



**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CABINET

**23 September 2020**

<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>Proposals to continue the Pause Programme in St Helens</b>
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member - Protecting Young People
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Nova Charlton
<b>Exempt Report</b>	No
<b>Reason for Exemption</b>	Open
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Public Notice issued</b>	N/A
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Report of</b>	Jim Leivers Director of Children's Services JimLeivers@sthelens.gov.uk 01744 671802
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<b>Borough priorities</b>  Please mark <b>X</b> for any priority supported by this report  <b>NB</b> Use Section 4 - Background Information to explain how each selected priority is supported	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	X
	Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	
	Create safe and strong communities for our residents	
	Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	
	Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	
	Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	

## 1. Summary

This report explains the Pause programme and the impact it has had in St Helens since it was launched as a pilot in 2017. The proposal is to continue to fund Pause for a period of 21 months through a combination of grant funding provided by the Pause charity and a contribution of match funding from the local authority.

## 2. Recommendations for Decision

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i) To approve the continuation of the Pause programme for a period of 21 months (November 2020 to July 2022).
- ii) To approve the total cost of the programme (£508k) and confirm that this will be funded by a grant of £254k provided by the Pause charity, and by allocating £254k of existing Troubled Families monies.

## 3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 To provide Cabinet with an overview of the Pause programme, an update on service delivery, effectiveness and value for money.
- 3.2 To provide details of the proposal for the Department for Education, through Pause organisation, to provide 50% match funding for the delivery of Pause as part of developing a wider city region approach to service delivery.

## 4. Background /Reasons for the recommendations

- 4.1 Pause works with women who have experienced or are at risk of repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. Pause aims to break this cycle by giving women the chance to pause, learn and aspire to take control of their lives. The purpose of Pause is to prevent the damaging consequences of countless more children being taken into care each year. The initial Pause pilot began in Hackney London, in 2013. There are now over 20 Pause Practices working across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland with plans to continue to expand by 2021.

The core programme lasts for up to 18 months per woman and aims to achieve the following outcomes:

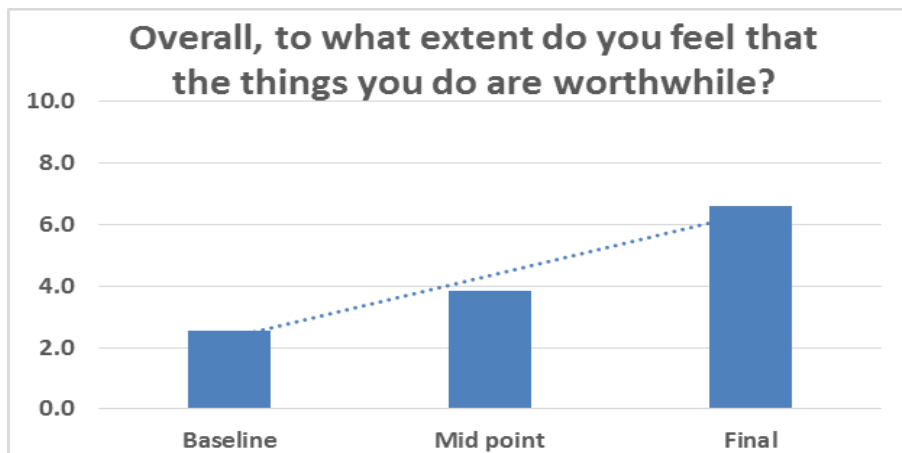
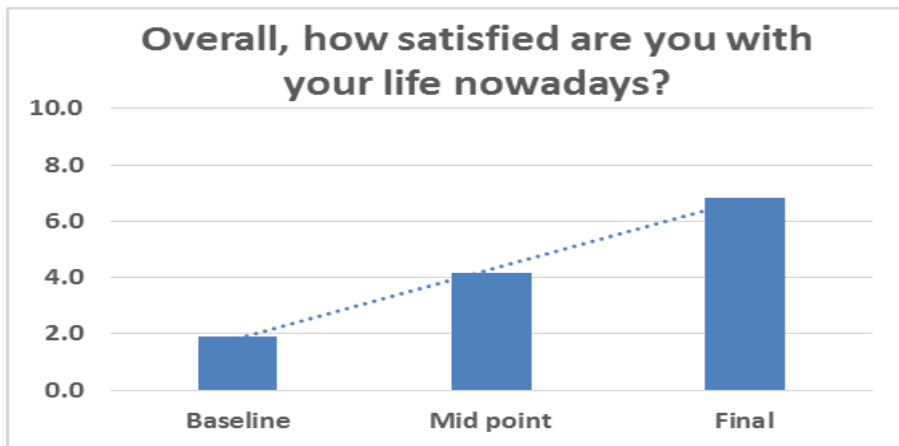
- For the women: a reduction in pregnancies, better engagement with services, improved stability, a more positive feeling of well-being and sense of self.
- Budget savings: better engagement with the women, leads to reduced expenditure relating to social care interventions and helps to reduce costs of accommodating children.
- The Pause hypothesis is that the benefits are not just immediate but that in the longer term there will be a reduction in repeat pregnancies leading to care proceedings, as a result of this group of women either choosing not to have more children, or being in a better position to parent and/or maintain contact with their existing children once they have stabilised their own lives.

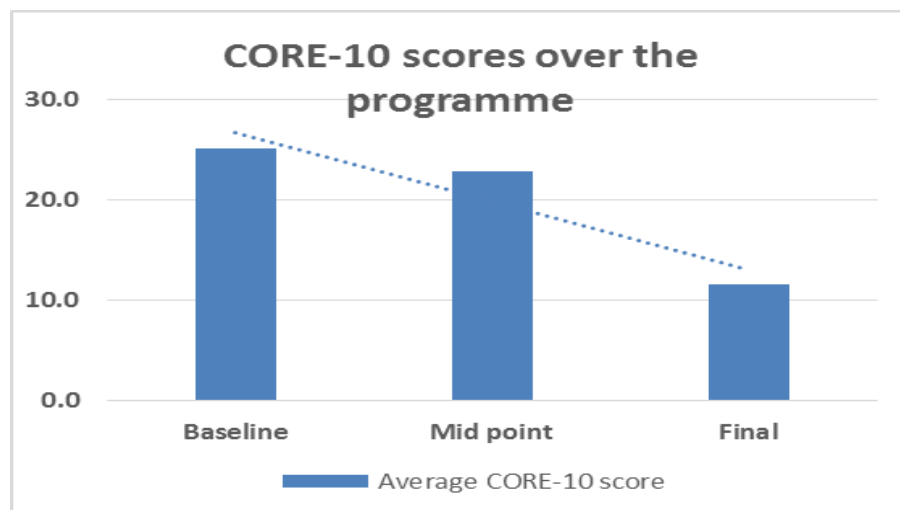
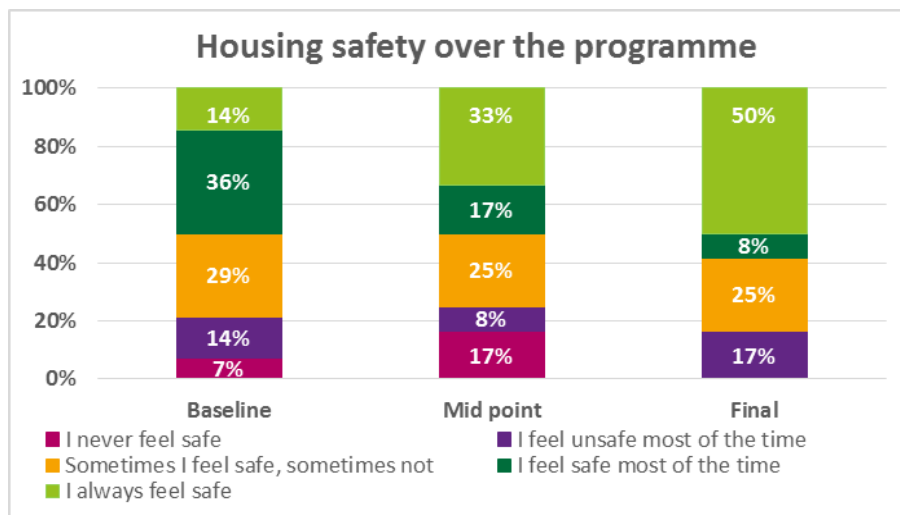
4.2 Pause is a trauma informed programme which draws upon a range of evidence-based health, social work and psychological approaches. Each Pause Practice works intensively with up to 24 women over a period of 18 months. Pause offers a combination of therapeutic, practical and emotional support tailored around each woman's needs. Each woman co-designs their own plan by working with their Practitioner to focus on and prioritise their own goals, which are then regularly reviewed and adapted. Whilst the model is not prescriptive, it does have a range of fidelity measures that are monitored through the Pause Monitoring and Evaluation Framework with performance reporting taking place on a quarterly basis overseen by a National Pause Practice Board. Pause has a strong track record and a growing evidence base (including an independent evaluation commissioned by the Department for Education) in engaging and providing individual support for women who have had traumatic experiences and complex needs. This often includes women with significant substance misuse, mental health difficulties and women who are victims of sexual violence.

The diagram below explains the key elements and examples of the approach



- 4.3 Pause St Helens is the first Pause Practice to be delivered in the Liverpool City Region. It is a partnership arrangement between St Helens Borough Council and the charity Pause, and started as an 18 month pilot in October 2017. The Authority subsequently extended delivery of the programme until October 2020 to support a second cohort of women.
- 4.4 Local need is high in relation to families who have experienced family court proceedings resulting in removals. An initial scoping exercise in 2017 identified a group of 56 potentially eligible women (213 children removed). Referrals have continued to come into the Practice from across the partnership and the service have received several self-referrals.
- 4.5 Pause St Helens has now actively worked with 41 women to date. There have been 108 children removed from this group of women, prior to becoming active with Pause. At the time of writing this report, there are 24 women currently on the programme and 14 women accessing post Pause support via a Next Steps offer.
- 4.6 Local outcome data gathered at the start, mid-point and end of the programme shows positive distance travelled in a number of areas over the first 2 years, including:





- 4.7 CORE-10 is a widely used clinical outcome measurement tool that is utilised with Pause women, throughout the programme, to measure change in their psychological well-being. It is a self assessment tool, but service users are supported by skilled practitioners to fully explore each area, before deciding on a score at the planning and review stages throughout the programme. The lower the score, the more satisfaction the women report in certain areas of their lives, eg recovery from loss, trauma, anxiety etc.
- 4.8 The economic impact was explored in the first external evaluation of Pause which identified that for every £1 spent a saving of £1.38 was made. Further work has done in the second evaluation which was commissioned by the DfE and is due for publication later in 2020. The economic modelling was undertaken by Ipsos Mori using the findings of a difference on difference study which showed clearly that having a Pause has an impact on rates of infant removal. This study found that the estimated benefit to cost ratios (savings per £1 spent) were significant at £4.50 over 4 years and £7.61 over 18 years. The second evaluation report is not published yet but Pause have agreed this information to be included within this report.
- 4.9 The current funding arrangement will come to an end in October 2020. The authority has received notification from Pause National that funding has been made available from the DfE to support further development and delivery of Pause across the Liverpool City Region. The funding available is £1.1 million for the whole of the Liverpool City Region and is to be used as

match funding to establish a regional approach to the delivery of Pause in the Northwest. Based on a 50% contribution from Pause, the Council would be required to identify total funding of £254k to deliver the full programme over the period November 2020 to July 2022. It is proposed that existing, currently uncommitted Troubled Families monies are used to meet the match funding requirement.

## **5. Community Impact Assessment**

5.1 See 8.2.4 below.

## **6 Consideration of Alternatives**

6.1 As above.

## **7 Conclusions**

7.1 There are 498 children currently in the care of the Local Authority in St Helens. The aim of Pause is to prevent the damaging consequences of children being taken into care and the impact is measured by how many children go into care whilst their birth mothers are either working with Pause or have completed Pause within the past 3 years. The programme has been highly effective in engaging women previously been regarded as difficult to reach. It has worked intensively with over 40 women since its inception with only one reported pregnancy so far. Prior to engaging with Pause, this cohort experienced 108 births resulting in the removal of children into care and the Pause pilot has therefore demonstrated its effectiveness in breaking the cycle of repeat pregnancies.

7.2 Based on an analysis of our first 2 years' worth of data, it is estimated that 21 pregnancies will have been avoided by delivering the Pause programme in St Helens. This represents 21 births that would have highly likely resulted in removal and further trauma to children and families. The Pause National Team track the likely financial savings. They estimate the cost savings over 3 years to be approximately £2m. This programme represents an important invest to save model to reduce the number of children coming into the care of the Council.

## **8. Implications**

### 8.1 Legal Implications

8.1.1 The Local Authority will be required to enter into an amended practice agreement with Pause (to be issued in due course). The current practice agreement is attached at Appendix 2, for information.

### 8.2 Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications

See 8.2.4 below.

#### 8.2.1 Social Value

8.2.1.1 The service will work with service users on a range of activities designed to increase confidence and self-esteem, build skills and new networks which are key to successful employment

#### 8.2.2 Sustainability and Environment

8.2.2.1 None.

### 8.2.3 Health and Wellbeing

8.2.3.1 Pause offers an intense programme of therapeutic, practical and behavioral support through an integrated model. Each woman has an individual programme designed around their needs looking at various elements of their system. This may include support from adult mental health and substance misuse services.

### 8.2.4 Equality and Human Rights

8.2.4.1 The programme addresses anti-poverty issues through its support around effective budgeting and access to appropriate benefits and local services to reduce levels of debt.

8.2.4.2 Maximizing the potential of women by supporting access to educational and employment opportunities and helping to reduce worklessness.

8.2.4.3 Encourages community integration through participation in a range of community groups and activities.

### 8.3 Customers and Residents

8.3.1 When family court proceedings end, there is a clear gap in the specialist support offer for women and their families who have had their children removed. Due to the complexities of their experiences, mothers who experience removal are more likely to come before the courts again, often quite quickly without having accessed the bespoke tailored support recommended and needed to be able to evidence change. Research by Lancaster University shows that over 11,000 women had more than one child removed between 2007 and 2014. **One in four women who has a child removed through the family courts is likely to return to have another removed and that number increases to one in three if they are a teenage mother.** Approximately 40% of women who experienced multiple removals of children from their care were Care Leavers themselves. 48% of these women entered the care system at an older age (10+) and half had experienced multiple placement moves. These women had been exposed to much higher levels of harm and adversity in childhood than what would be expected in the general population. **On average, the women with whom we work have had between three and four children removed.**

8.3.2 **There are 498 children currently in the care of the Local Authority in St Helens.** This evidences an ongoing need to develop and sustain innovative programmes of work with families to help break generational patterns of abuse and harm. The success rate of engagement with this group of women who have previously been regarded as difficult to reach, has been consistently measured at 85% or higher each quarter.

8.3.3 Based on an analysis of our first 2 years' worth of data, it is estimated that 21 pregnancies will have been avoided by delivering the Pause programme in St Helens. That is 21 births that would have highly likely resulted in removal and further trauma to children and families. The Pause National Team provide each Practice with a costs benefits analysis tool to support each area to track the likely financial savings associated with birthing data and patterns of removals linked to the women on each programme. Cost avoidance calculations for St Helens as of July 2020 are:

## Local forecast: cost avoidance across 41 Pause Women



### 8.4 Asset and Property

8.4.1 None.

### 8.5 Staffing and Human Resource

8.5.1 There are existing HR implications, the Pause Delivery Team consists of 5.00fte posts:

- 1 x Pause Practice Lead (Grade M; scp 36-38)
- 3 x Pause Practitioner (Grade K; scp 29-32)
- 1 x Pause Coordinator (Grade E; scp 7-11)

The Pause Practice Lead and two of the Pause Practitioners are seconded into these roles from other services within the Department. The other two Officers are on temporary contracts and it is proposed their contracts will be extended for the additional 21 months of the programme.

### 8.6 Risks

8.6.1 Should the programme discontinue, the cycle of repeat removal of children from a high risk group of women will continue to create poorer outcomes for families, contributing to additional cost and demand on statutory services.

### 8.7 Finance

8.7.1 The offer from Pause is to provide match funding of 50% to deliver an extended programme over a 21-month period, with the remainder of the cost of delivery to be funded by the Authority. The projected total annual cost is £290k per annum, and it is estimated that the cost of delivering a 21-month programme would therefore be £508k.



8.7.2 Based on a 50% contribution from Pause, the Authority would need to identify funding totaling £254k to deliver the full programme over the period November 2020 to July 2022. It is proposed that existing Troubled Families funding is used to meet the match funding requirement.

8.7.3 In the event that the final offer from Pause is less than a full 50% match for the cost of operating a 21-month programme, the Department will review all options to address the funding gap. This may include an additional contribution from the Troubled Families grant; reviewing the existing offer to deliver a reduced service over the same period; or reducing the length of the programme.

## 8.8 Policy Framework Implications

8.8.1 The Pause programme reflects the principles of good practice within the UK policy framework for health and social care. The effectiveness of the support provided is subject to evaluation and research at a local and national level.

## 9. **Background papers**

9.1 None.

## 10. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Current Pause Practice Agreement

Appendix 2 – DfE Funding Confirmation