



Report by the Chief Education Officer

CPWD Management Board : 4 February 2021

Subject: Nurtured Delivery Improvement Group (DIG) Update

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- update members on the work of the Nurtured Delivery and Improvement Group (DIG).

2. Recommendations

2.1 CPWD is asked to:

- note progress and focus of work in response to COVID19 by the DIG.

3. Background

3.1 Through multi-agency planning, the Nurtured DIG aims to ensure:

- all WDC children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed;
- families are supported in accessing education, learning and attainment opportunities and
- ensure improved life chances for all children, young people and families.

3.2 The Nurtured DIG aims are articulated in an Action Plan 2019-2022 which align with WDC Integrated Children's Services work.(App.1)

3.3 In response to COVID19 partners have re-aligned priorities and focus of resources and support to address challenges faced by children, young people and families at this time. This has been articulated in an Agile Plan and the Education Recovery Plan. (App.2)

4. Main Issues

4.1 Since March 2020 all Nurtured DIG engagement has been remote with a focus on supporting the wellbeing of our stakeholders.

- 4.2** All partners have faced significant challenges in service delivery in light of COVID19. These include: lockdown, furloughed staff, re-deployment of staff, staff absence, staff volunteering elsewhere in the Council, re-design of service delivery and remote working challenges. As a result, DIG outcomes have been re-prioritised with some overcome sooner and others delayed.
- 4.3** Within children's community health services, Health Visitors and School Nurses continue to deliver the Scottish Government care pathways with a focus on the most vulnerable children and young people. Face-to-face home visiting is prioritised around child protection interventions, with a range of supportive services delivered virtually including parenting programmes, focused work on dental health and the emotional wellbeing of young people, targeted interventions with breast feeding mothers and comprehensive immunisation programmes. Collaborative work with partner agencies provide support to Team around the Child (TATC) meetings, Education consultations, perinatal mental health and multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC). Quality improvement activity and NMC regulated supervision of undergraduate and post graduate students provides essential workforce continuity and oversight.

HSCP Children's Social Work Services have maintained many aspects of service delivery during the pandemic, including upscaling of some activities as the first phase of lockdown began to ease. Within level four restrictions, teams continue to focus on the most vulnerable families and child protection activity. Looked after children, including those in kinship care, remain a priority, with positive working relationships across education, social work and health supporting the safe care of children and young people at this time.

Contact between looked after children and their families uses a blended model of face to face, outdoor and remote contact arrangements. Referral rates to social work duty continue to be high; the implementation of the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019 has been challenging for all agencies however local protocols are in development in line with Police Scotland guidance. Regular Violence Against Women Partnership meetings are continuing as, does MARAC.

Services for children affected by disability began to recover during late summer and this remains the case with most families and children receiving support from a range of services thereby reducing the stress and isolation felt earlier in the year.

Comprehensive local guidance for staff around provision of services and response to demands and priorities continues to be updated on an ongoing basis.

Children's Hearings were unable to be held during lockdown resulting in some delay to service. With the move to Tier 4, an alternative venue has been found with space to ensure that all meetings adhere to social distancing protocols. Service has resumed and continues to support families.

Educational Services has maintained provision of education via remote learning for most learners and access to Hubs in the first lockdown. Whilst in restrictions at Tier 4, Key Worker and Vulnerable children and young people are being supported in school and ELC's.

They have ensured Free School Meal entitlement has been met and that families are able to access digital learning supports and a range of other support resources as appropriate. Systems have been established to ensure those shielding, most at risk of missing out or non-engagement have regular supportive contact with a member of school staff.

Children and families are supported via multi-agency Team Around the Child planning meetings which have been maintained and moved to a remote platform for delivery. Revised Child Protection guidance reflects the remote nature of engagement and associated monitoring required.

The education Recovery Programme and remote learning provision ensures continuity in learning and support for pupils, parents and staff in undertaking this new model of engagement.

Community partners such as Y-Sort-it and the Champions Board continue to work and engage with stakeholder by adapting their practice to the current restrictions. This has included a move to remote engagement and support, devising programmes of engagement using outdoors as a setting and using alternative provisions to ensure adherence to social distancing protocols. Focus again has been on ensuring the wellbeing and continuing engagement with young people; ensuring they have access to the most appropriate resources to address their needs. Focus of support has been on the most vulnerable and at risk such as Young Carers and Care Experienced.

Working 4U seeks to address the underlying causes of poverty, as well as the symptoms, by specifically tackling unemployment, providing opportunities to increase levels of education, skills, confidence and personal development as well support to claim in and out of work benefits and manage debt. Working 4U activities centre on the delivery of specialist services (Work Learn, Money) with the support for families, children and young people captured in Working 4Us contribution to the local child poverty action report.

Learning and Development.

Learning and Development primarily supports disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities. This covers a wide range of activity, such as youth work, family and adult learning, including adult literacy and English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) and community development and capacity building.

Key Activities developed and delivered in 2020/2021 include:

- Development of youth outreach to deliver diversionary activities;

- Development of resources to address the negative impact of high interest and illicit money lending;
- Contribution to development and delivery of care connections- meeting support needs for young people who have disengaged from education;
- Family learning and progression to community based qualifications;
- Holiday hunger, community based period poverty and addressing community-based food insecurity.

Employability

Employability encompasses all the things that enable people to increase their chances of getting a job, staying in a job, and progressing further in work.

Support that focusses on families, children and young people in 2019/2020 includes:

- Delivery of the apprenticeship pathway;
- Growth of access to foundation apprenticeships;
- Supporting parents to seek and secure employment through the Parental Employability Support Fund;
- Further development of the poverty and social inclusion project – assisting families to overcome challenges to opportunity and participation in community life.

Information and Advice

Working 4U will services include debt counselling, income maximisation support, money advice and welfare benefit advice services. Our services will be client orientated, based on a private and confidential diagnosis of the issues and are designed to provide options and empower the individual.

Support that focusses on families, children and young people in 2019/2020 includes:

- Improving the cancer journey;
- Support for housing tenants;
- Working with health and social care addictions interventions and GP referral development;
- Establishing working relationships with the Family Nurse partnership; and
- Contributing to the process for delivery of winter hardship fund.

Crisis Support

The crisis team was established in April to provide access to support for those affected by covid-19. The support centred on addressing food insecurity and assisting people to stabilise their lives in difficult circumstances. This includes support to maximise income from benefits, managing debt, dealing with fuel and utilities issues and providing employment advice in the light of redundancy and furlough.

The focus was placed on assisting the 'shielded' group; this was extended to disadvantaged families including those most likely to be affected by child poverty. Since April we have assisted 2,026 people. This includes 1,024

households requiring emergency food supplies and 827 households requiring practical support to, for example, collect medicines.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications as a result of this report. However, it is essential partners re-align resource allocation and priorities to meet the needs of children, young people and families at this time.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** There are no direct financial implications for Community Planning West Dunbartonshire resulting from this report. All activities related to the implementation of these interventions are contained within service Budgets.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** If the Council is unable to ensure positive outcomes for children, we will not be meeting their needs (Children and Young People Act 2014) (Equalities Act 2010).
- 7.2** If the Council is unable to meet the needs of children, young people and families this could result in reputational damage.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** The revised supports and guidance enhance the quality of the service provided to all children, young people and families, therefore it can be seen to have a positive impact in terms of the equalities

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** This report reflects the Council's aspiration to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

Person to Contact: Laura Mason Chief Education Officer

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Nurtured DIG Action Plan
Appendix 2 – Agile Plans 2020-21

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected:

All