

S39. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND: SERVICES TO EARLY YEARS CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (FPP) - 2013/2014 MONITORING REPORT

The committee considered a joint report by the by the Director of Social Work Services and Acting Joint Director of Education Services which provided an update on the work of external organisations in receipt of funding which provided services to early years, children and young people, and which fall within the FPP reporting and monitoring arrangements.

The report provided information on factors which impact service demand including national and local policy context and demographic change. An individual report was appended for each of the fourteen organisations which received funding. Each report set out the service provided, the agreed outcomes/objectives and performance information.

The committee heard from officers in relation to the individual reports.

(a) Aberlour Childcare Trust – Early Years Outreach

Elaine Costello provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £315, 162 of Council funding. The service worked with children 0 – 4 years.

The committee expressed concern that the report did not contain enough detail for the level of funding. Members stated that more information was needed in order to ensure that the level of funding was justified. Elaine Costello advised that more information could be provided.

Members asked about the secondment of the manager of the service. Elaine Costello stated that the manager had been in post until March 2014 and that the post had been backfilled internally.

The committee stated that figures needed to be reported transparently and that it would be beneficial to receive fuller reports at a future meeting of the committee.

Decision

The committee continued consideration of Aberlour Childcare Trust - Early Years Outreach to a future meeting to be provided with a more detailed report.

(b) Aberlour Childcare Trust – Family Support Centre – Langlees

The committee expressed concern that the report did not contain enough detail and information for the amount of funding provided.

Decision

The committee continued consideration of Aberlour Childcare Trust – Family Support Centre - Langlees to a future meeting to be provided with a more detailed report.

(c) Barnado's – AXIS Service

Matthew Davies provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £110,952 of Council funding. The service provided support to young people experiencing difficulties related to alcohol or substance misuse. The service aimed to provide support to 15 to 18 young people at any one time through Early Doors and 10 to 12 young people at any one time through the Core Service.

The committee asked for information in regard to the challenge of legal highs. Matthew Davies stated that this issue was part of a national focus and that while substances are legal they are not all safe. The service had carried out awareness raising with parents and would monitor the situation as it was a new and increasing area.

Members asked if stores selling legal highs were part of national chains. Matthew Davies stated that locally stores were not part of a larger network and operate separately. Fiona Campbell advised that trading standards and environmental health work closely with Police Scotland in this regard.

The committee sought further information on early intervention. Matthew Davies highlighted the work of the Early Doors programme. He stated that there was no set formula and that the programme was effective in engaging with groups of young people. Paid counsellors currently undertake the work, although the use of volunteers was being looked at in providing aftercare to avoid slippage by clients after leaving the programme.

The committee asked what the average age of a service user was. Matthew Davies stated that the Early Doors programme had a younger client base than the Core Service and that the peak age was around 14/15 years.

Members commented that employability outcomes were not relevant to all service users. Matthew Davies stated that outcomes were targeted to each clients needs as appropriate.

The committee asked about the number of young people who refused contact with the Early Doors programme. Matthew Davies stated that it is a challenge to engage young people and there were high levels of drop off. The service was looking at utilising referrals from police custody and accident and emergency.

Members expressed concern that two thirds of service users disengage with the service. Matthew Davies stated that the service shared members concerns and that improving engagement was an ongoing issue.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by Barnado's – AXIS Service in meeting Council priorities.

(d) Home Start

Elaine Costello provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £29,488 of Council funding. This was used to fund core staff and office facilities. 35 families had been provided with support and practical assistance. Eileen Hutton stated that the support and practical assistance provided included helping people look after their home well, cooking nutritious meals and keeping appointments.

Members asked how people come to the attention of the project. Eileen Hutton stated that referrals come from health visitors, doctors and social workers. There had been an

increase in referrals of ethnic minority families and the project was working to combat the isolation some families faced.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by Home Start in meeting Council priorities.

- (e) One Parent Families Scotland – Braes Children and Family Centre

Decision

The committee continued consideration of One Parent Families Scotland – Braes Children and Family Centre to a future meeting to be provided with a more detailed report.

- (f) Barnado's – Cluaran Service

Elaine Costello provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £628,819 of Council funding.

The committee asked for information on how many young people remained in the community. Matthew Davies stated that of those who completed the programme 88% remained in the community, with the majority staying with their families. In some cases it was not in the best interest of the individual to remain in the community.

The committee discussed that having young people remain in the community is cost effective and that this area may be suitable for a Spend to Save project.

Members asked for information about the wider situation in Falkirk in regard to vulnerable children. Margaret Anderson stated that there was sufficient demand in the area to justify another unit and that a business case was being looked at. The committee further discussed the possibility of a Spend to Save project.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by Barnado's – Cluaran Service in meeting Council priorities.

- (g) CAMHS, NHS Forth Valley – Clinical Psychologist, Looked After Children

Elaine Costello provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £73,264 of Council funding. Margaret Anderson stated that the funding ensured that looked after children were getting the right care. The service was seen to pay for itself as it reduced the potential of children and young people entering residential care.

Members stated that the service was essential but that the NHS had a role in providing mental health care to children and adults and that the work of the service fit better with the remit of the NHS which the funding should reflect. Margaret Anderson stated that she would request a 50 – 50 share with the NHS for funding liability.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by CAMHS, NHS Forth Valley – Clinical Psychologist, Look After Children in meeting Council priorities.

(h) Barnado's – New Beginnings

Decision

The committee continued consideration of Barnado's – New Beginnings to a future meeting to be provided with a more detailed report.

The Committee agreed to conjoin the following two items of business.

(i) Quarriers Scotland – Quarriers Falkirk Children's Rights

Elaine Costello provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £86,200 of Council funding. The service had assisted the Council in developing its response to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The committee asked why services were provided by both Quarriers and Who Cares? Scotland. Margaret Anderson stated that Who Cares? Scotland is the main national organisation in supporting looked after children and care leavers, bringing access to specialist knowledge. However, Quarriers provide for wider children's rights work.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by Quarriers Scotland – Quarriers Falkirk Children's Rights in meeting Council priorities.

(j) Who Cares? Scotland – Children's Rights Service

Elaine Costello provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £27,970 of Council funding.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by Who Cares? Scotland – Children's Rights Service in meeting Council priorities.

(k) SACRO – SACRO Restorative Justice Service

Decision

The committee continued consideration of SACRO – SACRO Restorative Justice Service to a future meeting to be provided with a more detailed report.

(l) Signpost Recovery – Time 4 Us

Fiona Campbell provided an overview of the report, advising that more information had been provided as previously requested. Matthew Davies stated that the project received

£30,000 of Council funding and had secured five year funding worth almost £230,000 from the Big Lottery Fund.

The committee asked about demonstration of the agreed outcomes. Matthew Davies stated that demonstration of outcomes would be improved and that it was a challenge as the work linked in with other services. The annual audited accounts had been received. The committee requested that the accounts were submitted to a future meeting.

Decision

The committee requested that further information on the annual audited accounts of Signpost Recovery – Time 4 Us be provided to a future meeting.

(m) NHS Forth Valley – Speech and Language Therapy

Andrew Facherty provided an overview of the report, advising that the project received £515,040 of Council funding.

Members asked what funding contribution the NHS made. Andrew Facherty stated that seven Speech and Language Therapists were funded by the NHS and that they were supplemented by Council funding.

Members asked for further information on NHS funding and work allocation. Andrew Facherty stated that there were twelve Speech and Language Therapists in the area and that two solely focused on the NHS. Benefits of the existing arrangements were that the Council utilised specialist knowledge in clinical supervision, continuing professional development and team management.

Members asked what the service provided. Andrew Facherty advised that some benefits are difficult to measure. Therapists meet with children, provide guidance and advice and follow up with children.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by NHS Forth Valley – Speech and Language Therapy in meeting Council priorities.