

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

18 JANUARY 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE COMMISSIONING

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Corporate Parenting Committee with an overview of Children's Social Care commissioning arrangements, and highlight developments that have been made in response to the directorate restructure, and implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

2 Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The report links to the following improvement priorities in the Corporate Plan:-

- Helping people to be more self-reliant;
- Smarter use of resources.

- 2.2 Plus the following local strategic priorities:-

- The Remodelling Children's Services programme;
- The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

3 Background

- 3.1 In June 2016, a report was presented to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, providing an update on the context, focus and structure of Children's Social Care, the achievements, and priorities/areas for development for the year 2016/17, which highlighted:

- The work undertaken with the Assessment Team to agree a model for the Information, Advice and Assistance Service, which will become an integral part of Bridgend's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) once established
- Two of the safeguarding hubs are now located in the communities they provide services to, who are co-located with the early help and intervention teams; making them more accessible to children, young people and families and the professionals involved in case management and service delivery
- The Directorate's Business Plan 2016/17, which reflects the new corporate priorities, and also the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- The establishment of a Remodelling Board, which oversees the planning and implementation of new models of service delivery, highlighting that there are four programmes that report into Children's Social Care Remodelling Board:
 - Children with Disabilities Transformation;
 - Remodelling Residential Placements and Services;

- Early Help and Permanence; and
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- 3.2 In addition to these developments, the Commissioning Team also now oversees commissioning activity across both Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care, where historically the team oversaw commissioning within Adult Social Care only.
- 3.3 In order to be able to respond effectively to the additional demands and requirements across the directorate as a whole, the team has been reviewed and restructured, and additional resource has been made available in the form of a 'Strategic Planning and Commissioning Officer', and a 'Commissioning and Contracting Officer'.
- 3.4 In November 2016, the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate were also able to successfully recruit into the role of 'Group Manager – Commissioning, Contracts and Contract Management', who would be responsible for the Commissioning Team in overseeing commissioning activity across the directorate.

4 Current situation

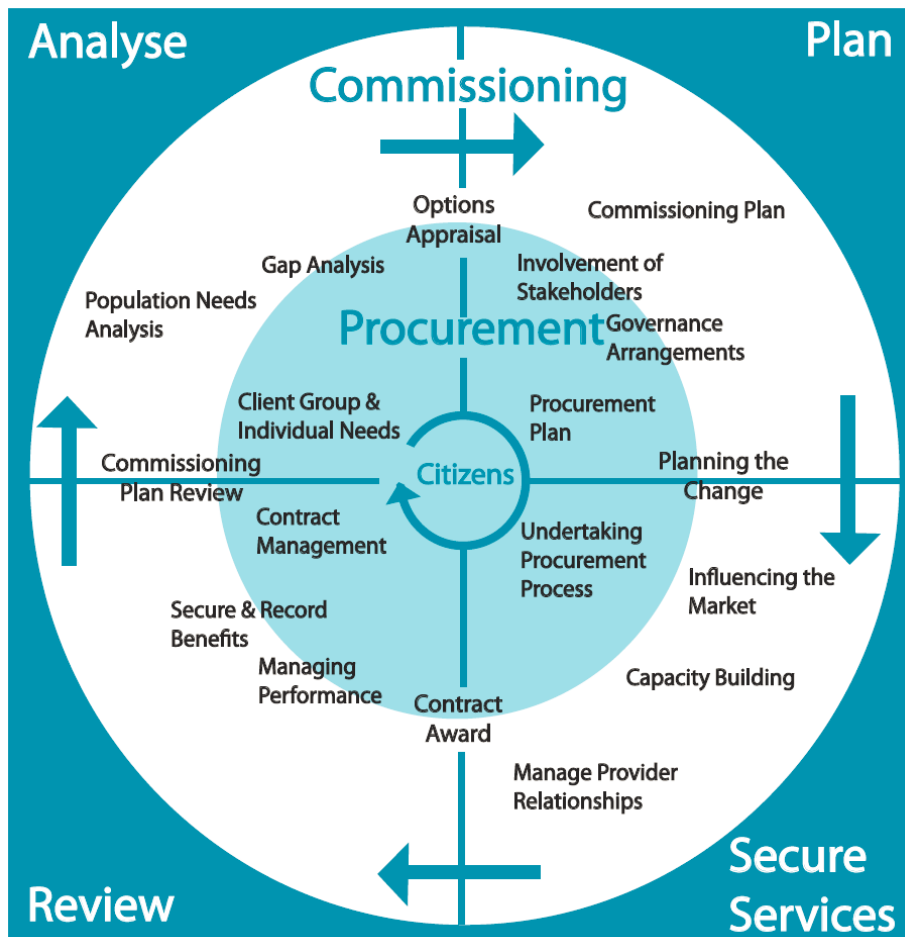
- 4.1 In keeping with the remodelling plans and the requirements of the Act, the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate are responsible for commissioning a range of support and services that are outcome-focused, responsive, timely, and proportionate to need.

a. Commissioning approach

- 4.2 It is recognised that there are a number of alternative definitions of commissioning. The Commissioning Team within the directorate have adopted Welsh Government's definition, taken from Welsh Government's (WG) 'Commissioning Framework Guidance and Good Practice – Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities':

'Social care commissioning is a set of activities by which local authorities & partners ensure that services are planned and organised to best meet the social care outcomes required by their citizens. It involves understanding the population need, best practice and local resources and using these to plan, implement and review changes in services. It requires a whole system perspective and applies to services provided by local authorities, as well as public, private and third sector services.'

- 4.3 This is often referred to as the 'commissioning cycle', and this is the process that is followed across the directorate when commissioning and procuring any services. The main tasks and activities that are undertaken are shown in the diagram below, taken from Welsh Government (WG)'s guidance, which was developed originally by the Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University:



4.4 Even though the process is cyclical in nature, once the scope of the commissioning activity has been agreed, it is recognised that ‘Analyse’ is the first stage of any commissioning exercise, which includes the key activities and requirements below:

- An agreed ‘vision’
- Identified links to other plans and strategies
- Population Assessments
- Gap analysis

The ‘vision’

4.5 During the summer of 2016, the Senior Management Team and the Extended Managers Group from Children’s Social Care commenced work to develop and agree the content of a document entitled: *Vision into Action: 2016 – 2017: ‘Together - delivering better outcomes for children/young people & their families’*.

4.6 The purpose is to have a single clear vision in place for Children’s Social Care, against which all future plans and strategies can be linked, supported by ambitions and behaviours which help guide how services deliver the change agenda. The document was consulted upon with wider staff teams and stakeholders, and the final vision that was agreed in December 2016 is shown below:

Vision into Action: 2016–2017 ‘Together enabling better outcomes for children, young people and their families via responsive and timely services which support them to live together, work on difficulties and be safe’

Links to other strategic plans

- 4.7 A key strategy which will have a significant influence on any future commissioning activity and commissioning plan within Children's Social Care is the Early Help and Permanence Strategy and Action Plan, which has been developed alongside colleagues within the Education and Family Support Directorate.
- 4.8 A draft version of the Early Help and Permanence Strategy & Action Plan was presented to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2016, and the strategy & plan are in the process of being finalised.

Population Assessment

- 4.9 Under the new Act, local authorities (and health) must carry out and publish a Population Assessment. This assessment is intended to give organisations, services, individuals and communities an understanding of where there are 'gaps' in care and support provided by public services, and what could be put in place to address these care and support needs.
- 4.10 The Population Assessment is made up of a number of sub-assessments, the below of which cover all age ranges, including children and young people:
- Learning Disabilities/Autism
 - Sensory Impairment
 - Secure Estate
 - Carers
 - Gender Based Violence/Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
 - Health/Physical Disability
 - Mental Health

There is also an assessment category entitled 'Children and Young People', which can be used to capture any further information or population need not covered by the categories highlighted above.

- 4.11 The Population Assessment is therefore an essential piece of work in informing any future commissioning activity, and are also critical in the development of any future commissioning plan for Children's Social Care.
- 4.12 Within BCBC, the sub-assessments have been completed, and the final Population Assessment will be agreed and published by April 2017, in accordance with WG's timescales.

Gap analysis

- 4.13 A key output from the various groups and projects that report into Remodelling Children's Social Care programme is the mapping and understanding of existing provision compared to needs within pertinent areas. This information will then be cross-referenced against the findings from the Population Assessments, and used to help inform any further commissioning activity in going forward.

b. Commissioning Plan

- 4.14 The vision document referred to in paragraph 4.5 forms the basis of the Commissioning Plan for Children's Social Care, which will be further developed and enhanced based upon the findings from the Population Assessment, which is to be finalised and published in April 2017.
- 4.15 The Commissioning Plan for Children's Social Care will be consistent with the commissioning plan already in place within Adult Social Care, entitled 'Living Independently in Bridgend in the 21st Century', which has been developed in line with WG's Commissioning Framework Guidance and Good Practice.
- 4.16 It should be noted that the legislation contained within the Commissioning Framework Guidance and Good Practice has been superseded by the new Act, and the new Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Therefore, should any updated guidance or good practice be made available by WG (or any other appropriate body) in response to these changes in legislation, then any future commissioning plan(s) and activity will be developed and undertaken in accordance with the most up-to-date guidance and documentation available.
- 4.17 It is BCBC's intention to hold a consultation event to help inform the development of the Commissioning Plan for Children's Social Care, where we will seek the views of all key stakeholders, including children and young people, and their families/carers.

c. Placements and contract management

- 4.18 Services and placements are currently commissioned via a range of national, regional and local frameworks and arrangements; including the 4 C's Framework, which is a national framework whose purpose is to support local authorities to find appropriate placements/care settings for looked after children in Wales.
- 4.19 Placements are currently made via the Placement Coordination & Commissioning team, who are located within the Children's Regulated Services section of the directorate. In moving forward, officers are reviewing existing arrangements, to establish potential options for further integration between this team and the Commissioning Team, in order to help ensure greater consistency of approach and knowledge sharing across Adult's and Children's services.
- 4.20 Contract monitoring arrangements are in place, with contract reviews being undertaken on an annual basis, in order to ensure; contract compliance, the effective measurement of providers' performance against defined outcomes within contracts/SLA's, and ensuring value-for-money in times of increasing austerity.

d. Partnership working

- 4.21 Officers are looking to build on the current relationship BCBC has with Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO), by strengthening arrangements with children's services providers, with BAVO looking to set-up a Children and Young People forum and partnership. Early engagement has already taken place between BCBC and BAVO, and officers will be closely involved in helping to establish the Terms of Reference for this partnership in moving forward.

- 4.22 There is a strong emphasis on collaboration in the form of regional commissioning across the Western Bay area. A prime example within Children's Social Care is the work being undertaken looking at advocacy services for children and young people across the Western Bay region. Officers and senior managers from each authority are working closely together to establish a regional service and specification, which will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the new Act and Welsh Government guidance.
- 4.23 In response to the requirements of the Act, a Regional (Western Bay) Safeguarding Children Board has also been established, whose objective is to protect children who are experiencing, or at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and to prevent them becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. The sub-groups of the Safeguarding Children Board are:
- Quality, Performance and Monitoring Group
 - Policy and Practice Management Group
 - Child Practice Review Group
 - Strategic Training Management Group (joint with Adult Safeguarding Board)
- 4.24 Commissioning officers from BCBC are part of a 'South Wales Commissioner's Group' that has been established in response to the new Act, and also common strategic drivers. The purpose of the group is to; problem-solve and act as 'critical friends', share best practice, and identify any potential options for commissioning children's services on a wider, more collaborative basis, in addition to the national framework already utilised by BCBC via the 4 C's Framework, which is used to help find appropriate placements and care settings for looked after children.
- 4.25 A Healthy Living Partnership Programme has also been established, which has a focus on increasing levels of physical activity, including those who are from under-represented groups. As part of this partnership programme, looked after children are being supported with free membership to leisure facilities, and a similar initiative is also being developed for young carers, in partnership with 'Action for Children'.
- 4.26 There are established close-working arrangements in place with the independent sector in the form of the Domiciliary Care Forum. At these quarterly meetings, providers, commissioners, and wider partners & stakeholders (such as Health and the Care and Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW)) are able to come together to; raise any sector-wide issues or concerns for the group to consider, identify and share best practice, and acts as a vehicle to engage and consult with the sector on any impending legislative or strategic changes.
- 4.27 The early involvement of stakeholders and also receiving the opinions of individuals and their families/carers are vital in ensuring you have the right services in place which are based on needs, which is a fundamental principle of effective commissioning.
- 4.28 An example of where this has been carried out in Children's Social Care is the remodelling of overnight short breaks services for disabled children. Early engagement sessions took place with pertinent staff and stakeholders, which helped to inform the development of an options appraisal for the service in moving forward. Targeted consultation sessions and activities were then carried out, to ensure everyone affected (including those who may use the service in the future)

had an opportunity to co-produce and help shape the model in moving forward. Those consulted included:

- children and young people receiving the service;
- their families/carers;
- families known to the Disabled Children's Team;
- the service staff team;
- Disabled Children's Team staff; and
- other pertinent stakeholders, including health colleagues

4.29 The directorate is committed to working closely with partners, stakeholders, families/carers and individuals to help shape future commissioning plans, and to help inform service delivery options in moving forward.

5 Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 This is an overview report, and therefore there is no impact on the policy framework and procedure rules.

6 Equality Impact Assessments

6.1 This is an overview report, and therefore an EIA is not required.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 This is an overview report, and therefore there are no financial implications.

7.2 However, it should be noted that effective commissioning will play a key role in helping Children's Social Care deliver against its remodelling plans, in order to meet the requirements of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

8 Recommendation

8.1 It is recommended that Corporate Parenting Committee notes the contents of this overview report, and provides comment on any aspect(s) as appropriate.

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10 Background documents

- 16 June 2016 – Report to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Children's Social Care Overview