

Meeting of:	Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 15 July 2019
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Healthy Living and Social Care
Report Title:	Families First 2018-19 Annual Report
Purpose of Report:	To appraise Scrutiny Committee of progress and activity within the Welsh government grant allocated to support the delivery of the Families First Plan 2018/19 in the Vale of Glamorgan.
Report Owner:	Prevention and Partnership Manager
Responsible Officer:	Director of Social Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Cabinet Member, Social Care and Health. Head of Children and Young People Services. Head of ALN and Wellbeing Operational Manager, Accountancy Operational Manager, Legal Services Operational Manager, Children and Young People Services
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this report is to appraise members of the Families First programme, some of the individual project outcomes and highlight the future direction of the programme. • Welsh Government has decided that Families First is to become part of the new Children and Communities Grant (occasionally called Flexible Funding) along with six other grant streams. It is not envisaged this will have any detrimental impact on the current projects or their delivery. 	

Recommendations

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the positive work undertaken to support children, young people and families in the Vale of Glamorgan be noted.
3. That Members are updated on the merger of the Families First Grant under the new flexible funding arrangements being implemented by Welsh Government (WG) into the Children and Communities Grant (C&C Grant).

Reasons for Recommendations

1. Recommendations 1&2 – That Members are kept informed about positive progress made around the development of Families First.
2. Recommendation 3 – To support Committee's broader understanding of the new grant funding arrangements under the C&C Grant.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Families First Plan was initially developed in 2012 and focussed on a support network of provision and services aligned to a 'team around the family' approach.
- 1.2 Families First Programme Guidance was refreshed in 2017 and reaffirmed the requirement to maintain the 'team around the family' model; described as Families Achieving Change Together (FACT) in the Vale of Glamorgan and to maintain services within the criteria for a Disability Focus. It also highlighted a step change within its priorities for commissioned services moving away from a wide range of bespoke services to a clear focus on parent support services and support for young people.
- 1.3 The Families First Management Board approved the Families First Advice Line (FFAL) moving from a pilot to a standalone project and the creation of two new teams, Vale Parenting Team and Wellbeing Youth Mentoring Team, to go live from April 2018, with a formal launch in October 2018.
- 1.4 The merger of projects has brought together projects with similar aims and target groups, and allowed the Management Board an opportunity to:
 - Test the positives of closer alignment and to consider if further alignment of similar projects could be considered.
 - Reconsider how the projects are supported and managed and seeking to develop a more overarching streamlined management and administration structure.
 - Strengthen project capacity to deal with changes in funding, guidance and staff turnover making these easier to manage.
- 1.5 This report reflects activity of Families First seven distinct projects that exist under the Families First Plan during 2018-19:

- FACT – delivered by Social Services;
- FFAL – delivered by Social Services;
- Disability Focus – internally delivered and externally commissioned;
- Parenting – internally delivered Social Services;
- Youth Wellbeing – internally delivered by Education;
- Young Carers – externally commissioned;
- Central coordination – internally delivered by Education.

1.6 Welsh Government (WG) established in April 2019 the C&C Grant. This grant absorbed Families First and encompassed six other grants; Flying Start, Legacy Fund, Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People, St. David's Day Fund, Communities for Work Plus and Childcare and Play. This new integrated funding stream will remain in place for the remainder of this Assembly term and will apply to all local authorities in Wales. WG have maintained the funding levels for 2019/20 of all the individual projects / programmes as 2018/19 through the grant merger. The grant remains subject to annual confirmation and is subject to discretion and ministerial approval.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

Individual project progress during 2018-19:

- 2.1** FACT delivered via Social Services; 69 families completed a Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) (68 families in 2017/18), with 48 post JAFF closure assessments. Referrals from Children's Services (where these have not met threshold for statutory intervention or require a 'step down' service), have remained high, with many cases remaining open between 8-12 months due to complex needs. 87% of children improved their school attendance and 93% of families reported they felt able to contribute to changes in their lifestyle / behaviours.
- 2.2** FFAL delivered by Social Services. Children, young people and/or families are referred through a central formal referral system. 968 calls have been received in 2018-19, an increase of 384 on the previous year. The team offer advice and signposting and if appropriate undertake assessments. This has proved successful in reducing the overall number of referrals to FACT by 5.4% from 2017/18 and improved the appropriate nature of referrals. This has aided a decrease of 23% (122) of those needing to access the FACT project from 2017/18 (159) and is seen as a positive response to the implementation of FFAL.
- 2.3** Disability Focus – centrally coordinated by the lead Officer for Families First and consists of a series of interlinked projects all offering different services to families with disabled children and young people.
- 692 families are now registered on the Disability Index, an increase of 104 from 2017/18. The Index newsletter has become a regional Cardiff and Vale newsletter, which provides information on services and support for children

with disabilities across Cardiff and the Vale more accessible. The newsletter was also distributed to 1012 professional partners (compared to 632 in 2017/18).

- Holiday Club has provided 64 disabled children (aged 4-11 years) with access to inclusive play opportunities, with 23 new referrals in 2018/19.
- Inclusive Youth Provision Teenscheme has provided 53 disabled children (aged 12 years+) with access to inclusive play opportunities, with 14 new referrals in 2018/19.
- Inclusive Youth Provision Speak Up has provided self-advocacy for 44 learning disabled young people and supported them to complete 71 accredited training opportunities in 2018/19. Speak Up provides a platform for disabled children and young people to have a voice and assists them with accessing and being part of their local community. Four of these young people represent Speak Up on local and national forums.
- 23 disabled young people have undertaken travel training, giving them the key skills and confidence to travel in an independent capacity using public transport. Nine young people are still travelling independently six months after completion the one-to-one travel training.
- 13 young people undertook 1-1 Life Skills (16 -19 years old). The support provided disabled young people opportunities to develop skills such as personal care, cooking, budgeting etc. Nine young people achieved their set outcomes on completion of the programme.

2.4 Vale Parenting - the project supports families with children between 0-18 in order to build on strengths and make positive changes, enabling parents to feel more confident in managing; behaviour, routines and boundaries. Services promote emotional wellbeing, and support positive family relationships. The following formal and informal sessions were provided:

Nurturing	282 sessions to 62 parents
Baby's 1 st Year	228 sessions to 62 parents
STEPS	122 sessions to 17 parents
Handling Teenage Behaviour	39 sessions to 9 parents
Welcome to the World	18 sessions to 8 parents
Talk, Learn Do	7 sessions to 7 parents
Attachment	91 sessions to 19 parents

2.5 Youth Wellbeing service – delivered by Education. The service targets young people aged 8 to 19 years to support their wellbeing and engagement with school and home:

- 280 new referrals were received in 2018/19 with 135 current open cases. 155 initial assessments were completed and 63 final assessments were undertaken during 2018/19. 96% of these pupils have identified that they

have benefited from the intervention, including improved mental and emotional wellbeing.

- EMOJIS an intensive support programme, delivered to out of school time, targeting young people aged 8 to 11 who have been identified as having emotional and behavioural issues - 424 individual sessions of support were provided in 2018/19.

- 2.6** Young Carers - externally commissioned to the YMCA; provides a respite provision and bespoke 1-1 support in the home for young carers (aged 7 - 18) to help improve the Young Carers and their families' resilience. 61 Young Carers accessed the project compared with 53 in 2017/18. 11 of these received 1:1 support in the home and 15 received 1:1 support at school. An average of 32 young carers attended the youth club each quarter. 36 young carers reported an improvement in their own resilience and in family relationships, 61 carers stated they felt less isolated as a result of accessing the project and enjoyed the activities provided.
- 2.7** Central coordination delivered by Education. The Coordination Team are responsible for the strategic management of the Families First programme in the Vale of Glamorgan. They have supported 92 individual workforce development opportunities, commissioned a new Framework for workforce development and report regularly on outcomes for Welsh Government.
- 2.8** The team also delivered various events including The Networking Event in November 2018. This event launched the FFAL, Youth Wellbeing and Vale Parenting Services, with 126 education and support staff attending the event. There were 31 information stands (supported by 45 professionals) and feedback received was very positive.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** All Families First projects work to support the Five Ways of Working and the Well-being Outcomes.
- 3.2** The whole Families First programme supports the Five ways of Working. Welsh Government's Families First guidance (2017) places a strong focus on early intervention and prevention and actively promotes integration and collaboration as ways of working. Each of the local projects undertakes various methods of gathering users feedback (both service users and that of professionals) to help focus future developments. Funding is agreed on an annual basis, but the ethos is one of longer term sustainable impact on the delivery of services.
- 3.3** The proposals for the use of Families First funding are in line with the well-being objectives in the Public Services Board's draft Well-being Plan, in particular the well-being objective 'to give children the best start in life'. The proposals are also consistent with work being undertaken by the Cardiff and Vale Regional

Partnership Board to address the priorities identified by the Population Needs Assessment.

3.4 Families First projects contributes to:

- Well-being Outcome 1: An inclusive and safe Vale. Objective 1 Reducing Poverty and social exclusion: Align relevant activities associated with Families First, Flying Start, Communities First and Supporting People programmes to maximise opportunities across all programmes. (This is done through the programme management).
- Well-being Outcome 3: An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale. Secure improved outcomes for groups of learners at risk of underachievement, such as those entitled to free school meals. Increase the learning opportunities for disadvantaged individuals and vulnerable families. Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment and training. (Youth Wellbeing Team and Young Carers Project).
- Well-being Outcome 4: An Active and Healthy Vale. Objective 7: Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles. Work in partnership to deliver a comprehensive play programme that improves the wellbeing of children and their families. Objective 8: Safeguarding those who are vulnerable and promoting independent living. Implement new ways of working in light of the Social Services Well-being (Wales) Act with a particular focus on the priority work streams of:
 - Provision of information
 - Advice and assistance services
 - Eligibility / assessment of need
 - Planning and promotion of preventative services
 - Workforce
 - Performance measures

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** The Council received a grant of £1,331,364 for 2018/19 and is indicative for each year covering the financial years until 2021/22.
- 4.2** Individually contracted Families First projects are required to have their own exit strategies. All Families First projects are stringently monitored and evaluated so that opportunities to build upon and sustain the initiatives can be identified.
- 4.3** Families First is established and dependant on continued Welsh Government funding. The exit strategy will be the cessation of individual project(s) should funding reduce/cease. In the longer term it is envisaged by Welsh Government that consideration will be given to mainstreaming successful elements.

- 4.4** During 2017-18 Welsh Government highlighted its intention to merge seven existing grants (Families First, Flying Start, Promoting Positive Engagement, St David's Day fund, Childcare and Play Grant, Communities For Work Plus and Legacy) into a single Grant called the C&C Grant (occasionally referred to as Flexible Funding). Early in development this single Grant has an overall budget award of £4,532,368, each projects/programme continues to have single reporting mechanisms within a single overarching plan.

Employment

- 4.5** As revenue funding, Families First supports a range of internal and externally funded projects, all providers employ staff to deliver their project. Each project is monitored closely and staff establishments are scrutinised by the Families First Management Board to ensure any growth in staffing is matched to project demand.
- 4.6** There are no direct workforce related implications associated with this report. However, if funding is reduced by Welsh Government in future years there could be implications on staff establishments.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.7** Contracts/service level agreements are in place with providers delivering Families First projects which set out clear roles, responsibilities and outcomes for the delivery of activities.
- 4.8** The Council has to satisfy its public sector duties and obligations under the Equality Act 2010 - all projects collect protected characteristics data to help ensure services are responding to need.
- 4.9** In accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language standards, the Council also has to consider the impact upon the Welsh language of any decision that it makes. Families First projects establish the language through which users wish to access the service and where possible services are provided through the medium of Welsh.
- 4.10** Families First projects also work to reduce crime and disorder by tackling the underlying causes of family and youth deprivation; targeting young people most at risk of becoming disengaged and not in education, employment and training (NEET) and providing opportunities to stay in education and training.

5. Background Papers

None