

**Report To:** Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 25 September 2014

**Lead Member:** Lead Member for Social Care (Adult and Children's Services)

**Officer:** Early Intervention, Strategy & Support Service Manager

**Report Author:** Early Intervention, Strategy & Support Service Manager

**Title:** Families First

---

**1. What is the report about?**

1.1 Providers' progress to date in delivering their services, the Families First Action Plan and Outcome 4 of the BIG Plan.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

2.1 To provide information regarding the Families First projects' delivery to date in order to ensure that all commissioned projects are:

- on target to deliver the expected outcomes in line with their tender objectives;
- delivering better outcomes for service users;
- making effective and efficient use of the financial resources provided.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

3.1 That the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee provides observations on the progress to date in the delivery of the Families First Programme.

**4. Report details.**

4.1 Families First is an innovative programme that promotes the development by local authority areas of effective multi-agency systems and support, with a clear emphasis on prevention and early intervention for families, particularly those living in poverty. Families First together with Flying Start and Communities First will help deliver the Welsh Government's vision for a citizen model of accessible, seamless service delivery in the community by skilled people working together to ensure better matching of provision to individual needs.

4.2 Denbighshire County Council has administered the Programme from 2011 – 15 with a grant allocation over the last three years for Denbighshire of £1.3M per annum. The programme will run up to 2017.

4.3 Key requirements of the Programme are:

- a Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) (early assessment of a family's needs and multi-agency intervention in a timely fashion);

- a Team Around the Family (co-ordinators who complete a Joint Assessment Family Framework and coordinate a broad range of support which can be delivered in a way to suit the family); and
  - strategically commissioned services to deliver support to families
- 4.4 Contract Reviews of all commissioned services take place twice a year and the outcome of the reviews have been scrutinised by the Families First Project Board. Contracts were extended for one year (2014-15) with amendments made to some services. The Play Consortium contract was decommissioned for 2014-15. .

#### **4.5 2013-14 Activity**

- 4.5.1 During 2013-14 377 families have been referred into the Families First programme with referrals coming from a range of sources. (including Social Services, Health, Schools, commissioned services, child and adolescent mental health services)
- 4.5.2 70 have completed a Joint Assessment Family Framework through the Team Around the Family (TAF).
- 4.5.3 203 families have been provided with a commissioned service via the Families First Panel (a multi-agency panel that co-ordinates Families First referrals below the Team Around the Family threshold). .
- 4.5.4 In total approximately 35,000 individuals have accessed commissioned services during 2013/14 (however caution should be noted as there will be instances whereby individuals have accessed more than one service several times (and so they have been double counted).

#### **4.6 Revised Delivery Model 2014-15 onwards**

- 4.6.1 An evaluation of the Families First Panel process and the Team Around the Family took place at the end of the 2013-14 period in which a number of lessons were learnt. These lessons were taken into account, alongside the continuous performance requirements from Welsh Government to make make revisions to the Families First model
- 4.6.2 The new model of delivery has introduced a more targeted and coordinated approach to individual families throughout the whole programme through the Youth Support Consortium and Family Support Service (as opposed to those solely supported through Team Around the Family). In addition the new model enables the commissioners to track and monitor the difference made to all families as a whole and not the impact of individual service providers.
- 4.6.3 The implementation of the revised model includes an electronic Joint Assessment Families Framework (JAFF). In 2013-14 a module within the Capita system was procured (administered by Tim Data on behalf of Denbighshire County Council) which provides a client and performance database for the whole programme together with future opportunities to align with Flying Start and Education who also use Capita. Work is currently underway to overcome IT security matters in order to enable Youth Support and Family Support services (both of whom are external to Denbighshire County.
- 4.7 In conjunction with the work detailed above the Children and Family Service has developed a performance management framework with the

aim being to measure and monitor the impact of early intervention services on the statutory provision. The first report using this framework will be published in July.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

5.1 The Families First Programme is a key contributor to:

- The Corporate Plan: “Vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible”.
- The Big Plan: “Outcome 4 - Vulnerable Families in Denbighshire are supported to live a life free from poverty, where they can be independent and flourish”.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

6.1 In total Denbighshire’s Families First grant is £1.3M per annum. The allocation of this grant for 2014-15 is detailed within *Appendix 1*.

6.2 There will be a reduction in the grant for 2015-17 however the budget for 2015-17 is yet to be confirmed by Welsh Government

## **7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?**

7.1 The assessment has identified that none of the protective characteristics will be adversely affected by the development of this service (see Appendix 2).

## **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

8.1 Families First Project Board.

8.2 Stakeholder Event on proposed revised model of delivery and workforce development requirements (with Families First providers).  
Evaluation of the 2012 – 14 delivery model with families and stakeholders.  
Evaluation responses overview:

8.3 Children, Young People, and Families Partnership.

## **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

9.1 The Programme must be delivered within the funding available.

## **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

10.1 Programme Guidance 2014-17

All authorities across Wales are still awaiting new guidance which is being prepared by the Welsh Government. The risks to the Programme in relation to this delay has been reported back to Welsh Government.

10.2 Funding 2015-17

No information has been provided to local authorities across Wales in relation to local authority allocations for the 2015-17 period as yet. During a meeting in October 2013 with the North Wales Regional Account Manager

representing the Welsh Government, it was alluded to that there was a probability of a £2.3M reduction to the Programme across Wales for the 2015-16 period (reducing the Grant to local authorities).

10.3 Timetable Slippage

The implications of both 10.1 and 10.2 above could have a negative impact on the tendering timetable thus impacting on the delivery of a newly commissioned Programme as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

10.4 The Families First Programme across Wales

There is no indication from Welsh Government of plans for the delivery of services to vulnerable families post 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 i.e. whether the Programme will continue, or whether something else will be put in place to replace it.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Articles 6.1 and 6.3.4(b) of the Council's Constitution

**Contact Officer:**

Families First Programme Officer – Early Intervention and Support Service  
Tel: 01824 712297