

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE PARENTING CABINET COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN

23 JULY 2012

SAFEGUARDING AND FAMILY SUPPORT: INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE (IFSS)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the development of the Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS).
- 1.2 To inform members of the Corporate Parenting Cabinet Committee of the initial plans for the operation and function of the regional team.
- 1.3 To receive guidance on any aspect of IFSS which needs high level local support to progress.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 This initiative supports the vision set out in the Community Strategy, impacting specifically on the themes of Strong Communities, Young Voices, Healthy Living and New Opportunities.

3. Background

- 3.1 In late 2011, representation was made to the Welsh Government by the Chief Executives of Swansea, Neath/Port Talbot and Bridgend indicating that the region needed an IFSS due to the high looked after population and high child protection numbers in the area.
- 3.2 In February 2012, the Western Bay Programme Board was established and the member authorities agreed to collaborate on a number of regional initiatives including the establishment of an Integrated Family Support Service across the region.
- 3.3 Agreement was reached that, given Bridgend's experience of establishing Connecting Families, we would also lead on the establishment of IFSS. Colin Turner was nominated as project lead and Nicola Echanis heads up the project team.
- 3.4 A number of meetings were held between the Heads of Service of each Local Authority area and senior health authority staff. A project team was established which took responsibility for producing the documentation which was sent to Welsh Government. (see Appendices 1, 2 and 3).

4. Current Situation / Position

- 4.1 On 17 May 2012, a letter was received from Welsh Government offering a grant to Bridgend on behalf of the Western Bay Consortium of £850,000 to establish an IFSS across the region. It is understood that this level of grant will also be made available in 2013/14, and from 2014 a similar level of funding will be added to the RSG for the continuation of the service.
- 4.2 Initial job advertisements were published on 6 June for key staff (see Appendix 2).
- 4.3 Partners are currently identifying accommodation for their bases, Bridgend will co-locate its team with Connecting Families.
- 4.4 Mapping across services in each local authority area has begun (see Appendix 3), in order to have clear care pathways for children and their families across the tiers of need.
- 4.5 Long term ICT solutions are being sought, but in the short term agreement has been reached that each area will use its own Integrated Childrens System (ICS) systems for recording information on families. Work is being undertaken in respect of an information sharing protocol.
- 4.6 An IFSS Board will need to be established as required by the statutory guidance. It has been agreed that the chair of this board will be Tony Clements, Director, Neath Port Talbot. Additional membership has been suggested to the Western Bay Board for approval. This will be at officer level and it is expected that the Board will consist of Directors and senior managers from Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea local authorities, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board and the voluntary sector. In addition to compliment the multidisciplinary nature of the teams and the cross cutting nature of the work it is suggested that Board membership should also include:-
- senior representatives from Education and/or Inclusion;
 - senior representatives from Housing;
 - Director of Primary, Community and Mental Health Services;
 - senior representation from Youth Offending Team and/or Probation Services or Police.

The Board should also identify a 'critical friend' who acts in a non-executive capacity. It is recommended that this person is drawn from a neighbouring local authority or LHB to, facilitate knowledge transfer between pioneer and non pioneer areas and the potential to utilise services across authority boundaries.

- 4.7 The reporting functions of the Board as outlined in the strategic guidance includes the following:

The Board is required to provide an Annual Report on the effectiveness of each Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) which the Board oversees. The report must be provided by the 31 March of each year. The report must be signed off by the Chief Executives of both the Local Authority and the LHB in the respective Pioneer

Area before being submitted to the Welsh Government. In order to produce this report the management of each IFST shall provide quarterly reports to the Board.

A copy of the Annual Report must be sent to:

- The Chief Executive of the Local Authority and its elected members responsible for Children, Young People and Social Services;
- The Chief Executive of the Local Health Board that relates to the IFST;
- Welsh Government Ministers;
- The Director General for Health & Social Services, Welsh Government

The Board may also wish to consider sending the report to their Local Service Board and their Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

4.8 At its simplest the Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) will offer five principal functions:

1. Provide advice and consultancy to practitioners and agencies on engaging complex families with parental substance misuse.
2. Undertake direct work with families through the application of time limited family focused interventions.
3. Jointly with the case managers co-ordinate agencies, practitioners and others to access the services which the family needs [Family Support Functions].
4. Spot purchase services not otherwise available.
5. Providing training on Evidence Based Interventions (EBIs) for the wider Workforce.

Those families with the highest level of difficulties, e.g. Alcohol, substance misuse and domestic violence will be directed to the IFST, families with broader needs will be directed to Connecting Families. The manager for Connecting Families will also manage the IFST and will oversee referrals to ensure there is an appropriate process/internal mechanism in place for managing these.

4.9 Work is on-going to identify appropriate performance indicators for the service. This will include the close monitoring of the LAC population across the region.

5. Effect Upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 This is an example of regional collaboration and part of the Western Bay Consortium arrangements.

5.2 The interface between Connecting Families and IFSS will be clearly defined.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 This has been undertaken, and no group is negatively affected by the proposal.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The grant of £850k is to be spent broadly in line with the following table:

	No.	£000
Operational Manager	1	47
Consultant Social Workers	8	356
Intervention Specialists	8	337
Business Support	3	75
Total Salary Costs		815
Premises Costs		5
Communications / Computing		27
Misc		3
Total Costs		850

7.2 The proposal will provide the best value for a wide range of council services as well as for partner agencies. Over time, the intensive work with families should free up resources that can be reinvested in earlier intervention and prevention. However, this cannot be quantified at present.

7.3 This is new money for new services for the people of Bridgend as well as those in our partner authority areas and therefore can only be beneficial to the area.

8. Recommendation

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee support the service and continue to monitor the implementation of this regional development.

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Background Documents

Appendix 1 – Proposal Document
Appendix 2 – Staff Structure
Appendix 3 – Service Mapping