

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **CABINET**

DATE: **TUESDAY, 16 JULY 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

SUBJECT: **OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS COMMISSIONING
PROJECT - OUTCOMES**

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To inform Cabinet about the outcomes of the Out of County (OOC) Placements Commissioning Project.

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

2.01 The project focused on OOC placements (i.e., non-Flintshire maintained provision), was identified due to increasing demands on the budget allocated to cover this element of the Council's provision. The project board identified the key planned outcomes to be achieved and the following section reports the progress and achievements against these key aims / work streams.

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Cabinet are asked to consider the position reached against each of the identified Planned Outcomes below.

3.02 ***Planned Outcome 1: Ysgol Plas Brondyffryn (YPB) to be flexible in relation to packages of respite care***

It was recognised that more flexible respite care provision would enable more young people to be educated and cared for locally. Agreement was secured with YPB to access a range of respite provision in place of the previous 2 or 4 night options and this is now accessed in line with individual needs. The need for additional in-house respite was identified as part of the project and Arosfa has successfully been established in response to this, catering for 3 children and young people for 350 days per year (previous provision being 2 children for 240 nights).

3.03 ***Planned Outcome 2: Clear mechanism for regular reporting & monitoring***

Raising awareness and the profile of this work was a key aspect of the early activity. Workshops were held with members around OOC placements and regular financial and activity reports were presented to the OOC Board members via monthly meetings. Flintshire County Council (FCC) developed a standardised format for advising independent providers regarding percentage uplift. This format has now been adopted by the North Wales Consortium (NWC) in partnership with Betsi Cadwallader University Health

Board (BCUHB) to advise providers. Stronger links have also been established between FCC and BCUHB finance officers.

3.04 ***Planned Outcome 3: Clear protocols for practitioners across Community Services for children (CS), Lifelong Learning (LLL) and health colleagues within Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board (BCUHB)***

Clear protocols and information for lead officers and parents have been developed and training events have been held for lead officers across CS and LLL in relation to these. The North Wales Commissioning Hub (NWCH) has adapted the model developed within FCC for utilisation across the region. The Welsh Government has now issued the final document outlining the Continuing Health Care Guidance (Children) and protocols are now being revised again in response to these developments.

3.05 ***Planned Outcome 4: Improved monitoring of placements***

At the onset of the project all placements were reviewed against individual need and the possibility of relocating to Flintshire provision, following which a number of placements were changed. Lead officers were made aware of the need for due diligence in relation to placement costs and expected outcomes and training was provided through the external consultants Clinical & Commercial Solutions Ltd (CCSL) to raise awareness and offer skill development in this area. The Terms of Reference for the Childcare Panel were revised to create the Out of County Panel which provides the ongoing forum for placement consideration, agreement and monitoring by senior officers from CS, LLL and BCUHB.

It is now routine to ensure that therapeutic and other chargeable interventions are appropriate to the individual young person's needs at the point in time and to ensure that they take place if a charge is to be made. It is also routine to consider whether a flexible approach to local care and educational provision could bring about better outcomes and avoid the need for a more expensive OOC intervention.

3.06 ***Planned Outcome 5: Establish joint procedures for signing and monitoring contracts and agreeing high cost placements***

The OOC Panel members (CS & LLL) have the delegated responsibility for agreement and sign off on high cost placements. FCC continues to work in partnership with BCUHB to further develop these procedures which need further refinement given the WG Continuing Health Care Guidance. The appointment of the agreed dedicated contracts officer will further secure this procedure.

3.07 ***Planned Outcome 6: Ensure best value principles apply regarding the use of resources***

It was recognised that more choice of providers and greater clarity over their charges for education, care and therapeutic interventions would help secure both improved quality and value for money. External consultancy was provided through CCSL to support this area. FCC worked to produce a Framework of providers from an initial Meet the Commissioner event,

through the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire / interview process to the establishment of a Preferred / Approved Provider Framework. The Framework and the process has been adopted by the NWCH as a model of good practice to be used across the Consortium. This process has improved service quality and efficiency by increasing the range of placement opportunities available for young people. It has also demonstrated to established and potential providers that Flintshire is a competent placement commissioner.

The support and training offered by CCSL has served to build capacity within CS and LLL with regard to lead / senior officers in relation to financial and business acumen around commissioning, procurement and contract monitoring, which in turn has supported the reduced spend against the OOC budget.

3.08 ***Planned Outcome 7: Develop a robust options appraisal process***

The process and associated documentation has been developed and is an integral part of the process for determining the need for, and accessing OOC placements. This has ensured that the need for OOC placements is duly considered and scrutinised against Flintshire's own education and care provision and that of other providers. This has also been adopted and adapted by the NWCH.

The work against these planned outcomes has resulted in a reduction of OOC placements along with a significant reduction in spend against the budget as demonstrated by the tables below:

Table 1: Community Services (Children) Placements				
Financial Year	Ongoing Placements	Placements Ended	New Placements	Total Number of Placements
2009/10	18	14	31	63
2010/11	16	28	7	51
2011/12	19	13	8	40
2012/13	13	13	14	40

Table 2: Lifelong Learning Placements				
Financial Year	Ongoing Placements	Placements Ended	New Placements	Total Number of Placements
2009/10	103	7	18	128
2010/11	90	23	4	117
2011/12	84	4	17	105
2012/13	73	13	12	98

Table 3: Joint Commissioned Placements (CS & LLL)				
Financial Year	Ongoing Placements	Placements Ended	New Placements	Total Number of Placements
2009/10	25	8	12	45
2010/11	24	13	7	44
2011/12	20	11	0	31
2012/13	18	3	6	27

Table 4: Expenditure						
Financial Year	Budget Allocation	Total Expenditure £	Community Services (Children) Expenditure £	Lifelong Learning Expenditure £	Joint Expenditure £	Total (Under) / Overspend £
2009/10	4,536,329	6,444,702	2,164,307	976,342	3,304,053	1,908,373
2010/11	5,776,478	6,791,361	2,324,470	1,848,124	2,618,767	1,014,883
2011/12	7,147,007	6,224,699	2,232,340	1,538,962	2,453,397	(922,308)
2012/13	6,370,492	4,624,265	2,162,794	1,054,701	1,553,612	(1,599,385)

It also means that more children and young people with complex needs are being educated and cared for closer to their home communities supporting family and friendship ties.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Cabinet recognise the work of the OOC Project and confirm it's completion of role in relation to the Planned Outcomes.
- 4.02 Any further opportunities for development in local provision and practice will be identified through the normal planning and decision making processes, e.g. MTFP, Service Plans reported to Cabinet.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 See Table 4 above for cost savings.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

- 6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 6.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.01 Improvements as a result of the project have resulted in more effective and sustainable placements and provision for children and young people.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

- 10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 This was undertaken during the life period of the project, involving officers and providers.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

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

None.

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