

Agenda Item	9.
Report No	CPB/7/22



Highland Community Planning Board – 9 September 2022

Improving Outcomes for Children and Families – Update and Next Steps

Report by: Executive Chief Officer, Health and Social Care

Recommendations:

The CPP Board is asked to:

- Agree that the additional resource provided through the whole family wellbeing fund be utilised to drive forward the proposed programme as previously agreed by the CPP Board.
- Identify and fund a project manager post to plan and implement the Lochaber programme as a pilot, prior to rolling this out across Highland.
- Establish a project and delivery team and plan to develop this partnership approach using the national principles for holistic whole family support that would report on progress to the Integrated Children's Service Board and ultimately to the CPP Board.

1. Background

- 1.1 Through the community planning partnerships integrated children's service plan 2021 - 2023 the partnership has a vision for children and young people to have the best possible start in life and enjoy being young, ensuring they are loved, confident and resilient and can achieve their potential. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is a national approach to improving outcomes for children and young people which recognises that children's individual growth and development is experienced in the context of their family and care networks, local communities, and wider societal influences.
- 1.2 This ambition means we are working as a partnership towards ensuring the wellbeing of our children and young people will flourish, where every child's rights are upheld and where children and young people grow up loved, safe and respected to realise their full potential.
- 1.3 The Promise clearly identified the need to significantly upscale family support services and identified whole family support as a priority in the Promise Plan 21-24. Children and families should be able to access preventative, needs-based support when they need it,

for as long as they need it. This embodies the ethos of the Promise by supporting families at their time of need rather than at crisis point. This will enable them to flourish and reduce the chances of family breakdown and of children entering the care system.

2. Whole Family Wellbeing Fund

2.1 The Scottish Government has responded to this direction for family support and recognises the cultural shift that will be required to achieve these ambitions. It has committed to investing a £500m Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF) over the lifetime of this Parliament. WFWF will support the whole system transformational change required to reduce the need for crisis intervention, and to shift investment towards prevention and early intervention.

2.2 The WFWF has been provided to Local Authorities to deliver but that the approach to spend should be agreed through the Community Planning Partnership.

This priority and the key principle of strengthening and supporting families to stay together whilst ensuring children feel safe and loved is reflected in the Scottish Government's Keeping The Promise Implementation Plan. This work also shares its ambition and works in harmony with the:

- Covid Recovery Strategy
- Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26, and the
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation.

2.3 It is also aligned with the Partnership's strategic approach to wellbeing across education, health, justice, transport and communities.

2.4 In the context of the Whole Family Wellbeing Funding, family support means multi-disciplinary and multi-agency support which aligns with the National Principles and is experienced as integrated by the family. The support should be available when needed for as long as it is needed, and could relate to a range of needs including mental health, substance use, parental imprisonment, domestic abuse, disability etc.

2.5 Providing holistic support that addresses the needs of children and adults in a family, at the time of need rather than at crisis point, aims to support families to flourish and reduce the chances of family breakdown and of children entering the care system. The same preventive interventions should also support adults in a family's ability to engage with other support that helps them access the labour market, pursue qualifications, or progress in employment, thereby enabling them to improve their financial situation.

3. The National Principles for Holistic Whole Family Support

3.1 Holistic whole family support will be readily available across Highland to families that need it, with the National Principles of Holistic Whole Family Support ('the National Principles') embedded into the planning, commissioning and delivery of services provided to support children and families.

3.2 These principles will be integrated into the next iteration of our Children's Services Plans

(2023 -2026). They will be used to deliver high quality, preventive, holistic whole family support through their services for children and families.

3.3 The partnership will work together to ensure that:

- the services families experience feel integrated;
- families have access to the range of services they need to help them flourish and thrive; and
- they will have the support they need, when they need it, and for as long as they need it.



3.4 **Non-stigmatising:** Support should be promoted and provided free from stigma and judgement. Services should be as normalised as accessing universal services.

3.5 **Whole Family:** Support should be rooted in GIRFEC and wrapped around the whole family. This requires relevant join up with adult services.

3.6 **Needs based:** Support should be tailored to fit around each individual family, not be driven by rigid services or structures. It should cover the spectrum of support from universal services, more tailored support for wellbeing, and intensive support (to prevent or in response to statutory interventions). Creative approaches to support should be encouraged.

- 3.7 **Assets and community based:** Support should be empowering, building on existing strengths within the family and wider community. Families should be able to 'reach in' not be 'referred to'. Support must be explicitly connected to locations that work for local families and the community, such as schools, health centres, village halls and sports centres.
- 3.8 **Timely and Sustainable:** Flexible, responsive and proportionate support should be available to families as soon as they need it, and for as long as it is required, adapting to changing needs.
- 3.9 **Promoted:** Families should have easy, well understood routes of access to support. They should feel empowered to do so and have choice about the support they access to ensure it meets their needs.
- 3.10 **Take account of families' voice:** At a strategic and individual level, children and families should be meaningfully involved in the design, delivery, evaluation and continuous improvement of services. Support should be based on trusted relationships between families and professionals working together with mutual respect to ensure targeted and developmental support.
- 3.11 **Collaborative and Seamless:** Support should be multi-agency and joined up across services, so families do not experience multiple 'referrals' or inconsistent support.
- 3.12 **Skilled and supported workforce:** Support should be informed by an understanding of attachment, trauma, inequality and poverty. Staff should be supported to take on additional responsibilities and trusted to be innovative in responding to the needs of families.
- 3.13 **Underpinned by Children's Rights:** Children's rights should be the funnel through which every decision and support service is viewed.

4. Framework for Holistic Whole Family Approaches and Family Inclusive Practice

- 4.1 There requires to be synergy between the ambition of WFWF and the 'Framework for Holistic Whole Family Approaches and Family Inclusive Practice' which asks Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs), Children's Service Planning Partnerships and other local partners to implement 'A Whole Family Approach and Family Inclusive Practice.'
- 4.2 This paper recognises that within Scotland's national alcohol and drug strategy, *Rights, Respect and Recovery*, that families are assets and key partners, with valuable knowledge and experience. Families have the right to support, in their own right, as well as the right to be involved in their loved one's treatment and support.
- 4.3 Within the paper ministers believe, " that implementation of this framework will save lives, reduce harms and transform the quality of life for families and we urge local areas to review their current provision and plans against the recommendations within this framework and initiate action.

4.4 The paper also acknowledges that supporting adults is central to this work and that partners at national and local levels across children's and adults' services need to work together to ensure whole family support is provided recognising that women in particular can face a range of barriers that can hinder them entering and sustaining attendance with treatment and recovery programmes. It states that Whole Family Approaches, specialist services and mainstream statutory providers need to ensure their service responses are designed to support women overcome the trauma and loss that they often experience when involved in child protection and lose the care of their children. In short, strong, enduring, collaborative working arrangements are needed between adult alcohol and drug services and children and families services.

5 What do we plan to do next?

5.1 On the 20th December 2021, the community planning partnership board agreed a proposal for a change and innovation programme to develop and shape the themes that emerged from the children's services workshop held in November 2021. These themes included;

- Developing family based approaches - the importance of local hub/community teams with opportunities for co-location focused on the needs of the child and family,
- a stronger approach to prevention and early intervention in pre-birth and early years,
- appropriate crisis intervention at the right time (24 hour services) and post crisis intervention support, including therapeutic supports,
- developing the workforce – retention, capacity and shared understanding to promote collaboration.

5.2 The board also agreed that through our partnership working we will develop our approach to improve outcomes for infants, children, young people by delivering joined up services at the right time within local communities. To achieve this, preventive support and services delivered by the Children Service's Partnership and other key partners will be aligned across localities. Support will be connected within local communities and strengthened by co ordination within the community planning process.

5.3 The board agreed the proposal to implement a Change and Innovation Programme in order to develop this thinking and shape the approach going forward and that the following principles guide this work:

- That it is place-based and responsive to the needs of the local community.
- That it is people led and developed from the locality up with the community voice and the voices of children and families at the centre.
- That an assets-based approach should be taken – building on local successes and capacity but identifying where gaps may exist.
- That the model should build on covid learning and resilience approaches developed.
- That measuring impact is critical to designing the new approach, being clear about

what we want to achieve; the “so what” question.

- That a tiered-intervention approach is adopted with a focus on strengthening supports through universal services.
- That it is needs led and evidence based.
- That it tackles inequalities and is trauma informed.

5.4 It had been agreed to pilot this approach in Lochaber with a view to rolling this out across Highland.

The intended aims of the whole family approach align with the already agreed Change and Innovation Programme agreed by the CPP Board in December last year. The delay in progressing this approach last year was the identification of suitable resource to enable this to go forward. The Board is therefore asked to agree that the additional resource provided through the whole family wellbeing fund be utilised to drive forward this work. Specifically, that we;

- Identify and fund a project manager post to plan and implement the Lochaber programme as a pilot, prior to rolling this out across Highland.
- Establish a project and delivery team and plan to develop a partnership approach using the national principles for holistic whole family support that would report to the Integrated Children’s Services Board and ultimately the CPP Board .

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