

## **SE11. Following the Public Pound – Services to Children and Young People – 2016/17 Annual Reporting Statements**

The committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services presenting updates on each of the external organisations funded by Children's Services which provide services to children, young people, families and adults which fall within the following Public Pound reporting and monitoring arrangements.

Annual reporting statements were provided for each of the 16 organisations. These were:-

- Aberlour Early Years Outreach Service;
- Aberlour Family Support Centre – Langlees;
- Barnardo's Axis Service;
- Barnardo's Cluaran Service;
- Barnardo's Education and Family Support Resources Service;
- Barnardo's Education and Family Resources Service (Oxgang Primary School);
- Cyrenians Falkirk Criminal Justice Services;
- Home-Start Falkirk West;
- NHS Forth Valley CAMHS Clinical Psychologist for Looked After Children;
- NHS Forth Valley Speech & Language Therapy Service;
- One Parent Families Scotland Maddiston/Braes Family Centre;
- Quarriers Children's Rights Service;
- SACRO Youth Justice Service;
- Signpost Recovery Time 4 Us;
- Signpost Recovery Criminal Justice Link Nurse – Women Offenders; and
- "Who Cares?" Scotland Advocacy Service.

In order to assist the committee to scrutinise the performance of each of the organisations, the report set out the national and local policy context within which the organisations provide services for the Council together with details of the funding provided. Each report by the respective monitoring officer assessed performance in accordance with the guidance agreed by the committee on 14 September 2017 (ref SE7).

Following a question in regard to the service provided by Barnardo's Axis Service, Matthew Davies, a Service Manager from Children's Services, explained that the Axis Service was a specialist service which provides a harm reduction service to young people. He stated that, should funding be further reduced, the risk was mitigated by the multiagency partnership within which Axis operated.

In regard to monitoring arrangements for NHS Forth Valley CAMHS, Vivien Thomson, a Service Manager from Children's Services, explained that while there had not been a formal monitoring review in 2017/18, there had been ongoing informal monitoring through regular evaluation meetings.

The committee discussed the Speech and Language Therapy Service and asked whether the reduction in funding since 2014 and consequential reductions in staff (from 16.8 FTE to 14.2 FTE) would impact on teaching staff. The Head of Education stated that the impact of further reductions in funding (staffing was funded by Falkirk Council, 47% and NHS Forth Valley, 53%) was being reviewed as part of the budget setting process. This includes consideration of factors which would mitigate against any impact.

The committee then discussed the impact of reducing funding to the organisations, highlighting that the Council will be required to make hard decisions in regard to its budgets and consequently for each of the external organisations, alternative and innovative options should be looked at. Citing the Speech and Therapy Service for example, members questioned whether the proportion of funding from the NHS should increase. The Head of Education confirmed that officers were working with NHS to consider how best to deliver a service on reduced funding. In response, members stated that the option of alternative funding for each of the services provided should be considered. Further, members stated that where duplication of services offered by providers existed, these should be reviewed and alternatives should be considered, for example, withdrawing funding from one provider or promotion of joint working on a reduced budget.

Following a question in regard to the monitoring officers' reports, the Head of Policy, Technology and Improvement stated that the format of the reports had been revised so that a more thorough appraisal could be provided. While she acknowledged that the organisations deliver good services, in the economic climate, officers need to look at alternative options, alternative funding models and different models of delivery. These were included in the monitoring officers' reports and this information would enable members to understand the context within which services are currently provided and this in turn would better inform decision making when the Council's budget for 2018/19 is set in February 2018.

## **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by the external providers in meeting the Council's priorities**