ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL							
Report to:	The Executive						
Date:	25 th July 2016						
Subject:	Proposal to fund a Resilient Families Team (Edge of Care)						
Portfolio Holder(s):	CIIr Aled Morris Jones						
Head of Service:	Anwen Huws, Head of Children's Services						
Report Author:	Laura Mowbray						
Tel:	01248 752715						
E-mail:	ljmed@ynysmon.gov.uk						
Local Members:	N/A						

A –Recommendation/s and reason/s

R1 – That the Executive approves releasing funding from the Council's general reserve for 16/17 to fund the costs of the Edge of Care Team

R2 - That the Executive approves funding for the subsequent two years to be included in the service budget for both years.

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places a clear duty on the Local Authority to provide a preventative approach to the delivery of wellbeing. The need to reduce the LAC population in Wales is a Welsh Government priority – they have set the expectations that the Local Authorities reduce the numbers of Looked after Children and the rate at which they become looked after. This is within the context where in both Wales and North Wales we have seen an increase in the rates of Looked after children and the rates at which children become looked after.

Isle of Anglesey County Council has seen a significant increase in demand for its Children's service which has led to the need to invest £1m over two years. We have seen a 43% increase in Looked After Children over the last 24 months (35% in the last 12 months), and these numbers are continuing to rise.

We are spending a significant proportion of the budget, on a growing number of children, whilst not necessarily achieving the best outcomes. The current system provides neither value for money or the best outcomes for children – all too often the outcomes do not justify the costs. We need to find innovative ways to improve and re-design service delivery to achieve higher quality, improved outcomes and better value for money. We want to develop a different approach.

The Local Authority has seen an increase in its LAC population and associated costs. However historically the number of looked after children in Anglesey was lower than the Welsh average. General demographic information is not available for 2015/16 at this point. Any strategy to reduce the overall number of Looked after Children in Anglesey must be considered in this context – of a low baseline and the need to reduce numbers in a safe way. In order to do so we need to invest in services that support family resilience and help parents achieve sustained change in their parenting capacity. Establish a *Resilient Families Team* (practical and therapeutic) to develop more effective approaches to supporting children in or on the edge of care is one element of this different approach. Investment will be targeted, in particular, to provide intensive and rapid support when the family breaks down, with the aim of keeping the family together. The aim of the service is to

- 1) Work intensively with families to keep their children out of care, to prevent becoming looked after = Reduce the number of children becoming looked after by the authority
- 2) Work intensively with families for reunification within 8 weeks of becoming cared for = Considerably reduce the average duration of being looked after
- 3) Work with identified families for the reunification of their children whom are currently in long term care. i.e. Support the plans when care orders are revoked during LAC reviews as a 'step-down'. = A focus on getting children safely out of the care system.

Being able to focus on supporting families to change to become a safe place for children, and to stop escalating into the care system, and supporting those in the care system back out will see benefits across the service and for the children. This is the context of other innovation and improvements in the delivery of services to children and their families, places the Local Authority in a better position to intervene in cases to support resilience and independence, to promote inclusion and sustainability.

B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?

Option 1 – Do nothing

Without investment in a Resilient Families Team it will be challenging to address the ongoing rise in the numbers of Children becoming Looked After on Anglesey. This will lead to increased costs for looked after children: whilst not necessarily achieving the best outcomes.

Option 2 – Invest

The project has the potential to ensure better outcomes for children and their families, and to make cost avoidances and eventual savings to the authority in reduced placement and court costs, and the associated reductions in staff turnover and sickness levels. Further details on the financial benefits can be found in the attached proposal.

Outcomes for Practitioners –able to spend more time working with children, young people and families: improved recruitment and retention: reduced staff absences.

Practice Outcomes –increased support to families via evidenced based intervention with families leading to:

Reduced numbers of children requiring a multi-agency child protection plan Reduced numbers of children being looked after by the local authority Increased numbers of children remaining at home with their families Reduced period a case remains in PLO Reduced number of LAC Reduced average time spend in care

Investment Required -

16/17 - £100k

17/18 - £241k (at 2016/17 prices)

18/19 - £241k (at 2016/17 prices)

By 19/20 we would expect the service to be financed from savings made on the costs of placements, with any other savings contributing to the Local Authority's Mid Term Financial Strategy

C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?

This requires authorising the release of funds from the Council's General Reserves in accordance with the resolution passed by the Full Council at its meeting on 10 March 2016. Agenda Item 5 – Resolution 1(dd) and 1(e)

D – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?

The required decision does not conflict with any policy that forms part of the remit of the full Council.

DD – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?

The Council resolved to allow the Executive the power to release up to £500k from general balances to deal with priorities arising during the year – Meeting 10 March 2016, Item 5 Resolution 1 (dd).

E –	Who did you consult?	What did they say?
1	Chief Executive / Strategic	This proposal was considered by the Senior
	Leadership Team (SLT)	Leadership Team on the 31 May 2016, as a
	(mandatory)	Invest to Save Bid in the first instance. The
		SLT acknowledge that establishing an Edge
		of care Team is essential in order to reduce

		the numbers of children who are looked after. The SLT recommended that the bid be presented to the Executive as a service improvement bid as recommended that it should in the first instance be funded from the reserves.
2	Finance / Section 151 (mandatory)	Has contributed to the report
3	Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory)	No Observations
5	Human Resources (HR)	
6	Property	
7	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	
8	Scrutiny	
9	Local Members	
10	Any external bodies / other/s	

F –	F – Risks and any mitigation (if relevant)							
1	Economic							
2	Anti-poverty							
3	Crime and Disorder							
4	Environmental							
5	Equalities							
6	Outcome Agreements							
7	Other							

FF - Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposal

Appendix 2a – Return on investment with ambitious avoidance and removal rates Appendix 2b – Return on investment with the numbers of children/families supported halved for each year.

G - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):

APPENDIX 1.

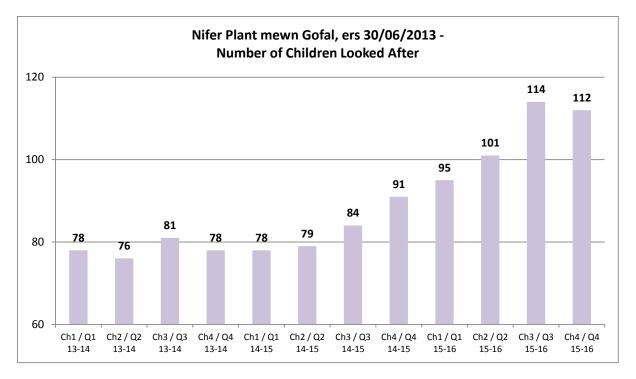
Service Improvement Bid

Programme or Project:	Children's Services	Expected Start Date	July 2016 (approval phase: leading to set up and implementation phase)						
			A detailed project plan would be established following approval						
Title:	Resilient Families Team (Edge of Care)	Expected End Date	Project duration three years from operational. Circa. October 2019. Embedded in business as usual from November 2019.						
Lead (HoS/Manager):	Llyr Bryn Roberts, Service Manager - Corporate Parenting	Links to Corporate Plan	Medium Term Financial Plan Becoming Customer, Citizen and Community Focused						
Main Contact:	Laura James-Mowbray, Transformation Programme Manager, Children's Services LauraMowbray@ynysmon.gov.uk #2715								

1. Introduction

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 places a clear duty on the Local Authority to provide a preventative approach to the delivery of wellbeing. The need to reduce the LAC population in Wales is a Welsh Government priority – they have set the expectations that the Local Authorities reduce the numbers of Looked after Children and the rate at which they become looked after.

This is within the context where in both Wales and North Wales we have seen an increase in the rates of Looked after children and the rates at which children become looked after. Isle of Anglesey County Council has seen a significant increase in demand for its Children's service which has led to the need to invest £1m over two years. We have seen a 43% increase in Looked After Children over the last 24 months (35% in the last 12 months), and these numbers are continuing to rise.



NOTE: Increased to 117 Looked after children in April 2016

We are spending a significant proportion of the budget, on a growing number of children, whilst not necessarily achieving the best outcomes. The current system provides neither value for money or the best outcomes for children – all too often the outcomes do not justify the costs. We need to find innovative ways to improve and re-design service delivery to achieve higher quality, improved outcomes and better value for money. We want to develop a different approach, and at the heart of this will be:-

1. Social workers working proactively with families to manage risk – spending much more time working alongside families, helping them to change so that the family is a safe environment for their children. Intervention methods that work with families must be developed in order to identify outcomes and to remove obstacles to achieving those outcomes.

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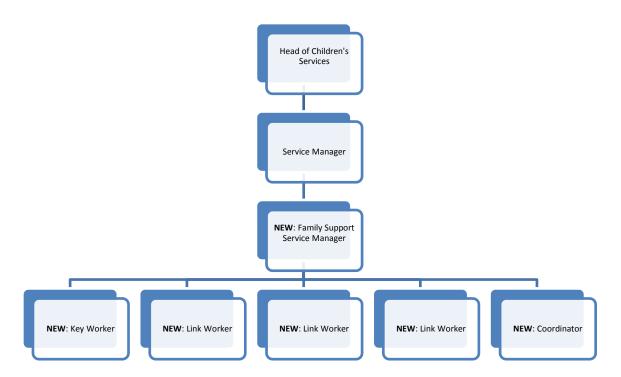
- 2. For families where this is not possible, timely action will be taken to remove the children through court processes and to find them a permanent placement with a family.
- 3. Improving family support services [practical and therapeutic] and thereby generating a virtuous circle of better services for children and families. Investment will be targeted, in particular, to provide intensive and rapid support when the family breaks down, with the aim of keeping the family together.
- 4. Restructuring and redesigning systems so that they are relevant, sensible, flexible and useful for practitioners
- 5. Emphasis on prevention and early intervention services including providing Information, Advice and Assistance to the public. To put it simply, providing smooth pathways to the support that families need.

2. Proposal

The aim of this bid is to take forward the third matter in the above list: that is to establish a *Resilient Families Team* to develop more effective approaches to supporting children in or on the edge of care. Investment will be targeted, in particular, to provide intensive and rapid support when the family breaks down, with the aim of keeping the family together. The aim of the service is to.

- 1. Work intensively with families to keep their children out of care, to prevent becoming looked after. Reduce the number of children becoming looked after by the authority
- 2. Work intensively with families for reunification within 8 weeks of becoming looked after with the aim of reducing the average duration of being looked after
- 3. Work with identified families for the reunification of their children whom are currently in long term care. i.e. Support the plans when care orders are revoked during LAC reviews as a 'step-down'.

Being able to focus on supporting families to change to become a safe place for children, and to stop escalating into the care system, and supporting those in the care system back out will see benefits across the service and for the children. This is the context of other innovation and improvements in the delivery of services to children and their families, places the Local Authority in a better position to intervene in cases to support resilience and independence, to promote inclusion and sustainability.



The Team will be located within the Parenting Team, and will build upon the core elements of the service already in place, ensuring families access the services of:

- 1. the Family Group Conference Coordinator, to look at support options within the family's immediate reach the Parenting Development Officer who supports families in developing their parenting techniques
- 2. the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS)
- 3. the team of Support Workers.

The new team will be trained by the Consultant Social Worker IFSS and the Parenting Development Officer, and will also be supported by other training and support as necessary. The team would be available to support families 7 days a week between the hours of 07:00 and 22:00, extending on current office hours and reflecting the fact that a family's needs don't stop outside of office hours. Workers will work side by side with families and their Social Workers, using proven methodologies such as signs of safety, motivational interviewing and brief solution focused therapy; supporting families to address issues that may result in the removal/non reunification of their children.

3 Best Practice

Edge of care teams are viewed as best practice in reducing the increase in LAC evidenced across the nation.

"Knowing the specific method of helping families to change is useful but, whatever the method, the worker needs to be able to engage and form a trusting relationship with the child and family members" Munro (2011)

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A dedicated team that can spend quality time with families, providing intensive support and a range of evidence based techniques will mean we can improve the families ability to change, and to safely meet their children's needs: alongside delivering against the vision of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

The approach advocated in this proposal is one that is similar to the Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS) which operates in all of the 22 Welsh Authorities, and with a success rate of 71% for Anglesey in the last 12 months, the numbers speak for themselves. Using a range of techniques including signs of safety, motivational interviewing and short focused based therapy; these teams work intensively with families with severe alcohol and drug misuse and children on the brink of care. Over the last 12 months the IFSS team based in Felinheli and supporting families in both Mon and Gwynedd have worked with 13 of our Anglesey based families, representing a total of 28 children.

Of these 28 Children, 5 were in the Public Law Outline process: that is at risk that the local authority would instigate court proceedings unless significant change was achieved. With the intensive support of IFSS one child was removed from the Public Law Outline process but remains on a Child Protection Register (CPR) whilst the other 4 were not only removed from a Public Law Outline process but are now receiving services on a step down level. Just these 5 children alone represents a yearly cost avoidance of £161k in placement costs alone. Additionally 6 further children were removed from the Child Protection Register, with their cases now closed to children's services. Without the intervention of IFSS such cases could have quickly escalated to Public Law Outline process; another possible cost avoidance of £193k in care costs. Likewise a further 9 children came into IFSS on the Child Protection Register although they remain on the Child Protection Register, the service have supported the vulnerabilities of the family from escalating and maintained the children in their family home, another potential cost avoidance of £289,752.84.

Evidence from other areas indicates the benefits of this approach both in terms of outcomes to families but also financial benefits. A joint project between **Newport City Council** and **Barnardos** has seen the establishment of a Family Assessment and Support Service (FASS). This model has been running for about 2-3 years, and is very much based on the successful IFSS (Integrated Family Support Service) model. Those involved would say it began to achieve its potential after 18 months – 2 years. And as a result of this, the number of children supported by FASS that have achieved their outcomes was over 48%. Overall since the introduction of the FASS team, the City of Newport has seen:

- A 22%) drop in the number of children coming into care
 - o 165 in 2014-15
 - o 129 in 2015-16
- An increase (16%) in the number of children stopping being looked after (including those rehabilitated home quickly)
 - o 250 in 2014-15
 - o 290 in 2015-16
- Re-referral rates have declined significantly
- Recruitment and retention of social workers in CIN/CP Teams has improved

4. Measuring Success

The intention of the project would be to agree it's measurable benefits at the beginning and establish process to measure the impact of the service.

Family Based Outcomes - We would wish to see a positive 'distance travelled' by the Family, this can be monitored by baselining and reviewing key indicators of their progress. Such distance travelled tools are used by TAF, TRAC, IFSS, Health and many other projects; it is also mentioned as a tool within the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. We would develop approaches that measure the change in families, and the improved effectiveness in managing their vulnerability and risk

Outcomes for Children - We would wish to see a positive 'distance travelled' by the Child: this can be monitored by baselining and reviewing key indicators of their progress. Such distance travelled tools are used by TAF, TRAC, IFSS, Health and many other projects; it is also mentioned as a tool within the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014. We would develop approaches that measure the child's perspective and link in with schools to identify overall wellbeing gains.

Outcomes for Practitioners – We would wish to see practitioners will be able to spend more time working with children, young people and families: improved recruitment and retention: reduced staff absences.

Practice Outcomes – We would wish to see increased support to families via evidenced based intervention with families leading to

- Reduced numbers of children requiring a multi-agency child protection plan
- Reduced numbers of children being looked after by the local authority
- Increased numbers of children remaining at home with their families
- Reduced period a case remains in PLO
- Reduced number of LAC (assuming no increase trend experienced nationally)
- Reduced spend on Foster placements
- Reduced Turnover in staff
- Reduced Sickness levels
- Reduced average time spend in care (evidencing quicker removal and return home)

Financial Benefits – We would wish to achieve cost avoidance due to avoiding the costs of children becoming looked after: and a reduction in the costs of looked after children over a period of time. We would wish to see the service financial profile change increasing % on supportive/preventative interventions.

What will require early agreement is a methodology to ascertain cost avoidances associated to a family or child. As a very basic data collation, it could simply be the assumption that all children referred to the new edge of care team would have been placed in care within 6 months. The project will know the number of children opened to them within the year and the number of those closed successfully with the children remaining at home; thus resulting in a cost avoidance figure directly associated to the cost of foster placement avoided.

5. Funding

a. Budget breakdown

Total amount requested (over 3 years):	£	627,292.30
One off costs total - Year 1 (2016/17):	£	145,258.46
Description:	Amount:	
Consultancy		£15,000
Training		£5,000
Consultant Social Worker / Team Manager post	£ 54,953.86 / 2 =	
(Grade 9 $47 - 50$)	£27,476.93	
2 x Key Workers (Grade 5 26 – 30)	£ 69,438.90 / 2 =	
•	£34,719.45	
2 x Link Workers (Grade 7 36 – 40)	£ 82,202.10 / 2 =	
	£41,101.05	
0.5FTE Business Support (Grade 3 16 – 20)	£ 24844.12 FTE / 2	2 =
	£6,211.03	
Family support fund*	£ 10,000 / 2 =	£5,000
Hardware for 5.5 FTE posts		£4,200
Office equipment		£550
Travel Costs	£ 12,000 / 2 =	£6,000
Ongoing funding total per year and number of	£	241,016.92
years	for a furth	er 2 years
Description:	Amount:	
Year 2 (2017/18)	£	241,016.92
Year 3 (2018/19)		241,016.92

*Reflects costs associated with such support as: Anxiety management, harm reduction, positive parenting sessions, short term mental health support.

b. Other sources of funding

- The service does not have the budget to introduce an edge of care team
- Social Impact Bonds may be an option, however research into this option shows it can take at best 18 months to 2 years to find a partner and of course there is no guarantee that a suitable partner will be sourced.
- The bid includes consultancy costs for pre-start up options appraisal for outsourcing such a service (the make or buy study), this may or may not result in a more cost effective delivery option; and can again take 18 months to 2 years as noted at the recent Alternative Delivery Model presentation by Wales Coop to Middle Managers, Heads of Service and Members. Though this could be a model for future delivery beyond project pilot.

6. Financial Benefits – Refer to Appendix 2

Option 1 – Do nothing

Without investment in a Resilient Families Team it will be challenging to address the on-going rise in the numbers of Children becoming Looked After on Anglesey. This will lead to increased costs for looked after children.

Option 2 – Invest

The Local Authority has seen an increase in its LAC population and associated costs. However historically the number of looked after children in Anglesey was lower than the Welsh average. General demographic information is not available for 2015/16 at this point. Any strategy to reduce the overall number of Looked after Children in Anglesey must be considered in this context – of a low baseline and the need to reduce numbers in a safe way. In order to do so we need to invest in services that support family resilience and help parents achieve sustained change in their parenting capacity. The project has the potential to make cost avoidances and eventual savings to the authority in reduced placement and court costs, and the associated reductions in staff turnover and sickness levels. The savings will depend on the number of children and families who enter and leave statutory interventions, and their level of needs; this factor is not completely predictable. The main savings/cost avoidance would be broadly in relation to:

- Cost avoidance in terms of supporting more children at a lower level of intervention
- Cost savings reductions in costs of Looked after children
- Staff savings efficiency sickness and turnover costs

The numbers indicated within the bid as being able to either; a) avoid care or b) be removed from care were based on the assumption made by the Corporate Parenting Service Manager: who has reviewed the profile of looked after children and considered the evidence from other areas. There is no definite guarantee that these numbers will be achieved; the project will require robust monitoring of achievements, distance travelled and cost savings/avoidances made. This will be done through the yearly reviewing of the projects successes, allowing the service to bring the original assumptions in line with emerging trends in the LAC population nationally, and align to the new team maturity and experience as they develop.

We currently have 6 children and young people in residential placements. These children have significant needs and display challenging behaviour due to their childhood experiences. These are 'high cost - low

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volume' placements and the average cost of 1 residential placement is £200,000 per year. We currently are unable to provide a 'step down' service to move children safely from residential placement to foster care. The Family Support Service would work intensely with these children and young people, the residential placement and the foster carers to ensure effective transition and to continue thereafter to provide support to enable the child/young person to settle and have permanence with their foster carers.

The outcome for the child/young person is that they are cared for in a nurturing family home which will meet their wellbeing needs. The move from residential placement to a foster placement would also lead to substantial savings for the local authority. Owing to the small numbers and needs of these young people, we have omitted these figures from the savings – when suitable candidates for the service are brought to the teams attention no bias will be given to the value of the work, any successes in this area will show as an exceeded target.

7. Project Delivery

Implementation of the project within the service shall be overseen by the Project Owner: The Service Manager for Corporate Parenting within Children's services.

Project Management support will be provided by the Transformation Programme Manager for Children's Services, thus ensuring that the project is reporting within robust Programme Management governance.

8. Benefits

Benefit	Measure
Cost Avoidance for the Local Authority: ✓ Court Costs ✓ Placement Costs ✓ Visiting (Contact) costs ✓ External agency costs	 Reductions in budget spend on Court, placement, agency support to achieve PLO deadlines and facilitating contact.
The Authority are achieving the best possible outcomes for vulnerable children & families (SSWA – Outcomes focused)	 Families will be supported to change and to find strategies that help them to become more effective in managing their vulnerability and risk – Distance travelled Tools can be used to evidence these Practitioners are able to spend more time working with children, young people and families Higher quality effective intervention with families Health, safety, Social and Wellbeing benefits for the child
Improved staff morale and confidence	 Reduction in days lost due to staff sickness Reduction in staff turnover
Free up staff time from lengthy Court work to work closer with other families	 Increase in Staff morale (increase) evidenced through reduced sick days and staff turnover Further reduction of children coming into care
More children staying at home with their families	 Increased numbers of children remaining at home with their families Reduced numbers of children requiring a multi-agency child protection plan Reduced numbers of children being accommodated by the local

	 authority Reduced costs on Looked After Children Service Financial profile change increasing % on supportive interventions Higher quality effective intervention with families Health, Social and Wellbeing benefits for the child
More children returned home via revoked care orders	 Increased numbers of children returned home to their families Reduced numbers of children requiring a multi-agency child protection plan Reduced numbers of children being accommodated by the local authority
	 Reduced costs on Looked After Children Service Financial profile change increasing % on supportive interventions Higher quality effective intervention with families Health, Social and Wellbeing benefits for the child

APPENDIX 2a - Return on investment with ambitious avoidance and removal rates

	2017/18		201	18/19	201	.9/2020	202	20/2021	202	21/2022	Totals for 5 full years	
Cost of Edge of Care Team	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£ 1,205,084.60	
Cost Avoidance in this year	£	241,460.70	£	321,947.60	£	402,434.50	£	418,531.88	£	418,531.88	£ 1,802,906.56	
Cost savings in this year	£	128,779.04	£	144,876.42	£	177,071.18	£	160,973.80	£ 160,973.80		£ 772,674.24	
									Return on investment		£ 1,370,496.20	
30% Reduction in costs of												
operating a support service can also be achieved by year 4. Representing a further saving of £75,000 each year from 2020 onwards.												

APPENDIX 2b - Return on investment with the numbers of children/families supported halved for each year

	2017/18		201	8/19	201	19/2020	202	20/2021	20	21/2022	To yea	tals for 5 full ars
Cost of Edge of Care Team	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	241,016.92	£	1,205,084.60
Cost Avoidance in this year	£	128,779.04	£	160,973.80	£	193,168.56	£	209,265.94	£	209,265.94	£	901,453.28
Cost savings in this year	£	64,389.52	£	80,486.90	£	96,584.28	£	96,584.28	£	96,584.28	£	434,629.26
										turn on vestement	£	130,997.94
30% Reduction in costs of operating a support service can also be achieved by year 4. Representing a further saving of £75,000 each year from 2020 onwards.												