



## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 0715112  
Date            21 July 2015

### ***Preventing Youth Homelessness***

#### **Request:**

Please provide information for the financial year 2014-15 but also note any emerging information you have for this current financial year. Please include details of age ranges where possible.

1. Do you offer services in your area for young people at risk of homelessness due to family breakdown to **prevent** them from leaving home?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. If yes, which of the following services do you offer in your area for young people at risk of leaving home due to family breakdown to **prevent** them from leaving home? (Tick all that apply)
  - a. Family mediation
  - b. Family support (e.g. Troubled Families)
  - c. Parenting support/programmes (for families with teenagers)
  - d. Respite for young people at risk of family breakdown
  - e. Other..... (please specify)
  
3. For each of the service types you have indicated in your answer to question 2, please could you state what the eligibility/ selection criteria are for young people or families seeking access to those services?
  - a. Family

Family Mediation is provided through the Council's Family Group Conferencing Service. The criteria for this service is as follows:

- Children and young people on the edge of care (who have an allocated social worker), where the presenting issues include a breakdown in family relationships.
- The existence of a network of "family" members, who are willing to work together to identify a plan to support the family and address specific concerns.

**APPENDIX 1:**

<b>National Criteria</b>	
<b>DWP</b>	Someone in the household is in receipt of a work related benefit.
<b>Education</b>	Less than 85% attendance in the previous academic year or a pattern of attendance that is a cause for concern. 3 or more fixed term exclusions Is in a Pupil Referral Unit or not in Full Time Education (PNIFTED) or not on a school roll. Not taking up the 2 year free nursery place offer.
<b>Crime</b>	Households with 1 or more under 18 year olds with a proven offence in the last 12 months. Households where 1 or more member has an ASBO, ASB injunction, ASB contract or where the family has been subject to a housing related ASB intervention in the last 12 months.
<b>Local Criteria</b>	
<b>Child at risk of entering care</b>	Child has been referred to children's services, an initial assessment has been made and a case file is currently opened.
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	There is a risk of domestic violence within the household.
<b>Substance Misuse</b>	At least one member of the household is involved in substance misuse and may or may not be receiving treatment.
<b>Mental Health Issues</b>	At least one member of the household is experiencing mental health difficulties be it adult or young person.
<b>At risk of sexual exploitation</b>	Young person is indulging in behaviours that put them at risk of sexual exploitation – for example staying out at night, having a much older boyfriend, becoming secretive about phone and internet usage.
<b>Involved in or at the edge of gang involvement</b>	Parent is concerned about their child's friends or associates, there is a recognised gang in the area, young person is wearing the signs or using the language of the gang.
<b>Meet the criteria for a YISP referral</b>	Child or young person over the age of 8 is involved in anti-social behaviour but has not been formally charged.
<i>For further guidance on the signs of possible sexual exploitation or gang involvement see Appendix 2.</i>	

We also use YMCA for mediation, the only criteria is the YP/parent accepts the mediation. Also offer advice to YP on coping strategies if they do not want parents contacted.

b. Family support (e.g. Troubled Families)

Family support is offered through the Early Help Service. The Government Troubled Families programme is managed within Early Help. In Phase 1 of the programme (April 2012 – March 2015) Government guidelines dictated that a 'Troubled Family' was one that:

- Was involved in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Had children not in school
- Had an adult on out of work benefits

In phase 1, Wolverhampton also had local criteria (see attached document). Families in Phase 1 had to meet at least two national criteria and one local criterion to be deemed a 'Troubled Family'.

c. Parenting support/programmes (for families with teenagers)

Parenting support is offered through the Early Help Service and is targeted at those families who have additional needs. In order to access support, an Early Help Assessment has to be completed to identify the needs of the young person and family. The Young Person's Homeless Team can access support from Early Help in this way.

d. Respite for young people at risk of family breakdown:

e. Other..... (please specify)

4. Please list the service user outcomes which are measured and recorded across each programme type:

a. Family mediation

b. Family support (e.g. Troubled Families)

c. Parenting support/programmes (for families with teenagers)

d. Respite for young people at risk of family breakdown

e. Other..... (please specify)

f.

As you can see we have answered question 4 above but this is only for the Housing Outreach service. Therefore, after careful consideration, to answer your question in full the Council regrets to inform you that it has decided not to disclose this information.

Information you have requested has been withheld from disclosure. The exemption engaged is Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI).

Section 12 of the FOI exempts Public Authorities from providing information where the estimated cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. Any estimate must be undertaken in accordance with the limits set in fees regulations made under Section 12 (5) of the FOI.

These Fees Regulations (SI 2004/3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations) allow for a refusal where the cost of compliance, for local authorities such as the Council, would exceed £450. As a guide, staff time to identify and extract this information is charged at a rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with the Fees Regulations (SI 2004/3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations) made under Section 12 (5) of the Act, the Council may consider any disbursements incurred.

In summary to produce the full information requested we would need to trawl through 8,903 cases at 30 minutes each case which would involve determining whether it holds the information, locating the information, or a document which may contain the information, retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information, and extracting the information from a document containing it.

5. In what percentage of cases during the financial year 2014/15 has youth homelessness been avoided due to your services working with families to prevent family breakdown? (Please provide an exact figure if possible, if not please state where estimates are used)

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from a document containing it.

6. How much money is allocated from each of the following budgets to fund services for young people at risk of homelessness due to family breakdown to **prevent** them from leaving home? What percentage of the overall budget does this account for? (Please provide an exact figure if possible, if not please state where estimates are used)
  - a. Children's services:
  - b. Housing:
  - c. Early intervention grant:
  - d. Troubled Families funding:
  - e. Social Impact Bonds:
  - f. Other..... (please specify)

Following reasonable enquiries, it has been established that the Council does not hold the above information. Consequently, we are unable to provide any information relating to the above, as per Section 1(1)(a) of the Act:

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request".