

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 9 October, 2017

Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Leisure

External Funding: Families First

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Cabinet of the Welsh Government grant allocated to support the delivery of the Families First Plan in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Recommendations

1. That the Council continue to act as lead body for the Families First grant with grant oversight undertaken by the Families First Management Board.
2. That Cabinet notes and supports the utilisation of the Families First grant.
3. That authority is given to the Head of Legal Services and the Head of Children and Young People Services to negotiate and execute appropriate contractual arrangements with delivery partners, including where re-tendering is required, to ensure the provision of the Families First Plan.
4. That the employment of appropriate personnel takes place in accordance with the Council's approved recruitment and selection policy to ensure the delivery of the Families First Plan.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To ensure Cabinet is aware of the continuing financial and legal responsibilities undertaken by the Council as grant recipient body in partnership with the Families First Management Board.
2. To ensure Cabinet is aware of, and supports, how the grant is being used to deliver Families First in the Vale of Glamorgan.
3. To obtain the authority of Cabinet in entering into appropriate contractual arrangements with delivery partners in furtherance of the Families First Plan.
4. To appraise Cabinet of the recruitment necessary to achieve delivery of the Families First Plan.

Background

2. The Families First Plan was initially developed in 2012 and focussed on a support network of provision and services aligned to a team around the family approach.
3. Families First funds the co-ordination and support of services, the provision of a dedicated family support service (FACT - Families Achieving Change Together) and a range of bespoke projects that support the long term aims to improve the life chances of children and young people from disadvantaged families.
4. Eight distinct projects exist under the current Families First Plan. One further project, Raising Awareness of Welfare Rights, ceased in March 2017 following notification of the Welsh Government Cabinet Secretaries' early planned changes.

FACT - internally commissioned (Social Services);

Disability Focus - internally and externally commissioned;

Partnership for Young Parents - internally commissioned (Social Services);

Putting Families First - internally commissioned (Education);

Youth Support Programme - internally commissioned (Education);

Young Carers - externally commissioned;

C-Card scheme - internally commissioned (Education);

Central coordination - internally commissioned (Education).

5. The Families First Management Board has also overseen a further pilot project, the Families First Advice Line (FFAL), which is managed through FACT and has been particularly successful. Children, young people and/or families are referred through a central formal referral system to a team who offer advice and signposting and if appropriate undertake assessments. This has proved successful in reducing the overall number of referrals to FACT and improved the appropriate nature of referrals.
6. All local authorities were informed early in 2017 that they would need to make additional changes to their Families First programmes, based on emerging priorities that would be made clear within the new Families First Programme Guidance launched in April 2017. All local authorities would also have a transitional year (April 2017- March 2018) in which to make this step change. The Corporate Management Team was advised of this position on 11th January 2017.
7. The new Families First Programme Guidance reaffirmed the requirement to maintain a Team Around the Family model and to maintain services within the criteria for the Disability Focus. It highlights a step change within its priorities for the commissioned services; the move is away from a range of bespoke services to a clear focus on parent support services and support for young people.

Relevant Issues and Options

8. The focus of the funding is to build on the new requirements and to establish a new Families First Plan to be submitted to Welsh Government by November 2017. As a transitional year, all new developments should be initiated by April 2018.
9. The Families First Management Board sought stakeholder involvement through an event held on the 4th May 2017. The event highlighted the change in direction of Families First and linked this to the locally developed needs assessment and the

Adverse Childhood Experiences Report. The event allowed stakeholders to shape ideas, suggestions and changes going forward.

10. It is proposed the funding is utilised to deliver the following existing and distinct projects:
 - Team Around the Family project (FACT) - internally commissioned and delivered via Social Services;
 - Disability Focus - internally and externally commissioned (potentially on a regional basis);
 - Young Carers - externally commissioned.
11. The following three projects are also to be funded from April 2018, subject to Welsh Government approval. These projects respond to the requirements of the Families First Guidance to focus on parent support services and support for young people, and absorb existing projects that meet this criteria. The Raising Awareness of Welfare Rights is the exception to this, having already ceased in March 2017 given it no longer falls within scope for Families First funding:
 - Wellbeing Youth Mentoring Service (to absorb both the Youth Support Programme and the C-Card projects). Internally commissioned and delivered via Learning and Skills.
 - Parent Support Project (to absorb Putting Families First, the Partnership for Young Parents and to incorporate some element of the Flying Start parenting service).
 - Families First Advice Line (to build on an existing pilot). Internally commissioned and delivered by FACT (Social Services).

The proposals for the use of Families First funding are in line with the well-being objectives in the Public Services Board's draft Well-being Plan, in particular the well-being objective 'to give children the best start in life'. The proposals are also consistent with work being undertaken by the Cardiff and Vale Integrated Health and Social Care Board to address the priorities identified by the Population Needs Assessment.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

12. A one year extension to the existing Families First Plan for the Vale of Glamorgan covering the period 1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017 was approved by Welsh Government on the basis the Council will receive a grant of £1,355,748 for 2017/18 and a currently intimated grant of £1,355,748 each year covering the financial years 2018/19 until 2021/22.
13. Individually contracted Families First projects will be required to have their own exit strategies. All Families First projects will be stringently monitored and evaluated so that opportunities to build upon and sustain the initiatives can be identified.
14. Families First is established and dependant on continued Welsh Government funding. The exit strategy will be the cessation of individual project/s should funding reduce/cease. In the longer term it is envisaged by Welsh Government that consideration will be given to mainstreaming successful elements.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

15. In addition to its contribution towards the Council's Corporate Plan, Families First will evidence work towards the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The Act outlines

seven national well-being goals for Wales, one of these being ' A More Equal Wales', ensuring that we enable all people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances. Through its work with children, young people and/or families the Families First Plan will evidence work towards this goal.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

16. Contracts/service level agreements would be in place with providers delivering Families First projects which set out clear roles, responsibilities and outcomes for the delivery of activities.

Crime and Disorder Implications

17. The funding would support a range of projects which will support families, young people and children, which will have a positive impact on factors influencing crime and disorder.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

18. The funding will address the needs of a variety of disadvantaged individuals including carers, disabled children and families.

Corporate/Service Objectives

19. This report supports the Council's Wellbeing Outcome 1: Objective 1: Reducing Poverty and Social Exclusion:

'Align relevant activities associated with Families First, Flying Start, Communities First and Supporting People programmes to maximise opportunities across all programmes'.

Wellbeing Outcome 3: An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale, Corporate Objective 5 'Raising overall standards of achievement'

'Secure improved outcomes for groups of learners at risk of underachievement, such as those entitled to free school meals'.

'Increase the learning opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and vulnerable families'.

'Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training'.

Policy Framework and Budget

20. This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

21. This is a matter which affects the whole of the Vale of Glamorgan and so individual Ward Members have not been consulted.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

22. Healthy Living and Social Care

Background Papers

23. Families First Guidance 2017

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Officers Consulted

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Corporate Management Team

Responsible Officer:

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