
**FAMILIES FIRST PROGRAMME – ARRANGEMENTS FOR
RECOMMISSIONING – DRAFT CABINET REPORT**

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to consider and review the Draft Cabinet Report (copy attached at **Appendix 1**) providing details of the current position in relation to Cardiff's Families First Programme and the proposed approach to recommissioning a new programme.

2. The report of the Director of Social Services recommends to the Cabinet that :
 - i. Agree the proposed phased approach to the recommissioning of the next Families First Programme grant funded services as set out in the body of the report;
 - ii. Subject to recommendation 3, to delegate authority to the Director of Social Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Early Years Children and Families and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance, and Section 151 and the Director of Governance and Legal Services for all aspects of commissioning (including the award of contracts) and any associated arrangements which may be required in relation to the next Programme, namely
 - a) Arrangements for the pilot of the Early Help Service and any subsequent longer-term arrangements which may be put into place following the pilot;
 - b) Service Level Agreements with the relevant Council service areas (including the Education department) for delivery of the main Parenting and Youth Support Services;
 - c) Arrangements (in a form to be determined and subject to advice) with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board for services which require specialist health delivery;

- d) Arrangements to extend any current contracts within scope of the Families First Programme to enable new arrangements to be put in place and subject to the existing contracts containing provisions to extend the same;
 - e) To explore and develop joint working arrangements with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and to enter into any subsequent joint working arrangements agreed (save for any joint working arrangements which include a delegation of a Council function to the Vale of Glamorgan and/or the delegation of a Vale of Glamorgan Council function to the Council whereupon the matter will be reported back to Cabinet);
 - f) Commissioning arrangements for other complementary services in relation to the Families First Programme including the award of contracts.
- iii). Agree that, subject to all contracts and arrangements being made to include appropriate provisions in relation to the availability of grant funding, the term of such agreements and arrangements will be not go beyond 31st March 2022.

Previous Scrutiny

3. The previous Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 6 December 2016, reviewed an update on the families' first programme, together with the draft transitions arrangements which includes varying some existing contracts in order to extend their initial contract terms, decommissioning some of the services and potentially commissioning pilot/alternative arrangements during the transition period. The report also sets out a timetable for the governance arrangements to ensure a smooth progression to new arrangements for service users.
4. The Committee subsequently wrote to inform the Cabinet member that it was pleased with the draft Cabinet report and considered it to be a positive response to the concerns raised around the transitions arrangements by Committee in October.
5. The Members reviewed the plans for the interim arrangements for the extension of some contract terms, de-commissioning of some of the

services, the alternative / pilot arrangements during the transition period and the commissioning the next families first programme.

6. The Committee noted that the Directorate has started to prepare for new commissioning during the transition period, including consulting with all relevant stakeholders. Once the Directorate is in a position to propose a model for the longer term arrangements and having taken into account the final WG guidance a further report will be submitted to Cabinet for approval. The Committee recommends that all appropriate providers must be considered as part of the tendering process i.e.: both large and small organisations, and that the draft Cabinet report should be brought back to this Committee prior to its consideration by Cabinet. The Committee also noted the contents of the letter sent by Sova Wales, which was circulated at the start of the item.

Background

7. The Council currently receives a Welsh Government grant of just over £5m per annum for the Families First Programme, to provide early intervention and prevention services for families. The programme is one of the Welsh Government's key initiatives for tackling poverty.
8. The Council manages the grant on behalf of the Cardiff Partnership, which is made up of all the main statutory and third sector partners working together to deliver Cardiff's Integrated Strategic Plan, *What Matters: 2010-2020*.
9. Originally, the Vulnerable Children and Families Board, was responsible for providing governance in relation to the Families First programme and the commissioning proposals for the first programme were overseen by this group. However, following a review of the partnership arrangements under the Cardiff Public Services Board, it has been agreed that the new Improving Services for Children [ISfC] Board should now fulfil this role in relation to governance of the programme. This Partnership governance arrangement is advisory and is in addition to the Council's own governance processes. The Chief Executive chairs the new ISfC Board

10. The Welsh Government's initial Guidance identified that the initial Families First programme would end in 2017. The Guidance also contained a requirement that services should be 'strategically commissioned'. In line with this, the Council used an 'outcome-based' commissioning approach to commission services via two competitive tender processes resulting in the award of seven contracts, which commenced on 1 April 2013. These contracts are due to expire on 31 March 2017, although they contain an option to extend on an annual basis for 12 month periods if continued grant funding is made available.

11. The main specification for the initial programme comprised six lots, providing for themed packages of services. Each of these packages is led by a Lead Provider who has entered into sub contracts with a range of other providers. In this way, each package provides a number of different projects or services. The packages are:

- Early Years – led by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.
- Child and Youth Engagement – led by City of Cardiff Education Services.
- Sustainable Employment – led by Sova.
- Healthy Lifestyles – led by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board.
- Emotional and Mental Health and Wellbeing – led by Barnardo's.
- Disability Focus – led by Action for Children.

12. Under the same Programme (although commissioned under a separate procurement process) there is an additional 'Team Around the Family' service for which a contract is in place with a single provider, Tros Gynnal Plant.

13. The Families First grant funding for this programme remained at the same level between 2012/13 and 2015/16 at £5,743,339 but was reduced to £5,072,763 in 2016/17.

14. In July 2016, the Cabinet Secretary, Carl Sargeant, confirmed that there would be another Families First programme. At this time, he issued a decision paper, which set out his intentions for the new programme and

clarified the distinctive contribution that Welsh Government wanted the Families First programme to make alongside other programmes and initiatives.

15. The decision paper confirmed four main elements of provision:
 - I. continuation of Team Around the Family [TAF] model of working
 - II. continuation of the Disability Focus, which provides support to families with needs related to their child's disabilities (this element continues to be ring-fenced)
 - III. a clearer focus on support for parenting
 - IV. a clearer focus on support for young people.

16. Other related activities, like childcare, support into employment and welfare benefit advice, would no longer be eligible for Families First funding because Welsh Government commit funding through specialist programmes and initiatives.

17. Welsh Government published the final guidance for the new programme in April 2017. This confirmed the direction of travel for the Families First programme set out in the decision paper but provided additional detail about the services to be commissioned.

18. The Guidance does not specify a set programme length for the new arrangements. Welsh Government receives the funding allocated to the Families First programme from the Westminster Government on an annual basis and so is not in a position to be able to provide indicative budgets for future years. However, the Cabinet Secretary has confirmed his commitment to continue to support the Families First programme and Welsh Government officials have said that this can be assumed to be for the current Assembly term.

Draft Cabinet Report

19. The draft Cabinet report (copy attached at **Appendix 1**) sets out the proposed commissioning approach for the new programme, together with the key drivers which will be taken into account, namely:
 - the Guidance for the new Families First programme;

- a review of the current programme which has been carried out with stakeholders, including children, young people and their families as well as professionals, and which has identified what has worked well, and what we can do to improve arrangements (para 25);
- an analysis of contract monitoring information and business intelligence from the current programme (para 30);
- the Pilot to roll out use of the Families First 'JAFF' [Joint Assessment Family Framework] as a first level assessment, which was carried out as part of the implementation of Cardiff's Early Help Strategy and associated work with schools to develop a 'graduated response' where family needs are identified;
- the changing context of delivery, including the implementation of relevant legislation (specifically the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act);
- improved alignment with other tackling poverty programmes such as Flying Start and Supporting People but also the need to identify and respond to the changing delivery arrangements as Communities First ends;
- the Population Needs Assessment which was published in April 2017 - this was led by Public Health Wales, Cardiff and Vale Team, as part of the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

20. The financial guidance for Families First specifies that the funding must not be used to deliver statutory services. However, we have received clarification that funding may be used to deliver wider early help services and contribute to the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

21. The lessons set out above have informed the planning for each of the four main areas of provision identified in the Families First Guidance. Further detail about the proposed approach to each of these is set out below. The central Families First team has also used this information to complete an Options Appraisal, which is attached as **Appendix B**.

22. The Cabinet report requests delegated authority to make decisions to secure services for:

- Team around the family Model (Para 39)
- Disability Focus (Para 44)
- Parenting (Para 48)
- Support for young people (para 55)
- Infrastructure (Para 63)

23. The report also sets out the Commissioning plan and funding arrangements and requests permission to secure services for a four year term from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2022 (Para 70 to 72)

24. Equality impact assessments have also been undertaken which have been used to inform the proposals for the interim arrangements (see **Appendices C**).

Scope of Scrutiny

25. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to:

- Gain assurance that the draft Cabinet Report provides appropriate arrangements for the recommissioning of the Families First programmes from 1 April 2018.
- Pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children and Families prior to the consideration of the Draft report by Cabinet.

Way Forward

26. Councillor Graham Hinchey (Cabinet Member for Children and Families), Tony Young (Director of Social Services), and Ceri George (Improvement Project Manager – Prevention and Partnerships) will present the report to the Committee, and will be available to answer any questions Members may have.

27. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

Legal Implications

28. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

29. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

Review the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix 1**, together with information provided at the meeting and provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director of Social Services prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

13 July 2017