

SUBJECT: Project 5: Proposal to develop a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Looked After Children and young people

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE:

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

To apprise Members of a proposal to develop **PROJECT 5: A Multi-disciplinary Intensive Therapeutic Fostering Service for Looked After Children and Young People**. The project is proposed as a partnership with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, under the governance of the Regional Children and Families Partnership Board and initially funded by the Integrated Care Fund (ICF).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

For scrutiny members to support the proposal of developing a multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Looked After children and young people between Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire County Borough Councils, including **establishing the posts required for the operational delivery of the project**.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Local Context

In April 2016 Children's Services established Delivering Excellence a 3 year improvement plan. Workstream 3 of this programme concerned the development of services to ensure the right service offer is in place for all children and families needing support. A key element of workstream 3 is to increase the number of Monmouthshire foster carers available to provide high quality foster placements for Monmouthshire children. Project 5 supports the delivery of Workstream 3 to **support in-house carers to meet the needs of the most complex and troubled children**.

3.2 Now in year 3 of the overall improvement programme, Children's Services has achieved a stronger position regarding attracting in-house carers and retaining a stable, permanent workforce within children's services. This means that there is a firmer foundation on which to build further, more specialised services including an intensive therapeutic fostering service through Project 5.

3.3 Project 5 has the potential to promote and support our aims **to deliver against the Medium Term Financial Plan** regarding returning children from high cost residential placements, and preventing high cost residential placements (cost avoidance).

- 3.4 Operationally the project aligns to the development of the overall suite of Family Support Services including the recently implemented Edge of Care Team and BASE.
- 3.5 The project is based on firm evidence of similar projects (MIST) within Gwent (and elsewhere). The MIST model has a proven track record of achieving better outcomes for children whilst also delivering financial savings (see appendix 1). Project 5 is developed from the MIST model.
- 3.6 Project 5 is proposed within a context of increasing numbers of Looked After children and increasing numbers of children presenting with complex needs. It is part of planning for the future sustainability of the service through building the capacity to respond locally to these challenges, rather than remaining reliant on the external market.
- 3.7 Project 5 delivers to the objectives with in the Corporate Plan by seeking to provide our most vulnerable children and young people with local services, that best meets their immediate and longer term needs and strengthens their connections with family and community.
- 3.8 Project 5 is intrinsically aligned with the strategic intentions of the Regional Partnership. The Gwent Children and Family Partnership seeks to improve outcomes and services for children with complex needs. The development of Project 5 within Gwent is seen as a cornerstone of this and there was a successful bid for ICF money to support its implementation. The aim is to develop a Gwent wide multi-disciplinary approach to delivering an intensive therapeutic fostering service for children and young people with challenging and complex needs. As Torfaen and Caerphilly already have a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service in place the partnership agreed the ICF grant money which has been secured, should be used to roll out the development of a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service to Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire.
- 3.9 Case for Change
Looked After Children and young people with the most complex needs tend to experience multiple foster care placement breakdowns. Their risk taking behaviours and significant emotional needs often exceed the resources of Local Authority Foster Carers and due to the frequent placement moves, their needs are often unable to be addressed by core Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Consequently, many of these most troubled young people are placed in residential care out of area, with poor clinical outcomes and at great expense.
- 3.10 In addition to the high cost, the outcomes for young people in these placements are not always positive. Contact with family can be challenging because of the distance, their relationships with their peers and communities are severed and the standards of education provision are often poor or unable to be evidenced.
- 3.11 Blaenau Gwent currently has 17 young people placed in residential care. 10 of these young people are troubled teenagers who have broken down multiple foster care and residential placements. The full year cost of these 10 placements is **£2,144,705.77**. Similarly, Monmouthshire currently has 8 young people placed in residential care who could benefit from this new therapeutic fostering service. The full year cost of these 8 placements is **£2,086,916**.

3.12 Service Design

The service works in partnership with carers by forming and maintaining an integrated multi-disciplinary team around the young person and family, so that the complex system around the looked after young person pulls in the same direction and creates a shared understanding of the young person's risks and needs. It is highly intensive working with up to 15 young people at a time, with daily activity on every case and 24/7 out of hours on call.

3.13 Project 5 will comprise 3 regional posts:

- Programme Director (employed and hosted by Caerphilly)
- Clinical Director (employed and hosted by ABUHB)
- Administrator (employed and hosted by Caerphilly)

The ABUHB have made a bid to fund the regional posts from the Health Transformation Fund.

3.14 At a local delivery level the team will comprise:

- Team Manager (employed and hosted by Monmouthshire)
- Clinical Psychologist (employed and hosted by ABUHB)
- Therapeutic Practitioners x3 (employed and hosted by Monmouthshire)
- Young Persons Practitioners x2 (employed and hosted by Monmouthshire)

3.15 As the proposal is for a joint collaboration between Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire a Service Level Agreement will be required to ensure equity between the 2 Local Authorities in terms of potential risks and benefits and to ensure that our children, young people and carers are both getting the same access to the service. **The proposal is for Monmouthshire to employ and host the local Project 5 Team, and therefore posts will need to be established.**

3.16 Monitoring Arrangements

The Project will be governed at a regional level through the Children and Family Partnership Board who report to the Regional Partnership Board at Director level. The Regional Programme Lead and Clinical Director of Project 5 will report into the Children and Family Partnership Board and locally to the Heads Of Service. Operationally there will be a Delivery Group established between Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire. Locally Project 5 will come within Family Support Services line managed initially through the current Service Manager for Early Help and Family Support Services.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

	Description	Costs	Benefits	Disbenefits/risks	Recommended
Option 1	Do nothing	Cost neutral		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The opportunity to improve outcomes for children and young people presenting with complex needs would be lost Opportunity to develop a Gwent wide approach to delivering a multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service within Monmouthshire which would mirror approaches already adopted by Torfaen and Caerphilly would be lost 	No
Option 2	For Monmouthshire to develop a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Looked After Children and young people as a single Local Authority.	£375,753 per annum initial investment (note service cannot be scaled down)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of Partnership Support and investment through the ICF grant (full or part) requiring up-front investment from the Council The future sustainability of the Project would be predicated on a greater reduction of children placed in residential care and the risks of not achieving this would fall to Monmouthshire alone. 	No
Option 3	To develop a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Looked After Children and young people between	No cost for initial 18 months then £187,876.50 per annum diverted from the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The opportunity to improve outcomes for children and young people presenting with complex needs at a local level using an 		YES

	<p>Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire County Borough Councils, using an ICF to establish the service over the first 18 months.</p>	<p>external placement budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">initial grant is maximised• Opportunity to develop a Gwent wide approach to delivering a joint multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service in close partnership with Health is maximised.• Opportunity to develop a financially sustainable service that reduces the reliance on the external market (and potentially saves money longer-term) is maximised.		
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5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The regional administrator / data analyst will be responsible for gathering performance data to evidence the success of Project 5. This will include:

- Number of children referred into project
- Number of children bought back into foster care from residential care
- The savings attributed to these children moving back to alternative provision
- Number of children diverted from going out to residential placements and the cost avoidance attributed
- Increased placement stability
- Improved school attendance
- Improved emotional wellbeing
- Views and feedback from the children and young people receiving a service from the Project including number of children placed closer to home, quality of family and friendships, access to employment / education / training.

6. REASONS:

- Project 5 supports the delivery of the next stage of the Children's Services improvement journey regarding ensuring the right service offer is in place for children in receipt of statutory social work services.
- Project 5 accords with the work within the fostering project regarding the development of Monmouthshire carers for Monmouthshire children, extending this to supporting in-house carers to meet the needs of the most complex and troubled children.
- It promotes and supports our aims to deliver against the Medium Term Financial Plan regarding returning children from high costs residential carers, and preventing high cost residential placements (cost avoidance).
- The project is based on a firm evidence of a similar project within Gwent (and elsewhere) with a proven track record of achieving financial savings and delivering better outcomes for children.
- The Local Authority is now in a stronger position regarding attracting in-house carers, and retaining a stable workforce within children's services, so has a stronger platform for building, including the development of family support intervention services.
- The Local Authority will share risks with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
- The project will be supported through grants for the initial 18months to reach financial sustainability.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The Gwent Children and Families Partnership Board have **secured ICF grant money to fund the local posts at £309,538 for 2018/19 and £397,873 2019/20.**
- 7.2 Full year operational costs for the project have been calculated as £375,753 (plus ongoing pay awards from 1st April 2019 onwards). See appendix 2
- 7.3 The ICF grant funding will sustain the local team for 18 months. It is expected that the intensive therapeutic fostering service becomes self-sustaining after a period of 18 months. To achieve this the local authority funds coming back from high cost placements needs to be diverted to meet the costs of the local team. The running costs (post-ICF funding) will be split on a simple 50:50 basis. Therefore, both Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire will need to fund the local team to the amount of £187,876.50 per annum once the 18 month ICF funding period has ended (anticipated to be from either 1st October 2020 or 1st April 2021 depending on when the team is operational with a suitable building sourced as its base). Given the existing overspend position on the external placement budget the operational costs of £187,876.50 per annum is represented as a potential pressure within the 19/20 MTFP for 21/22.
- 7.4 Across Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire the current full year cost of residential /high cost placements is £4,231,621.77. **Reducing or preventing out of area placements by a minimum of four placements across both authorities will ensure the service covers its own costs within each local authority area.**
- 7.5 It is important to note that the full savings of a child returning to the local authority from a residential/high cost placement may not be achieved in total as existing funds will still be required to fund their local placements, all be it at a much reduced rate. So whilst the team costs are able to be predicted, the costs associated with the foster care/ alternative local are yet to be fully determined, including potentially higher rates of fees to therapeutic carers. However, the prediction of costs being covered on the basis of four placements has taken this into account.
- 7.6 Based on the success of the Torfaen and Caerphilly models and on the premise of the information provided within this report and the projected success of the Blaenau Gwent/Monmouthshire project, we will reduce the external placements budget in order to fund the annual costs of the new team (50%) once ICF funding has ceased.
- 7.7 After the initial 18-months, the intention is for the grant money to transfer to Newport to enable them to set up their multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service after this. (However there is scope for the ICF money to remain longer with the Blaenau Gwent / Monmouthshire local team if the team is not fully sustainable at that time.)
- 7.8 The Children and Families Partnership Board recognise the need for the local and regional element of the Project 5 team to have suitable accessible accommodation to deliver regional training, therapeutic interventions and activities for the children and young people. Therefore an ICF main capital grant has been secured to purchase / refurbish accommodation to house the Project 5. It will act as the regional base for the service,

where the regional directors and administration will be located as well as providing the local, community-based hub premises for the Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent team.

8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 8.1 This project is aimed at building sustainable services that reduce reliance on external providers often located outside of Monmouthshire borders. It is based on a close partnership approach with Health and is a collaborative enterprise on behalf of ABUHB and the 5 Local Authority partners of the Children and Family Partnership Board.
- 8.2 The development of the service is aimed at enhancing and improving services for looked after children and young people in the longer term. It is preventative in focus and explicitly aims to keep Monmouthshire young people closer to home. As part of the ongoing service development and monitoring there will be consultation with the children and young people receiving a service.
- 8.3 Project 5 will improve outcomes for children who have experienced multiple ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and who have the most complex and challenging needs. This will reduce the use of expensive and often ineffective and/or out of area placements. It will work in close alignment with the Gwent-wide Attachment Service to achieve psychologically-informed environments, including an ACEs-informed workforce.

9. CONSULTEES:

- Directorate Management Team - 12th September 2018. The meeting supported the development of the project and its stated aims. It was suggested that the link to the current improvement programme within Children's Services should be made explicit.
- SLT – 16th September 2018. SLT agreed with the proposals within the report. An adjustment was made in the resource section to include £187,876.50 per annum as a potential pressure within the 19/20 MTFP for 21/22. This is because of the existing £222K overspend position on the external placement budget. This is updated within the resource section of this report (paragraph 7.3).
- CYP Select – 18th September 2018. CYP were in support of the proposals within the report and noted the current progress within the increase of in-house fostering provision.
- Children and Families Partnership Board – Full support given to the project moving forward in Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent
- Project 5 Reference Group

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

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Appendix 1

EVIDENCE BASE

Torfaen County Borough Council have commissioned a **therapeutic fostering service** called MIST (Multi-disciplinary Intervention Service Torfaen) which has been running for 12 years. MIST provides intensive support to a small number of specially recruited and trained therapeutic foster carers to repatriate young people placed in out of area residential care and to prevent young people who may be at risk of residential care from moving out of area. Caerphilly County Borough Council has also recently developed a MIST type service due to the success of the Torfaen MIST which is outlined below.

MIST's clinical approach is rooted in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of child development and is in line with the Welsh Government strategy 'Together for Mental Health'. It is multi systemic; providing a variety of different types and styles of intervention simultaneously at many different points in the young persons' system. The approach places particular emphasis on four psychological models; attachment, family systems, person-centred and social learning approaches.

Equally important is MIST's approach to working with risk which recognises the necessity both of safeguarding and of tolerating well understood and managed risks, which are both inevitable and provide essential opportunity for young people to build resilience and trust and to learn new skills.

The model effectively creates a team around the young person, where the staff members have good relationships, communicate well, hold a shared understanding, act consistently and provide mutual support. The team works with well understood and managed risks to keep young people safe whilst building their skills and resilience which, over time, leads to a reduction in their risk taking behaviours.

The team around the young person can provide a buffer against the disruption caused by changes in professional personnel and can hold in mind the young person's life story and make sense of the present in light of this. This helps to counter the problems of disruption that often prevent progress in the care of looked after young people.

The MIST service in Torfaen has been independently evaluated twice; in 2008 and 2011. Both evaluation reports were positive. The 2011 evaluation was a 'Social Return on Investment Study' which concluded that for every £1 spent on MIST, a saving of £5.20 is made across statutory services.

For the Local Authority the benefits have been:

- Residential placements have reduced from an average of 15 at any time to being consistently below 5, despite a rise in the overall number of LAC
- Significant financial savings as a result
- Placement stability averages at 93% for MIST young people
- 85% of MIST young people are engaged in education or training
- Shared learning and benefits for foster care recruitment and training
- Provision of clinical advice and consultation to wider staff groups.

Appendix 2

OPERATIONAL COSTS

The predicted management costs of the **local posts** (at 2018/19 Monmouthshire pay rates) are as follows

Role	wte	Total
Team Manager	1.0	59,626
Clinical Psychologist	0.6	43,661
Total costs for local team management		103,287

The predicted staffing costs for the local posts are as follows

Role	wte	Total
Therapeutic Practitioners (Social Workers)	3.0	147,948
Young Person's Practitioners (Support Workers)	2.0	60,598
On Call Cost		12,520
Total costs for local team staffing		221,066

The predicted Non-staffing costs for the **local team**

Cost area	Cost £ - annual unless stated
Training – £10,000 in the year 1 for accredited training in team teach and DDP (all other training will be provided by regional leads)	10,000 (year one only)
Premises – including utilities and maintenance	20,000
IT, including furniture and set up costs	10,700
Telephones, mobiles, stationery etc	5,700
Recruitment costs	To be absorbed by LA
Mileage	10,000
Therapeutic resources/activity	5,000
TOTAL YEAR 1 PER TEAM	61,400
TOTAL YEAR 2 + PER TEAM	51,400

Therefore the total running costs of the local team for a full year will be **£375,753** (plus ongoing pay awards from 1st April 2019 onwards) which will be fully met by the ICF grant money initially.

Appendix 3

Risk Assessment

Risk	Level	Mitigation	Level with mitigation
1. Not recruiting the calibre of staff to deliver the project	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust recruitment and induction processes will be put in place • The posts will be recruited to on a permanent basis increasing the likelihood of quality staff applying. 	Medium
2. Inability to identify local alternative foster placements for the children and young people to return to.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blaenau Gwent has already agreed to develop a professional foster carer scheme. • Monmouthshire is actively recruiting new carers and has the potential to recruit current carers in the project. • The recruitment of therapeutic carers in to the scheme is integral to the delivery model of the service. • The model is not wholly dependent on the specific recruitment of therapeutic carers as it works equally with family / kinship carers and generic carers. 	Medium
3. Inability to achieve the financial release from children and young people returning from residential placements to enable the team to become sustainable without the ICF grant.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who might benefit from the Project are already identified within the service • We already have skilled carers within the service who would respond well to working with Project 5 • The additional support provided to carers to enable them to look after children with complex needs costs less than alternative options • Project 5 builds on an existing evidence base and practice knowledge base • It is the responsibility of the regional Project 5 Programme Director and Clinical Directors to unblock issues that might prevent this project from being a success • The Children and families 	Low

		<p>Partnership will be monitoring progress and support the Project to succeed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project 5 administrator/data analyst will provide regular activity data to enable close scrutiny by the heads of service and partnership board 	
4. Redundancy costs should the project not be sustainable	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is commitment within the partnership and between the Heads of Service that HR issues would be dealt with collectively. There are vacancies across the Local Authorities for qualified social workers, reducing the potential for redundancy costs to be an issue. There is recent history of services being disaggregated and staff being re-absorbed into local authorities (IFST). 	Low
5. Capital bid may not be successful leaving the regional team and the local Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire Team without a base or a suitable accommodation might not be found	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire councils will look to house the team within existing accommodation to meet the needs of the Project. 	Medium
6. One council may not agree to the development of a joint team	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blaenau Gwent has already given approval for the Project. 	Low

