

SE16. Following the Public Pound: Early Intervention Services to Children & Young People – 2015/16

The committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the work of external organisations in receipt of funding in whole or in part, who provide early intervention services to children and young people, and who fall within the Following the Public Pound (FPP) reporting and monitoring arrangements. Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report.

The committee discussed the commissioning of services and how organisations would adjust if they faced reductions in funding. Fiona Campbell advised that Children's Services were reviewing all services for any instances of duplication or other issues. It was highlighted that there was an outstanding remit to report to committee on the entirety of the family support service work. The Council had agreed to undertake a review of external funding as part of its budget process and this review was being progressed to identify if money was being well spent on commissioning external organisations.

(a) Aberlour Childcare Trust – Early Years Outreach

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report, advising that Aberlour Childcare Trust – Early Years Outreach received a direct grant of £276,384 in the reporting period.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Aberlour Childcare Trust – Early Years Outreach.

Councillor McCabe left the meeting during consideration of the previous item and re-joined the meeting during consideration of the following item.

(b) Aberlour Childcare Trust – Family Support Service - Langlees

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report, advising that Aberlour Childcare Trust – Family Support Service - Langlees received a direct grant of £199,695 in the reporting period.

Members asked if some of the families helped by this service would also have received assistance from the early years outreach service. Nick Balchin stated that some families would have been supported by both services and that the family support service worked to support parents to have a key role in the education of their children.

Following a question on the use of peer assisted interviews, Nick Balchin stated that this was a way of helping children articulate their feelings when they did not have the language skills to do so. A computer was used and support was provided by a staff member alongside the child's parent.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Aberlour Childcare Trust – Family Support Service - Langlees.

(c) Barnados – Education and Family Support Service

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report considering the performance of Barnados – Education and Family Support Service. He advised that a direct grant of £279,208 was received by the organisation in the reporting period.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Barnados – Education and Family Support Service.

(d) Barnado's – New Beginnings

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report considering the performance of Barnados – New Beginnings. He advised that a direct grant of £182,724 was received by the organisation in the reporting period.

The committee highlighted that the number of families assisted had halved from the previous year but funding had remained at the same level. A question was raised as to whether this could be said to reflect good value. Nick Balchin stated that the level of demand for the year was unusually low and demand was expected to increase to previous levels. Members asked if the same need did still exist and when the service was provided to 25 families did they all need support. It was stated that the benefit should be maximised.

The members also stated that more information was required on the level of support provided and what support was available for young people of high school age. Nick Balchin stated that some young people moved onto the Mariners Service if they needed continuing support. If there was a need for intensive agency support then this could be provided by Cluaran. It was stated that some young people did enter mainstream education at the end of their time at Oxfams and did not need continued support or the level of support was reduced.

The committee discussed that more information was required across all following the public pound reports to show what service was provided across the Council area. Information should also show if people's issues were being dealt with and what was the minimum level of funding required before there would be a significant detrimental impact to service provision.

Decision

The committee:-

- (i) **approved the report and acknowledged progress by Barnados – Education and Family Support Service, and**
- (ii) **requested that a report was submitted to a future meeting of the committee to provide more detail on the entirety of the service provided in relation to early intervention services to children and young people.**

(e) Home Start

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report considering the performance of Home Start. He advised that a direct grant of £29,488 was received by the organisation in the reporting period.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Home Start.

(f) NHS Forth Valley – Speech & Language Therapy

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report considering the performance of NHS Forth Valley – Speech & Language Therapy. He advised that a direct grant of £465,040 was received by the organisation in the reporting period.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by NHS Forth Valley – Speech & Language Therapy.

(g) One Parent Families Scotland – Braes Children & Family Centre

Nick Balchin provided an overview of the report considering the performance of One Parent Families Scotland – Braes Children & Family Centre. He advised that a direct grant of £120,755 was received by the organisation in the reporting period.

Decision

The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by One Parent Families Scotland – Braes Children & Family Centre.