

## Family and Community Support Service - Update

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### Education, Children and Families Committee

21 June 2011

#### 1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with information about the services that comprise the Family and Community Support division within the Children and Families Department.

#### 2 Summary

- 2.1 The Family and Community Support division is one part of the Support for Children and Young People service within the Children and Families Department (see Appendix 1 for a diagram). The current configuration followed a review of services completed in June 2009.
- 2.2 Family and Community Support comprises the following set of six services:
- Youth Offending Service
  - Intensive Family Support Service
  - Working with Men Project
  - Family Group Decision Making Service
  - Integrated Community Support Service.
  - Support to Parents and Carers - capacity building project
- 2.3 A seventh service, Cedar, was funded to 31 March 2011 and the approach has been incorporated into the work of the Intensive Family Support Service.
- 2.4 These services, each with a distinct focus, seek to enhance and support the capacity of families in bringing up their children and young people, and to address the wellbeing indicators for children.
- 2.5 The manager of each service reports to the Service Manager, Family and Community Support, who reports to the Head of Support for Children and Young People.

- 2.6 The body of the report provides a description of each of the services and the issues related to that service.
- 2.7 In reading this report it is important to bear in mind the distinction between understanding the work of a service which seeks to address an issue, and having an overview of the issue itself. For instance, the Youth Offending Service works with many but not all of the young people who are charged by the police. In many cases where a young person is already looked after through the children's hearing system the case will not come to the Youth Offending Service. Or in relation to support for parents and carers, the important contribution made by the staff within Family and Community Support is only one element in a network of strategic effort involving different services and agencies.

### **3 Main report**

- 3.1 The principles adopted in the review of FCS services were based around the need to develop a grouping of services which:
- identify and solve problems early on, and so reduce the tariff of service required;
  - improve capacity to support parents to prevent breakdown of a child's links with family and community;
  - work to help families themselves to find solutions, as well as providing practical help;
  - strengthen support for schools and other service settings so they can sustain their work with particular children and families;
  - work with children and families taking individual and collective responsibility; and
  - develop increased mutual confidence among colleagues in different services, departments and agencies.

#### Youth Offending Service

- 3.2 The Youth Offending Service works to address the needs of young people who are offending, to help them desist and thus to help protect communities from the consequences of offending behaviour.
- 3.3 A multi-agency strategy group oversees the work of the service.
- 3.4 At March 2011 the service had 204 open cases of young people aged 8-15 years, of which it carried lead responsibility as the 'key team' in 150 cases. These figures are slightly down on the previous year (220 and 167)
- 3.5 There have been three significant developments in the work of the Youth Offending Service in the last two years:
- pre-referral screening,

- work with 16 and 17 year olds and
  - management of cases involving high risk of harm.
- 3.6 The Scottish Government is proposing a further development in Edinburgh – a “Whole System Approach” to young people who offend, including 16 and 17 year olds.
- 3.7 Multi-agency pre-referral screening involves representation from the Youth Offending Service, Education Welfare, Services For Communities, Social Work Early Intervention and the Police. Cases of offending by individual young people are brought by the police to the weekly screening group to decide on the appropriate response. In most cases responsibility for making a direct intervention is taken on by one of the agencies represented. This approach has reduced the number of referrals to the Children’s Reporter on offence grounds from 792 in 2006/7 to 357 in 2009/10. The approach is consistent with *Getting it Right for Every Child* in re-emphasising that young people should only be referred to the Reporter in cases which are both serious and require compulsion. By cutting out the process loop involving the Reporter and the preparation of advice and reports by social workers, considerable staff time is saved and connection is made with young people and their families much earlier following an offence
- 3.8 By management agreement, two posts have been seconded, at no cost to the Children and Families Department, from the Criminal Justice (Adult) Social Work service to allow the Youth Offending Service to take the lead role in work with 16 and 17 year olds who are liable to be dealt with in the adult criminal justice system. This has been recognised as an important objective for some time because of the needs of this young group of adults and the ineffectiveness of custody in addressing their offending. Almost all court and hearing reports for this age group are now undertaken by the Youth Offending Service. 143 Social Enquiry Reports were submitted by the service in the year to 31 March 2011.
- 3.9 The Youth Offending Service convenes a multi-agency risk management approach in cases where young people present a risk of significant harm to others. This is in line with national guidance “*Getting it right for children and young people who present a risk of serious harm*”. During 2010/11 46 young people (38 males and 8 females) were discussed in a total of 102 Case Conferences.
- 3.10 The Scottish Government has approached Edinburgh to develop a “Whole System Approach” to dealing with offending by young people up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and those presenting a risk of serious harm, learning from the experience of Pre-Referral Screening and from a successful trial in Aberdeen over the last year. The objective is to reduce the number of young people being dealt with in the criminal justice system and receiving custodial sentences. This would involve developing a streamlined and consistent response to young people involved in offending that works across all systems and agencies. The key policy frameworks would be brought together into a single holistic approach to dealing with young people who offend, with an emphasis on early and effective intervention. Based on experience, it is expected that improved

outcomes can be achieved as well as reduced pressure and costs across different agencies and systems. This proposal is in the early, exploratory stage of discussion with the Scottish Government.

3.11 Before 2007 the national “Youth Justice Standards” specified performance information which was nationally reported, based on the information system of the Scottish Children’s Reporters Administration. This requirement is no longer in place and SCRA have now ceased reporting according to that specification. Key outcome indicators identified for tracking in Edinburgh are:

- Number of young people entering the adult criminal justice system within 2 years of exiting Youth Offending Service. This stood at 47 for 2010/11.
- Number of young people (age 12+) referred to the Reporter on offence grounds on 5+ occasions in the previous 6 months. This is a rolling figure reported by SCRA. The figure for January 2011 was 28.

#### Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS)

3.12 The Intensive Family Support Service was established to engage with families presenting persistent antisocial behaviour and facing enforcement action such as eviction or change of tenancy arrangements. The service has developed its role to include work with families where there are welfare concerns.

3.13 An important feature of the service is its focus on the family as whole, working with and supporting parents in dealing with issues of all kinds that are impacting on the way the family able to function. While the level of intensity varies widely, staff are able to offer high levels of support when required.

3.14 The service has taken responsibility for the Cedar work with children who have experienced domestic abuse (see below). It has also collaborated with others in the recent establishment of the SNAP programme working with young boys who are displaying aggressive and anti-social behaviour.

#### Working with Men Project

3.15 This service works with men who are domestically abusive but who have not yet been convicted in court of domestic abuse. A parallel programme, the Domestic Violence Probation Programme, based in the Department of Health and Social Care, works in a similar way with men who are on probation for domestic abuse.

3.16 The service engages men in an extended programme of work to reflect on, take responsibility for, and address their behaviour. In parallel it provides support and safety planning for women partners and their children. The primary goal of the service is safety and wellbeing for children and women partners as well as for the men.

3.17 The managers of the service, with another colleague, were responsible for designing “The Caledonian” system which was accredited by the Scottish Government in 2010 as the national approach for working with men who

perpetrate domestic violence. Staff have now been trained in delivering this programme.

- 3.18 A significant role for the service is in managing risk, which can in some cases be very significant. Staff convene multi-agency risk management meetings in those cases. Working with Men staff also contribute to child protection processes in the cases they are working with.
- 3.19 With support from the Big Lottery Fund and from the Fairer Scotland Fund it has been possible to expand the staffing over recent months to 4 men's workers and two women's workers. Over the next two years this will allow a significant expansion in provision from the 35 men who currently complete the programme each year.

#### Family Group Decision Making service (FGDM)

- 3.20 The Family Group Decision Making Service brings extended families together in a structured way alongside professionals to help the family consider and decide on a response to the needs of child members of the family. In appropriate cases, it is often possible to find better solutions for a child through involving all members of the family. Often this will avoid the need to accommodate the child.
- 3.21 Before a social worker requests that a child be accommodated by the local authority they are, since October 2010, required to consider whether a Family Group Meeting would be appropriate. It has been possible to make this requirement as a result of an increase in the staffing of the Family Group Decision Making service from two to four coordinators, at senior social worker level, with an allocation of funding from the Fairer Scotland Fund.
- 3.22 In the 7 months from 1 October 2010 to 30 April 2011, 117 referral discussions took place and 82 of these have led to a full referral. Following exploratory contact with the family, 42 of these led to significant work being undertaken, leading in turn to 17 Family Group Meetings.
- 3.23 The plans agreed by families at these meetings addressed a range of issues. For example:
- In 5 cases the family plan prevented the need for the child to be accommodated.
  - In 2 cases the plan made it possible for a child to be rehabilitated home.
  - In 8 cases contact agreements were agreed. This can be significant both for the wellbeing of the child and for the stability of placement.
  - In 5 cases specific contingencies were addressed in the plan.
- 3.24 There were 25 cases which did not progress to a family meeting, but in which work was undertaken. This included provision of advice on case planning and specific mediation work to support contact arrangements and positive communications between family members and the Children and Families Department.

- 3.25 The Family Group Decision Making service is also developing a role with residential care managers and social workers to review cases where there may be a benefit in convening a family group meeting. This is still at an early stage, but there is reason to believe that through this process and involving the wider family better plans may be made for a number of children, perhaps involving a return to family care.

Integrated Community Support Service (ICSS)

- 3.26 The experience of delivering an Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS) from 2005 demonstrated the effectiveness of a model of round-the-clock support for very vulnerable and often challenging young people. ISMS was exclusively for 11-16 year old young people with the highest tariff needs who would otherwise need to be secured.
- 3.27 The ISMS model has been extended and adapted to provide for a slightly wider group of young people, including those who would otherwise be liable to placement in residential school or other high tariff and high cost residential provision. In most cases the intensive support is enough and there is no need for the use of an Movement Restriction Condition or an electronic tag.
- 3.28 The Integrated Community Support Service is “integrated” in the sense that it involves a six separate teams working with the same young people to provide a single tailored, coherent, 24/7 service to prevent young people moving further into the care system, and to help some young people to move to lower tariff provision or back home. Each team has its own particular responsibility, but staff from all teams also take on responsibility for dealing with any aspect of the service if there is a need.
- 3.29 There are two City of Edinburgh Council teams in ICSS: the Intensive Support Service and the Crisis, Assessment and Supervision Service. Other elements of the service are provided by voluntary organisations: 6VT (the Youth Café) provide NightZone which is an evening provision and a Family Café; Action for Children provide a one-to-one service to support individual young people and their families especially in the evening and at weekends; Cair Scotland provide an engaged substance misuse service. Across the range of provision, the service works with about 50 young people at any one time.
- 3.30 The service also makes provision for dealing with crises when young people and their families need respite. Staff from across the six teams in the statutory and voluntary sectors are then complemented by suitably qualified staff provided through First People Solutions, a private care staff agency.

CEDAR (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) Project

- 3.31 Cedar is a twelve week therapeutic group programme for children and young people who have lived with domestic violence. A mothers group runs concurrently with the children’s group, and there are separate groups for children in early and late primary and for teenagers.

- 3.32 Based on a successful Canadian model, the programme was an initiative of Scottish Women's Aid working with authorities in Fife and Forth Valley as well as Edinburgh. Funded by the Scottish Government from 2008 to March 2011, it was intended as a demonstration project with the goal of promoting such an approach across Scotland. It has been evaluated positively in its impact on children and young people and on relationships within the family, especially between children and their mothers. The approach has now been incorporated into the practice of the Intensive Family Support Service, with reliance on co-facilitators from other services.
- 3.33 The programme is structured to address important issues for children and young people who have lived with violence and fear in the home. The children's and young person's groups
- Allow better understand and coming to terms with experiences of domestic abuse, including recognising that they are not to blame.
  - Develop safety and problem solving skills.
  - Help children and young people to feel able to express and understand feelings.
- 3.34 The group for Mothers aims to:
- Help mothers reflect on their children's needs
  - Enable mothers to help their children
  - Prepare mothers for issues that may arise from the children's group
  - Provide a chance for the mothers to talk about their own experiences
- 3.35 For the period of the funding Cedar was staffed by two coordinators. The coordinators were then supported in the running of groups by trained co-facilitators released for the purpose from a range of different services in the NHS and Voluntary Sector as well as council services. This is an important contribution by these services to the welfare of children, and the evaluation confirmed that it offers staff a powerful developmental opportunity to gain a deeper understanding about domestic abuse.
- 3.36 Discussions have been taking place with Shakti and the Multicultural Family Base about how to make the Cedar programme available to children from minority ethnic communities.
- 3.37 The partnership with Scottish Women's Aid and the authorities in Fife and Forth Valley will continue. It is currently seeking funding to allow the provision of support to other authorities to develop Cedar in their area.
- 3.38 The service worked with 40 children in the year to 31/3/2011. This was down from 47 for the previous year. Uncertainty about staffing with the end of funding from the Government meant that it was not possible to start groups which would run on into April and May.

### Development of Support for Parents and Carers

- 3.39 There is increasing understanding of the importance of providing support for parents and carers at an early and preventative stage as well as when difficulties become serious. This has been recognised in the publication of the multi-agency parent support framework *“Supporting Edinburgh’s Parents and Carers”*,
- 3.40 The service within Family And Community Support is aimed at building capacity among existing services to provide support to parents in fulfilling their role.
- 3.41 The service was developed in parallel with the multi-agency parent support framework and is now an integrated element in the development of support for parents and carers.
- 3.42 The staff complement in Family and Community support is a single post of Coordinator: Parent and Carer Support. A second member of staff is seconded on a temporary basis to develop and deliver appropriate training for staff groups.
- 3.43 The Coordinator worked initially in the Liberton/Gilmerton area alongside the Neighbourhood Partnership and local services to develop a model of provision. This included :
- training of staff in different agencies and coordination of delivery and access to parenting programmes and other support for parents.,
  - development of accessible information for parents including the establishment of Parent Information Points in universal settings including libraries and schools,
  - one-to-one early intervention support for parents on a referred basis
  - development of pathways to support.
- 3.44 Three Neighbourhood Partnerships took advantage of Fairer Scotland Funding to build on the work in Liberton / Gilmerton and adopt a similar approach in their areas. They appointed Development Officers for this purpose.
- 3.45 The Fairer Scotland funding has been extended on a reduced basis in 2011/12 for those three neighbourhoods to allow continuation of the parent support development work. The development workers are now managed directly by the Coordinator.
- 3.46 The work in these areas will be evaluated as a contribution to refining the city-wide strategic approach to provision of support for parents and carers.
- 3.47 Staff across agencies have been trained in delivering the following parenting programmes (information from end of May 2011):



**PEEP** (a universal programme). 100 staff have been trained to deliver this programme and 45 groups running

**Mellow Parenting** - 21 Practitioners have been trained to deliver this programme. 2 groups have run and a further 3 are planned for 2011.

**Incredible years** 25 Practitioners were trained during 2010.

6 groups are running.

**Teen Triple P** 31 Practitioners have been trained to deliver this programme and 4 groups are running.

All programmes have built in Evaluations.

3.48 Through partnership with the Services for Communities Department, Parent Information Points have been established in the following Libraries:

- Portobello
- Craigmillar
- Moredun
- Oxbgangs
- Ratho
- Balerno
- Corstorphine

Planning is in progress at

- Kirkliston
- South Queensferry
- Drumbrae new build.

There are also mobile Parent Information Points in all 5 Neighbourhood Partnerships for use at different events in the community and school meetings such as parent evenings.

3.49 The multi-agency work to develop supports for parents and carers is overseen by an implementation group, and that group will be reporting to senior management groups in more detail on progress with this work in August 2011. This will permit a more comprehensive presentation of information to be presented to committee for its consideration at that time.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### **5 Equalities Impact**

5.1 An equalities screening/check/relevance assessment has taken place which indicated that this area of work scored 4 on its relevance to equalities. This was mostly a positive impact. It was noted that minority ethnic young people are

under-represented in using services. Regard was given to all areas of inequality and human rights.

## 6 Environmental Impact

6.1 There are no implications for the environment arising directly from this report.

## 7 Recommendations

7.1 Committee is asked to note the content of this report.

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Appendices	1 Structure chart
Contact/tel/Email	Donny Scott, Service Manager, 0131 469 3017, donny.scott@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	<b>National Outcome 4</b> - Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens <b>National Outcome 5</b> - Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed <b>National Outcome 8</b> - We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk <b>National Outcome 9</b> - We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
Background Papers	None

Appendix 1

