

Report To: Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 7th November 2013

**Lead Member/
Officer: Deputy Leader/
Head of Business Planning and Performance**

**Report Author: Commissioning and Evaluation Officer, Partnerships and
Communities Team, Business Planning and Performance**

Title: Families First

1. What is the report about?

1.1 To evaluate and monitor the 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 a thorough analysis of the projects' delivery to date will ensure all commissioned projects are on target to deliver the expected outcomes in line with their tender objectives and ensure better outcomes for service users and effective and efficient use of the financial resources provided.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1 The Partnerships Scrutiny Committee comment on the delivery progress for the 2012-13 period together with receiving up to date information regarding programme activities during the current financial period in relation to the Families First Programme in Denbighshire.

4. Report details

4.1 Strategic Overview

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, Communities First and the Integrated Family Support Service are helping deliver the Welsh Government's vision for a citizen model of accessible, seamless service delivered in the community by skilled people working together to ensure better matching of provision to individual needs. Within Denbighshire, funding of £1.2M (2012-13) and £1.3M (2013-14) has been allocated to support Non Commissioned, and Strategically Commissioned Services as per Families First Guidance.

4.2 Families First – Project Progress

This Report summarises provider delivery and outcome information for the 2012-13 period, together with additional information regarding projects which were set up later than the April 2012 start date, together with up to date details on what has

been happening during the 2013-14 period so far. Please find attached as **Appendix 1** - Families First Programme in Denbighshire.

4.3 **Processes and procedures to capture better outcomes for service users and effective and efficient use of the financial resources**

Work continues to take place to evaluate, capture, and improve systems. Information within this section intends to inform and assure Partnerships Scrutiny of good practice and processes to ensure robust governance, performance, contract monitoring, and future commissioning.

4.3.1. **March 2013** – evaluation of the Team around the Family Referral and the Families First Panel Referral Processes. Based upon the current model, please find attached example from the 2012-13 period of the difference made to one family (**Appendix 2 – Example of Family Case Study** – this appendix is restricted from public disclosure by virtue of paragraphs 12 and 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

4.3.2. **April 2013** - formulation of a Denbighshire Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Guidance Framework (covering contract, finance and performance information and monitoring).

4.3.3. **August 2013** - all Families First Projects advised of dates for two monitoring visits to be made per annum by the Commissioning and Evaluation Officer.

4.3.4. **September 2013** – CYPSP (Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership Group) disbanded. In its place a new Denbighshire Families Operational Group (*title to be confirmed*) held its first meeting to ensure effective operational interface between key programmes such as Families First, Flying Start and Communities First including the management of interdependencies of activity within action plans and between programmes. This Group will act in a strategic role for the Families First Programme in Denbighshire.

4.3.5. **September 2013** – receipt by Welsh authorities of revised Progress Reporting Template from Welsh Government in relation to capturing performance information.

4.3.6. **By October 2013** - Monitoring Visit 1 made to all Families First Projects by Commissioning and Evaluation Officer.

4.3.7. **October 2013** - Networking Event for Families First Providers to exchange information on what they do, ideas in relation to requirements, what’s working well, what isn’t etc.

4.3.8. **November 2013** – reconvening of the Families First Project Board (whose remit is to ensure that the process secures the best use of resources to deliver positive outcomes that meet the needs of citizens, communities and service users)

4.3.9. **November/December 2013** - Further development of the JAFF (Joint Assessment Family Framework) – Wrexham and Denbighshire are working with a

firm called Capita One and are in the final stages of implementing an electronic version of the JAFF for operational use.

4.4 Good Practice in relation to delivery, progress and outcomes for Families First

4.4.1. Families First Learning Sets

Regional Learning Sets have been established across the areas of Team around the Family, Parenting, Performance and Commissioning, and Disability, provides opportunities for a forum for people to share experiences, identify commonalities and differences and to take action in their local authorities on the basis of learning from the set.

The Learning Sets:

- Identify particular activities for a broad work plan to provide a focus for Learning Set discussion, taking into account the regional working project plan.
- Identify the learning to emerge from discussions, noting how this learning can be used to the benefit of partners across all local authorities. This learning will depend upon the collection and sharing of evidence.
- Ensure that regular feedback and progress reporting can be shared among group members and appropriate action taken to inform the learning programme.

4.4.2. Sub-regional Commissioning Project

Denbighshire's involvement in this Project (Children and Family Services and Families First funding) has highlighted some key benefits which include:

- ✓ Improving the consistency of services across North Wales.
- ✓ A sub regional service should produce financial savings for each partner.
- ✓ Streamlining of referral systems can make processes more efficient for referring agencies.
- ✓ The process may result in a rise in standards and sharing of innovative practice, although there is a risk that the service falls to the lowest common denominator which needs to be managed.
- ✓ Can set minimum standards across North Wales.
- ✓ Streamlining the services for health and other regional bodies

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

- 5.1 The Families First Programme is a key contributor to 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 risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 6.1 **Timescale regarding re-commissioning** – The Programme is within the final six months of the first iteration with all contracts/service level agreements currently ceasing on 31st March 2014. The multi-agency Families First Project Board is being reconvened in early November 2013 to project manage the commissioning process

in a timely fashion and make recommendations to the Denbighshire Family Operational Group (*title to be confirmed*).

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