

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
DATE: THURSDAY, 24 JANUARY 2013
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
SUBJECT: INTEGRATED FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 The purpose of this report is to report to members concerning this local authority's response to the Welsh Government requirement that they set up an Integrated Family Support Service during 2013.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 The Welsh Government have requested information from all local authorities in Wales regarding how they intend to roll out the IFSS model in their area during 2013, including the governance and operational considerations.

2.03 The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) is underpinned by the guidance and regulations issued under Part 3 of the children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010 in respect of pioneer areas. Wrexham County Borough Council were one of the original pioneer sites for this initiative set up in 2010.

2.04 The thinking that drives the provision is based upon the clear message that future policies from WAG will be built around integrated services to children and families which provide holistic support at every level of need. The key principle in play being that children should live with their families as long this promotes their welfare and wellbeing.

2.05 The IFSS will deliver focused services to enable parents misusing substances to achieve the necessary behavioural changes leading to improved parenting capacity. The IFSS intervention will sit alongside the current care planning processes and will not supplant the need for a caseholder from statutory frontline teams. There is therefore no efficiency in terms of staffing capacity requirements arising from this new initiative.

2.06 In order to address the needs of families with complex problems the IFSS teams will be multi agency in nature and the culture promoted by the team will be one of reflective practice, peer group support and

mentoring in order to deliver evidence based interventions which are relevant to the families' needs. The interventions are to be supported by a Section 58 agreement which will set out the expectation of priority assistance by all agencies to the IFSS, although Wrexham's experience is that existing parameters of legislation restrict the usefulness of such a document..

2.07 The Local Authority and Local Health Board are expected to cooperate closely in the establishment of the IFSS although the principal duty lies with the Local Authority to take the lead.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Wrexham as a pioneer authority already have an established team in keeping with the IFSS guidance and, following consultation it has been proposed that an integrated team be established across the two counties but hosted by Flintshire.

3.02 Within the funding envelope provided by the Welsh Government it is proposed that the following staff will form the new joint team across Wrexham and Flintshire;

- One consultant social worker
- Four "spearhead" workers
- One administrator
- One support worker and/or sessional workers on hourly rate and/or volunteers
- One promotions officer to raise awareness (time limited).

There will also be set up and operational costs plus travel costs over the two counties which have as yet to be determined.

3.03 The team will be based initially at the Connah's Quay Office, in close proximity to the Duty and Assessment Team in Flintshire. There will also be a satellite office in Lampit Street, Wrexham in close proximity to the Wrexham Child Care Teams.

3.04 Reliable IT systems need to be considered by Flintshire County Council in conjunction with Wrexham Local Authority to enable data to be collated across the border parameters for the purpose of WG reporting.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That members consider and comment on the proposals for the new team as set out in this report, including that of Flintshire as the host authority.

4.02 That, as part of this process, members support the development of

information protocols, to include cross county confidentiality, data protection, referral criteria and allocation from each authority be drawn up and agreed and an extension to the existing Section 58(1) agreement which Wrexham have in place be negotiated with the relevant agencies involved.

- 4.03** That members support the setting up of an Integrated Family Support Service during 2013 and make recommendations to Cabinet for approval.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01** The funds allocated to the six North Wales authorities by the Welsh Government total £850,000.

- 5.02** The Welsh Government have expressed the requirement for at least two IFSS Teams across the North Wales footprint with this funding which will be allocated to Wrexham in 2013/14 (as the pioneer authority) for desegregation. There is an intention for the funding to be passed to the RSG from 2014 but no guarantee as to funding levels nor whether the money will be ringfenced.

- 5.03** We are as yet unclear as to the final expectations of the WG in terms of funding disaggregation for 2013/14 given that North Wales are developing 3 teams. Flintshire and Wrexham have developed the proposed model using a straight 3 way split of the award of £850k i.e. £283,000 per team x 3 teams across North Wales. This does not take account of per head capita population figures which would give the Flintshire / Wrexham team an increased funding pot compared with central and west area teams.

- 5.04** It is worth noting that the amount originally allocated to Wrexham as the pioneer site was £600, 000 and expectations at the time the pioneer sites were established were that similar funding would be made available for the rollout. Those expectations have not been realised due to the current national fiscal challenges.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01** None arising directly from this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 7.01** None arising directly from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01** None arising directly from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 Assistance has been requested from Flintshire's Human Resources Department to provide clarity and guidance in relation to the present Wrexham IFSS, staff and whether they need to be engaged under Flintshire contracts and subject to our recruitment policies or whether secondment arrangements should apply.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 It is proposed that there will be a local steering group to include Betsi Cadwalader Health Board and that the new North Wales Family Support Board will oversee the rollout of IFSS across the region as part of its function.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Flintshire have undertaken fact finding visits to all five IFSS pioneer authorities and this has helped formulate the rollout plan.

11.02 The North Wales Heads of Children's Services have taken the lead for the rollout across North Wales and three workshops were organised during the latter part of 2012.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Background documents are available upon request from the relevant contact officers named below.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Contact Officer: Carol Salmon
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