

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1 March 2018



Stronger Families Programme – Phase 2 Update

Report of Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Services

Purpose

- 1 To provide Overview and Scrutiny with an update on the Stronger Families Programme (SFP) Phase 2, specifically:
 - Identification of eligible families;
 - Payment-By-Results (PBR) claims;
 - Earned Autonomy proposal.

Background

- 2 Phase 1 of the national Troubled Families programme (known locally as Stronger Families) was delivered between April 2012 and March 2015. The Troubled Families programme aspires to transform the way services work with children, young people and families to ensure families receive effective coordinated support to meet their needs at the earliest opportunity and reduce demand on high cost statutory services.
- 3 Phase one of the programme focused on the core themes of crime/anti-social behaviour, education and worklessness. The aim of the phase 1 programme was to ‘turn around’ the lives of families by addressing the issues facing the family by reducing crime/anti-social behaviour, improve the child’s attendance and behaviour in school and getting parents back on the road to employment. The programme claimed results for 1,320 families – equating to 100% of the target set by government.
- 4 County Durham’s phase 2 programme began in September 2014, as one of 50 ‘early starter’ programmes. The programme will run until May 2020 and has a target to ‘turn around’ the lives of 4,360 families. The national programme is led by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 5 Key aspects of the phase 2 of the programme include:
 - (a) A focus on service transformation through effective targeting of children and families with complex needs requiring early help, the use of evidence based approaches and interventions to support families to achieve positive

outcomes and through effective partnership working to ensure all the needs of the family are understood and addressed;

- (b) Expanding the 3 mandatory 'core criteria' with 6 nationally set 'headline issues'. These headline issues are: Crime/anti-social behaviour; education; children in need of help; worklessness/financial exclusion, domestic abuse and health. A family needs to make measurable improvements in each of the 6 areas which are relevant.
- (c) Introducing the requirement to develop a local Family Outcome Framework (FOF), defining eligibility criteria and significant and sustained outcomes for families. This sets out progress measures that each family has to achieve in order to make **significant and sustained** progress. This ensure our work with children and families is focussed on achieving measureable positive outcomes.

6 Durham's FOF was developed and launched in May 2015 after consultation with range of key partners.

7 The funding available from MHCLG via the programme is split between upfront 'attachment' fees (£1,000 per family), and payment-by-results (£800 per family) that is released once families are 'turned around'.

Identification of eligible families

8 The annual attachment target for 2017/18 is to identify and work with a cumulative total of 3,367 families by March 2018. As of the end of January 2018, the programme has worked with a total of 5,202 families. This exceeds the 2017/18 attachment target by 1,835 families as shown in figure1.

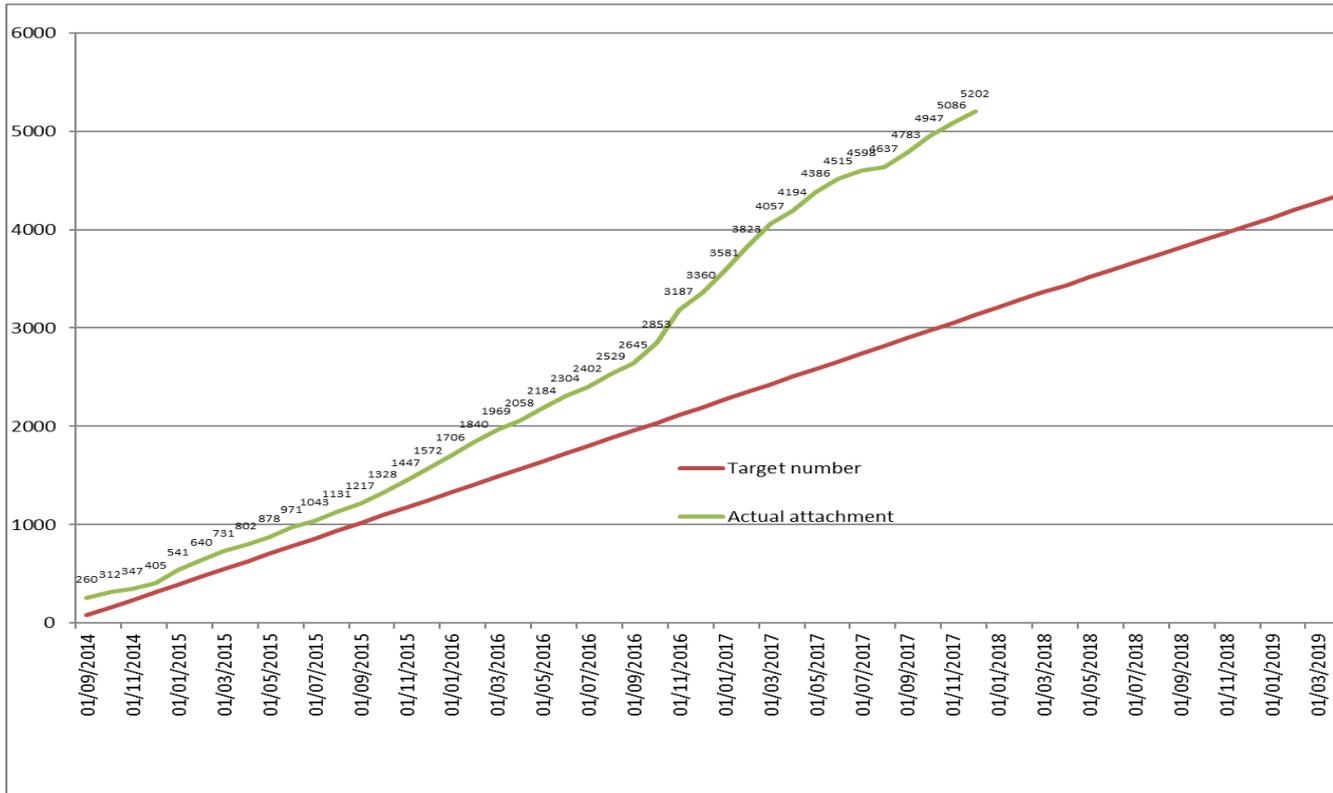


Figure 1 – Stronger Families Programme – Identification and attachment of families (December 2017)

Payment-By-Results (PBR)

9 The current results window will remain open until 28th March 2018 allowing Local Authorities to make their next round of results claims. It is expected that an additional 200 results will be certified in Quarter 4 2017/18. This would place Durham at 35% of target and within 3 percentage points of the national troubled families’ teams expected rate of results (38% of target) for this stage in the programme.

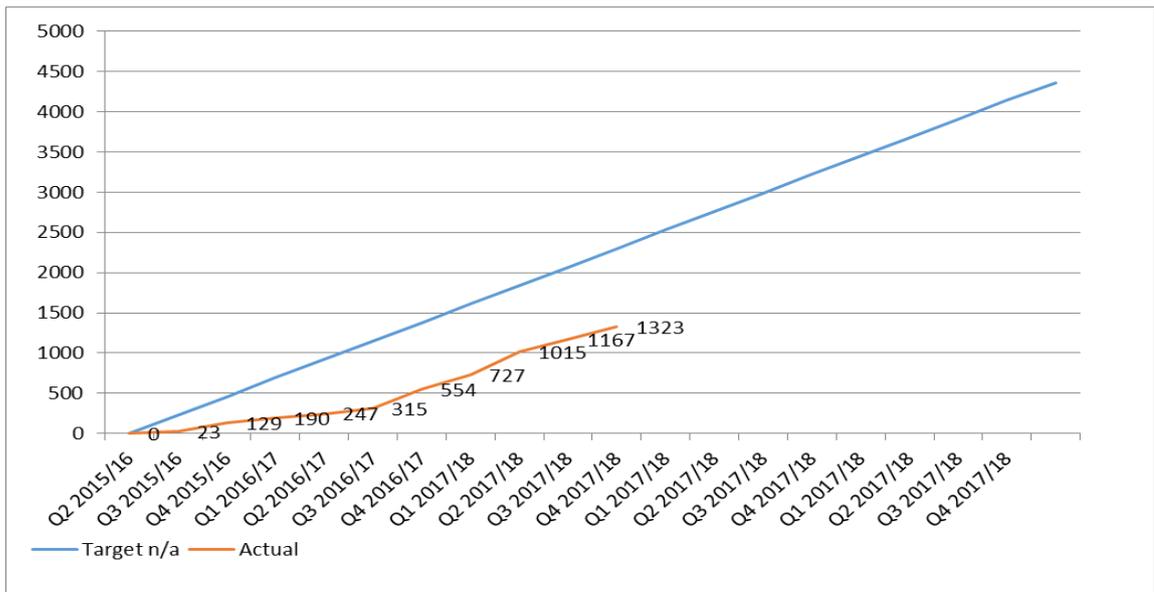


Figure 2 – Stronger Families Programme – PBR Performance at the end of January 2018

- 10 Comparator performance information for 2017/18 has not yet been released from MHCLH, however, informal feedback from the Regional Troubled Families Data and Performance leads meeting suggests that Durham’s performance continues to be in-line with that of neighbouring authorities.
- 11 The reasons as to why some families do not meet the results criteria are recorded against each family. The most two prevalent barriers which prevent result are: a lack of progress to employment, and children’s attendance failing to reach the 90% threshold. A range of actions to help address these barriers have been identified.
- 12 The MHCLG has recently revised the mandatory education outcome and this is anticipated that as a consequence of this revised guidance, as well as the increased numbers of families on the programme since November 2016 (paragraph 6) that will begin to achieve their outcomes in the coming months, the rate of results claims will accelerate throughout 2018/19.

Earned Autonomy

- 13 On 11th October 2017 MHCLG announced optional changes to the funding arrangements for LAs for the remainder of the programme, inviting those interested to submit formal proposals.
- 14 MHCLG will be both retaining the current payment-by-results (PBR) model, whilst also exploring the option of ‘earned autonomy’ for some areas for the remainder of the programme. EA will need to be able to demonstrate that receiving grant funding earlier will accelerate their service transformation and enhance the legacy of this programme.

- 15 44 LAs submitted an expression of interest in earned autonomy and County Durham is one of only 19 LAs invited to progress their earned autonomy bid proposal.
- 16 Following the development of proposals and consideration by CYPS Senior Management Team and Corporate Management Team, a formal proposal and investment plan under 'earned autonomy' was submitted on 14 February 2018. Key aspects of the proposal include:
- (a) Redesign of early help services to form an intensive family support service to support families with complex needs alongside new 0-19 Family Centre's working with a range of partners including the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS);
 - (b) Implement and evaluate a range of specialist services targeted at working with the most complex and vulnerable families to reduce the demand on high cost services;
 - (c) Develop and implement a VCS Alliance Programme to increase joint working with the VCS;
 - (d) Increased investment in ICT solutions, management information and analytical support;
 - (e) Development and implementation of Think Family Workforce Academy to provide intensive induction to newly appointed staff across the County Durham Partnership
 - (f) Implement a range of evidence-based interventions that facilitate family outcomes;
 - (g) Develop and implement a 'Place based' approach
- 17 Durham's proposals will be evaluated by representatives of the MHCLG and a Ministerial panel. Local Authorities that are granted autonomy will move to the new model with effect from 1st April 2018. DCC will be notified by in Mid-March on the outcome of the submission.

Key Messages

- 18 The key messages from this update include:
- The programme has exceeded its target to identify and work with 3,367 families by March 2018
 - 1,323 families have been 'turned around' up to the end of January 2018;
 - Changes to national guidance around the education outcome, as well as the successes realised from increasing the number of families on programme since November 2016 is likely to accelerate results claims during 2018/19;
 - A proposal for 'earned autonomy' has been submitted that will release the remaining grant funding available in order to invest in an accelerated service transformation programme.

Recommendations

19 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to:

(a) note progress of the phase 2 programme

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Stronger Families funding into LA would be increased if earned autonomy bid is successful. 100% of the funding would be paid.

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – aims to reduce inequalities

Accommodation - None

Crime and disorder – aims to support reduction in crime and antisocial

Human rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications- None