

## **UPDATE ON THE FAMILIES FIRST PROGRAMME (TROUBLED FAMILIES)**

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide People's Board with a progress update on the Families First Programme formerly known as (Troubled Families).

### 2. BACKGROUND

The Troubled Families Programme 2015-20 aims to:

- improve outcomes for families.
- transform local services.
- deliver savings to the public purse

St Helens Local Authority were set a target by the Government of 1710 families to nominate, attach and 'turn around' by the end of the programme in March 2020.

We are now in the fourth and final year of the existing programme and with less than 12 months to go, we have a great deal to do to reach the targets set by the Government, failure to do so will risk future Government funding to the Local Authority, funding which is utilised for local jobs and services and investment in current early help services.

#### **Explanation of terms and the process:**

##### Nominations

This refers to all Partner Agencies and Social Work Teams, Early Help Teams identifying and nominating the families they are working with who meet two or more of the Troubled Families criteria (known locally as Families First, St Helens) which are:

- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- Poor school attendance
- Worklessness and financial exclusion
- Vulnerable children
- Domestic abuse
- Health

A fuller explanation of each of the criteria and can be found in the Families First St Helens outcomes plan.

## Attached

Eligibility checks are completed by the team and if the family do meet two or more of the criteria, the family are 'attached' to the programme enabling the Local Authority to claim a £1000 attachment fee per family. Feedback from some partner agencies have been that at the time of completing the nomination form, they may not know enough about a family to correctly identify the appropriate criteria. This is not necessary, as the Families First team will be able to check on our database to identify this. The nominating professional will be informed of the criteria the family have met.

## Claims

Professionals continue working with the family, ensuring that plans and actions focus on all the identified criteria. An example would be a family attached under the 'Health' criteria due to a parent's mental health and under 'Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour' due to anti-social behaviour in respect of the children in the family.

Using the Families First outcomes plan, progress measures within the agreed timescales can be evidenced because the parent is now engaging with support from her GP/medication reviews and the young person is now engaging with the Youth Justice Service or a prevention programme. Due to that support, significant and sustained progress has been possible for this family that will enable the Local Authority to claim a 'turned around' fee of £800 for this positive outcome.

## Progress to date

In order to have a greater chance of reaching the 100% Payment by Result (PbR) target set by the Government, of 1710 families there is a need to over-attach to the programme. As a result St Helens is aiming, from now until the end of the programme in 2020, to identify and attach 3665 families. Up to the claim window of April 2019 a total of 3256 families have been identified as meeting the criteria and have been attached to the programme, which is positive.

**Table 1 Families attached up to 30.04.19**

<b>Month / Year</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
January	72	21	17	64	132
February	7	14	15	123	175
March	10	45	12	11	256
April	5	12	11	51	135
May	23	32	18	44	
June	34	25	8	88	
July	22	15	27	162	
August	21	11	26	204	
September	13	44	38	48	
October	15	53	30	238	
November	11	15	26	214	
December	16	315	35	174	
<b>TOTAL PER YEAR</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>1421</b>	<b>698</b>
<b>Overall total number of families identified to date</b>	<b>3256</b>				

Adhering to our Local Families First Outcomes Plan and the National Financial Framework, up to the claim window of April 2019, 60 new claims were made which equates to £ 48,000.00. In total 468 PbR claims for improvements have been made by the Local Authority to date, with St Helens now standing at 27.3 % of ‘turned around’ families. Within this data, it is apparent that, although a number of agencies can demonstrate improved activity, there still remains a number of challenges in respect.

A letter recently sent by the Deputy Director of the Troubled Families Programme, to St Helens Strategic Director of Peoples Services, acknowledged the progress the Local Authority have made to date, which would include the ambitions of St Helens to develop a robust partnership plan to increase nominations and service delivery. However, the reality is that some partner agencies in St Helens are still performing significantly below target for both nominations and claims.

On a more positive note, there are a number of partner agencies who are now sending the team lists of families who they are currently working with, or have in the past provided a service for those who are not open to social care or early help. Using this data, the team are now able to attach and potentially claim for these families, ensuring that the valuable work that you are providing to local families is being evidenced.

### **Current performance**

Attachment target for March-April	= 286
Actual Attached for March-April	= 384
Exceeded target	= +98
Overall attachment target	= 3665
Actual attachments to date	= 3256
Numbers of attachments required to meet target	= 409
Claims target for April	= 87
Actual Claims for April	= 60 equates to £48,000.00
Shortfall based on target	= 27 equates to £21,600.00 potential loss to date.
Overall Claims Target	=1710
Actual claims to date	= 468 equates to 27.3% success rate
Shortfall	= 1242 equates to 993,600.00 overall potential loss

The above figures clearly indicate that performance in St Helens is improving in respect of attachments, which now exceeds the monthly target and we are on track to meet the figure of 3665. However, St Helens at 27.3% remains below Government expectations in respect of claims, given the national average stands at 45%.

Although recent performance is positive, we also need to acknowledge that monthly there have been significant shortfalls (127) between the PbR targets that have been set and the actual claims we have made. Given this, there has been a change to the way the team will from now on report projections, with the accumulated shortfall of 127 rolled over and added to the next 12 months projections. This has effectively increased the monthly PbR targets from now until the end of the programme.

### **Projected claims**

Claims target for May = 99  
Potential claims to be checked for May =104\*

\*These are cases that we have been monitoring over the last 6 months for the May claims window, successful claims can be made as long as progress has been maintained and recorded clearly.

### **Board Induction/Update Sessions**

Several induction/update sessions have now taken place to help board members and partner agencies understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of the Troubled Families agenda.

Three induction sessions have taken place with attendees from across the partnership. Attendees were asked to pledge monthly numbers of families they could nominate which have been added to the agency targets. Attendees attending have advised that they now fully understood the importance of the Families First St Helens programme and their responsibilities in delivering this agenda.

### **Sentinel Computer System**

Training on this new system to identify families has now been completed and the Families First team are utilising the system. There has been a huge push by the team to get as many data feeds onto the system before the end of March, to give us a clear 12 months, to evidence sustained improvement in those cases where school attendance is an issue. It is positive that most agencies have responded to this request.

## 3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

With less than 12 months of the programme to go, it will remain important to maintain pressure and pace and improve activity to reach the attachment figure of 3665 before September this year and improve PbR outcomes. There will also be an increased focus to identify 'nearly there' cases where we are close to making a claim, to identify specific actions within the plan to ensure that a PbR claim is possible.

The Families First team also encourage all partner agencies to look at their current client base, where families are not open to early help but levels of support are/have been provided. An example of this would be providing a child time within a school's nurture group, supporting mum or dad to access children's centres activities or to access work coaches. As previously stated, this could be a valuable source of information that could boost attachment and outcomes figures and the Families First Team would be able to process this information for a potential claim.

- **Peoples Board is asked to note the contents of this report**

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