



CABINET - 13TH APRIL 2016

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTENSIVE THERAPEUTIC FOSTERING SERVICE FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN CAERPHILLY

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

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- 1.1 The attached report was considered by the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 22nd March 2016. The report sets out a proposal to develop a multi-disciplinary intensive therapeutic fostering service for Looked After Children and young people in Caerphilly.
 - 1.2 Members were advised that Looked After Children and young people with the most complex needs tend to experience multiple foster care placement breakdowns. Their risk taking behaviours and significant emotional needs often exceed the resources of Local Authority Foster Carers and due to the frequent placement moves, their needs are often unable to be addressed by core Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Consequently, many of these most troubled young people are placed in residential care out of area, with poor clinical outcomes and at great expense.
 - 1.3 It was explained that the Council's 'standard practice' approach is not sustainable and a different approach is needed to better meet the needs of this troubled group of Looked After Children and young people.
 - 1.4 Members were advised of the therapeutic fostering services called MIST (Multi-disciplinary Intervention Service Torfaen) which has been commissioned by Torfaen County Borough Council and has been running for 12 years. MIST provides intensive support to a small number of specially recruited and trained therapeutic foster carers to repatriate young people placed in out of area residential care and to prevent young people who may be at risk of residential care from moving out of area. It is proposed that a MIST type service is developed to meet the needs of Caerphilly children and young people.
 - 1.5 Reference was made to the financial implications and it was proposed that Directorate budget reserves be utilised to fund the establishment of this service, the aim being for the service to cover its own costs within 18 months of being established. Over time it is anticipated that savings will grow as increasing numbers of young people are supported to remain in Caerphilly.
 - 1.6 Whilst budget reserves will be used to fund the establishment of the service and it is anticipated that the service will cover its cost within 18 months of being established, Members sought assurances that this will be the case going forward. They requested that a further recommendation be included to allow a report on the provision to be brought back to the Committee following the 18 month period.
 - 1.7 Subject to the forgoing, and having considered the report, the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet that:-

- (i) the content of the report be noted;
- (ii) the proposed service development as detailed in the report be approved;
- (iii) the proposal to utilise Directorate budget reserves to establish the service be supported;
- (iv) a further report on the provision be presented to the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 18 months following its establishment.

1.8 Members are asked to consider the recommendations.

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Appendix 1 The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Report dated 22nd March 2016.