

**SUBJECT: Well-being Plan: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
Progress and Draft Action Plan**

MEETING: PSB Select Committee

DATE: 10th October 2018

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE

To provide PSB Select Committee with an overview of the work that the public service board will develop to begin to address and mitigate the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on long-term outcomes/wellbeing.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle aimed at achieving seven national well-being goals.
- 2.2 One of the responsibilities the Act places on the Public Services Board (PSB) is to prepare and publish a Well-being Plan and well-being objectives for the county. Monmouthshire's Well-being Plan was approved by the PSB in April and published at the beginning of May.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the committee are invited to:

- 3.1 Scrutinise if there has been enough progress in relation to the well-being step '*Tackle the causes of ACEs and the perpetuation of generational problems in families*'.
- 3.2 Scrutinise the approach taken to develop this wellbeing step and draft action plan.
- 3.3 Scrutinise if the draft actions are the right actions for PSB to begin to explore the complex issue of tackling ACEs.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being. These experiences range from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, to parental divorce or the incarceration of a parent or guardian. The ACEs research tells us is that these adverse experiences are likely to have a significant impact on health-harming behaviours (such as problematic drug or alcohol use), mental health and chronic disease throughout adulthood. Clearly for a child to experience a single ACE is unwelcome, however, what the evidence shows is that children who experience fewer than four ACEs are more resilient to the long-term impact. There is a moral as well as a financial imperative therefore to work

to limit as far as possible the ACEs children are exposed to and to mitigate the impact of ACEs that they do experience.

- 4.2 There is a multitude of reasons why children become exposed to ACEs and many of these reasons will be interrelated. Incarceration is linked with poor education, poor education is linked with poverty, and poverty is linked to a higher incidence of involvement with social care, and so on. Experiencing ACEs makes an adult more likely to raise children in environments where they too experience ACEs. Mitigating the impact of ACEs is, therefore, an essential element within an ACE reduction strategy.
- 4.3 Attempting to identify simple solutions to such a complex set of problems is impossible. What is possible however is a consideration of those factors that agencies and services have influence over in order to collectively create an environment conducive to whole systems change. This will require us to think differently; away from a model where we assume that we can control outcomes and towards a model that seeks to identify key points of influence, where small changes can create a difference.
- 4.4 We are doing lots already, much driven by a statutory imperative. The focus of partnerships should be on achieving difference at a policy, planning and implementation level, including consideration of existing and new activity. Since ACEs are a complex issue, it will be important to focus on those factors where partners have most control/influence and those where there is evidence that intervention will make the most difference whilst accepting that not everything can be a priority.
- 4.5 To assist with this the Cymru Well Wales, Adverse Childhood Experiences' Support Hub facilitated a session at the Programme Board meeting on the 1st of October. The session provided an introduction to ACEs and the evidence base and a forum for starting to consider what a Monmouthshire response to mitigating and preventing ACEs might look like (details included in Appendix 1).

5. REASONS:

- 5.1 To ensure that actions are in place that will help give 'children & young people the best possible start in life' by making progress towards tackling, mitigating and preventing ACEs.
- 5.2 To improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of our county and work towards the aspirations outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Resource implications are indicated in the draft ACEs action plan, however, they are only estimated in terms of weighting at this stage and no cost has been attributed for the purposes of this report as this detail will need further refinement.

7. EQUALITY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Evaluations are being completed as this step is developed and will be available for scrutiny when more specific proposals are scrutinised at a future committee.

8. AUTHOR:

Sharran Lloyd, Community & Partnership Development Manager
01633 644344 / 07814 212067
sharranlloyd@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Charlotte Drury, Children's Services Manager
07811 234244
Charlottedrury@monmouthshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

PSB Programme Board - ACEs Workshop held on 1st October 2018

The PSB Programme Board has been given a clear directive by the Chief Executives on the PSB, to drive forward the thinking and action required in relation to the steps under the Wellbeing plan. PSB leaders are expecting to see significant progress towards this at their next meeting in October and the workshop was intended to provide a vehicle to begin to shape a deliverable action plan to support the vision and ambition we have for the county.

To assist with this the Cymru Well Wales, Adverse Childhood experience's Support Hub facilitated a session at the Programme Board meeting on the 1st of October. The session provided an introduction to ACEs and the evidence base and a forum for starting to consider what a Monmouthshire response to mitigating and preventing ACEs might look like.

Attendees worked in groups to define 'the problem' and to explore possible causal pathways (see Appendix 2). Groups fed back to the main group before turning their attention to exploring the leverage points where action could be focussed to achieve change. The diagram, in figure 1 below, was provided to help attendees think about how action might be organised and at what level of influence it should sit. The difficulty with issues such as ACEs (wicked issues) is that they are hard to define, multi-causal, unpredictable and impossible to know everything we might need to know about them, which can feel overwhelming and can lead to everything (and therefore nothing) becoming a priority. Figure 1 and the accompanying table were therefore provided to focus thinking, and have been used to present the work that came out of the session to organise the product, identify gaps in thinking and help prioritise action.

This was an ambitious task given the timeframe and what is presented below represents the very start of the thinking. There is a significant amount of work that remains to be done to further develop a systemic approach to ACEs and to create meaningful and deliverable action plans that will drive change. It is also recognised as we start to progress the action around the ACEs agenda, that the ACEs Step in the Well-being Plan, will have reach into additional Wellbeing Steps, for example; resilience of children and young people's mental health and developing networks of care. What was evident at the workshop is that the willingness, energy and drive exist in the County to take this forward.

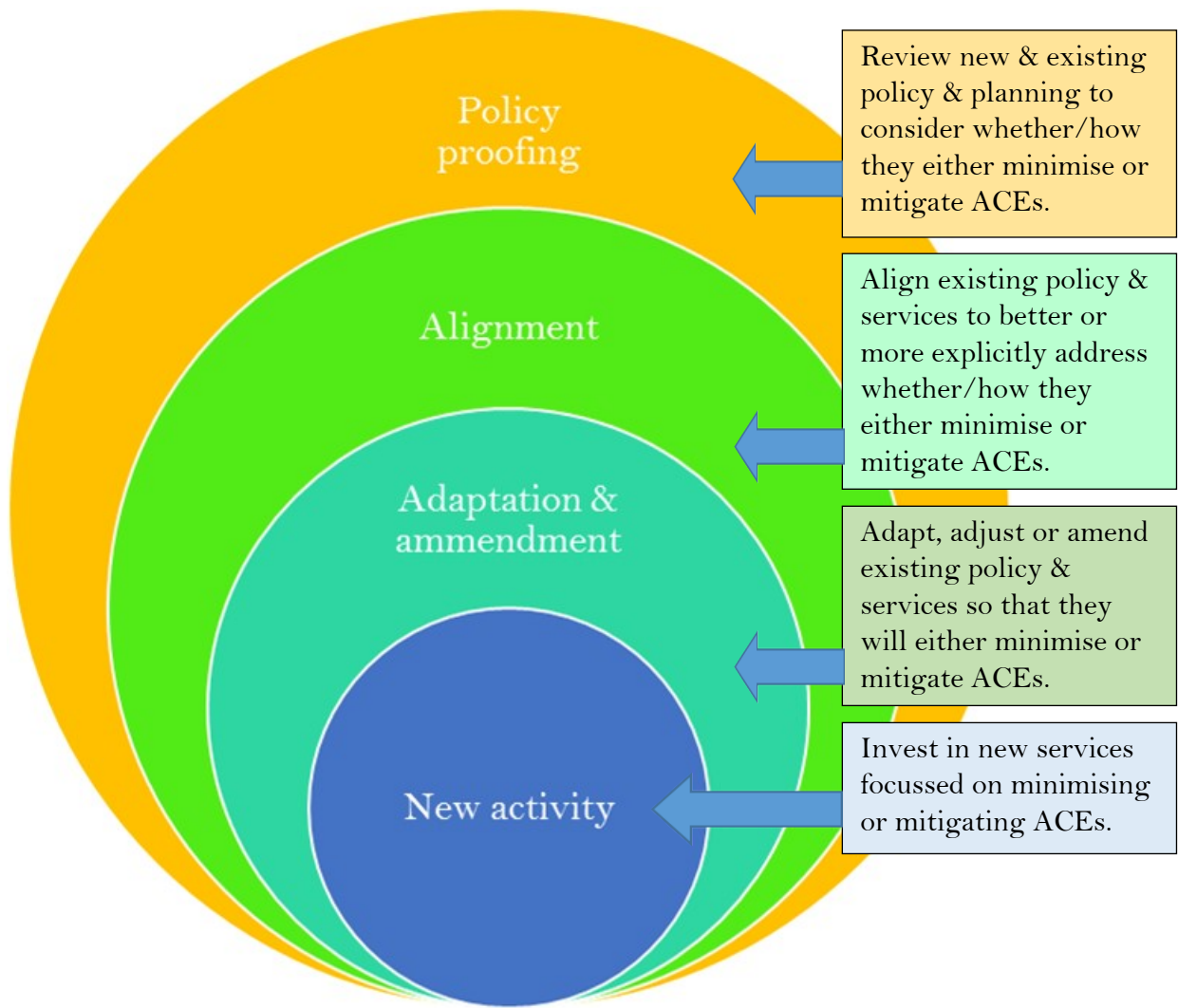


Figure 1: Framework for applied thinking

	Action	How would we do this? Next steps	Impact H/M/L	Control H/M/L	Resource H/M/L	Timescale S/M/L	Lead
A. Policy Proofing	1. PSB to consider decision-making processes of member organisations in order to ensure that ACEs are factored into decisions	Mapping of decision-making processes. Precursor to action B.2	M	M	M	M	Programme board?
	2. Introduce standardised ACE impact assessment across PSB organisations. This will enable Monmouthshire PSB to create a set of common principles and a common language around ACEs and what it means in Monmouthshire to be ACE informed. This will also enable the PSB to identify gaps in resources, knowledge, training etc.	Create an Impact Assessment Set out a programme for implementing Identify who would gather and analyse the data and report back	H	M	H	M	
	3. Review the role and purpose of the PSB ACEs lead so that the purpose is clear and the role contributes to how the agenda and this action plan is driven forward at a senior level.	PSB table discussion to agree on role and purpose.	H	H	H	S	
	4. Consider the creation of an ACE awareness self-assessment to enable organisations to identify individual action plans. This recognises that different agencies will require different approaches and have access to different resources.	Identify who will create self-assessment Set out a programme for implementing Identify who would gather and analyse the data and report back	H	L	H	M	
	5. Ensure the right people are involved, including children, young people and families. Who is missing and how do we involve them?	Scope a participation strategy to sit across the action plan Disseminate to partner agencies to implement	H	L	M	M	

	Action	How would we do this? Next steps	Impact H/M/L	Control H/M/L	Resource H/M/L	Timescale S/M/L	Lead
B. Alignment	1. Explore synergies across PSB organisations' policies to identify opportunity for alignment regarding ACEs	The follows on from action A.1	H	L			
	2. Consider how community resources (hubs/libraries/youth centres/community resources etc) can contribute to mitigating ACEs and also helping ACE experienced adults and young people feel they matter (Place-Based Working).	Identify venues and select those most open to working in this way Identify and train staff and community leads so they are ACE informed Co-produce action plans for each venue	H	L	M	M	
	3. Ensuring the right people are involved, including children, young people and families. Who is missing and how do we involve them?	Scope a participation strategy to sit across the action plan Disseminate to partner agencies to implement	H	L	M	M	

	Action	How would we do this? Next steps	Impact H/M/L	Control H/M/L	Resource H/M/L	Timescale S/M/L	Lead
C. Adaptation & amendment	1. Using the knowledge that the ACE agenda provides to maximize opportunities for schools to develop improved relationships with ACE experienced parents and children/young people.	Audit of the current position in schools Establish a working group to take this forward	H	M	M	M	
	2. Improving a Trauma-informed/ACE informed the approach to children at risk of school exclusion to reduce the number of exclusions	Could form part of C.1					

	<p>3. Frontline staff working relationally to a core skill/value set that is trauma/ACE informed. It is accepted at this point that we are not yet clear, what this looks like and this would need to be the first task.</p>	<p>Identify core skills Identify key staff Identify where there is good practice (knowing what good looks like) Create an action plan to roll-out</p>	H	L	M	L	
	<p>4. Identifying opportunities for co-delivery and organisation-neutral support to maximise time and enable relationship based working, this would require staff to be multi-specialised. It is accepted that this may not always be appropriate and one-size does not fit all, however, where possible this may address the issue of families experiencing multiple hand-offs because no one has enough time.</p>	<p>Identify locations where this might be possible</p>	H	L	H	L	
	<p>5. Consider how the Early Help Panel model might be adapted to add value to other broad areas of service delivery, in particular getting the child/family to the right service first time, reducing hand-offs, minimising multiple assessments and maximising resources available</p>	<p>Scope areas where the model might have the most traction</p>	M	H	L-M	S-M	JB
	<p>6. Look at opportunities for integrating services to better meet the needs of those using services (Place-Based Working).</p>	<p>Link with the Integrated Partnership Board</p>	M-H	L-M	?	?	

	7. Ensuring the right people are involved, including children, young people and families. Who is missing and how do we involve them?	Scope a participation strategy to sit across the action plan Disseminate to partner agencies to implement	H	L	M	M	
--	--	--	---	---	---	---	--

	Action	How would we do this? Next steps	Impact H/M/L	Control H/M/L	Resource H/M/L	Timescale S/M/L	Lead
D. New activity	1. Identify opportunities for the use of the ACEs materials including the Resilience video		M	M			
	2. Consideration of how services and community resources could be deployed to ensure that every child has an available and trusted adult	Identify key staff and map what this would look like for each child Consider Active Citizenship agenda	H	H	H	M	
	3. Ensuring new activity considers how it is Trauma-Informed and how it raises resilience, how does it use what the ACE research tells us, to improve outcomes?	Ensuring new activity considers how it is Trauma-Informed and how it raises resilience,	H	H	L	S	
	4. Increase education and awareness of ACEs by the rollout of a training programme on ACEs/ trauma awareness to all staff	Establish a staff training programme	L	H	H	M-L	
	6. Ensuring the right people are involved, including children, young people and families. Who is missing and how do we involve them?	Scope a participation strategy to sit across the action plan Disseminate to partner agencies to implement	H	L	M	M	

Moving from Talk to Action

- If we can't do everything, what are the main areas that we want to focus on?
 - What specific populations
- What would 'better' look like?
 - What are we trying to change for that client group?
- How do we achieve that? What do we know already, what is happening anyway and what do we need to stop, start or change, and who needs to do it?
- What else do we need to consider, e.g. resources/ budget/costs?
- Does the action proposed to reduce and/or mitigate the issues and can we evidence this?
- What are we going to do first/next?

APPENDIX 2

Adverse Childhood Experiences System Model

