

## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by the Director of Community Health & Care Partnership

Community Health and Care Partnership Committee: 28 March 2012

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**Subject: Proposal for the Development of a Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care (M.T.F.C.) Scheme, in collaboration with neighbouring authorities**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report is to inform members of discussion between West Dunbartonshire Council and colleagues in neighbouring authorities about a possible collaboration in setting up a Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care (M.T.F.C.) service and to seek approval to continue West Dunbartonshire's involvement in this proposed development.
- 1.2** A briefing paper explaining the details of the proposed service are set out in Appendix 1. This briefing was drafted by Karen Nowland who has been seconded by Renfrewshire Council to work on developing this proposal on behalf of participating authorities.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** Officers from West Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde have been meeting since Autumn 2011 to discuss the potential for collaborative work on commissioning services for children and young people with chronically disruptive behaviours. These young people present some of the greatest challenges to local authority services in providing appropriate care and are often in very costly placements.
- 2.2** It is widely accepted that there is a relatively small but growing group of young people whose behaviour and longer term life chances improve little despite placements in very expensive specialist services. These young people tend to go on to make significant demands on the full range of social welfare systems after they leave care.
- 2.3** The young people for whom M.T.F.C. can provide better outcomes are those who are identifiable in terms of their exposure to significant adversity prior to coming into care. In the absence of proven treatments to address their behavioural difficulties, their care journeys tend to be characterised by multiple placement breakdowns and an escalation to residential school, specialist placement or secure care.
- 2.4** In discussions across the participating authorities, recognising the needs of this group of young people and considering how best to respond to the challenge of providing them with the care required, there has been

agreement that there is the potential to develop an M.T.F.C. Service which has a proven body of evidence showing positive outcomes for young people with this range of problematic behaviour.

### **3. Main Issues**

**3.1** Discussions between participating authorities are now at a stage where each individual authority has identified their own need, based on an internal audit of young people over the past 3 years, for whom a resource of this nature could have contributed to a much more positive outcome.

**3.2** No individual authority can generate enough demand, or resource, to make running an M.T.F.C. scheme on their own viable.

**3.3** In order to take discussions further, participating authorities would need to make a commitment to developing a high level project plan.

**3.4** A number of potential funding streams are being explored as part of the start up. This work will be carried forward in any potential project.

**3.5** Each participating council now has to look at their own organisational readiness as well as level of commitment and willingness to contribute the necessary time and resources to taking this project to the next stage.

### **4. People Implications**

**4.1** There are no personnel issues beyond a continued commitment of officer time to further work on this proposal.

### **5. Financial Implications**

**5.1** There are no immediate financial issues arising from this report. There would be financial implications in proceeding to putting an MTFC Service in place and this would be the subject of a more detailed report to a future committee. There would be initial start up costs and these could perhaps be met from Change Fund monies at least in the first year. Once the service was established costs would be offset by a reduction in the use of other resources.

### **6. Risk Analysis**

**6.1** There are no risks identified at present, any potential risks will be the subject of a future report.

### **7. Equalities Input**

**7.1** No issues have been identified.

### **8. Conclusion and Recommendation**

- 8.1** Embarking on the development of an M.T.F.C. service is a significant undertaking requiring considerable planning and determination on the part of those involved. However M.T.F.C. has a proven track record of positive outcomes for very troubled young people and is being successfully delivered across 16 sites in the UK including Glasgow.
- 8.2** The collaborative aspect of the service being proposed here creates an additional challenge. It is clear, however, that for smaller/medium sized councils the only way this proven treatment option for some of our most vulnerable young people could be offered will be through a collaboration of this kind.
- 8.3** Committee are asked to agree:
- i) to continuing involvement by West Dunbartonshire in this project;
  - ii) that a more detailed project plan be the subject of a future committee report.

**R Keith Redpath**  
**Director**  
**5 March 2012**

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**Background Papers:** **None**

**Appendices:** **Appendix 1**

**Wards affected:** **All wards**