

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: FORTH VALLEY FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE
Meeting: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date: 1 DECEMBER 2014
Author: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update committee on the initial pilot and subsequent procurement of Forth Valley Family Support Service by Forth Valley Alcohol and Drug Partnership. This provides support to family and friends of those affected by substance misuse in Forth Valley (Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling local authority areas).
- 1.2. The Forth Valley Family Support Service was piloted for eighteen months from April 2012 until June 2013 with external evaluation that informed the service specification for procurement of the future service.
- 1.3. A feature of Forth Valley Family Support Service is that the specification for the service was drawn from consultation with existing family support services in Stirling and Grangemouth and those who had contact with a service that had operated in the Clackmannanshire area utilising the Public Social Partnership (PSP) approach.
- 1.4. The Forth Valley Family Support Service pilot was funded by the three Local Authorities, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling with each contributing £20,000, for provision of the service. The contract for the provision of the pilot was awarded to the local service, Addictions, Support and Counselling (ASC) which has offices in Falkirk and Stirling.
- 1.5. The pilot was supported by the three local Third Sector Interfaces, provided by CVS Falkirk & District in this area, that were well placed to support any groups established as a result of the pilot as well as creation of literature to publicise the service.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO OUTCOMES

- 2.1 Forth Valley Family Support Service contributes to Falkirk Single Outcome Agreement for the following within Health Inequalities and Physical Activity – Harms to Health (including alcohol and drugs) –
 - Support for family and friends of those affected by substance misuse.

3. OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATION WHICH RECEIVED FUNDING

3.1 Forth Valley Family Support Service Pilot was established with the following objectives, associated activity, and outcomes, that had been agreed after consultation using the Public Social Partnership (PSP) approach these were given priority rating as indicated:

- Provide opportunities for families in a range of support including, group work, peer support groups, one to one, telephone support and home visits (1);
- Ensure training is available to all staff and volunteers on trends in drugs and alcohol misuse and treatment/recovery support available (1);
- Promote Forth Valley Family Support Service to treatment services and other professionals, agencies and members of the community (1);
- Provide signposting and basic information service to family members on matters linked to substance misuse problems (2);
- Provide respite for family members (3);
- Offer a range of complimentary therapies to family members (3);
- Promote the service and offer support via a variety of online media (3); and
- Fundraising (3).

3.2 It was agreed that the service would not provide:

- Work with children – this required specialist input and children should be referred to other agencies;
- Direct support for/to substance users – this would be carried out by specialist treatment services provided in the area, although families would benefit from hearing first hand what services provide;
- Drugs and alcohol education in schools – required specialist service provision; and
- 24 hour telephone support – callers out of hours would be referred to national agencies/help lines. The service would ensure that they were known to national organisations who provide 24 or out of hours support and refer to local agencies where appropriate.

3.3 Forth Valley Family Support Service Pilot operated until September 2013 and supported 100 individuals with 55 being residents of Falkirk with the following common themes:

- A lack of knowledge of substance misuse and addictive behaviour;
- A lack of understanding of treatment services;
- High levels of family conflict and poor communication;
- Poor coping skills; and
- High levels of stress resulting in poor physical and mental health.

3.4 To address the common themes support work focused on the following areas:

- Knowledge – helping clients to understand the different psychological and behavioural effects that drugs and alcohol can have on individuals;
- Boundaries – helping family members to understand the importance of setting limits;
- Communication – providing workshops around positive communication techniques;

- Education – raising awareness of substance misuse, treatment processes and pathways, helping individuals and families to recognise to differentiate between helpful and unhelpful behaviours;
- Roles and Responsibilities – individuals examining their own roles within their family;
- Sleep Hygiene – promotion of cognitive behavioural approaches to help the individual to deal with issues around sleep;
- Anger Management – where unmanaged anger has been a common presenting problem for family members;
- Stress/Anxiety – one of the major common themes with clients being provided with emotional and practical support to help them identify and understand stress and anxiety;
- Emotional Support – a safe space for individuals to express their emotions and discuss their situation;
- Practical Support – signposting to other specialist services and some cases supporting them to attend these services; and
- Naloxone – provision of Naloxone Training events were made available to all family members.

3.5 Family members who had engaged with the service were supported beyond September 2013 by CVS Falkirk & District, and Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs.

3.6 The Forth Valley Alcohol and Drug Partnership, after successful tender, appointed Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs to provide Forth Valley Family Support Service from 1st April 2014 with the objectives as outlined at paragraph 2.1.

3.7 The service is monitored by Forth Valley Alcohol and Drug Partnership Monitoring Group which meets with the service each quarter. In the first quarter 2014/2015, the service worked with 11 families in Falkirk Council area with one Family Support Group (8 members) meeting fortnightly.

3.8 Falkirk Council's contribution to this service is £20,000. Both Stirling and Clackmannanshire Council provide the same financial contribution.

4. ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL ORGANISATION PERFORMANCE

4.1 An individual report is attached for Forth Valley Family Support Group. The report provides an overview of the service provided, the agreed objectives or outcomes, performance information during the reporting period and a financial overview. The Audited accounts for the host Service ASC (Addictions Support and Counselling) for 2013/14 have not yet been published.

4.2 As part of the funding application process an annual risk and financial assessment is undertaken based on governance arrangements, financial management and past performance to ascertain their risk rating. The ratings are graded low, medium or high and provide monitoring officers with an indication of the minimum level of monitoring and support which should be established. External organisations deemed as low risk, are monitored at least annually, medium risk external organisations should be monitored at least quarterly and high risk, at least monthly.

Monitoring is recommended to take the form of regular reports, which measure performance against outcomes and/or objectives and provide financial monitoring information. Monitoring Officers are also required to hold meetings with the external organisation throughout the year.

- 4.3 Quarterly monitoring is in place for Forth Valley Family Support Service, funding is released on a quarterly basis on receipt and approval of their monitoring reports. Their annual risk and financial assessment is medium risk with previous annual accounts being assessed as satisfactory.
- 4.4 A Following the Public Pound Annual Reporting Statement in respect of Forth Valley Family Support Service is attached at Appendix 1. The report provides an overview of the service provided, the agreed objectives or outcomes, performance information during the reporting Audited accounts for 2013/14 have not yet been published.
- 4.5 The service accepted 100 referrals during the period from across Forth Valley – 55 referrals from Falkirk. The service established a Family Support Group in Falkirk meeting fortnightly at ASC premises in Vicar Street, Falkirk. The group were supported by Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs and Falkirk and District CVS post 30th September 2014. Members of the Family Support Group (Falkirk) attended local and national events with family support and recovery focus.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 As set out within the report to this Committee on 13 June 2013, ‘Following the Public Pound: Scrutiny Committee Role and Reporting Schedule’, Members are invited to consider each organisation’s report and select from the following options for each external organisation:
 - A. Approve report and acknowledge progress by the external organisation in meeting Council priorities;
 - B. Request further information on specific aspects of the service provided; or
 - C. Request action with follow-up for subsequent Scrutiny Committee consideration.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- 6.1 **Consider this report and the attached Following the Public Pound Annual Reporting Statement 2013/14 in respect of Forth Valley Family Support Service and select an option from those presented in 5.1.**

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DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & NEIGHBOURHOOD

Date: 5th November 2014
Ref: ABC FPP SCRUTINY 14112014 -FVFSS
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. None

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Falkirk 01324 506045 and ask for Caird Forsyth.