

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET COMMITTEE CORPORATE PARENTING

THURSDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2015

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

#### UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION STRATEGY

#### 1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet Committee on progress with implementation of the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy.

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

- 2.1 This report links to the following corporate priorities:

- Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement.
- Working with children and families to tackle problems early.
- Working together to help vulnerable people to stay independent.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In April 2015 there was a significant re-structure of Early Intervention and Family Support Services that encompassed a wide range of services which had previously existed under separate management arrangements, with separate referral systems. This resulted in a move from an individual service based model (Youth Service, Educational Welfare etc.) to a locality/hub based model.

- 3.2 We now have three locality Early Help Hubs (North, West and East of the County Borough) made up of a range of roles including:

- Family Support Workers
- Education Welfare Officers
- Family Engagement Officers
- Lead Workers (Youth Workers)
- Counsellors
- Young Carers Co-ordinator

- 3.3 In addition to the locality hubs, we have a central hub that offers a range of county wide specialist services including Connecting Families, specialist Youth Services, and workers who co-ordinate and provide support for those young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). We also have a separate regional Western Bay Intensive Family Support Service.

- 3.4 In addition, there is an Early Years and Childcare service which includes the Flying Start programme.

3.5 The re-structure of all of these services (Early Intervention and Family Support) generated a budget saving of £730kas part of the 2015/16 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The financial savings were predominantly generated from streamlining management and back office functions. We were able to protect and in some cases increase the number of front line delivery staff by moving a range of previously core funded posts to grant funded sources (e.g. Families First).

#### 4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 The re-structured services have been operational since April 2015. However, some of the new processes, including a simplified referral arrangement (one front door) and the re-direction of inappropriate contacts from the Safeguarding Assessment Team commenced in June 2015.

4.2 Central to the new Early Help locality hub arrangements is the Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF). This is an assessment of the family's needs. The co-location of a broad range of staff has not only resulted in a better 'join-up' of service delivery but it has also seen a significant increase in the number of families we are working with. This is evidenced in the table below:

	2014/15	2015/16 (April – Oct)	Comments
Number of completed JAFF Assessments	228	251	In 7 months we have completed 23more JAFFs than we did in the whole of 2014/15

4.3 Another positive outcome linked with the re-structure is the number of Safeguarding cases that have been 'stepped down' into Early Help Services. This is highlighted in the table below together with other relevant data:

	2014/15	2015/16 (April – Oct)	Comments
Number of Safeguarding step-down cases to Early Help	3	53	This partly accounts for the reduction in CIN numbers
No of EH cases escalated to Safeguarding	16	9	
No of Safeguarding Assessment Team Contacts re-directed to Early Help	9	104	

4.4 Each of the three Early Help Locality Hubs is co-located with the Safeguarding Social Work Teams. This is proving invaluable in terms of facilitating

communication, sharing information and embedding the processes for 'Stepping Up' and 'Stepping Down' families, who move between different service areas as their needs and circumstances change.

- 4.5 Attached as Appendix A and B are case studies which support the benefits of the co-location of Safeguarding and Early Help Services.
- 4.6 Work is currently underway to bring together the Authority's Early Intervention and Prevention and Looked After Children Placement and Permanency Strategies with a joint action plan, in order to ensure service priorities are agreed and that accountability is attributed correctly.
- 4.7 More generally, there are a range of initiatives that have been progressed in Early Help services such as 'Team Around the School', 'Team Around the 'Cluster' and 'Team Around the Family' which are proving effective in terms of improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- 4.8 There are however, pressures and risks associated with the new working arrangements. With an emphasis on 'stepping down' and redirecting contacts from safeguarding services, capacity within early help services is a cause for concern. and In addition, a significant risk to early help services is that over 70% of staff are funded from grant (e.g. Families First, Flying Start). At the time of writing this report, Welsh Government has not indicated whether these monies will be made available to local authorities in 2016/17 and beyond.

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

- 5.1 None

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

There are no direct equality impact issues arising from this report.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The Integrated Working and Family Support service budget is £7.712 million as detailed in the table below;

Provider		15/16 Allocation £
	Core Funding	1,528,296
WG	Families First	1,516,283
WG	Communities First	219,151
WG	Education Improvement Grant	165,000
WG	Youth Strategy Grant	123,100
Big Lottery	Invisible Walls	40,271
WG	Flying Start	3,330,600
WG	Flying Start Basic Skills	61,767
Health	Healthy Pre School	12,000
WG	Out of School	101,563
SCBC/NPT	WB IFSS (contribution from NPT & SCBC)	572,000
	Earmarked Reserves	42,000
	<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>7,712,031</b>

7.2 Over 70% of the current budget is grant funded. As indicated in 4.8 of the report, we have not yet received notification of whether any of the grant monies will be available in 2016/17. Welsh Government will publish its draft budget for consultation in early December 2015 but a final budget will not be published until March 2016. Smaller external funding sources (e.g. Big Lottery) are secure until March 2017. However, the contribution from the City and County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot authorities to the regional Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) is only confirmed at this point until March 2016.

7.3 A resilience plan is in place but this would need to be presented to Cabinet should the grant funding not be available or is reduced in any way.

## 8. Recommendation

8.1 That the Cabinet Committee note the report

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**27 November 2015**

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Appendix 2 – Case Study – Child MD

**Background documents:** Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy.