first wave of 'early starter' areas has been invaluable to our ongoing refinement of the design of the expanded programme. We aim to publish a second iteration of the new Financial Framework for the expanded programme next week which will reflect much of that input and it will, as requested, include some initial guidance on the development of local Troubled Families Outcomes Plans. This guidance is still a work in progress and we will continue to work with early starters (including the wave 2 areas that join in January) on this and other elements of the programme ahead of publishing a final version of the Financial Framework in February 2015.

Work to further refine the basis upon which we will make local allocations of the estimated 400,000 families across all areas will be completed shortly and we will confirm those allocations soon after (anticipated December 2014). Following on from this we will then be able to confirm the number of TFEAs each area will be entitled to. These individuals will be in place for the start of the national roll out in April 2015.

Early Starters: Second Wave

Joe will be writing next week to the Chief Executives of all areas that have reached the performance thresholds for inclusion in the second wave of early starters. His letter will invite areas to sign up to a number of commitments and will suggest the number of families which they should get started with (and receive attachment fees for) during the remainder of 2014/15. Areas will have a couple of weeks to consider that invitation and those that sign up will then receive confirmation in early December of their early starter status along with details of when their additional service transformation grant (previously TFC grant) and attachment fees will be paid to them for the period 1st January to 31st March 2015.

We will also be holding an event in December 2014 that brings together all of our confirmed second wave early starters; details to follow shortly.

National Roll-out

As already advised, those areas that are not early starters (wave 1 or wave 2) will need to have turned around 75% of their families in the current programme by the end of the next claims window (i.e. 20th February 2015) to be eligible for the national roll-out of the expanded programme from 1st April 2015.