

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 15 th December 2020
Report Subject	Families First – Funding Element
Cabinet Member	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire Integrated Youth Provision (FIYP) seeks approval to extend existing Families First funded prevention and support services for up to 12 months, subject to the Welsh Government approving further funding. This will enable:

1. Ongoing provision of key services for Flintshire parents, young people and families with disabled children that benefit most from early support to build resilience and well-being;
2. Effective operation of the Early Help Hub (EHH); and
3. Work with partners to evaluate, develop and commission prevention and support services for Flintshire children, young people and families.

Since 2011, the Welsh Government flagship programme for building resilience and well-being amongst young people and families that benefit most from early support is Families First. The Families First Management Board commissioned three consortia to provide services from 2018/19. This included embedding the consortia within the Early Help Hub to support delivery of Council statutory duties.

Since 2019/20, Families First is funded through the Children and Communities Grant (CCG). The CCG brings together seven early and targeted support programmes. Council aims were to evaluate, develop and commission more integrated and streamlined prevention and support services involving all these programmes for 2021/22. The pandemic response has delayed this.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	For Cabinet Members to approve an extension subject to the Welsh Government approving further funding for a period of 6 months, with the option of a further 6 months if required.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILIES FIRST
1.01	Families First, launched in July 2011, was a flagship programme for implementing the Welsh Government's Child Poverty Strategy for Wales (2011). Flintshire County Council, along with Wrexham and Denbighshire, were pioneer local authorities for the new programme.
1.02	<p>Unlike other local authorities in North Wales, the lead officer established a multiagency Families First Management Board (FFMB) to oversee local delivery, with representatives from varied statutory and voluntary sector partners. The FFMB agreed a Families First Action Plan 2012/13 - 2016/17, which the Welsh Government approved. Key areas of focus were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Early identification and engagement of families at more risk of escalating problems;2. More 'whole-family' approaches to work with young people and families with multiple needs; and3. Embedding inclusive practices across early support and prevention services for families with children with disabilities and for families preferring support in the Welsh language or language of choice. <p>In implementing the Action Plan, a Team Around the Family service was established and managed by the lead officer for Families First. In all 11 projects were developed and procured.</p>
1.03	<p>The strategic context for prevention and early support for young people and families in Wales has radically changed since 2011. For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Legislative reforms such as the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2016 and Social Services and Well-being Act 2014; and2. Policy changes such as the introduction of the Healthy Child programme and the 30-hour free early years entitlement for working parents of children aged 3 and 4 years. <p>As a result, from 2017/18 the Welsh Government repositioned Families First to focus more explicitly on targeting prevention and early support to parents, young people and families with disabled children at more risk of entrenched disadvantage. For example, those affected by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).</p>
1.04	The FFMB commissioned three consortia to provide a diverse suite of early support and targeted services from 2018/19 (see 5.01). Each

	<p>consortia comprises 5-8 statutory and voluntary sector partners as part of an integrated and holistic approach to building resilience and well-being for young people and families that benefit most from early support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parenting consortia led by Y Teulu Cyfan 2. Young People's consortia led by Action for Children 3. Disability consortia led by Action for Children <p>The FFMB also embedded the consortia within the EHH to support Council delivery of statutory duties to provide information, advice and assistance for families requiring support to avoid problem escalation (see 5.01, 6.01).</p>
1.05	<p>Throughout the pandemic, the consortia have directly supported 200 young people, 368 parents and 501 families with children with disabilities (Q1-2, 2020/21). Key outcomes include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 95% of individuals report improved family relationships (282 of 296) 2. 92% of participants report improved emotional/mental well-being (204 of 222) 3. 89% of families report improved family resilience (250 of 282).
1.06	<p>Since 2019/20, the Welsh Government has funded Families First through the CCG. The CCG brings together seven early and targeted support programmes/funds (see 6.02). The Council established single, integrated governance arrangements to oversee these programmes/funds and other related programmes.</p> <p>The Council aims were to evaluate, develop and commission more integrated and streamlined prevention and support services from April 2021. For example, bringing together elements from multiple programmes into a single service specification. Work had started on this. However, the focus on responding to the pandemic has delayed its conclusion.</p> <p>Without this new specification and an associated procurement process, the contracts for the three consortia would end on 31 March 2021.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>The Council has specified in all contracts for services and roles funded through the Families First programme that any continuation depends wholly on Welsh Government funding and good performance. In this way, the Council is indemnified from any changes the Welsh Government may make.</p> <p>Welsh Government CCG funding of £1,181,000 funds the three consortia in 2020/21. The current contracts conclude on 31/3/21, after 3 years. This request is for an extension, subject to further funding being approved, for a period of up to 12 months (i.e. 6 months with an option of a further 6 months should this be required).</p> <p>There are no capital / technology/ asset implications.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>Key risks relate to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Section 17 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to secure the provision of an information, advice and assistance service. The FFMB redeveloped Families First funded provision to enable the Council to meet this duty. This includes the co-location of Families First consortia within the Early Help Hub (see 6.01). 2. Loss of expertise in support for young people and families at risk of problem escalation, at the same time as growing risks of problem escalation arising from the pandemic and wider economic and financial uncertainties (see 6.04). 3. The Education and Youth (EY) Portfolio Risk Register 2020/21 records the following risk: EY05: Insufficient financial resources to support children and young people's emotional health.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	The Flintshire Prevention and Support Leadership Operational Group which oversees the CCG and related prevention and support programmes supports the extension of the existing contracts for Families First consortia.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	https://committeemeetings.flintshire.gov.uk/documents/s500001169/Appendix%201%20-%20The%20story%20of%20the%20Early%20Help%20Hub%20so%20far.pdf?LLL=0 (Cabinet Committee appendix report explaining context for, and development of the EHH including co-location of Families First services. See pages 15-17 for details of Families First services within each consortia)
5.02	https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/local-news/flintshire-named-families-first-pioneer-2751941 (media article about Flintshire selection as a Families First pioneer in Wales)
5.03	https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/16286764.flintshire-ground-breaking-new-early-help-hub-support-families/ (media article about establishment of EHH)

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	https://law.gov.wales/publicservices/social-care/Local-authority-responsibilities/general-and-strategic-duties/information-advice-and-assistance/?tab=overview&lang=en#/publicservices/social-care/Local-authority-responsibilities/general-and-strategic-duties/information-advice-and-assistance/?tab=overview&lang=en (details about the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 related to section 17).
6.02	https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-02/revenue-account-budget-2019-20-grants-notes.pdf (details of CCG)
6.03	https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/policy-and-international-health-who-collaborating-centre-on-investment-for-health-well-being/publications-and-resources-bucket/adverse-childhood-experiences-and-their-association-with-chronic-disease-1/ (ACEs study, Public Health Wales 2016)
6.04	https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/traumatic-stress/ (growing mental health needs associated with COVID-19) and https://www.pwc.co.uk/premium/covid-19/uk-economic-update-covid-19.pdf (increasing economic uncertainty in UK).

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Ann Roberts, Senior Manager, Integrated Youth Provision</p> <p>Telephone: 077 9889 3509</p> <p>E-mail: ann.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>30-hour free early years entitlement: Introduced from September 2017, the entitlement provides 30-hours free childcare per week for working parents with children aged three and four years for 48 weeks of the year. The entitlement is set out in Taking Wales Forward 2016- 2021.</p> <p>Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs): Public Health Wales published a large-scale research study about the extent to which, and the long-term effects on, Welsh adults who were exposed to adverse experiences in childhood. See 6.03.</p> <p>Children and Communities Grant: Welsh Government grant to address the support needs of the most vulnerable children and adults in communities through a range of early intervention, prevention and support mechanisms. The CCG seeks to mitigate or remove disadvantage to vulnerable people to enable them to have the same life chances as others, and therefore contribute to a more equal Wales. The CCG comprises the following grants: Flying Start, Families First, Legacy Fund, Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People, St David's Day Fund, Communities for Work Plus, Childcare and Play.</p>

Families First Action Plan: sets out key objectives with plans for local services and service transformation aligned with Families First priorities. In the first instance, the multiagency boards that have provided oversight of the local Families First programme agree these plans. The Council then agrees the plans with the Welsh Government.

Flintshire Families First Management Board: a multiagency, multidisciplinary board that oversaw local implementation of the Families First programme from 2012/13 to 2018/19. The board included representatives from the Council, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, Public Health Wales and BCUHB. The board's work is integrated into the work of the Flintshire Prevention and Support Leadership Operational Group.

Flintshire Prevention and Support Leadership Operational Group (LOG): a multiagency, multidisciplinary board that oversees local implementation of the CCG and other prevention and support programmes/funds. This includes the Housing Support Grant and the Youth Support Grant. The LOG reports to a Prevention and Support Chief Officer's Group.

Healthy Child Programme: delivered by health visitors for the early life stages, all families have a programme of screening, immunisation, health and development reviews, supplemented by advice around health, well-being and parenting. The programme includes universal home visiting and support for families that starts in the ante-natal period.

Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) that took effect from April 2016 creates a new legal system for social services in Wales. The Act aims to shift the balance away from long term care and support, wherever possible, to families and local communities. It demands a change in culture when working with the individual to help them achieve their well-being outcomes. Firstly, by asking "what matters to you?" and secondly by maximising their own support networks and accessing community and voluntary resources.

Team Around the Family: a team that works alongside families with multiple needs to assess their needs, determine what matters to families and develop and agree a plan to address those needs and build resilience and well-being.

Targeted provision: provision for specific cohorts of young people and parents (such as young people with disabilities) and/or more vulnerable young people and families.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, whilst ensuring the health and well-being of future generations is secured, and does so through Public Services Boards. The Act establishes seven well-being goals and aspires for a society where every child grows up free from ACEs and where policy makers understand that ACEs do not arise in isolation but are associated with environments that tolerate inequalities.