

## Family and Community Support Division - Update

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### Education, Children and Families Committee

9 October 2012

#### 1 Purpose of report

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

#### 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, working alongside the other Support for Children and Young People divisions: Children's Practice Teams, Looked After and Accommodated Children, Disability, Professional Services (Additional Support Needs), and Special Schools and Specialist Provision.
- 2.2 The current configuration of Family and Community Support followed a review of services completed in June 2009. Further development of the division is taking place in light of Departmental priorities.

#### Current Configuration

- 2.3 Family and Community Support currently comprises a number of distinct, but complementary services:
- Edinburgh Family Support Service
  - Support to Parents and Carers
  - Family Group Decision Making Service
  - Integrated Community Support Service.
  - Youth Offending Service
  - Working with Men Project (to be renamed SAFE)
- 2.4 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.

## Developments

- 2.5 Funding made available to the council through the Early Years and Early Intervention Change Fund will enable four developments in Family and Community Support services over the coming months. The framework for these developments was agreed at the Education Children and Families Committee on 21 June 2012.
- 2.5.1 The work on Support for Parent and Carers will be established consistently across the city with a development worker aligned to each of the Children's Services Management Groups.
- 2.5.2 Local neighbourhood teams will be established to engage with families at an early stage. This service will build on the practice of the Edinburgh Family Support Service.
- 2.5.3 The Family Group Decision Making Service will be expanded, enabling more families to be offered the opportunity to develop plans for their children.
- 2.5.4 A new service will be introduced, Multisystemic Therapy (MST), which has demonstrated significant success in helping parents and carers to manage the factors influencing the behaviour of their children.
- 2.6 The main body of this report provides an outline of the objectives and principles guiding the provision of service and an update on each of the services.

## 2.7 Customer Service Excellence

The Family and Community Support division was the first area of service within the Children and Families Department to be successful, following assessment in May this year, in achieving the Customer Service Excellence award.

## **3 Main Report**

### 3.1 The Strategic Objectives of the Division

- 3.2 Each service within the division has a distinct focus, with the aspiration to provide a continuum of provision, and together they share the following strategic objectives:
- 3.2.1 To maintain children and young people at home or in alternative family placements.
- 3.2.2 Where possible and appropriate, to return children and young people to their families or to alternative family placements.
- 3.2.3 To prevent children and young people within the children's hearing system from moving further into the care or justice systems.
- 3.2.4 To reduce the damage caused by alcohol and drugs to individuals, families and communities.

- 3.2.5 To protect children and young people from abuse, neglect and harm, including from domestic abuse.
- 3.2.6 To reduce youth crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 3.2.7 To provide quality services and make the best use of resources, both those in services and those of the family and community.

#### Principles guiding practice

- 3.3 Services within the division work to the following principles:
  - 3.3.1 Identify and solve problems early on, and so reduce the need for higher tariff services;
  - 3.3.2 Improve our capacity to support parents to prevent breakdown of a child's links with family and community;
  - 3.3.3 Work to help families themselves to find solutions, as well as providing practical help;
  - 3.3.4 Strengthen support for schools and other service settings so they can sustain their work with particular children and families;
  - 3.3.5 Work to help children and families to take individual and collective responsibility;
  - 3.3.6 Develop increased mutual confidence among colleagues in different services, departments and agencies.
- 3.4 These principles have proved themselves robust as guides to thinking. In particular, practitioners and managers have found themselves placing increased emphasis on **the importance of the family** as the focus of support and intervention. This involves recognising and building on their **strengths** as well as responding to need. Seeing things from the family's perspective also means trying to build **relationship**, ensuring that the system of professionals makes human sense to family members. This will often imply a main key practitioner with whom family members can develop trust and who can help them to manage their interactions with a number of other agencies.
- 3.5 The further development of the Division is now being influenced by a further principle: that we should seek, where possible, to deliver services locally, enhancing partnership with other neighbourhood colleagues.

### **The Services**

- 3.6 Edinburgh Family Support Service (EFSS)
  - 3.6.1 The Edinburgh Family Support Service provides outreach support to families where parenting is a main factor contributing to significant concerns about the welfare, development or conduct of children and young people.

- 3.6.2 An important feature of this service is its focus on the family as a whole, working with and supporting parents in dealing with issues of all kinds that are impacting on the way the family are able to function. While the level of intensity varies, staff are able to offer high levels of support when required. The service uses a systemic approach to help families manage their relationships with schools, communities and other wider systems.
- 3.6.3 From September 2011-September 2012, 50 families were referred for this core service. Of the 50 referrals received, 9 are awaiting allocation.
- 3.6.4 The service works in partnership with the Youth Offending Service to offer the SNAPiE programme (Stop Now And Plan). This is a cognitive behaviour programme offering concurrent groups of 8-12 year old boys and their parents. This programme targets primary age boys on the margins of low level offending and anti-social behaviour. During the 2 year pilot 56 referrals have been received for SNAPiE, of this 56, 12 boys and their parents have graduated from the programme and another 8 are currently participating in a programme.
- 3.6.5 Cedar (Children and Mothers Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) is now embedded into Edinburgh Family Support Service. This is a therapeutic groupwork programme for children and young people aged 4-16 who have experienced Domestic Abuse. Mothers have the opportunity to attend a women's group to support their children.
- 3.6.6 Provision of specific support to Gypsy Travellers is now part of the service provided by EFSS. The focus of the work has been to assess the needs of this community and provide supports around health, environmental factors and access to or participation in pre-school, school and further education.
- 3.6.7 The service has begun a pilot project to recruit volunteers for a new befriending programme. The purpose is to combine the enhancement of support that can be provided to families with the creation of opportunities for volunteers to gain experience in working with vulnerable people. Significant interest has been shown and 17 people have applied to take part in the pilot to date. Systems have been established in line with the Edinburgh Volunteer Centre and Council guidelines and all volunteers will be given appropriate training, including a Protection of Vulnerable Groups disclosure check and child protection training. This pilot will be evaluated to understand the potential to adopt this approach more widely within the Children and Families Department.
- 3.6.8 Building on the model and practice of the Edinburgh Family Support Service and with funding from the Early Years / Early Intervention Fund, six local neighbourhood teams will be established during this financial year. These teams will be in a position to respond quickly to identified need for a family based response.

### 3.7 Supporting Parents and Carers

3.7.1 Under the banner of *Supporting Parents and Carers* the Council has been working to increase the capacity of services and communities to engage with and provide effective support to parents and carers.

3.7.2 This commitment by the Council and its partners will be supported and reinforced by the forthcoming publication by the Scottish Government of a National Parenting Strategy.

3.7.3 Three local neighbourhood partnership areas currently benefit, through funding from the Fairer Scotland Fund, from having Development Workers whose work has included the following:

- Local coordination of parenting programmes – providing a calendar of programmes to meet the needs of the area, and helping parents access appropriate programmes.
- Auditing need and available resources in their area, and bringing services together to achieve synergy.
- Development of accessible information for parents/carers and professionals – including
  - Development of information packs.
  - assistance to the Named Person in Getting it Right for Every Child.
  - Development of Parent Information Points, both static and mobile.
  - Piloting a “local information hub”
  - Web-based information.
- Establishing the role of Development Worker as a “single point of contact” for advice and signposting.
- Training – delivery of training for staff as well as arranging appropriate training.
- Organising, in partnership with others, family events during school holidays.

3.7.4 The establishment of Children’s Services Management Groups in each of the city’s neighbourhoods, and funding from the Early Years / Early Intervention Change Fund has created the opportunity to extend the approach and provide consistency across the city, with a Development Worker post attached to each of the Children’s Services Management Groups (CSMG) . The worker will be able to support the focus of the CSMG on developing support for parents and also to lead on the implementation of local initiatives to build the confidence and capacity of staff to work with parents and carers.

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

- 3.8.1 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.
- 3.8.2 Before a social worker requests that a child be accommodated by the local authority they are required to consider whether a Family Group Meeting would be appropriate. As a further measure, the service also attends the panel which considers referrals of children for accommodation. This has led to significant pressure on the capacity of the service.
- 3.8.3 The team, previously comprising a manager and four coordinators of family group meetings, is currently being augmented by a further four coordinators. This has been made possible with funding from the Early Years / Early Intervention Change Fund. With the increased staff, it will be possible to allocate work promptly as referrals are received.
- 3.8.4 In the year to end of March 2012, 149 referrals were received and significant work was undertaken with 88 families. Family Group Meetings were held in 59 of these cases.
- 3.8.5 The increase in the capacity of the team creates several opportunities for improving the service to families.
- 3.8.6 One development will be to offer emergency family network meetings to those children who are accommodated in an emergency situation (and are often not very well known to the local authority). Such emergency family meetings could be held within days of a child becoming accommodated, with a view to holding a full Family Group Meeting further down the line. The meetings would be held with the intention of searching for family alternatives to the care system or to maintaining that child's links with the family via agreed contact arrangements. In some cases it will be valuable to research who is in that child's family - even those who have never met the child or have been out of touch for a number of years.
- 3.8.7 The service will be able to provide some increased support to kinship carers - including holding Family Group Meetings to plan support for kinship placements in a flexible and helpful way.
- 3.8.8 The service will focus on children in respite care through the Edinburgh Families Project (EFP) - with a view to preventing them moving further up the tariff of services. This approach may also be applicable to those children placed in EFP in an emergency.
- 3.8.9 It may also be possible to work more closely with the Prepare team, Family Nurse Partnership to see what impact can be achieved on the

increasing numbers of unborn babies that will enter the care system at birth.

3.8.10 While the increased capacity of the team will not permit unlimited extension of the Family Group Decision making approach, there are a number of other areas in which it has the potential to make a valuable contribution, including throughcare and aftercare for young people moving on from being looked after.

### 3.9 Integrated Community Support Service (ICSS)

3.9.1 The Integrated Community Support Service aims to maintain young people at home, either with their own families or with alternative families, and has been successful in achieving this.

3.9.2 It targets young people whose personal, social and family circumstances are such that they remain at risk of being accommodated because they:

- Have not engaged with other services or do not meet the criteria for other services; or
- Have engaged successfully with other services but require ongoing and additional supports to build upon the progress achieved.

3.9.3 Young people referred to the service have experienced a range of other services and have a number of interrelated issues seriously impairing their capacity to function within a variety of social settings and which causes distress and harm to themselves, their families, at school and in the wider community.

3.9.4 The service is currently working with 69 young people.

3.9.5 The service adopts a whole family approach to the needs and risks of young people, and parents / carers are central to the support process. Each package of support is tailored to the needs of individual families, and is delivered flexibly over a 24 hour period, including public holidays. Young people might attend an intensive day or evening care programme in addition to receiving one-to-one support throughout the week, including weekends. Structured family sessions and/or parent only support groups complement the work done with individual young people and, where necessary, overnight respite or crisis care is available to relieve pressure upon family relationships.

3.9.6 In some cases, an integrated social and education programme will be offered to young people who have become alienated from the formal education system due to chronic non attendance, school refusal, or behaviour that is damaging to other pupils. In these circumstances, the service works closely with mainstream and/or specialist education providers to establish an action plan for addressing barriers to reintegration. For older youths, the service collaborates with colleges, employers, and training providers to develop pathways into the world of work.

3.9.7 Many of the young people referred to the service are seriously affected by their own substance misuse or that of their parents. Substance misuse assessment and counselling is an integral part of the work of the service and every referral is screened by specialist workers to determine the extent of the problem within the family and to map out a plan of action most likely to reduce the level of harm identified.

3.9.8 The service has a crucial role in supporting the work of other professionals to address serious offending, anti-social behaviour and child protection concerns relating to older children. It does this by making available its core services to young people who present a significant risk of harm to self or others and who might otherwise be admitted to secure care or custody, complemented in a small number of cases by electronic monitoring of young people subject to Movement Restriction Conditions through the Children's Hearing system.

### 3.10 Youth Offending Service

3.10.1 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.

3.10.2 A multi-agency strategy group oversees the work of the service.

3.10.3 In 2011, the Scottish government announced its intention to launch the Whole Systems Approach, a suite of guidance aimed at addressing youth offending in 5 key themed areas. The driver for developments in this field are Scotland's ambition to comply with the 1991 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which recognises amongst other things that everyone under the age of 18 should be recognised as a child.

3.10.4 The 5 key themed areas are:

- Early and Effective intervention;
- Diversion from Prosecution;
- Risk assessment and management of young people;
- Alternatives to secure care and custody;
- Reintegration and transitions for young people in custody.

3.10.5 Due to previous initiatives, Edinburgh had already largely developed practice in the first four of these practice areas, although the Whole Systems Approach increased the applicable age from 8-15 year olds to 8-17 year olds, and for the first time asked Youth Offending Services nationally to work with the prison population aged 16 -17.

3.10.6 In January 2012 the Scottish Government agreed additional funding for Edinburgh to establish Whole Systems practices. This has allowed staff to develop Whole Systems in relation to Court Service support and Reintegration and Transitions work. In addition, there has been continuous development in the other themed areas.

3.10.7 As a result of the developments listed above, there has been a demographic change in the work of the Youth Offending Service over the past 3 years. There has been a gradual change to working with an older service user group, now mainly 15-17. In March 2012, the service had 202 open cases of young people aged 8-17 years, of which it carried lead responsibility as the 'key team' in 149 cases.

3.10.8 Development of Early and Effective practices has been a primary objective of the Youth Offending Service since 2008. Since introducing Edinburgh's model, Pre-Referral Screening (PRS), there have been impressive reductions in the number of young people requiring statutory requirements to address offending. PRS is a multi-agency weekly meeting to discuss children who have been offending in the previous week. In attendance are representatives from the police, Youth Offending Service, Children and Family Early Intervention; Community Safety, Education; and NHS mental health staff. There has been a steady reduction in children referred to the Children's Reporter since 2008, with annual figures reporting as follows:

2007/8	732
2008/9	432
2009/10	357
2010/11	355
2011/12	299

In the past 12 months this has been a 16% reduction in children referred to SCRA; and an overall 59% reduction since the introduction of PRS in June 2008.

3.10.9 As mentioned, there is a stronger focus of working with 16 and 17 year olds involved in offending. Historically this work has been undertaken by Criminal Justice Social Work in the Health and Social Care Department. As of 2008, the Youth Offending Service began providing court reports and undertaking the supervision of community based court orders. Over the past year this has developed further to include the provision of services to young people sentenced to custody and subject to parole conditions where the Youth Offending Service had an active involvement with the child at time of sentencing.

3.10.10 Over the past year, 147 Criminal Justice Social Work reports were written by YOS, with 51 community based orders being supervised as of 31 March 2012.

3.10.11 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 2011/12 52 were discussed in a total of 147 Risk Management Case Conferences.

### 3.11 Working with Men Project (SAFE)

3.11.1 Working With Men, to be renamed *SAFE*, provides a service across Edinburgh to increase safety for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. The service works with

- men who are domestically abusive,
- their partners,
- ex-partners and
- any children affected by the men's abusive behaviour.

3.11.2 As part of the award-winning Council policy on domestic abuse, Working with Men (WWM) also offers a service to men (and their families) who are employed by the City of Edinburgh Council, including employees who live outwith the city.

3.11.3 The service generally works with men for two years. This is the typical period for completion of the programme involving first in a series of around fourteen individual sessions and then a twenty-six week groupwork programme. Continuing support is then provided through maintenance groups.

3.11.4 The service works alongside and complements the work of the Caledonian Edinburgh programme (formerly the Domestic Violence Probation Project – DVPP) which provides a court-mandated probation service within the Department of Health and Social Care.

3.11.5 The service has a project manager, senior social worker, three men's workers and two women's workers in post, with a third women's worker due to start in October 2012. This has enabled us over the past year, in the core service to work with 47 men and 60 women and their children.

3.11.6 A significant role for the service is in managing risk, which can often be very significant. Staff convene multi-agency risk management meetings in those cases. Working with Men / SAFE staff also contribute to child protection processes in the cases they are working with.

3.11.7 Another major area of work for this service is providing training/consultancy for colleagues in Children and Families, and also for other agencies who deal with service users as victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse. The service is increasingly focused on building people's skills and confidence in engaging with domestically abusive men.

3.11.8 A number of developments are imminent in relation to:

- development of a service for Polish people
- assessment of safe contact between parent and child
- reciprocal consultancy and mentoring arrangements with a Children and Families practice team.
- Delivery of the Caring Dads programme
- The possibility of developing a service for young people using violence in relationships

- 3.11.9 The Council recently received funds from the Scottish Government's Violence Against Women fund to allow Working with Men / SAFE to develop a service for Polish men and women affected by Domestic Abuse. The second biggest ethnic group in terms of police callouts in Edinburgh, after White Scots, is Polish men. It has been hard historically for Working with Men and DVPP/Caledonian Edinburgh to engage with Polish men, primarily due to the language barrier. This is also true for C&F services in general and providing a service to this community will be strongly welcomed by colleagues in Children and Families Practice Teams.
- 3.11.10 Four members of the team have recently been trained in delivering basic safe contact assessment training to colleagues and this will be provided over the next year. By mid-November 2012 three further staff members will be qualified to provide expert risk assessments on safe contact to Family Courts, Children's Hearings or Children and Families teams. This could be a significant income stream, depending on the level of resources we are prepared to commit.
- 3.11.11 In developing best practice in child protection and working with the non-abusing parent, the service is establishing reciprocal consultancy and mentoring on a pilot basis with colleagues in the Edinburgh East Children and Families Practice Team. This will include piloting joint initial duty visits to men who have been violent and where this has been referred to the team from Social Care Direct. This approach gives a message to both men and women that is radically different from the practice of addressing concerns to the woman, requiring her to protect the children from exposure to domestic abuse. It is also likely to lead to increased levels of engagement of men, both with Working with Men / SAFE and with the East Edinburgh Practice Team.
- 3.11.12 Working with Men / SAFE will be involved in delivering the Caring Dads programme: an intervention programme for men who have abused or neglected their children, or exposed them to the abuse of their mothers. Training in delivering this programme has been arranged and paid for by the Scottish Government's Equalities Unit.
- 3.11.13 The service is exploring the potential to develop services for young people who use violence in relationships. This includes young people who are being violent to parents as well as partners and is an area that causes much concern to Children and Families Social Workers.

### 3.12 Multi Systemic Therapy

- 3.12.1 A Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) service will be introduced in the coming months, with the intention that it is operational before April 2013. This is made possible with funding from the Early Years / Early Intervention Fund.
- 3.12.2 MST is an approach to significant teenage anti-social behaviour, sustaining young people at home and in school. This has an extensive

evidence base for its effectiveness in different countries, recently including England. The approach is being increasingly deployed in the UK. In England this is being supported by the Department of Health. MST Services are already in place in Fife, Glasgow and in Northern Ireland.

3.12.3 The approach is based on the recognition that the behaviour of a young person is influenced by his or her relationship with the environment including membership of peer groups, engagement or disengagement with school and the quality of relationships in the family.

3.12.4 A key worker with a small caseload of four or five families works intensively to help the parents or carers to take charge of those key environmental factors, promoting pro-social rather than anti-social behaviour, engagement in school and with pro-social peers.

3.12.5 MST is a licensed programme with stringent systems to ensure adherence by staff members to programme principles. These principles are designed to ensure maximum flexibility in responding to the circumstances of individual families while sustaining the daily focus of parents and carers on the steps and changes that they need to take.

3.12.6 Edinburgh will establish two teams of four practitioners with a supervisor and a programme manager/supervisor. It is anticipated that the teams will be able to work with about 50 families in the first year of operation.

## **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.

7.2 Committee is asked to consider expressing congratulations to the staff and managers in the Family and Community Support division for the achievement of the Customer Service Excellence Award.

Appendices	None
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