

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to the Cabinet

Date of meeting: January 22nd, 2019
Cabinet member: Councillor Dilwyn Morgan
Contact officer: Marian Parry Hughes
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Subject: Application for Service Transformation Resource (Children and Family Support Department)

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. Cabinet approval is requested to assign £34,382 from the Council Plan Fund to Finance a transformation officer post for a period of one year in the Children and Family Support Department to undertake a specific intervention in order to ensure that the Service is operating in the most efficient way possible.

2. REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

- 2.1. It is expected that departments function in a way that ensures that there are no unnecessary arrangements within their services, and that procedures and essential tasks are being implemented in the most efficient way.
- 2.2. The Children and Family Support Department are of the view that a full scale and detailed review of all responsibilities and associated tasks across the service is needed in order to provide assurance that the service is being run and managed effectively and efficiently.
- 2.3. We are in a difficult and challenging period in relation to the increase in demand on services and the associated financial burdens inevitably attached to this.
- 2.4. Within this context, and in accordance with a request by the Leadership Team, the Head of Service discussed with members on October 16th, 2018, the ideas for moving towards improved efficiency within the service.
- 2.5. Historically, there has been a perception that the service is not making the most of the opportunities to realise efficiencies, and in light of the discussion with members in October, the service considered what was discussed and as a result a report was presented to the Leadership team on December 4th, 2018 requesting consideration of a specific resource to lead the service through a transformation project.
- 2.6. The aim of the work will be to provide assurance that the service in its' entirety is working in the most efficient way possible for the benefit of the people of Gwynedd and to ensure that any changes needed are implemented.

3. INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION BEHIND THE DECISION

- 3.1. The Children and Family Support Service was subject to a full inspection by Care Inspectorate Wales in May 2018. Positive feedback was received as a result of this

inspection which noted that the services for children and their families in Gwynedd had 'significant strengths'.

- 3.2. The Inspectorate confirmed that safeguarding practice within the Service was given priority and that there were robust processes in place which complied with statutory responsibilities, and that outcomes for children were good. The conclusion of the inspection therefore provides a good foundation for future development, and provides evidence that the service is effective.
- 3.3. No improvement notices were identified by the Inspectorate, but there were some areas that needed strengthening, and as a result the service has formulated an ambition programme that concentrates on these areas. Undertaking this review will be a key step in the ability to transform some elements of the service.
- 3.4. There are examples within the service where specific teams are working to transform their arrangements and processes in the context of Ffordd Gwynedd principles, but these interventions on their own do not evidence that the service as a whole is making the most of every opportunity to ensure efficiency.
- 3.5. In order to undertake a full and detailed review, the service is of the view that a specific resource by way of a transformation officer is essential in order to work with the Senior Management Team and the operational statutory teams (Social Services threshold), from the front door to those areas where needs are complex and intensive.
- 3.6. It is foreseen that the resource would be needed on a three day a week basis for a period of six to nine months to undertake the review, and then at least three to six months to support any changes and recommendations that will need to be implemented.
- 3.7. There will be an expectation that the transformation officer will work closely with managers and front line staff within each team and will also be able to draw from expertise from other areas when the need arises. The Senior Management Team will lead and provide governance for the work by operating as a Project Board, and the officer will have access to time and expertise from Senior Managers to undertake the work.
- 3.8. A key part of the work is to challenge and change culture and to continually reinforce the Ffordd Gwynedd ethos through providing support, challenge and help to remove any obstacles, and to ensure that the foundations are in place to meet the needs of the service and increase efficiency across the service area.
- 3.9. Identifying opportunities to work across the Council and with partners is a critical part of the work, and this corresponds with the wider vision for the future, for example in the development of the Family Support Strategy and the Effective Child Protection project work.

4. NEXT STEPS AND TIMESCALES

- 4.1. Should the Cabinet approve the application, a financial resource on for three days a week for twelve months is requested at the sum of £34,382.
- 4.2. If approved, an officer will be appointed to the post on a temporary or secondment basis from the beginning of March 2019.

5. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

No consultation was undertaken

5.1. Statutory officers' views:

i. **Monitoring Officer:** No comments in relation to propriety

ii. **Head of Finance:** There will be several deserving applications competing for scarce resources from the Council's Business Plan Fund to transform Services. It is a matter for Cabinet members to prioritise the applications that will make a difference when allocating resources from the Fund. I confirm that there is sufficient provision to finance the plans that have been presented to Cabinet, and that there is further money available from the reserve for some projects that will come to future Cabinet meetings for approval.

Appendices