

**SUBJECT: Children's Services – Service re-design**

**MEETING: Cabinet Report**

**DATE: 11<sup>th</sup> January**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: Social Care and Health**

**1. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to reconfigure the way in which we deliver our services within Children's Services

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That members approve and endorse the proposal for the re-design of the Children's Services delivery model (See appendix a).
- 2.2 To approve and endorse the new Children's Services Structure (See appendix b).
- 2.3 To approve the call on reserves in 2017/18 up to £86,000, recognising the Children's Services Improvement Plan will achieve financial balance by 2018/19.
- 2.4 To approve the change in status of 4 social worker posts from temporary to permanent.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 The primary aim of Children's Social Services is to work together with others to ensure that Monmouthshire's children and young people reach their full potential and live free from the harmful effects of abuse and neglect. We aim to provide responsive, family orientated services which ensure that our most vulnerable children are effectively safeguarded.
- 3.2 Over the last year, Monmouthshire Children's Services has continued to deliver services in an increasingly challenging and complex context.
- 3.3 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014) coming in to force has required transformational change in the way that we work with our partners and provide services to individuals and families particularly in respect of promoting well-being and the delivery of early help and prevention. The service re-design will be central to our ability to deliver the cultural and practice changes necessary to fulfil our duties under the legislative framework of the Social Services and Well-being Act.
- 3.4 The re-design will build on the lessons from the previous re-structure implemented in 2013 (see appendix a). Feedback from staff, families and partners has told us that our current configuration could be improved.
- 3.5 Cabinet members will be aware that our service improvement within Children's Services is currently being driven through a programme approach which is extensive and requires the whole

service to pull together in implementing effective operational systems and processes; developing the workforce and driving up practice; and developing services through intelligent commissioning.

- 3.6 The overall service improvement plan 'Delivering Excellence' was presented to Cabinet in July 2016. Within our plan we identified that getting the right service re-design would be a key component to delivering against the identified areas for improvement.
- 3.7 Since that time we have been working closely with the workforce to think through how we can utilise our limited resources in the best possible way and test out some interim changes. As part of this exercise we have analysed and drawn evidence from:
- Institute of Public Care (IPC) review (June 2016)
  - Further consultation with IPC regarding models of family support and the impact that this has on 'right-sizing'
  - Service reviews undertaken in respect of the previous delivery model (2013 and 2014)
  - Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) inspection reports 2014 and 2016 (particularly around front-door pressures)
  - Front door review undertaken by Tracy Harry (2016)
  - 6 monthly Child Protection and Independent Reviewing Officer reports
  - Service knowledge regarding case load analysis, the flow of work and pressure areas within teams gleaned through discussions and performance indicators within Operational Team Manager meetings (see also appendix d)
  - Outcome of interim arrangements put in place to alleviate pressures including the development of 1 additional team and change in 'transfer' points
  - Learning from the experience of responding to 'service critical' areas particularly 'front-door' and court work
  - Outcomes from case weighting and analysis of 'where the work sits' within the service including numbers Looked After Child (LAC), numbers Child Protection Registration (CPR), numbers Child in Need (CIN), numbers in Public Law Outline (PLO) or court.
  - Learning from the interim outcomes of the business support review and the views and experiences of business support colleagues particularly the need to balance generic business support tasks with more specialist support provided to service areas / teams
  - Listening to the feedback and perceptions of partner agencies.

This careful review of our information and evidence base has now enabled us to design a model that meets our current needs as well as supporting us in our aspirations for change and improvement.

### **What will be different?**

#### **3.8 The Early Help Team**

In order to achieve better outcomes for children and families it is critical that the service is in a position to manage the demands on it. Central to this is ensuring that we maximise our chances of providing early, helpful services and preventative interventions to children and families who are the most at risk. To this end we have increased capacity and narrowed the focus at the 'front-door' with an emphasis on partnership working and safeguarding. This 'Early Help Team' additionally has the capacity to realise the integration of the Team around the Family (TAF) project previously endorsed by Cabinet in July 2016.

- 3.9 There will be an emphasis on the provision of advice, support and assistance to both families and partner agencies to prevent drawing children into statutory social services interventions when these are not required.

- 3.10 The transfer point into Care and Support will be at the point when it is identified that there is a requirement for a managed care and support plan or statutory intervention to ensure that a child is protected from the risks of abuse or neglect.
- 3.11 To be successful in reducing demand on statutory social work services it is essential that the early help and integrated front door arrangements are delivered effectively and that community social work effectively connects with local public service hubs, schools and early years settings and other community teams to enable families to step down to less intensive support delivered through early help arrangements.

### **Care & Support Team**

- 3.12 This is a newly created team. This team will work with children who are on the cusp of or who require a formal statutory intervention through a managed Care and Support plan. These children will be at risk of significant harm through abuse or neglect, and will include children who are on the Child Protection Register; recently accommodated children and children who are subject to court interventions. This team will work with children until their permanent arrangements are secured, at which point they will transfer to the Supporting Children and Young People Team.

### **Supporting Children and Young People Team**

- 3.13 This team will be responsible for supporting children and young people who will remain subject to local authority care throughout their minority. There will be an emphasis on building relationships with these children based on a deep understanding of their needs, wishes and feelings and on drawing the right support around them so that they are supported to reach their potential and build a strong sense of identity and inner security. This team will support the council in meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities.

### **Workforce Planning**

- 3.14 The re-design sets out how we intend to organise the workforce within Children's Services. However, operationally, to achieve excellence the service will depend on our ability to create a stable, confident and competent workforce. Work-stream 2 of our overall service improvement plan 'Delivering Excellence' sets this out in full recognising the very real difficulties of both recruiting and retaining suitably skilled and qualified people.
- 3.15 Subject to Members' endorsement of our delivery model, within work-stream 2 we will continue to define the skill mix, roles and responsibilities of the workforce and ensure that job-descriptions and role profiles accurately reflect this. Supporting strong leadership within our service managers, team managers and senior practitioners will be an essential component.

### **What are the impacts of our proposal?**

#### **3.16 DESIRED IMPACT ON SERVICE USERS**

- Services are more seamless and coherent
- Families are given clear and consistent messages
- There is a clear focus on children who are most at risk

- Families are helped in the right way when they need it

### **3.17 DESIRED OPERATIONAL IMPACT**

- Points of transfer which is better in keeping with a child's journey through services
- Partnership working and inter-agency working is enhanced
- Families and children achieve better outcomes
- Better use of resources within the directorate
- Improved reputation of service making it easier to attract applicants
- Increased population of permanent staff

### **3.18 DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR STAFF**

- Clearer sense of team purpose
- Professional development within specialisms and more stepped approach to Continual Professional Development
- Enhanced line-management support
- Aligning skill set to service areas
- Clearer defined role profiles
- Greater sense of confidence as team performance increases
- Greater sense of satisfaction when we realise better outcomes for children & families.

## **4. REASONS:**

- 4.1 In Children's Services our services are delivered within the overall structure of the Social Care and Health directorate. The current proposed model aligns with the service design of the Chief Officer at a service manager level. This was approved by cabinet and has recently started to come into effect. These changes were made to ensure sustainable, practice led improvement across the social care and health directorate (both Adults and Children's services). In particular, the proposals are orientated around the two Service Manager areas of 'Well Being Family Support & Safeguarding' and 'Managed Care & Looked after Children'.
- 4.2 The Social Services and Well-Being Act expanded the duties for social services in terms of assessing and meeting needs; our arrangements for front-door access; the provision of information and advice and the development of collaborative relationships with our partner agencies. This has required a reconfiguration of services, particularly around the role profiles of 'front-door' workers.
- 4.3 The current proposal accords with our re-drafted vision statement for children's services which, together with our partners, emphasises our intention to provide a seamless response to meetings children's needs. To enable this to happen we need capacity at the 'front-door' to work developmentally with partners, schools, early help services, communities and families, particularly around our ability to work jointly to manage risk and need at a preventative level.
- 4.4 The proposal realises the need for a closer operational link between Children's Services and TAF with the intention of addressing the 'pre-social care gap' in the children's service offer (IPC review June 2016). Following the decision by cabinet on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2016 the TAF team will now be part of the Children's services team and will fit into the structures as in appendix a.
- 4.5 The proposal recognises and seeks to respond to both capacity and practice issues deeper within the service and the need to support the development of specialisms particularly around Court

work, for example. Similarly it seeks to balance the distribution of resources and social work time so that there is attention paid to all our children and families, particularly our long term looked after children and care leavers.

- 4.6 We have recently undertaken a review of business support to ascertain what is required to support the work of the service. This has informed a realignment of business support in accordance with the proposed delivery model.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 The proposed delivery model will involve the deletion and creation of posts as set out in appendix b, bi and c. The net additional resource required will be in the region of £86,000. In line with the three year financial improvement plan, this new structure will align the workforce in order for the second year 2017/18 being one of consolidation, with a view to 2018/19 heading for a balanced budget. In light of this, we can fund the additional resource from 2018/19 but may require a 'one off' use of reserves in 2017/18 for £86,000.
- 5.2 In 2015 the temporary use of reserves to fund 4 additional social workers was approved. Appointment to these posts have subsequently been made permanent and feature as an integral part of the Children's Services structure and are essential to safely manage the number of children within children's services. The permanent funding for these positions is within the 2017/18 budget.
- 5.3 The delivery model assumes that funding for the TAF project continues through Families First.

## **6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)**

- 6.1 Our new service delivery model has been developed to impact positively on all children, young people and their families. This will be regularly updated and reviewed as the model is implemented. The proposed structure looks to align people's skills and competencies to increase organisational efficiency and effectiveness in line with the Social Services and Well Being act.

## **7. CONSULTEES:**

Claire Marchant – Chief Officer, Social Care and Health  
Departmental Management Team – On going since April 2016  
Senior Leadership Team – as above  
Unions – both unison and GMB – in line with consultation plan  
All Staff Teams within Children's - commenced in April 2016.  
CYP  
TAF Team  
Tyrone Stokes and Rob Long – Social Care & Health Finance Team.  
Sally Thomas, HR Manager  
Julie Anthony, HR Adviser  
Youth Offending Service

- 7.1 Consultation has been on-going since April 2016. More formal consultation commenced on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016 with those directly affected by the proposed changes being the first to be

consulted followed by the wider service. HR were included in the initial proposals as well as both unison and GMB. Individual consultation was offered to all staff. There were two meetings with TAF and some of the team provided written responses. No fundamental changes were made to the proposals as a result of the comments received during the consultation period, although there were some adjustments made to the implementation plans. See appendix e for a list of the comments / issues raised and the responses.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

CCSIW Inspection Report (November 2014)

Chief Officer's Report (June 2016)

Children's Services Service Improvement Plan (2015 & 2016)

Delivering Excellent Practice in Children's Services (IPC June 2016)

Appendix a) proposed new model of service delivery.

Appendix b) and b1) proposed and current structure charts

Appendix c) key differences.

Appendix d) Case load data

Appendix e) Consultee feedback

Appendix f) Delivery time-line

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