



## Report of the Director of Social Services

External Funding Panel – 3 October 2018

### Welsh Government Invest to Save Bid for Multi-disciplined Integrated Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Hub

<b>Purpose:</b>	To approve the funding application for the WG Invest to Save expression of interest for Integrated IAA Hub
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Social Services and Wellbeing Act Wales (2014)
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal and the Family Support Continuum Steering Group
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that the External Funding Panel approve the Integrated IAA Hub application
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<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Catherine Window

#### 1. Introduction

1.1. Welsh Government's Invest to Save Fund for 2018-19 bidding round opened in July 2018. Since 2009 the fund has supported projects across a number of areas including:

- Procurement;
- ICT;
- Workforce;
- Improving ways of working; and
- Service delivery.

The Invest to Save Fund has allocated £174 million to over 180 projects since 2009 and the majority of Welsh public sector organisations have used the fund to support some of their initiatives.

- 1.2. This financial year the Fund has up to £5 million available to distribute to support the right projects which are ready for implementation. All projects will be considered however they are particularly interested this year in projects which have the potential to make an impact either regionally or nationally or which will improve the outcomes for looked after children
- 1.3. A funding bid for the Integrated IAA Hub was submitted to the Welsh Government Invest to Save as an expression of interest on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018 in accordance with guidance provided from the Welsh Government.
- 1.4. The bid asks for support in developing an Integrated Hub to manage Information, Advice and Assistance across the Continuum of Support in Swansea, to ensure families receive the right support at the right time.

## 2. Current Service and Key Issues

- 2.1. Our Information, Advice and Assistance Service (IA&A) is available to the public and also to other professionals and provides –
  - **Information** - We can provide information about universal, community and preventative support services to help people make informed choices about their well-being. You do not have to give the personal details of the child and family to get information.
  - **Advice** - If children and families have particular needs we can start an assessment by having a 'What Matters' discussion to help families and/or professionals to think about how to improve their situation. We can help to explore options that may come from friends and family, professionals or any other early intervention and prevention services.
  - **Assistance** - this is where a person takes action with a family to help them or to access support services for children, young people or families on their behalf. With parents/carers consent then I,A&A can make a referral directly to a service on the behalf of the family or arrange for a meeting so the appropriate support can be identified.
- 2.2. Phone lines are operated by qualified social workers who will listen to issues, get an understanding of the needs of our families and provide information, advice or assistance on who can help from social services, health, youth offending service, education, police, early intervention and prevention services and the third sector.
- 2.3. In addition to IAA, the local authority has other services, which act as 'front doors' for specific themes. They are listed below:
  - **Domestic Abuse Hub** – receives referrals directly from the Police for issues relating to domestic abuse. This service has recently undergone a re-structure and is now effective in managing the right demand, which ensures children and families are having the right support at the right

time. This Hub does not currently take demand from the public but there is scope to broaden this in future.

- **Under 11's Single Point of Entry** – receives referrals from professionals and families who do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention. This service allocates directly into our Team Around the Family (TAF) team and Family Wellbeing Team (FWT) in addition to other early help services for things like parenting support. A large number of referrals to this service are made from the IAA team.
- **Over 11's Evolve Service** – receives referrals directly from schools and operates within the community to support children of secondary school age. This service also receive a large number of referrals from the IAA team.

- 2.4. These front door services manage allocation into their own teams and there are clear referral pathways in place to support staff to 'pass on' referrals but there is a lack of consistency in closing the loop on some of the more complex cases which may have a variety of needs. The inability to refer directly between teams (i.e. IAA cannot refer directly into TAF) and the inconsistency in tracking cases, which are passed between services, can often lead to drift resulting in cases escalating to statutory services.
- 2.5. This is further complicated by the different eligibility criteria and thresholds adopted by services. Whilst this is clearly identified and understood within specific services, there is a lack of understanding on a multi-agency perspective on what these eligibility criteria are across the whole system. A scatter-gun approach to referrals across different professionals can happen as a result of this.
- 2.6. The current systems in place are not effectively set-up to support staff in understanding 'what matters' to families. There are examples of when the identifying need presented at the point of referral differs to the underlying support that the family want and as a result needs are often unmet resulting in cases escalating into statutory services that could potentially have been avoided.
- 2.7. Recent performance information identified that IAA received a total of 12,675 call contacts in 17/18. These came from a number of different sources including police, health, families and schools. Of these calls, 4971 came to the team for information only, 3786 for advice, 1175 for assistance which resulted in further contacts and 1165 were referred into statutory services.
- 2.8. On average families experience up to 40 contacts, 12 referrals and 3 pass-backs/hand offs throughout their journey. It is also evident that an average of 12 professionals could be involved with a particular family yet, in some cases, they hadn't received an intervention that they wanted and/or needed.

- 2.9. A costing exercise determined that each contact or referral equated to an average of 30 minutes worth of professional time and each pass back equated to an average of 1 hours' worth of professional time. It was identified that on average the total time taken to support these particular cases was upwards of 29 hours and in some extreme cases this time reached 100 hours. The cost to the Local Authority to manage this is estimated at over £666 per case the total number of cases that experience this is approximately 2,340 per year costing a total of £1.5 million per annum to the local authority.
- 2.10. The proposal aims to filter this information so that the right demand is being worked with and understand need more effectively at the initial point of contact in an effort to allocate directly to the right service. The expectation is that this will have an impact on the number of contacts, referrals and professionals involved with these types of cases and could result in financial benefit across the local authority and other partners.

### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1. The proposal is to resource, refocus and expand the current IAA team into a multi-disciplinary team of staff who will be co-located within an Integrated IAA Hub. The team will be better able to manage demand and the flow of information through the team until the point of allocation or assessment is expected to be far quicker and more effective.
- 3.2. It is anticipated that this will allow us to manage demand more effectively by ensuring the team only deal with appropriate calls, that family's needs are understood quickly and clearly and that cases are allocated to the right team to support in a timely manner.
- 3.3. By co-locating a team across the whole system, officers from multi-agencies will be able to clearly identify cases that meet eligibility criteria for certain services. The hub will allocate effectively through joint decision making based on need, eligibility and availability, ultimately reducing the number of pass backs across the system.
- 3.4. Ultimately, the new process of identifying what matters and allocating support based on need will provide families with a smoother journey through our services. Placing families at the centre of decision-making and exploring options together will help clarify what support is being offered any why. Through this change professionals across a number of agencies will work together to support families to live happy, healthy and safe lives with help from the right people at the right time, if and when they need it.
- 3.5. The reduction in system waste as a result of this pilot will contribute to the organisation financially. Based on the costs above we estimate that the cost of the flow in the new system would be approximately £234.23 per case, and applying this to our average number of cases annually of 2340 indicated that this would amount annually to £548,098. This would realise a cost saving of approximately 1 million annually.

#### 4. Legislative Requirements

- 4.1. The IAA service is a requirement of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and must, as a minimum, include the publication of information advice and assistance. The service currently operates in this way and provides information, advice and assistance on a range of topics related to accessing support for children and families and supports families and professionals to raise safeguarding concerns around the children in their care.
- 4.2. According to the Act, IAA must, 'promote early intervention and prevention to ensure that people of all ages can be better supported to achieve their personal outcomes, and explore options for meeting their care and support needs. It should be considered to be a preventative service in its own right through the provision of high quality and timely information, advice and assistance.' (SSWB Act part 2 section 5)
- 4.3. The proposal would support the IAA team to focus on preventing escalation through appropriate allocation to early intervention services. Understanding 'what matters' will promote early identification of need and support people to meet their wellbeing outcomes by offering support in a more timely way.
- 4.4. By placing families at the centre of decision-making, IAA will encourage the voice of the child to be heard and allow for a more joined up approach to exploring options and making decisions.
- 4.5. Additionally, the proposal meets the fundamental principles of the Act:
  - **Voice and control** – Understanding 'what matters' as early as possible and using this as a basis for exploring options will ensure that families have control in their own support and that their voices are at the centre of any decision making.
  - **Prevention and early intervention** – Working more closely together with colleagues across different agencies will allow easier allocation into early help services to ensure intervention is appropriate and timely so we can prevent needs escalating.
  - **Well-being** – A child and/or families wellbeing outcomes and goals will be understood through the 'what matters' conversation and will be the driving force behind any intervention. These will continue to be a focus through the assessment and intervention a family receives and will involve consistent and frequent reviewing.
  - **Co-production** – Decisions and intervention will be coproduced and directed by the family where it is appropriate to do so.

#### 5. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 5.1. The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

5.2. Our Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

5.3. We have completed an EIA Screening Form and will complete a full EIA report pending the success of the pilot and the invest to save bid which will inform service change. This will include engagements and consultation with service users.

## 6. Financial Implications

6.1. The total costs of the complete implementation of the programme over 3½ years is £1,612,370 as outlined in the following table:

Item	Cost (including on-costs) for Total Project £
Staffing	1,482,370
Premises relocation and IT	80,000
Consultancy and evaluation	30,000
Project Management/finance/legal/HR	20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,612,370</b>

6.2. The local authority is seeking £806,185 from the Invest to Save programme which is 50% of the total cost of the development and implementation of a multi-disciplinary integrated information, advice and assistance hub.

6.3. The indicative drawn down of the funds, if successful, is outlined in the table below

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£126,185</b>	<b>£350,000</b>	<b>£220,000</b>	<b>£110,000</b>

6.4. Pending successful application to the WG Invest to Save funding a detailed budget profile will be submitted outlining when funds would be drawn down. This would be reviewed annually in line with our budget setting process and the MTFP.

- 6.5. The remaining 50% of costs would be met by re-aligning already existing resource mainly within Child and Family Service Budget lines and a smaller amount in Poverty & Prevention budget lines with the view to reviewing this annually as it is anticipated that if the offer is correct then demand will be reduced.
- 6.6. A continually annual cycle of review will be implemented to enable us to move resource around to meet need and make the model sustainable for the future to enable the investment to be re-paid.
- 6.7. This will help us to manage demand in a more effective, responsive way and meet budget saving targets as austerity continues. Ongoing annual review will inform decisions in terms of future commissioning and enable us to move resources around to meet need and make the model sustainable for the future. This will in turn, enable the investment to be re-paid within a 5 year period.
- 6.8. The repayment profile has been calculated based on when potential cash saving would be realised as implementation progresses over the next 5 years.

	<b>2019-20</b> £	<b>2020-21</b> £	<b>2021-22</b> £	<b>2022-23</b> £
Revenue	80,000	220,000	250,000	256,185

- 6.9 We would only utilise Invest to Save funds if needed, this is the total amount we have sought, however this is pending WG approval.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 It will be necessary to ensure that all terms and conditions attached to WG Invest to Save grant funding are complied with and that the Council's Financial Procedure Rules Regarding Grant Applications and Acceptances are followed, if successful.

### **Background Papers:**

Invest to Save Expression of Interest  
EIA form

### **Appendices:**

None