

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

THURSDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - SOCIAL SERVICES & WELLBEING

CHILDRENS COMMISSIONING CONSORTIUM (4CS) FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To provide the corporate parenting cabinet committee with information and an update of the work being undertaken by the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C's) and their forward work programme

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The report links to the following corporate priorities:
- Working with children and families to tackle problems early
 - Working together to make the best use of our resources

3. Background.

- 3.1 The 4C's was originally formed by the 10 South East Wales Improvement Collaboration authorities, 4Cs was renamed and expanded in 2012 to include five Mid and West Wales authorities. The Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C's) is a partnership of authorities across Wales who work together to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and achieve value for money through working together collaboratively. A Board which includes Heads of Childrens Services governs the 4Cs work programme.
- 3.2 As well as significant cost savings, benefits include improved management information, consistent and secure collaborative tools and processes across authorities to facilitate individual placement matching, contract award and contract monitoring, collaborative risk management, and quality assurance of providers; sustained reduction in prices; and an environment of partnership with the independent sector to commission new sustainable care models. It also rationalised processes for all participant authorities ensuring a consistent placement process fit for purpose by focusing on the needs of the child.
- 3.3 4Cs has won awards, including a prestigious Government Opportunities (GO) National Excellence in Procurement for Innovation and Initiative Award for a health and social care organisation in the National Government Opportunities Excellence in Public Procurement Awards 2013/14. The Consortiums commissioning work has been commended by the Childrens Commissioner for Wales.

- 3.4 Participation and Co-Production with young people with care experience is well embedded in all 4Cs developmental work. Participation in the 4Cs Consortium presents collaborative opportunities for children's social care within an acknowledged environment in which development and delivery of social care services is both complex and challenging. Over 91% of young people who responded to the 2014 Framework 360 Outcomes Survey felt their outcomes were being met by their placement most or all of the time.
- 3.5 Significant progress has been made by the (4Cs) to improve the way local authorities commission looked after children (LAC) placement services. In 2012 4C's launched the first collaborative social care Frameworks in Wales for Fostering and Residential LAC placement services, BCBC staff were involved in the original, scoping, tendering and interview process. These will now be renewed in May 2016. Year on year significant cost savings have been achieved as a result of the collaborative approach taken by 4Cs to placement commissioning. £79 million per annum was spent on independent sector LAC placements by 4Cs authorities. Over the life of the current Placement Frameworks projected savings are £6.18m in actual cost avoidance, with potential cost avoidance being estimated at £10.68m
- 3.6 The Foster and Residential Frameworks provide a strategic procurement solution for independent sector Looked After Children's (LAC) placement needs. For the life of the contract the provider; quality, cost per placement, terms conditions and specifications are determined and agreed. This has eliminated the need for a full procurement process for each and every placement and removed options of 'opportunistic' pricing which previously existed for some urgent requirements. Non-framework placements are more expensive than Framework placements. When making placements in the independent sector authorities increasingly place with Framework assured providers, in fact 97% of independent foster care placements are with framework providers. BCBC has been commended by the 4C's for their consistent use of the database. Significantly higher rates of concerns are reported by local authorities to the 4Cs regional commissioning unit in relation to non-framework providers leading to higher costs and higher rates of disruption
- 3.7 Local authorities have been able through the Frameworks to match placement needs with providers at predetermined or improved prices through the individual placement matching process. BCBC now uses a module within the database which enables us to ensure that any long term or sibling foster placement discounts are applied at the earliest opportunity.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 In preparation for the new collaborative Frameworks 4Cs has completed a regional needs and market analysis and agreed a regional Commissioning Strategy which sets out an ambitious joint agenda over the next few years for placement commissioning.

Key objectives are to ensure:

- Outcomes and life chances of Looked After Children and young people are good
- A range of services which improve outcomes and meet the needs of vulnerable children and their families and
- Value for money

4.2 The new Regional Commissioning Strategy, through the two new Frameworks will meet the anticipated placement requirements. Bridgend CBC has representatives attending to promote our interests. Furthermore it will encourage new provision into Wales where gaps currently exist and facilitate strategic partnership with placement providers to develop new models of care which offer new solutions to placement issues, whilst delivering better outcomes and value for money.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

5.1 Not applicable for the purpose of this report

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Not applicable for the purpose of this report

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 Not applicable for the purpose of this report

8. Recommendation.

8.1 That the cabinet committee takes note of the information contained within this report.

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<Date of final sign off>

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Background documents: No additional documents are being submitted with this report