
To: Paisley South Local Area Committee

On: 17th November 2015

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Families First Approach – Establishing a Families First Core Team Foxbar

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides information on the progress in establishing a Families First Core Team in the Foxbar locality.
- 1.2. The Council meeting on 25th June 2015 approved proposals for deploying significant investment in response to the recommendations contained in the Tackling Poverty Commission report.
- 1.3. Council agreed to allocate £1 million from the tackling poverty fund to extend the successful and innovative Families First Core Team approach into three new localities. Foxbar is one of the new localities with Johnstone and Gallowhill being the other two areas.
- 1.4. The Families First approach is embedded in the Early Years Strategy and ensures that families with children aged 0-8 in these areas will be supported to give children the best start in life through the provision of a local, family-centred service.
- 1.5. The Families First Core Team model has been delivering in the Linwood and Ferguslie areas since November 2013. A recent evaluation by Glasgow University found that the Families First approach including the effectiveness of the Core Team as 'overwhelmingly positive'.
- 1.6. Work is being taken forward to recruit staff to Core Team and it is expected the new service will start in Foxbar early in 2016. In addition a community engagement process has commenced to ensure that the priorities for the Families First Core Team will be identified by local parents and children.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that the Local Area Committee notes:

- [a] the decision of Council to allocate £1 Million to extend the provision of the Families First Model to Gallowhill, Johnstone and Foxbar;
- [b] that the recruitment process has commenced and the Families First Core Team service is expected to commence in Foxbar early in 2016; and
- [c] a process of engaging the local community has commenced to ensure that the Families First priorities are identified by local parents and children.

3. Background

3.1. Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership is committed to ensuring that all children and young people in Renfrewshire are given the best start in life. The Early Years Strategy was approved by the council's education policy board on 7 March 2013. This strategy commits the partnership to a family centred approach to improving outcomes for children and families.

3.2. The strategy consists of 3 approaches:

- 1) a family-centred approach within the locality;
- 2) a family-centred outreach approach;
- 3) support for families with older children.

3.3. Following extensive consultation an implementation plan was developed prior to full implementation in the autumn of 2013. An early years steering board was established in order to provide clear governance and accountability for the implementation of the strategy. This board reports to the Children and Young People Thematic Board and draws its membership from across the community planning partnership.

3.4. Although the early years strategy is at an early stage of implementation current progress is already demonstrating indications of a positive impact on children and families in Renfrewshire. In order to determine the impact and effectiveness in achieving agreed outcomes an evaluation plan is in place. This comprises two strands:

- I. an outcome focussed self evaluation framework involving ongoing monitoring of the implementation plan by the evaluation team and
- II. an external evaluation.

3.5. The family-centred approach within the locality includes the development of a 'core team model' after a period of consultation with families in each locality and partners across the Community Planning Partnership.

3.6. The Families First core teams were established in Linwood and Ferguslie localities in November 2013.

- 3.7. The external evaluation of the family centred approach in Linwood and Ferguslie by Glasgow University has now been completed and a summary of the final report is attached as an appendix to this report. The key findings of the evaluation report are "overwhelmingly positive". The report highlights a number of key strengths of the approach. These are that, to better meet the needs of families, services should be:
- Faster in response and more able to devote time to building up and maintaining relationships with families. Initial presenting issues may just be one of many that families face and it takes time to understand parents and children's, often complex, situations
 - Willing to model appropriate behaviour for families rather than merely 'instructing them what to do'
 - Building relationships with families based on mutual respect and relating to them on their terms
 - Prepared to 'go the extra mile'. Services which are able to operate in a flexible manner and go beyond families expectations of what is required are held in high esteem by the community
 - Reducing the number of agencies families have to deal with at times of crisis. Having a one-stop service with an emphasis on building strong professional client relationship helps maintain parental confidence at times in their lives when self-belief and self-esteem is often low. At such times families are often ill prepared to cope with the demands imposed on them by any number of professional agencies.
- 3.8. One of the recommendations of Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Commission was to extend the successful Families First core team model.
- 3.9. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) has been the defining foundation for identifying those potential additional localities within Renfrewshire which would benefit most from Families First input. The SIMD identifies a number of areas of deprivation and the specific issues and challenges that these areas face in relation to health, income, education, employment, access to services and crime incidence. The areas of Gallowhill, Foxbar and Johnstone were subsequently identified for the extension of the core team model.
- 3.10. The recruitment process for the Families First Core Teams to allow the establishment of the service in the new areas including Foxbar is being progressed. It is expected that the new team members will be in post by January 2016 allowing the service to commence around this time.
- 3.11. A consultation of families and community groups in each of the localities took place between September and October to identify the views and needs of each of the communities. The results of the Foxbar consultation will determine the scope and nature of the service to be provided.
- 3.12. The exact location of the base office of the team is currently being identified but is expected to be located within Heriot Primary School. The team will make use of other facilities in Foxbar to deliver universal services such as group and drop in sessions. The teams will make strong links with all schools, pre-5 centres and other partner agencies in the area such as Health Visitors.

Implications of this report

1. Financial Implications

The costs of the extension of the Families First Model is contained in the allocation of £1 Million from the Tackling Poverty Commission fund.

2. HR and Organisational Development Implications

None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life

Community Care, Health and Well-being

- Closer and stronger links are developing across all CPP partners.

Empowering our Communities

- Families will become more resilient and empowered to make positive choices.

4. Legal Implications

None.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

(a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety Implications

None.

9. Procurement Implications

None.

10. Risk Implications

None.

11. Privacy Impact

None.

List of Background Papers

- (a) Giving our Children the Best Start in Life: Renfrewshire's Strategy for the Early Years
- (b) Glasgow University Evaluation of Families First
- (c) Action Plan to Tackle Poverty

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is John Trainer, Acting Head of Early Learning and Inclusion, 0141 618 6860, john.trainer@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk.

Children's Services

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09/10/15

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