

Report To: Health & Social Care Committee **Date:** 24 October 2019

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Partnership **Report No:**
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Subject: WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Health & Social Care Committee about new Scottish Government funding to support local authorities with the reinvigoration and extension of the Whole System Approach (WSA) to youth offending.
- 1.2 The report outlines the spending proposal of the funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Whole Systems Approach was launched in 2011 based on significant evidence that outcomes for young people involved in offending could be better served by diverting them from statutory measures, secure care and custody.
- 2.2 The Whole Systems Approach has delivered successes for young people, victims and communities. The annual numbers of offence referrals for children's hearings, young people appearing in court and being sentenced to custody have fallen markedly over the past 8-10 years.
- 2.3 Recent indicators suggest that some of the positive outcomes of WSA have started to take an adverse direction. There has been an increase in the number of referrals to the Children's Reporter however these are not being converted into hearings or compulsory supervision orders. This would suggest that more children are being drawn into formal systems when they do not actually require compulsory measures. In response to this the Justice Board and COSLA agreed that renewed local efforts should be directed at the preventative and planning stage, early and effective intervention.
- 2.4 The Scottish Government and COSLA identified new funding of £25,000 to be disbursed to each local authority for 2018-19, with a further £25,000 in 2019-20. The funding is aimed at supporting local authorities to reinvigorate the WSA to offending for young people up to 18 years of age and, wherever possible, to care-experienced young people up to 26 years of age.
- 2.5 The Scottish Government and COSLA have highlighted the success of the approach taken by Community Justice Partnerships through the introduction of Lead Officers and have suggested that this is the route local authorities should take for youth justice.
- 2.6 The Scottish Government has confirmed its commitment to making available a further

£25,000 for 2019-20 to each local authority to be paid through the local government General Revenue Grant subject to the use of the funding for 2018-19 which was made available to tackle the following priorities:

- Ensuring youth justice is reflected as a priority in Children's Service Plans, Community Justice Plans and other strategic planning arrangements.
- Ensuring a person-centred approach which improves support for children and young people and delivers better transitions.
- Should local authorities and partners conclude need, they may also allow an extension of WSA to some areas to support young people up to the age of 21 or 26 if care experienced.

The Scottish Government is aware that Inverclyde was not in position to spend the 2018/19 allocation and have confirmed that as the funding was allocated through the General Revenue Grant then local authorities may carry this forward. The Scottish Government is, however, keen that the funding is utilised to ensure that the needs of children in trouble are prioritised by all community based partnerships, encouraging coordinated strategic planning in support of targeted and preventative services which can be sustained after the funding period.

2.7 Across Scotland, local authorities have mainly deployed the funding across five key areas where they are seeking to address areas such as managing high levels of risk, and strengthening, prevention and early intervention.

2.8 Within Inverclyde, there are a small number of young people at risk of causing harm to themselves and others due to consequences of their own behaviour or the consequences of others towards them. This small group of young people are often identified as young people at risk of becoming looked after and accommodated or who are transitioning from youth custody back into the community. The Whole Systems funding would provide an opportunity to:

- Implement a structured multi-agency framework of assessment and risk management specific to vulnerable high risk young people.
- Provide training for staff.
- Provide intervention and support on a wrap-around basis when statutory agencies are not available, either via direct commissioning or developing and upskilling existing sessional staff.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the Health & Social Care Committee notes the content of this report and endorses the proposal to

1. Develop services to provide interventions to vulnerable and high-risk young people up to the age of 21 or 26 if care-experienced.

2. Develop and implement a consistent model of risk assessment and management for vulnerable high-risk young people.

Louise Long
Chief Officer
Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Low level offending is common in childhood however those involved in patterns of more serious and persistent offending are often our most vulnerable and traumatised young people, who have experienced multiple adverse childhood experiences and have had poor education experiences. Whilst different interventions and support may have been offered they have not always been successful in stemming the young person's journey through the youth justice system and into the adult criminal justice system.
- 4.2 The Whole System Approach to youth offending was introduced in 2011 based on the above knowledge and evidence that showed outcomes for young people involved in offending could be better served by diverting young people away from statutory formal measures and a recognition that contact with the youth justice system is the biggest factor in whether a young person will continue to offend.
- 4.3 The Whole Systems Approach introduced three policy strands:
- Early and Effective Intervention.
 - Diversion from prosecution (keeping young people out the criminal justice system).
 - Reintegration and transition support from secure care and custody.
- 4.4 Practitioners believe that the Whole Systems Approach facilitated improved outcomes for young people through closer multi-agency working, data sharing and a strong incorporation of welfare and wellbeing in decision-making and practice.
- 4.5 Across Scotland, local authorities have utilised the additional funding across five key areas
- Appointment of a worker to review and further develop Whole Systems. This had been the initial thinking from a service perspective in Inverclyde and was the route advised by the Scottish Government, however this has not been supported.
 - Funding a specific project, carers or sessional staff.
 - Staff training and development.
 - Extend or scope the extension of Whole Systems to 21 years or 26 years, if
 - care-experienced.
- 4.6 The utilisation of some of the above enables children's services planning and community justice planning partners to address key Whole Systems Approach priorities of:
- Ensuring youth justice is reflected as a priority in Children's Service Plans, Community Justice Plans and other strategic planning arrangements.
 - Ensuring a person-centred approach which improves support for children and young people and delivers better transitions
 - Provide the opportunity to extend the Whole Systems Approach to support young people up to the age of 21 or 26 if care-experienced
- 4.7 The evaluation of the Whole Systems Approach highlighted a reduction in detected offences, a reduction in referrals to the children's reporter and a decline in youth custody. Within Inverclyde however, we continue to face challenges with effectively managing a small number of vulnerable young people with complex needs who are at risk of harm or who present a risk to others. This group of young people is at risk of becoming involved in offending, becoming accommodated or is in a cycle of offending and youth custody.
- 4.8 The rollout of Community Justice Lead Officers across Scotland has been a successful approach to supporting the community planning partners in the reducing reoffending agenda. A reinvigorated Whole Systems Approach incorporating a revised and updated standardised risk management framework including targeted intervention to this small

group of young people which would enable the children's services planning and community justice partnership to deliver on the following areas:

- Assist partners to work together to identify when children are in trouble and to intervene in a co-ordinated way.
- Ensure systems are in place to enable partner agencies to intervene early to keep young people out of formal systems.
- Support young people who are already in formal systems – children's hearing/court.
- Ensure consistent approaches to risk assessment and management of high risk young people.
- Ensure that youth offending is rooted in GIRFEC pathways.

4.9 Work is currently underway in developing a vulnerable young person's risk management framework as outlined above. This is intended to complement the existing child protection, adult support and protection and MAPPA procedures. The additional funding will enable this framework to be effectively implemented at an increased pace and enable roll out of training to staff. Additional resource will also support specific targeted services to young people that are flexible, responsive and available at times when social work staff are not available – evenings and weekends. It is proposed that the additional funding be utilised to support this area of work.

4.10 The risk framework will be developed on a multi-disciplinary basis with potential support from outwith Inverclyde for a small cost, however it will require training for all staff across the HSCP, Education, Community and the third sector. £18k will support the training programme.

4.11 A sessional staff budget will be established to support young people at risk in the community and school. The use of sessional staff will be monitored through Child Planning meetings, however a budget of £20k for 2019/20 will be allocated.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

5.1 Financial Implications

The Scottish Government is providing £25,000 in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
Children & Families	Employee Costs	19/20	20k	N/a	Scottish Government Funding
Children & Families	Other Expenditure	19/20	18k	N/a	Whole System Approach

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
N/a					

Legal

5.2 There are no legal issues within this report

Human Resources

5.3 There are no human resources issues within this report.

Equalities

5.4 There are no equality issues within this Report.

	YES (see attached appendix)
	NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or Strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

5.5 There are repopulation issues.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None