

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**28 MARCH 2018**

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES**

**COMMISSIONING AND AWARD OF CONTRACTS IN RESPECT OF THE FAMILIES FIRST PROGRAMME**

**1. Purpose of Report.**

The purpose of the report is to:

- a) Seek approval to continue service delivery based around contract arrangements currently in place for the delivery of Welsh Government funded contract arrangements for Families First.
- b) On the basis that such approval is granted:
  - suspend that part of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) in respect of the proposed Contracts listed in Appendix 1 of this report in relation to the requirements as to retendering these Contracts
  - authorise the Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services to enter into contracts with the current providers as detailed in Appendix 1

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities**

2.1 The continuation of the contracts support the delivery of Corporate Priorities of –

Supporting a successful economy  
Smarter use of Resources  
Helping people to be more self-reliant

**3. Background.**

- 3.1 In January 2017 Cabinet was informed of Welsh Government's intention to make substantial changes to the Families First programme. On concluding its consultation exercise, revised guidance was published. Further discussions ensued with Welsh Government concerning the introduction of Flexible Funding related to grant funded delivery arrangements for 2018/19 onward.
- 3.2 On the 22 January 2018 Welsh Government issued an indicative grant offer letter for 2018/19 in relation to the development of funding flexibilities, enabling service re-design in support of the delivery of sustainable improvements in outcomes for people and communities.

- 3.3. Welsh Government's indicative grant offer letter nominated Bridgend as a Flexible Funding Pathfinder Area. Consequently, discussions are on-going with Welsh Government with regard to how the flexibility of funding arrangements can and will be implemented.
- 3.2 These ongoing discussions surrounding the implementation of funding flexibility arrangements have prevented a commissioning exercise from being undertaken. Current Families First services are due to cease on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018. This would have a significant impact upon individuals, children, young people and families, particularly those in or in danger of experiencing poverty. The proposals contained in this report are therefore, a practical response to the need to ensure service continuity until the Funding Flexibility has been finalised and a commissioning exercise undertaken.

#### **4. Current situation / proposal.**

- 4.1 The existing programmes within the Families First Programme listed below have been extended by the maximum permitted period under the terms and conditions of the Contract and are currently due to end on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018.

Programme 1 - Family Learning and Engagement.  
Programme 2 - Parenting Support.  
Programme 3 - Childcare Support.  
Programme 4 - Family Support Programme  
Programme 5 - Physical and Emotional Wellbeing.  
Programme 6 - Disability Support.

- 4.2 The Council would have been expected at this time, to re-tender for replacement services, in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in accordance with the Regulations and our own Contract Procedure Rules (in particular Rule 7.2.)
- 4.3 To ensure the continuity of essential services to individuals and families it is proposed that Cabinet suspends the relevant parts of the Council's CPRs in respect of tendering and agrees to the awarding of contracts based on current contract arrangements, on an initial 6 month basis, Appendix 1 of this report provides information on the contract type, the contracted provider and the value of the Contracts.
- 4.4 If there is further delay relating to the Funding Flexibility which prevents a full commissioning exercise of the contracts within the 6 month period Cabinet is requested to permit the Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services the option to enter into further extensions of up to a further 6-months, i.e. until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. This is in order to enable the Council to respond promptly and align itself to any new and or emerging guidance and directions expected in the near future from Welsh Government with regard to the Flexible Funding arrangements.
- 4.5 Cabinet needs to be aware that, in awarding these contracts to the current providers, the Council is exposed to the risk of potential challenge from other providers of such services. The Council will be failing to comply with Public Contract Regulations 2015 which implement EU Procurement Directives if it adopts the course of action specified in this report.

4.6 The risk of challenge is not possible to quantify, however, given the current difficulties in the commissioning of the services and that these contracts relate to vulnerable people and families in need of support services, the Council may take the view that the potential for challenge is one it is prepared to accept. The relatively short duration of between 6-12 months of these Contracts should also be considered as part of this balancing exercise.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.**

5.1 This report is requesting a suspension of the Council's CPRs, but no amendment to the CPR's themselves are being sought.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 An EIA has not been undertaken in relation to these specific proposals. However, Families First is an anti-poverty programme directed toward supporting people in need. The impact of the cessation of services provided by its contract arrangements will have a detrimental impact on people living in poverty and many of the protected characteristics.

## **7. Financial Implications.**

7.1 All services funded via these contract arrangements are funded by Welsh Government Grant. Welsh Government has informed of its indicative funding levels at least until the end of March 2019 which is at a slightly reduced level.

## **8. Recommendation.**

8.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- a. suspend the relevant parts of the Council's CPR's in respect of the requirement as to re-tendering of the proposed contracts listed in Appendix 1 of this report;
- b. authorise the Corporate Director Operational & Partnership Services to enter into contracts of 6-months with the current providers in respect of the Contracts in Appendix 1 of the report with the option to enter into further extensions for a period of a further 6-months i.e. until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019;

**Andrew Jolley**

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Background Docs - None



## Appendix 1 - Contract details

### Families First Proposed Programme - 2018/19

<b>Contract Element</b>	<b>Contracted Provider</b>	<b>Short Term Contract Value (6-months)</b> * unless otherwise indicated
1. Disability Support Programme	Barnardo's	£82,250
2. Parenting Support Programme	Action for Children	£67,750
3. Practical Home Management	Barnardo's	£15,000
4. Support for Young Carers	Action for Children	£19,000
5. JAFF/ TAF (including parent school engagement, dad's worker & language & learning elements)	BCBC – Education & Family Support	£969,591* (12-months)
6. Emotional Health Support for children and young people: - Youth (1:2:1) Counselling - Play Therapy (<10 years)	BCBC - Education & Family Support	£51,000* (12-months)
7. Health & Wellbeing (Promoting positive life choices)	BCBC - Education & Family Support	£91,000* (12-months)
8. Targeted Child and Family Support	BCBC - Education & Family Support	£120,000* (12-months)