

Family Focus Programme Update

Executive Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ric Pallister, Strategy and Policy
Lead Member: Cllr Cathy Bakewell
Strategic Director: Vega Sturgess, Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus)
Assistant Director: Steve Joel, Assistant Director (Health and Well-Being)
Service Manager: Kirsty Larkins, Housing and Welfare Manager
Lead Officer: Alice Knight, Welfare & Careline Manager
Contact Details: Alice.Knight@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462943

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress of the South Somerset Family Focus Programme for supporting families with multiple and complex issues in the District.

Forward Plan

This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan for February 2015 following the last update report to District Executive in August 2014.

Public Interest

Through its Troubled Families Programme 2012-15, the Government committed to turning around the lives of over 120,000 families across the country by April 2015. The programme aims to reduce the overall cost to agencies, such as frequent, acute interventions, custodial sentences and children being looked after by the state.

This report provides an update on the delivery of Family Focus in South Somerset, and sets out the next steps for the programme.

Recommendation

That Members note the progress made in delivering South Somerset Family Focus, the multi-agency family support programme in the District.

Background

In 2012, the Government's Troubled Families Programme challenged Local Authorities to deliver multi-agency support to families meeting DCLG's criteria around anti-social behaviour and criminality, poor attendance at school, worklessness and other locally agreed criteria which have a high impact on people's health or have a high impact on public services/costs.

DCLG has two objectives for the programme: to help families with escalating needs and reduce the cost of public services.

DCLG set Somerset a target to support and change the lives of **870** families by April 2015; in South Somerset our target was **243** families. Phase 1 of the programme runs over three years from 2012-15, finishing on 31 March 2015.

Somerset

Family Focus Phase 1 was co-ordinated by SCC with delivery devolved to each district. The programme was overseen by the Somerset Troubled Families Programme Board which is responsible for co-ordinating the local delivery and reporting back on success to central Government.

Across the county the offer to the family is normally based on a family being allocated a support worker who works with the family for around 13 months, understanding their needs and advocating on their behalf with a range of agencies, helping the family to address their own issues and feeling more empowered to navigate the world around them.

In August 2014, Somerset met its target of 'turning around' 870 families (i.e. meeting successful outcomes identified in the initial criteria). These were all families where crime/anti-social behaviour, school attendance and worklessness were an ongoing issue within the family and they were receiving interventions from a wide range of public agencies. To achieve 'success', these problems were no longer an issue in the family, for example ASB stopped, school attendance rose to consistently above 85% for all children in the household, and one adult in the household secured continuous employment or training.

The Government has acknowledged the successful model adopted in Somerset which is the 5th best achieving Local Authority area for Troubled Families in the country.

South Somerset

Phase 1 of Family Focus in South Somerset is being delivered by Yeovil4Family, a project of Yeovil Community Church based at the GateWay in Yeovil. Yeovil4Family provide family support for (on average) 15 months per family, through trained Link Workers and in many cases Volunteer Mentors. By providing the family with a dedicated worker who understands their concerns, can assist them to bring more structure to their family lives and can advocate on their behalf with other agencies, the family can build up a relationship with their worker and make progress on the specific challenges that they face. The model has proved very effective and families have shown to make significant changes in their lives, well beyond the Government 'success measures.'

By September 2014, South Somerset had achieved successful outcomes for **239** families. In these cases families were identified as being 'turned around' for crime, anti-social behaviour, education and employment.

Programme outcomes in South Somerset

- Since the beginning of the programme (in 2012), 239 families have been 'turned around' achieving the government criteria for ASB, education and worklessness.
- Since February 2013, **127** families have been 'attached' and received direct support through Yeovil4Family with a dedicated Link Worker; of these **39** have also had support from a volunteer mentor.
- There are currently **84** families in the programme being supported by **7** Link Workers (5.3 full time equivalents) and **16** volunteer mentors.
- The majority of families receive support for at least a year. However in the order of 2/3rds of families have received support for 17 months. Y4F assess the progress

made by each family on a monthly basis to determine whether a family is ready to 'exit' the programme.

- As well as the 3 Government measures around ASB, school attendance and employment, other achievements for families include 'stepping down' from Children's Social Care (Child Protection Plan), securing more suitable housing, engagement with mental health services, engaging with a youth group, sorting out benefits, volunteering, training, addressing alcohol and drug problems, improved family relationships, children's counselling, moving on from school to college avoiding NEET status.
- Some other things families have been supported with which are hard to measure as a success but where the Link Worker has advocated for the family are attending court cases, supporting families through relationship breakdown, working with CSC and the family when children are taken in to care, establishing processes for reporting concerns of sexual abuse, working with Housing as a family are evicted.
- To date, a total of **58** families have been approved for exit from the programme. These families are considered to have made considerable progress and have received a suitable level of support from Y4F before supporting them on their onward journey through other agencies. Exiting families is undertaken by a multi-agency group to ensure that all possible support is being accessed by the family as they continue their journey beyond Family Focus.
- All families participating in the programme complete a Family Journey Mapping tool and a well-being survey, to monitor progress and achievements made.
- Since September 2014, when reward funding for Family Focus finished, a further **32** families have been referred in to the programme. With new referrals still being accepted until March 2015 we estimate overall approximately **150** families in South Somerset will receive intensive Link Worker support and **285** families overall will benefit from the programme in South Somerset.
- The breakdown of results across the 5 districts is shown at **Appendix 1**

Case study

Kelly lives in Yeovil with her 3 children Lucy, Megan and Tia. Kelly was physically abused in a previous relationship and the father showed signs of violence towards the children; there were several separations. Lucy has lived with her Dad on and off but has lived at home with Mum since October 2012. Kelly was caring for her sick parents in another home. Lucy and Megan were both on the radar of mental health services and Children's Social Care but engagement was sporadic, and Megan's behaviour in and out of school had been brought to the attention of the police on a number of occasions. There was often tension in the household and due to Kelly's depression the home had slipped into a poor state of repair. Tia's school attendance was erratic. There is an older child who does not live in the household and has minimal contact with the family.

Yeovil4Family began working with the family in July 2013, providing dedicated Link Worker support and a Volunteer Mentor who met weekly with Kelly. Lucy engaged with a Youth Mentor. There were 54 home visits (only 2 of which failed).

Yeovil4Family liaised and advocated for the family with a range of agencies including help with benefits, attending SSDC and support with form filling/phone calls, liaising with schools and attending meetings, liaising with CAMHS, with Yarlington and Children's Social Care.

The family is much more stable. Kelly is now a Carer for her parents as well as working part-time 8 hours a week. She is in receipt of Carer's Allowance and Income Support. It has been agreed that mainstream education is not suitable for Megan and she now has a place at the Pupil Referral Unit where she receives support and is progressing well. Lucy is receiving support through the school PFSA and is keen to move on to college after school. There have been no incidents of ASB since October 2013. Children's Social Care no longer have any concerns about the family. Tia's school attendance is at 98%.

Kelly is engaging with mental health services and is more able to cope with her responsibilities. Sorting out her finances has meant they no longer have rent arrears and a volunteer team has assisted her to clear the garden. There is more routine in the household and the family are better empowered to navigate the world around them.

Yeovil4Family reduced their support over a few months and the family were exited from the programme in December 2014.

Names have been changed to protect confidentiality

Next Steps

Due to the success of the Troubled Families Programme, Government has announced there will be a second phase from April 2015 to 2020. It is expected that more than 400,000 families will be identified nationally against broader criteria and that these families will be turned around during this period. The target is **3,000** further families in Somerset. All local authority areas are expected to implement detailed plans of redesigned services for families that will evidence public savings and improved outcomes.

During 2014 SCC has taken the decision to directly deliver the service, and redesigned its Childrens Centre service structure to introduce a new early help service known as **getset** which pulls all existing children's services together in a district-based hub offered in Children Centres, satellite locations, outreach or home-based work.

Phase 2 of Family Focus will be delivered as part of **getset** services from April 2015. Posts are currently being appointed, with 8 new Family Focus Support Workers and 1 new Early Help Officer being recruited into **getset** for South Somerset. Recruitment to the South Somerset posts has proved challenging for SCC and there is concern that there will be insufficient staff to enable the new Family Focus Phase 2 services to be operational from April 2015 in South Somerset.

All Government funding for Family Focus in Somerset will go into **getset** and therefore there will be no funds to continue with the existing model offering family support through Yeovil4Family. Any new referrals received from agencies from April 2015 will be referred to **getset**.

SCC has established a South Somerset Getset Advisory Board, a multi agency partnership which will help design services around the new **getset** model. SSDC is represented by Cllr Ric Pallister and Family Focus Co-ordinator Alice Knight. Cathy Bakewell has been appointed as Chair of the Board.

When SSDC and SST considered the new **getset** model in August and September 2014 there was concern that good practice from the existing programme would be lost and families may experience disruption in support. Members asked that we look at how SSDC and Yeovil4Family could continue to support families in South Somerset through the transition into Family Focus Phase 2 and the emerging **getset** service.

Through re-profiling our remaining resources we are able to continue to work with Yeovil4Family to provide family support until December 2015.

The existing Family Focus Programme has continued to be promoted with local partners and taking referrals from schools, doctors, social workers, housing associations, police and other agencies. This model is proving successful for this stage of the programme as information is up to date and families are likely to engage if they are already working with another agency. For example, Children's Social Care are now referring families to us as they 'step down' from a Child Protection Plan – they may no longer have serious concerns but acknowledge that the family still need support, to ensure their situation does not revert to the critical stage again.

At this stage, the existing programme will continue to take referrals until March 2015 and families will be offered support up until December 2015 or as long as financial resources allow. From April 2015 any new families referred to Family Focus will be referred to **getset**.

Through this arrangement we are able to:

- Ensure continuity for families currently in the programme
- Continue to take new referrals until SCC's **getset** service is fully up and running
- Offer families at least 9 months support up until December 2015
- Retain trained Link Worker staff, employed by Yeovil4Family, who have been successfully delivering the programme in South Somerset.
- Work with SCC on their transitional arrangements in setting up their new **getset** service
- Asses the 'cost/benefit' analysis of individual families to measure the impact/reduced costs on public services as a result of engaging with the programme
- Work with Yeovil4Family to explore potential funding opportunities with other partners to continue to provide family support in South Somerset where needed

Financial Implications

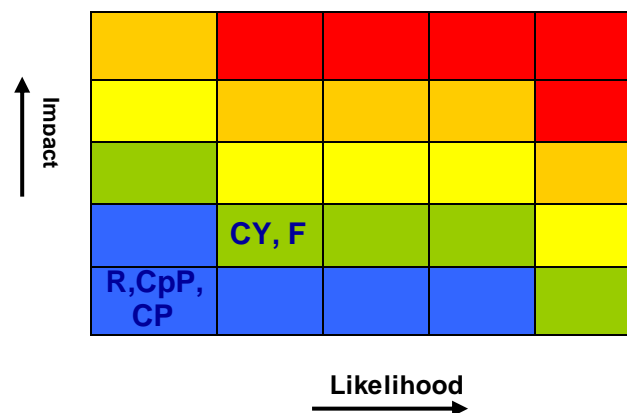
There are no new financial implications. The programme is currently being delivered within budget and is monitored by the local Programme Management Group.

South Somerset has received all DCLG attachment and success payment funding via SCC received for the final year amounting to £213,501. It is estimated that 14/15 spend will be £177,500 which leaves £36,001. This together with £130,258, remaining at the end of 2013/14, and a Yarlington contribution of £5,000 results in a total sum of £171,259 for continued delivery.

Based on current resource forecasts, the South Somerset Family Focus Programme will have sufficient financial resources to continue operating until at least the end of December 2015. In comparison, it is worth noting that programmes across the other Districts end on or before the 31st March 2015.

Risk Matrix

This matrix only identifies the risk associated with taking the decision as set out in the report as the recommendation(s). Should there be any proposal to amend the recommendation(s) by either members or officers at the meeting then the impact on the matrix and the risks it identifies must be considered prior to the vote on the recommendation(s) taking place.



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Links to SSDC's Corporate Plan (2012-2015)

Focus 1: Jobs: Work with partners, to contribute to tackling youth unemployment;

Focus 4: Health & Communities: Ensure that the strategic priorities of the Somerset Health and Well-Being Board reflect local needs and align council resources to deliver projects to address those needs.

Focus 4: Health & Communities: Ensure, with partners, that we respond effectively to community safety concerns raised by local people and that the strategic priorities for policing and crime reduction in South Somerset reflect local needs;

Equality and Diversity Implications

No new implications

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

No new implications

Background Papers

1. *Somerset County Council (2011): Total Somerset pilot High Contact families Project in Highbridge, Somerset: Bath Spa University Synopsis*
2. *DCLG (2012): Troubled Families Financial Framework*
3. *South Somerset Together (2012): Family Support Programme Management Guideline Document*
4. *SSDC DX Report & Minutes August 2014*
5. *SST Report Family Focus July 14*
6. *SCC getset report*

Appendix 1 Family Focus outcomes across Somerset

Family Focus Report - South Somerset

Progress Overview - South Somerset

Progress Overview	Cumulative Figures		
	2012-13 (Yr1)	2013-14 (Yr2)	2014-15 (Yr3) AUG 2014
Families Identified	243	268	285
Families Actively Engaged	52	88	104
Families supported via existing provision	191	180	181
Total Successful Outcomes (1+2)	24	159	239
Target Turn Around	80	202	243
Crime, Anti Social Behaviour & Education (1)	24	159	232
Continuous Employment	0	0	9
Of which counting towards target (2)	0	0	7
Progress to Work	3	9	14

Total successful claims
includes those families turned around for Crime/ASBEducation and any additional households turned around for continuous employment

Family Focus Report - Taunton & West Somerset

Progress Overview - Taunton & West Somerset

Progress Overview	Cumulative Figures		
	2012-13 (Yr1)	2013-14 (Yr2)	2014-15 (Yr3) AUG 2014
Families Identified	262	259	277
Families Actively Engaged	0	124	143
Families supported via existing provision	262	135	135
Total Successful Outcomes (1+2)	2	166	236
Target Turn Around	86	217	262
Crime, Anti Social Behaviour & Education (1)	0	164	227
Continuous Employment	2	2	11
Of which counting towards target (2)	2	2	9
Progress to Work	4	7	20

Total successful claims
includes those families turned around for Crime/ASBEducation and any additional households turned around for continuous employment

Family Focus Report - Sedgemoor

Progress Overview - Sedgemoor

Progress Overview	Cumulative Figures		
	2012-13 (Yr1)	2013-14 (Yr2)	2014-15 (Yr3) AUG 2014
Families Identified	205	215	229
Families Actively Engaged	69	101	127
Families supported via existing provision	136	114	103
Total Successful Outcomes (1+2)	19	132	183
Target Turn Around	68	170	205
Crime, Anti Social Behaviour & Education (1)	19	132	182
Continuous Employment	0	0	1
Of which counting towards target (2)	0	0	1
Progress to Work	3	11	20

Total successful claims
includes those families turned around for Crime/ASB/Education and any additional households turned around for continuous employment

Family Focus Report - Mendip

Progress Overview - Mendip

Progress Overview	Cumulative Figures		
	2012-13 (Yr1)	2013-14 (Yr2)	2014-15 (Yr3) AUG 2014
Families Identified	160	192	203
Families Actively Engaged	53	86	107
Families supported via existing provision	107	106	96
Total Successful Outcomes (1+2)	14	123	212
Target Turn Around	53	133	160
Crime, Anti Social Behaviour & Education (1)	14	123	207
Continuous Employment	0	0	8
Of which counting towards target (2)	0	0	5
Progress to Work	1	3	10

Total successful claims
includes those families turned around for Crime/ASB/Education and any additional households turned around for continuous employment