

APPENDIX 2

Bridgend Children's Services

Family Support Commissioning Strategy

Action Plan January 2025

1. Introduction and context

This document is an appendix to a draft commissioning strategy for Family Support services to children, young people and families across Bridgend in the period 2025 – 2027 prepared by the Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University (IPC) for Laura Kinsey and David Wright in Children and Family Services at Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC). The appendix comprises a draft action plan for discussion based on the recommendations in the draft report and the Council's commitments in its three-year plan for children and families services including:

- To a single point of access for all children and family services along with integrated management arrangements for IAA, early help, locality social work, locality early intervention and edge of care teams with direct responsibility to the Director of Social Services and Wellbeing.
- To take a joined-up locality approach between key partners in the Council, third sector partners and other statutory partners in locality clusters, supporting schools, so there is a 'no wrong door approach' to any child or family who needs to access any tier of preventative services. This design will be informed by good practice in other parts of Wales and will require some redesign to websites and telephone routing systems.
- To offer a more extensive range of responses at level 3 of the continuum of need so that the most vulnerable families can get the interventions they need to reduce the number of children and young people needing to experience care or safeguarding.
- To review the planning and commissioning external services and managing grants to support the effective delivery of grant funded services to complement Council provision and explore the potential for partnerships with the voluntary sector to manage and deliver services for families with complex needs.

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2. Key commissioning priorities

The strategy identified the following key priority areas for further improvement

- Streamlined systems
- More intensive targeted support
- Parenting support
- Older children and young people
- Children and young people with neurodiversity, learning disabilities and mental health challenges.
- Partnerships with families

The following draft action plan considers each of these six areas below. The action plan should be read in conjunction with the front door review action plan from January 2025.

Area	Priority Actions	Leadership and Timescales
Streamlined systems	Introduce management arrangements for early help which are integrated with edge of care model, and which promote greater consistency and reliability of early help services across the County Borough	SMT decide on management arrangements and appoint / develop to roles from March – June 2025
	Work with partners to implement the findings and action plan of the recent review of front door arrangements.	Establish a joint working group with support from the regional safeguarding board to deliver the action plan from April 2025 – March 2026

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Area	Priority Actions	Leadership and Timescales
	Work with partners to agree a single set of measures and a single monitoring framework to maintain a close handle on demand, activity and performance in referral, assessment and early help services.	MASH/IAA managers with Information Systems colleagues overseen by the joint working group from April – September 2025
More intensive targeted support	Undertake a programme to build the skills and capacity of staff within Early Help and Family Support services so they are able to work intensively with families at tier 3, including establish a common skill set that family support workers and refocus current services to undertake a higher proportion of their work with these families, and monitor the impact and adjust resources as needed.	Establish a Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to oversee the development and delivery of the programme from April 2025 – March 2026
Parenting support	Review parenting programmes delivered via or by the Council, to ensure they are sufficiently intense and personalised to meet complex needs. Include a review of the Integrated Family Support Services which address acute or highly complex needs and explore intensive support models which could have a greater impact on more vulnerable families.	Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to oversee the review (co-terminus with older children review) from April – September 2025
	Deliver a commissioning and procurement exercise to identify potential partners in delivery for these new services, and explore the extent to which voluntary sector, education and NHS partners can provide tier 2 'course-based' support for parents.	Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to oversee the exercise (in tandem with the older children exercise) and liaise with partners on implications from September 2025 – March 2026

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Area	Priority Actions	Leadership and Timescales
Older children and young people	Review interventions with families in conflict which could have a greater impact on more vulnerable families and liaise with partners in the NHS to direct resources to develop and deliver such programmes.	Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to oversee the review (co-terminus with parenting support review) from April – September 2025
	Deliver a commissioning and procurement exercise to identify how best to deliver these services, including through increased capacity in this area so that Family Support services can be undertaken more intensive support for families with more complex needs.	Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to oversee the exercise (in tandem with the parenting support exercise) and liaise with partners on implications from September 2025 – March 2026
Children and young people with neurodiversity, learning disabilities and mental health challenges	Work with colleagues in the NHS to agree a strategy for investment in these areas focused on those with complex needs at tier 3 of the continuum of need.	Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to work with partners to agree a shared strategy for these services April 2025 – September 2025.
	Deliver a joint commissioning and procurement exercise with partners to identify and secure more intensive Family Support interventions particularly suited to children and young people with neurodiversity, learning disabilities and mental health challenges and work with partners to develop and implement them in Bridgend.	Commissioning Strategy Implementation Team to oversee the exercise with partners from September 2025 – March 2026

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Area	Priority Actions	Leadership and Timescales
Partnerships with families	Review the impact of Signs of Safety and Strengths-Based practice across BCBC and partners and agree a programme of further implementation.	Children and Families Service Senior Leadership Team oversee this exercise from April – September 2025.
	Agree a revised set of principles and practice standards on working effectively with families and review current ongoing staff training programmes to ensure they focus on them.	Children and Families Service Senior Leadership Team oversee this exercise from April – September 2025.