

SE20. Following the Public Pound: Services To Children & Young People 2018/19 Annual Reporting Statements

The committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update regarding the work of the external organisations that received funding, provided services to children and young people, which fell within the Following the Public Pound reporting and monitoring arrangements. The reporting period was April 2018 to March 2019.

Funding was provided by Children's Services to external organisations to provide services which could not readily be provided by the Council. As part of the Following the Public Pound arrangements, reporting statements were prepared by the relevant monitoring officer for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee (External).

Organisation	2017/18	2018/19
Aberlour Early Years Outreach	£227,705	£159,060
Aberlour Family Support Centre - Langlees	£168,811	£110,937
Barnardo's	£732,285	£500,000
Home-Start Falkirk West	£28,014	£28,014
NHS Forth Valley CAMHS Clinical Psychologist for Looked After Children	£68,472	£64,904
NHS Forth Valley Speech & Language Therapy Service	£465,040	£465,040
One Parent Families Scotland Falkirk	£92,523	£82,523
Quarriers Children's Rights Service	£86,200	£86,200
Signpost Recovery Time 4 Us	£38,869	£38,869
"Who Cares?" Scotland Advocacy Service	£27,970	£27,970
TOTAL	£1,935,889	£1,563,517

The Director of Children's Services summarised the key national and local priorities on the background context to the services provided by the organisations. These were:-

- Getting It Right For Every Child
- Early Years Framework
- Strategic Outcome Local Delivery
- Integrated Children's Services Plan

- Closer To Home
- Realigning Children's Services

The convener stated that funding from the Council to each of the organisations had decreased over recent years and was likely to continue to do so. He highlighted, as an example the funding to the Early Years Outreach project which had resulted in 33 fewer children receiving support compared to the previous year.

Cathy Megarry stated that this was due to reduced staffing but stressed that it was not the case that the 33 children would not receive support. There were other means, such as Pupil Equity Funding, to support those in need. In response to a statement by the convener that as the financial gap widens the number of families in need of support increases, Ms Megarry stated that there was increasing need in the area but the service would, for example through the Closer to Home project, direct resources to those in need and have the greatest impact. For example, in regard to Family Support, the service would re-align in-house services and look at unmet needs, taking families views into accounts. Nevertheless there was concern at the continued reduction in funding.

Following a statement that the inclusion of staff numbers involved, in each of the monitoring reports, would better assist members' scrutiny of value for money, Ms Megarry stated that often there was not a direct correlation between Council funding and staff numbers. The organisations had, in the main, other sources of funding. Generally the managers worked to maintain staff levels in the face of reduced funding.

In response to a question on whether services employed trauma-informed staff and whether staff were trained in this specialisation. Ms Megarry agreed that it was important that staff were trauma-informed and agencies were aware of this specialism and at the forefront of delivering trauma-informed services.

The committee asked, In regard to the WhoCares? Scotland advocacy project, for further detail on the 400 interactions reported for the year. Ms Megarry stated that she would provide further information.

In regard to the Signpost recovery Time 4 Us project, Lesley James stated that the number given of people who directly benefit from the organisation of 30 appeared to be low and undertook to confirm the number with the organisation and to provide feedback to members.

In regard to the Quarriers Children's Rights Service, Ms James confirmed that referrals could be made by a range of agencies and could be made by the children.

Decision

The committee approved the reports and acknowledged progress by the following organisations in meeting Council priorities:-

- (1) Aberlour Early Years Outreach**
- (2) Aberlour Family Support Centre - Langlees**
- (3) Barnardo's**
- (4) Home-Start Falkirk**
- (5) NHS Forth Valley CAMHS Clinical Psychologist for Looked After Children**
- (6) NHS Forth Valley Speech & Language Therapy Service**
- (7) One Parent Families Scotland Falkirk**
- (8) Quarriers Children's Rights Service**
- (9) Signpost Recovery Time 4 Us**