

SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 24 th November 2016
Report Subject	Team Around the Family Update
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer for Social Services
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the current role of Team Around the Family (TAF) within Social Services and the impact of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 on the early intervention agenda.

This report provides Scrutiny with an overview of TAF and the TAF process within the wider early intervention agenda. It focusses on the successes and challenges of the project, with some relevant case studies, to clearly show the role of TAF in supporting vulnerable families in Flintshire. The report will also explain the integral role of TAF in successfully delivering the 'Information, Advice and Assistance' element of the Social Services and Well-being Act, as well as responding to the CCSIW's recent recommendation to further develop our early intervention services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Scrutiny to evaluate the success of TAF as part of Flintshire's commitment to develop and deliver effective early intervention services.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CURRENT ROLE OF TEAM AROUND THE FAMILY AND THE INTEGRAL ROLE OF THE PROJECT IN THE LONG TERM EARLY INTERVENTION AGENDA
1.01	<p>The Development and Focus of Team Around the Family</p> <p>The Team Around the Family is a coordinating service working with vulnerable families across the local authority, bringing together appropriate support agencies and interventions, to meet the individual needs of family members. It also aims to offer early support in order to reduce the likelihood of families requiring more complicated and therefore, costly, services. The programme recognises that supporting a family often involves many different teams and services and the work of the TAF team is to engage the relevant support services at a time which is most appropriate for the family, in order to prevent them reaching crisis point and requiring higher level, remedial services.</p>
1.02	<p>Under the contractual obligations of the Welsh Government's Families First grant, every local authority in Wales was expected to develop a TAF, but this has taken a slightly different form in each area, to adapt to the needs of the local population. TAF originally sat within Lifelong Learning in Flintshire, but was moved under the umbrella of Children's Services in the summer of 2015. The structure remained the same, but the team developed their work in a cohesive way with outside agencies, by ensuring that the interventions were completed by the specialist agencies themselves, rather than relying on TAF officers to carry out direct work. This has been largely successful, although some families do require a more 'hands-on' approach, to encourage and enable them to engage with appropriate support.</p>
1.03	<p>The Team around the Family approach in Flintshire relies heavily on effective multi-agency working and building strong working relationships with other agencies, including statutory and non-statutory services provided by the local authority as well as the 3rd and private sectors within the local communities. The Team Around the Family is a framework for joint/multi-agency working to support all children, young people and families with additional needs. Our aim is to ensure appropriate support is in place to prevent a family reaching crisis point and to enable the family to utilise its own strengths to progress and move forward. TAF should encourage families to seek and access support when necessary and should promote a culture of empowerment to support the family to eventually move forward for themselves.</p>
1.04	<p>To develop an integrated approach to family support in Flintshire, the support provided by TAF should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family focussed – taking a whole family approach to improving outcomes• Bespoke – tailored to individual family members' needs• Integrated – with effective coordination of planning and service

	<p>provision, providing a seamless progression for families between different interventions and programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro-active – seeking early identification and appropriate intervention for families • Intensive – Continuously adapting the family’s changing needs <p>Local – identifying appropriate support service to meet the family’s needs within the local community wherever possible</p>
1.05	<p>The Work of the TAF Team</p> <p>TAF receive referrals from a wide range of agencies working with families, including children’s and adult’s social services, education, health, police and the 3rd sector. Approximately 50% of the referrals come from children’s services, either as a step-down from more intensive intervention, or through initial referrals that do not meet children’s services thresholds. (See attached Quarters 1 and 2 Performance Monitoring Report, Appendix 1). It is possible for families to refer themselves and we encourage this as it is empowering and positive for a family to recognise their need for support and take the first steps to ask for it.</p>
1.06	<p>The TAF referral form is called the Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) and is in a North Wales regional format, with slight differences based on local needs. This allows a family a smooth transition from one TAF to another if they move around the region and ensures that their support from TAF remains consistent, as their paperwork can move with them. (See attached JAFF, Appendix 2)</p>
1.07	<p>The TAF team is made up of one TAF Coordinator (21 hours per week) and five TAF Officers (ranging from 29 to 37 hours per week). TAF Officers are not social workers, but it is a degree essential post and the team have a range of backgrounds and experiences, including law, education, early years and substance misuse. Caseloads are currently between 12 and 15, but this changes to reflect numbers of referrals and complexity of cases.</p>
1.08	<p>The TAF team work with approximately 200 – 250 families per year, with each case remaining open on average for 2-3 months. TAF is not a time-limited intervention, but it is important to maintain the focus on empowerment and not promote a culture of dependency, so a TAF Officer will close a case as soon as the appropriate support agencies are in place and the family are engaging with them for themselves. TAF is an enabling and coordinating service rather than an intervention in itself.</p>
1.09	<p>The TAF process is an invaluable element of the early intervention agenda. By enabling families to access appropriate services at this early stage of need, it should prevent them requiring social service intervention at a later stage, thus greatly reducing the long-term financial cost to the organisation. The major challenge of working at this level is encouraging a family to accept support and engage with services. TAF is a consent based service and a family has to be ready to ask for help and support. Many families do not wish to admit any need for support until they reach crisis point, but through engaging them earlier, we often manage to avert the crisis as well as building up their resilience as a family and giving them</p>

	<p>the tools they need to face the next emergency situation without recourse to social service involvement. The other major challenge to working as a multi-agency response to a family's needs, is balancing the accessibility and appropriateness of the agencies involved. Although a family may need a wide range of support services, it is important for the TAF officer to ensure that support is prioritised and introduced according to the family's needs, rather than the accessibility of the services. This is particularly difficult in the current economic climate as funding is becoming more restricted and in turn services have increasingly large waiting lists, often leaving families waiting for the service they desperately require.</p>
1.10	<p>Examples of TAF Support Case study 1:</p> <p>Background: Family of three, single mother and two teenage daughters. TAF received a self-referral from mother. Young person (13) refusing to attend school, having been excluded on a number of occasions. Police involvement due to fighting and received Restorative Resolution. Very difficult relationship with father, as he now has another family and doesn't see the children very often. Mother very depressed and having suicidal thoughts. Major problems with benefits and income.</p> <p>TAF support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with school and Inclusion Service to secure managed move • Referral to and liaison with Youth Justice Service (YJS) Parenting Support team to help mum to access Challenging Years parenting course. • Referral to Quest for mum to increase self-confidence • Support for mum to attend appointments with GP, Jobcentre and YJS. • Referral to Young People's Counselling Service and support for young person to attend • Regular meetings to coordinate support <p>Impact and legacy: Ongoing support for the family to build up relationships, deal with impact of father leaving and starting a new family and mother's depression and agoraphobia. Young person is now talking about her feelings and is more open to attending another mainstream school. Young person has not been involved in any anti-social behaviour and is engaging well with YJS. Family relationships appear less strained and mother is setting boundaries and rewarding positive behaviour.</p>
1.11	<p>Case study 2:</p> <p>Background: Family of two, mother and 2 year old child. TAF received self-referral from Mother. Child has cerebral palsy and is also epileptic. He has poor sleeping habits and wakes regularly. Mum provides all care for the child and has no support network, having recently moved to the area and no</p>

	<p>family support.</p> <p>TAF support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to Daffodils and Crossroads, to provide peer support for mum from other parents, as well as activities for young person. • Referrals to Citizen’s Advice Bureau and Welfare Rights to ensure that mother was receiving all the benefits and financial support she was entitled to • Liaison with number of involved health professionals • Regular meetings to coordinate services • Support to access specific support, such as “Blue Badge” • Signposted to Early Support provision and Assisted Places Grant for children with a disability • Young person to attend “Stepping Stones” group in the near future to help his transition to more independent access to nursery attendance when he is two and a half <p>Impact and legacy:</p> <p>The family are now accessing appropriate services and engaging well with support agencies. Mother is supported by an advocacy worker for the long-term and has had a Carer’s and Direct Payments Assessment, ensuring she has the practical and financial support she requires. The family now have access to higher level provision when necessary and are aware of the services to consult when further support is required.</p>
1.12	<p>Current TAF Funding</p> <p>The Team Around the Family is grant funded, from the Welsh Government’s Families First grant. This is due to come to an end in March 2017, but there is currently a period of 6 months extension to allow commissioned services to successfully manage their exit strategies. We have been informed that certain aspects of the Families First programme will continue to be funded (including TAF and parenting support) however, we have no indication on the level of funding and how this will affect future capacity. This places TAF in a period of uncertainty, as all positions within the team are reliant on the current level of funding.</p>
1.13	<p>The Future of TAF</p> <p>The TAF ethos of a multi-agency response to early intervention is directly reflected in Part 2 of The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Act places a duty on the Local Authority to ‘prevent or delay the development of people’s needs for care and support’ and in fulfilling this duty, the LA must ‘identify the services already available in the authority’s area which may help in achieving the purposes ... and consider involving or making use of those services in discharging the duty’. In essence, the Act places a duty on the LA to utilise the local non-statutory support services within the 3rd sector, faith sector etc. to support a family, to try to prevent them from requiring statutory intervention. The TAF model would enable the LA to bring together statutory and non-statutory agencies, to deliver on this duty and aligns with the development of the Early Intervention Hub, which is looking at the co-location of these agencies, to work together to form a timely and appropriate response to a family’s needs. TAF also helps the LA to meet the recommendations of the recent CCSIW Inspection Report, based around further development of the early</p>

	<p>intervention model. The TAF idea is based on working together with a wide range of agencies, sharing resources, learning from good practice and avoiding any duplication of services. This is an innovative response to supporting a family and supporting them to develop the skills and resilience to work together to manage future issues without hitting crisis point, but it has the added benefit of being financially practical, as it calls on all agencies involved to share the costs.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	TAF is currently entirely funded through the Families First grant. The grant for 2016/17 is £210k to cover 6 posts. The extension period of 6 months, to end of October 2017 allows a further extension of 6 months to current contracts, but this will need to be reviewed based on the continuation grant, yet to be agreed by WG.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Consultation will be carried out with staff and Unions, depending on the outcome of future funding discussions.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The TAF model is now fully integrated into Children's services and plays an integral role in their early intervention function. The main risk to the service is based on a significant reduction in funding, leading to reduced personnel. This would lead to a significant increase in cases being managed by the First Contact Team, which would put further pressure on existing teams. This risk could be mitigated in part by working with the current (non-statutory) services involved in the TAF model, to encourage them to continue with this form of intervention without extensive input from Children's Services.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1:2016/17 Quarters 1 and 2 TAF Performance Monitoring Report Appendix 2:Flintshire JAFF

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Contact Officer: Craig Macleod, Senior Manager Children and Workforce Telephone: 01352 701313 E-mail: craig.macleod@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>(1) TAF: Team Around the Family</p> <p>(2) WG: Welsh Government.</p> <p>(3) YJS: Youth Justice Service</p> <p>(4) CSSIW: The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales</p>