



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Cabinet**

**28<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

### **Report of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion & Partnerships – Hayley Lervy**

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All Wards

## **Commissioning of Families First Funded Services**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To seek Member approval for the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning, (or his nominated representative) to embark on a tender process in order to secure new Families First funded services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 onwards. Also, for delegated authority to be granted to the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (or his nominated representative) to accept the most advantageous tenders and to award a contract to providers for the provision of such Families First funded services.

#### **Executive Summary:**

In 2017, a range of services were established through commissioning and partnership agreements to deliver support services for children and families as part of the Families First programme. Those agreements are now due to come to an end and cannot be further

extended. The report sets out the need for the Council to embark on a tender process for the appointment of providers of these services.

**Background:**

Families First is a Welsh Government early intervention and prevention programme aimed at improving outcomes for children, young people (0-25 years) and families.

The Council receives an annual grant from the Welsh Government in respect of this programme, which has a number of key elements:

- a. Team Around the Family
- b. Joint Assessment Family Framework (TAF Assessment)
- c. Strategic Commissioning
- d. Disability Focus

In 2017, a range of services were established to deliver support services for children, young people and families. Contracts were initially issued for two years, from April 2018 – March 2020 and have subsequently been extended to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

Services are delivered through both internal and external providers, with external providers being identified through a procurement exercise in 2017/18. These are shown below (contract values 2022/23):

Team Around the Family	NPTC – Social Services	£622,588
Parenting	NPTC – Think Family Partnership	£330,000
Youth Services	NPTC – Youth Service	£354,240
Children's Community	NPTC – Think Family Partnership	£37,000
Coping with Loss	Barnardos	£58,920
Emotional & Mental Health	Barnardos	£192,660
Domestic Abuse	Thrive Women's Aid	£98,200

Children with Disabilities - Support for Parents & Families Affected by Disability	Resolven Building Blocks	£83,470
Children with Disabilities – Support for Children & Young People	Interplay/Resolven Building Blocks	£79,830
Disability Co-ordinator	NPTC – Inclusion Service	£32,750
Home Support	Hafan Cymru	£39,820

In order to ensure continuity of early intervention services it is necessary for a recommissioning exercise to be undertaken to secure contractors for externally delivered services, to commence service delivery in April 2023.

User figures from 2018-2022 demonstrate the high demand for the services and evidence the need from children and families. Changing the type of service available may create a gap in provision that the programme is currently filling. Therefore, it is proposed that the services to be commissioned retain the same focus of work as the current programme.

<b>Service</b>	<b>18/19</b>	<b>19/20</b>	<b>20/21</b>	<b>21/22</b>
Coping with Loss	65	28	56	50
Disability – Support for Children & Young People	124	64	25	56
Disability – Support for Families	102	111	71	140
Domestic Abuse	186	160	69	63
Emotional and Mental Wellbeing	143	216	180	184
Home Support	38	39	26	48

The existing Families First funded services are delivered by both internal and external providers, including public, private and third sectors. It is anticipated that a similar mix of submissions will be received for those services put out for competitive tender.

Service specifications are being reviewed to ensure that these remain fit for purpose and that they align with other services and support provided by the Council.

It is proposed that services currently delivered internally remain as such and a separate report will be presented to Members to confirm the outcome of the commissioning exercise and to provide details of the internal services following a review of the service specifications.

### **Proposals**

It is proposed that seven Lots be commissioned reflecting the themes and contract value of the current programme, and that contracts are awarded for a two year period with the option to extend for a further two years, on an annual basis.

Coping with Loss	£58,920
Domestic Abuse	£98,200
Emotional Health & Wellbeing	£127,660
Home Support	£39,820
Maintaining Healthy Relationships*	£65,000
Support for Children & Young People with a Disability/Additional Learning Need	£79,830
Support for Families Affected by Disability	£83,470

\*the service was incorporated into the contract for the Emotional & Mental Wellbeing contract for 2022-23, however, it is recommended that this is commissioned as a separate service going forward.

It is proposed that the commissioning exercise begin in early August 2022 for evaluations of submissions to take place in the Autumn.

### **Financial Impacts:**

Families First is one of seven grants included in Welsh Government's Children & Communities Grant (CCG) and indicative CCG allocations have been given by WG to 2024-25. The Council has flexibility on

how the grant is distributed across the seven programmes, however, the proposals outlined in the report are based on the Families First allocations being of a similar level to 2022-23. Clauses however will be incorporated into the tender documents and any contractors or service levels agreements to ensure that where funding levels are decreased by the Welsh Government, the contract value can be reduced if deemed necessary.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below.

*The programme is available across Neath Port Talbot and aims to be inclusive to all children and young people who require the support of the services available.*

*Based on the above assessment, a full impact assessment is not required as the programme has low or no impact on most factors. In the few cases where impact has been identified this is positive, providing access to early intervention services for children and families, and supporting their wellbeing.*

*Consultation and engagement with children, young people, parents, and stakeholders will be undertaken around the services and criteria proposed. These are in line with the current programme delivery and monitoring information demonstrates that services meet the needs of local families with high participation numbers across the programme.*

### **Valleys Communities Impacts:**

The Families First programme is delivered across Neath Port Talbot, supporting families from all Wards. Service specifications require

services to be made available to users at a location that is accessible, appropriate and suitable for the intended purpose, and community venues local to service users should be used to ensure that transport is not a barrier to engagement.

**Workforce Impacts:**

No implications

**Legal Impacts:**

The Council is a contracting authority for the purposes of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (the “Regulations”) which govern the procurement of services. Based on the value of the contract set out above, the contract is likely to exceed the threshold level for Service contracts under the Regulations which is £213,477 (inclusive of VAT). Therefore the Council will at all times have to comply with the Regulations and will additionally have to comply with its own Contract Procedure Rules when procuring the service.

The relationship between the Council and the successful tenderer will be governed by a contract which will set out the terms and conditions applicable to the delivery of the service.

In addition, the Council has entered into a grant agreement with the Welsh Government which requires the Council to achieve best value for any expenditure that it incurs in fulfilling the requirements of the Welsh Government Families First Programme. Embarking on a competitive tender exercise will ensure that the Council meets these requirements.

**Risk Management Impacts:**

In the event that the Council did not embark on a commissioning activity for the Families First programme for some services, the Council could be found to be in breach of the Welsh Government grant agreement exposing the Council to claw back of such funding. The Council therefore must embark on a tender exercise to meet compliance with the requirements of the grant funding.

## **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:**

The Families First programme includes a domestic abuse service, providing support to children and parents who have experienced domestic abuse. Through continuing to include a domestic abuse service within the programme the Council will ensure continuity of support, helping to mitigate the effects of violence and abuse on those affected.

## **Consultation:**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

## **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Members give approval to:

1. Embark on a commissioning exercise for the appointment of providers for the following services and values:
  - Coping with Loss
  - Domestic Abuse
  - Emotional Health & Wellbeing
  - Home Support
  - Maintaining Healthy Relationships
  - Support for Children & Young People with a Disability/Additional Learning Need
  - Support for Families Affected by Disability
2. The Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (or his nominated representative) be granted delegated authority to agree the final specifications for services that are required to meet the requirements of the Welsh Government Families First Programme Guidance;
3. The Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (or his nominated representative) be granted delegated authority to accept the most advantageous tenders identified as part of the

tendering programme identified in Recommendation 1, following a quality/cost evaluation of all tenders.

4. The Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (or his nominated representative be granted delegated authority to enter into a contract and any other associated documentation with providers to fulfil the requirements of the Welsh Government Families First Programme Guidance; and
5. The Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning (or his nominated representative) be designated to be the Representative of this Council for the purposes of the proposed Contract and to carry out on behalf of the Council all the delegated powers of such a Representative.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To ensure that commissioning activities can be undertaken to secure appropriate support services are in place for children, young people and families in the Neath Port Talbot area.

**Implementation of Decision:**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period

**List of Background Papers:**

First Stage Impact Assessment

Welsh Government Families First Programme Guidance, April 2017

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