

INTEGRATED SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE – PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

1. Reason for Report

To provide Members with a report on the result of the Review undertaken as part of the Behaviour Matters Action Plan, to identify the most appropriate future arrangements for the provision of integrated support to vulnerable children and young people and make recommendations arising from this.

2. Report Summary

2.1 The report recognises the valuable role of YPSS in the provision of services to young people experiencing difficulties in their lives. It proposes that these strengths are built on by developing preventative projects, based on Integrated Community School Cluster demonstration sites. This would see a range of staff, including some of those currently engaged by YPSS, working together in Integrated Children's Support Teams.

2.2 A bid for funding, from the Changing Children's Services Fund, equivalent to the amount previously allocated from ESF, amounting to £291k, has been submitted. If this is successful, the report recommends that the temporary contracts should become permanent, but with flexibility built in to allow the development of staff to work on a cluster basis.

2.3 The proposals will require a commitment, through the Scrutiny process, to imbed an element of Changing Children's Services within core funding.

3. Glossary of Terms

YPSS – Young Persons Support Service

ESF – European Social Fund

4. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

4.1 support the bid for additional funds, amounting to £291K, from the Changing Children's Services Fund to retain the current capacity and allow staff with more than 4 years service to be given permanent contracts, but with flexibility built in to support the development of Integrated Children's Support Teams;

4.2 agree that projects, based on Integrated Community School cluster demonstration sites, are undertaken to establish the effectiveness of a multi-disciplinary Integrated Children's Support Team, including Education, Social Work Services, Community Learning and Development, Police and Health, to support vulnerable children and young people; and

4.3 note that it is anticipated that the opportunities afforded by these proposals will be maximised by continuous review and roll-out, in conjunction with a commitment, through the Scrutiny process, to imbed an element of Changing Children's Services within core funding.

5. Corporate Plan Links and Contribution

5.1 The recommendations are consistent with the following Corporate Objectives

- *Wealthier and Fairer*
 - Ensure key services are available across the region
- *Safer and Stronger*
 - Make this an inclusive society
- *Smarter*
 - Provide all children with access to positive learning environments
 - Remove barriers to education, training and employment

5.2 The recommendations within this report are consistent with the Corporate Plan values of:

- Customer First
- Continuous Improvement
- Equality and Diversity
- Local Decision Making and Service Delivery
- Openness and Communication
- Trust and Honesty.

5.3 The report builds on the vision outlined in the draft Integrated Children's Services Plan, specifically of localised service delivery that is both integrated and focused on early intervention. The quality of the current provision is good, as evaluations suggest, but there is little evidence of any positive impact on the statistics surrounding school exclusion levels. Chief Officers, in developing the Integrated Children's Services Plan, have challenged services to question whether they are correctly structured and targeted to deliver the outcomes required.

5.4 In recognising the need to work with children and young people at the earliest stage in their difficulties, the Children's Services Chief Officers agreed that one of the five strategic priorities of the Integrated Children's Services Plan would be "Early Intervention":

"We will develop our approaches to ensure that we intervene as early as possible to prevent escalation of need" (P8).

5.5 This further challenges services to work with children and young people within the context of the universal services, Education and Health, and to make sure that additional support, if needed, is available and services best meet people's needs.

6. Resources/Value for Money Assessment

6.1 The recommended approach in this report provides an opportunity to explore the potential benefits of increased joint working across a range of staff groups based around Integrated Community School clusters within a defined locality. It offers an opportunity to improve effectiveness by increasing joint working and, as a result, enhance current standards of service provision and outcomes for children and young people.

6.2 The proposed model will result in localised service delivery through an integrated team of professionals working in partnership to deliver better outcomes for children and young people to address identified need, at the earliest opportunity. It would use a resilience-based approach and engage the whole community. This model will be used as a focus for development of local synergies with staff from services such as Education, Social Work Services, Community Learning and Development, Police and Health.

7. Risk Assessment

7.1 If Members do not agree to replace the ESF funding with Changing Children's Services Funding, this would lead to a reduction in capacity to support a very vulnerable group of young people.

7.2 YPSS was developed as part of a continuum of service provision (see **Appendix 1** Pyramid of Provision). However, a gap has developed since the Service's inception and the focus of the work has increasingly been on those young people who are most vulnerable i.e. those who are Looked After. Currently over 65% of YPSS's work is with this group of young people. Maintaining the status quo also results in risks as indicated by the continuing rise in school exclusions.

7.3 One way to assess the impact of existing provision is to review School Exclusions, a significant indicator of risk given the link between school exclusions and social exclusion. Latest figures from the Scottish Government, which relate to 2006/07, show a national upward trend in secondary exclusions, with the rate per 1,000 pupils increasing from 115 in 2005/6 to 120 in 2006/07. The equivalent figures for Dumfries and Galloway show an even larger increase, albeit from a lower base, from 71 to 91. The position of Dumfries and Galloway, compared to the Scottish Average and comparator authorities, is shown in the tables below.

Primary Exclusions for D&G, Comparators and Scotland 2004/05 – 2006/07 (Rate per 1000 pupils)

	Angus	Argyll & Bute	D & G	Highland	Moray	Scottish Borders	Scotland
2004/05	13	3	8	5	15	12	13
2005/06	14	5	7	8	12	16	15
2006/07	19	7	11	6	12	17	16

Secondary Exclusions for D&G, Comparators and Scotland 2004/05 – 2006/07 (Rate per 1000 pupils)

	Angus	Argyll & Bute	D & G	Highland	Moray	Scottish Borders	Scotland
2004/05	100	109	79	44	75	56	112
2005/06	69	119	71	42	67	55	115
2006/07	107	128	91	42	69	61	120

7.4 Within the wider context of the Behaviour Matters Review, there is an opportunity to consider whether current structures and ways of working deliver the right outcomes for young people and their families. Evidence of rising school exclusions can be taken as a clear indicator that existing structures are not having the necessary impact.

7.5 This report proposes the development of multi-disciplinary teams. Partnership working, in multi-disciplinary structures, can result in staff members becoming isolated from their professional peers, with confused professional accountability. In controlling the risks, partners must be clear about how they will work together to make a difference for children and young people. Applying the "*Getting the Best Out of Partnership Working – Staff Guide*" will help manage the risks, by bringing clarity of purpose and management accountability to the new partnership structure planned for the Integrated Children's Support Teams.

7.6 Many of the YPSS staff, who are predominantly on temporary contracts, have been employed on this basis for more than four years. Therefore, under employment law, they have accrued the right to be made permanent and those employees should be offered the clarity of a permanent contract with the Council. Any other staff would be able to compete through internal selection for the permanent jobs. This should, however, build in flexibility to allow the development of staff to work on a cluster basis. The proposals will require a commitment, through the Scrutiny process, to imbed an element of Changing Children's Services within core funding to fund the on-going cost of these staff.

8. Authorities and Legal Implications

8.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 introduced a duty on Education Authorities to seek continuous improvement in relation to all aspects of the Education Service.

8.2 The recommendations in this report are consistent with the vision of integrated service delivery and the strategic priority of Early Intervention, as outlined in the draft Integrated Children's Services Plan and the "Getting It Right for Every Child" (GIRFEC) agenda. All recent national policy guidance relating to young people promotes partnership working to improve the lives of children, young people and their families. In Dumfries and Galloway, there is a long standing commitment to working in partnership, but the experience suggests that it should not be entered into lightly as it is frequently complex and challenging.

9. Consultations

9.1 The following have been consulted and have expressed their broad agreement and support for the recommendations in this report; their detailed comments have been incorporated–

- Senior staff in Education, Social Work and Community Services
- Group Manager – Human Resources
- Acting Director of Finance
- Assistant Regional Director, Aberlour Childcare Trust
- Chief Executive, NHS, Dumfries and Galloway
- Area Manager – Wigtown

9.2 UNISON, as the lead trade union involved, has also expressed its broad agreement to the main thrust of the report. The following comment was also made, with a request that it be included in the report – ‘We agree with the officer’s recommendations that the YPSS Service continues as a core funded service and we will work with the department to review how the service is delivered in future’

10. Background

10.1 The Education and Community Services Committee on the 20 November 2007 and the Social Work Services Committee on the 6 December considered a progress report on the Young People’s Support Service. This identified a funding shortfall for 2008/09, based on the current staff establishment, due to the cessation of ESF Funding, amounting to £291K per annum. The service had been in receipt of ESF Grant since 2003. An additional allocation was made to cover the period 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2007.

10.2 The report recognised the links between this service and the Behaviour Matters Action Plan, which proposes the development of Children’s Support Teams to provide a flexible response and YPSS staff would be an integral component of such teams. It was therefore agreed by both Committees that a review be undertaken to identify the most appropriate future arrangements for the provision of integrated support to vulnerable children and young people, with the result reported back to a co-joined meeting of both committees in February 2008.

10.3 There are currently 9 YPSS staff on temporary contracts and it was also agreed at the November / December 2007 committees that these should be extended to 31 March 2008, pending the outcome of the Review.

10.4 In view of the funding shortfall, a bid for the amount previously provided through ESF, i.e. £291K per annum has been submitted to the Changing Children’s Services Fund. The success of such a bid is likely to be dependant on the service being able to demonstrate that the funds will be used to ‘Change Children’s Services’. A separate report on the Changing Children’s Services Fund allocations is included on this agenda.

10.5 The bid has been considered by a Member led Scrutiny Panel and recommendations, based on that scrutiny process, are contained in a separate report before Members today.

10.6 The current ESF funded project is focussed on 12 to 16 year old pupils. Although this age range will continue to require support under the future structure, the potential benefits of early intervention mean that, resources permitting, the proposed Integrated Children’s Support Teams should expand their activities to younger children. The opportunity to work with those children, who are at an earlier stage of need, presents opportunities to maximise the impact of resources and reduce the likelihood of escalation into more challenging and costly needs, both social and economic. This will further develop consistent support for vulnerable children and young people as they move from primary to secondary school.

10.7 A switch to this approach will need to be carefully managed and resources will continue to be needed to meet the needs of those who are already exhibiting more challenging behaviours. However, it is expected that locating services within the

clusters will have multi-layered benefits by bringing schools and support services closer together to deliver better outcomes for children and young people.

11 Key Issues - Integrated Service Provision

11.1 There are clear links between the potential development of local Integrated Children Support Teams and the Integrated Children's Services Plan, giving an early opportunity to re-engineer services. The recommendations in this report aim to support inclusion in universal provision and to target early intervention but they also acknowledge the risk of losing the existing support for this very vulnerable group and the likely impact on them and the remaining support services. Any change will need to be carefully managed.

11.2 The recommendations therefore both safeguard existing service provision and move services in the direction envisioned in the draft Integrated Children's Services Plan. This will also meet the expectations of the Scottish Government's "Getting It Right For Every Child" (GIRFEC) proposals, that places the child and young person at the centre and reminds us that our aim should be to ensure:

"That children and young people get the help they need when they need it, from services which work together around their needs."

11.3 The development of Integrated Children Support Teams across Dumfries and Galloway would be a significant change, with attendant risks. It is therefore proposed that such an approach should be adopted across a number of demonstration sites, starting in August 2008. The detail of how these teams will operate will require further consultation and negotiation, including line management arrangements. Applying the Integrated Children's Services Plan Partnership Tool will provide the framework to address these issues. The demonstration sites will also be expected to develop robust performance criteria and quality assurance mechanisms.

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APPENDICES - 1

Background Papers:

- Young People's Support Service – Social Work Services Committee - 6 December 2007

- Young People's Support Service - Progress Report – Education and Community Services Committee - 20 November 2007
- YPSS Service Evaluation Report (October 2006)
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS) -Final Offer of Funding from the Scottish ESF Objective 3 Programme - Children's Services Sub Committee -2 February 2006
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS): Review of Advice Provided to Children's Services Sub Committee -Education and Community Services Committee - 24 January 2006
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS) -Provisional Offer of Funding from the Scottish ESF Objective 3 Programme -Children's Services Sub Committee - 8 December 2005
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS) – Provisional Offer of Funding from the Scottish ESF Objective 3 Programme – Education and Community Services Committee – 29 November 2005
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS) -Children's Services Sub Committee - November 2005
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS) – Children's Services Sub Committee – September 2005
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS): Outcome of European Social Fund Bid – Children's Services Sub Committee – April 2005
- Young People's Support Service (YPSS) -Children's Services Sub Committee – September 2004

Appendix 1 – Hierarchy of Service Provision

HIERARCHY OF SERVICE PROVISION

