

Assessment No	1019	Owner	levans
Resource	HSCP	Service	Joint
	FirstName	Surname	Job Title
Head Officer	Lesley	James	Head of Service Children and Families and Justice services
Members	Kara Pentland - Admin Assistant Susan McGrory - Information System Lead Sharon Laing C&F Senior Manager Claire Gow Social Worker John Gallacher (Senior Social Worker) Senior Social Worker Amy Jack (Social Worker) Social Worker Kirsty Porterfield - Project Manager/Improvement Officer Laura Evans Programme Manager/Service Improvement Lead Ailsa King Health Improvement Lead		
	<i>(Please note: the word 'policy' is used as shorthand for strategy policy function or financial decision)</i>		
Policy Title	What would it take programme: Re-design of Duty Team		
	The aim, objective, purpose and intended out come of policy		

The redesign duty project, is one of the projects in the What Would It Take programme (WWIT). The WWIT programme is a five year plan, which has range of projects which have been scoped to improve services for children, young people and their families. One of the projects is the redesign of the duty system within the Children and Families service.

There are currently two duty teams each day, one covering Clydebank and the other Dumbarton and Vale. Each team is made up of one Senior Social Worker (SSW) and two Duty Social Workers (DSW). The SSW changes every second day and the DSW daily. The Duty team receive all new referrals including Child Protection where there is not an allocated Social Worker. The Duty team also manages any urgent work required for families that are on the waiting list for allocation. The allocation of work is task driven and if it is not completed it is then tasked to another DSW the next day.

Challenges Identified

The daily change of DSW mean that families and professionals may have to speak to multiple workers about the same issue. This lack of continuity can lead to information being lost and families having to tell their story multiple times. The change in DSSW meant that there was a variation of thresholds to access services and sometimes conflicting advice being given to professionals and parents.

40% of referrals to Duty Social Work did not meet the threshold for social work intervention or multi-agency assessment. Referrals are currently being accepted where GIRFEC National Practice Model has not been followed. This has resulted in children becoming known to social work services whose needs could have been supported by non-statutory and Universal Services.

Duty work competes with other demands from the social workers caseload and may this may lead to delay in assessment or early help by sign posting to more appropriate services.

Employees reported that they were working in a task focused way rather in a trauma informed person-centered way. This is incompatible to supporting child and their families in emotional distress when at their most vulnerable. Assessing risk to children can best be achieved when social workers can build relationships and trust with the family. The disconnected system also created anxiety for employees that information could be missed and that children could be at risk.

The New Model (Name to be chosen by Children and Families)

The model was developed to meet the challenges above. Data was collected to quantify the level of work generated through referrals and consultation and benchmarking with other local authorities to determine the employee structure to meet level of predicted referrals.

There will be one West Dunbartonshire wide team that will consist of two Senior Social Workers and eight Social Workers, including the specialist EEI domestic abuse post. The existing social worker and senior social worker job specifications cover the requirements of the role.

The team will be developed from existing resources and recruiting to current vacancies. There will be in internal recruitment process with notes of interest followed by competitive interview. If not all, positions are filled then there will be external recruitment.

Internal recruitment will begin early July 2024. The Team will be consulted in developing the Standard Operating Model for the service.

The new model will be reviewed at 12 months and employee's feedback will be crucial to the evaluation.

Service/Partners/Stakeholders/service users involved in the development and/or implementation of policy.

	<p>Consultation and Evaluation</p> <p>There was research undertaken over a period of three months that included interviews with families and employees that explored and identified the challenges with the current system using the “Empathy Map” participation tool. The consultation allowed the problems of the existing service to be defined.</p> <p>There was also an audit of referrals to Duty, which supported the above position.</p>	
Does the proposals involve the procurement of any goods or services?		Yes
If yes please confirm that you have contacted our procurement services to discuss your requirements.		No
SCREENING		
<i>You must indicate if there is any relevance to the four areas</i>		
Duty to eliminate discrimination (E), advance equal opportunities (A) or foster good relations (F)		Yes
Relevance to Human Rights (HR)		No
Relevance to Health Impacts (H)		Yes
Relevance to Social Economic Impacts (SE)		Yes
Who will be affected by this policy?		
<p>Employees within the Children and Families service</p> <p>Current and future children, young people, and families who are required to be involved with the service</p> <p>Citizens of West Dunbartonshire</p>		
Who will be/has been involved in the consultation process?		
<p>Consultation and Evaluation</p> <p>There was research undertaken over a period of three months that included interviews with families and employees that explored and identified the challenges with the current system using the “Empathy Map” participation tool. The consultation allowed the problems of the existing service to be defined.</p> <p>There was also an audit of referrals to Duty, which supported the above position.</p> <p>The Duty project team met on the 6th June 2024 to discuss the EIA and the proposed duty team. The project team discussed the positive and negative impact this duty team will have on employees and children, young people, and their families who have a protected characteristic.</p>		

Please outline any particular need/barriers which equality groups may have in relation to this policy list evidence you are using to support this and whether there is any negative impact on particular groups.

Specific group to consider	Needs	Evidence	Impact
Age	Any risk about an unborn child, child or young person, or if there is a risk in a household should be referred to the Children and Families Social Work service. West Dunbartonshire Council are obligated to document these concerns and continue to investigate the concern or refer onto universal services.	<p>The legal duty to investigate and report issues in relation to child protection is derived, and the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, sections 60-64, which set out the duties and powers of local authorities,</p> <p>Local authorities have a general duty to promote social welfare by making available advice, guidance and assistance on such a scale as may be appropriate for their area. The Act also introduces a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area and, so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of children in need by their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to the children's needs. – Social Work (Scotland) ACT 1998</p> <p>The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need falls upon the local authority as a whole, and embraces social work services, education, housing and any other relevant services required to safeguard and promote the welfare of such children. Children (Scotland) Act 1995</p> <p>National Child Protection Guidance 2023</p> <p>Where there is a child protection concern, relevant information should be shared with police or social work without delay, provided it is necessary, proportionate and lawful to do so.</p>	There is no specific impact identified in relation to age.

Disability	<p>The local authority has a duty to carry out an assessment of the child, or of any other person in his or her family, in order to ascertain the child's needs in so far as they are attributable to his or her disability or that of the other person, if asked to do so by the child's parent or guardian.</p> <p>Guidance and regulations on the Children (Scotland) Act 1995</p>	<p>4% of children within West Dunbartonshire children are registered as disabled.</p> <p>5% school aged pupils in West Dun in 2023 were assessed and /or declared as having a disability.</p> <p>4% of children in early learning and childcare with 29% of early years children having an additional support need with the top reason being for a social, emotional and behaviour difficulties followed by 9% of children have a language speech and communication condition within West Dunbartonshire.</p>	There is no specific impact identified in relation to disability.
Gender Reassign	<p>This information is not captured within the Children and Families service. However, Social Workers will add further information into a observation or under alias. The system is being developed to consider this protected characteristic to capture this information correctly.</p>		There is no specific impact identified in relation to gender reassign.
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<p>This information is captured within Care First which will allow Social Workers to capture this information.</p>		There is no specific impact identified in relation to marriage and civil partnership.
Pregnancy & Maternity	<p>West Dunbartonshire has the second highest teenage pregnancy in Scotland. It is important there is a service which can respond to unborn children who are at risk due to domestic abuse substance use should be made known to the service.</p>	<p>Nationally 5% of those on the Child Protection Register as registered as unborn</p> <p>Small-scale data from the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) (2011a, 2011b) suggests that children who ultimately require permanent alternative care are often identified prior to birth.</p>	<p>Positive Impact</p> <p>The special needs in pregnancy team will be added to the duty team eventually. The team won't be added at the initial set up of the new duty team. Once the team are added, the Snips will have a positive benefit in the timelines and accessing those who require support earlier.</p>

Race	The ethnicity of West Dunbartonshire is becoming more diverse with the census 2022 highlighting that the non-white or other ethnicity categories have doubled in the last 10 years to 3.2 %.with higher rates in school age populations There are more than 47 additional languages spoken at home by school pupils. This diversity of children young people and families may face additional challenges in accessing support due to racism, cultural understanding and interpreting.	Unaccompanied asylum seeking children make up 1.38% of our looked after children.	<p>Positive Impact</p> <p>The service has access to interpreting services. The interpreting service can offer face to face or telephone support. There is a gap that referrals can only be provided via phone call or email to social work teams within West Dunbartonshire. This can make it difficult for people where English is not their first language to contact the service.</p>
Religion and Belief			There is no specific impact identified in relation to religion and belief.
Sex			There is no specific impact identified in relation to sex.
Sexual Orientation			There is no specific impact identified in relation to sexual orientation.
Human Rights			
Health	Any risk about an unborn child, child or young person, or if there is a risk in a household should be made known to the Children and Families service. West Dunbartonshire council are obligated to have a document these concerns and continue to investigate the concern or refer onto universal services.	<p>West Dunbartonshire has both a high percentage of lone parent families and lone parent who are not in employment. 50% of lone parent in West Dunbartonshire were not in employment. This can increase a child's risk in growing up in poverty and increase in becoming overweight, being diabetic or increased chance in developing cancer.</p> <p>2.7% of children in West Dunbartonshire are underweight which is the highest in GG&C.</p> <p>An estimated 5% of West Dunbartonshire of children live in household where there is drug abuse</p>	<p>Positive Impact of having a front door to all C&F services</p> <p>Having a front door for families, children, universal services and young people to contact the local authority can allow for services to tailor outcomes to meet their current needs and prevent their health deterioration. This can be via creating a social work assessment, vaccines, proving signposting to mental health services and education on the effects of tobacco, alcohol and living an active live.</p>

Social & Economic Impact	<p>Any risk about an unborn child, child or young person, or if there is a risk in a household should be made known to the Children and Families service. West Dunbartonshire council are obligated to have a document these concerns and continue to investigate the concern or refer onto universal services.</p>		<p>Positive Impact of having a front door to all C&F services</p> <p>The front door can signpost and provide emergency payments to families if they are unable to pay bills or food. Section 12 allows the duty team to have direct access to a welfare fund to provide support up to £50 per transaction. This can be a supervised shopping visit. Approvals for more than £50 needs to be provided via a Team Lead. The service can also refer into working4u which has access to other welfare funds and can also look into maximising the families' income.</p>
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<p>Cross Cutting</p>	<p>A number of the protected characteristics have the same impact no matter the protected characteristic.</p> <p>Any risk about an unborn child, child or young person, or if there is a risk in a household should be made known to the Children and Families service. West Dunbartonshire council are obligated to have a document these concerns and continue to investigate the concern or refer onto universal services.</p> <p>Services within C&F need to develop current services and anticipate future service demands. The number of children aged 0-15 is projected to decrease by 19.5% by 2043. This has implications on the costs and delivery of services including education. This means that there will still be a high need of children who need help and are in deprivation or have adverse trauma, but there is less money to invest in services as less people are choosing to stay in West Dunbartonshire.</p> <p>Prevention is a key focus of this programme of improvements. My developing a front door which can meet the statutory deadlines of assessments and sign post families and carers quickly to universal services to support them when they need it is key to prevention. Working with education colleagues and providing support to women when they are pregnant to focus on what is record to lead a healthy life free from abuse will prevent children coming to the service in the future.</p>	<p>The second top reason for referral to children's reporter in 2002/2023 in West Dunbartonshire was lack of parental care</p> <p>An estimated 17.5K of citizens stated they had physical or sexual abuse in childhood.</p> <p>Domestic abuse is the common reason why children are added to the child protection register.</p>	<p>Positive Impact of having a front door to all C&F services</p> <p>Having a dedicated team to support those who live in West Dunbartonshire to listen and act on an identified risk, will allow the service to continuous improve and review the service. The team will know what is working and what needs to change.</p>

Actions					
Action	Issue Description	Action Descscription	Actioner Name	Due Date	Completed Date
1	How a service user access the children and families service needs to be reviewed.	As part of how someone looks for help and finds help, is different to how people find information ten years ago. The commonly used method to find services and information is via social media or google. It is important that the internet pages for Children and families are up to date, accessible to those with a disability or where English is not their first language. The website will also service in people deciding if the duty service is the best place to go to.		31/03/25	
2	<p>The front door can signpost and provide emergency payments to families if they are unable to pay bills or food. Section 12 allows the duty team to have direct access to a welfare fund to provide support up to £50 per transaction.</p> <p>Currently not all of the duty team have access to the welfare fund or a purchase card.</p>	Expand the use of purchase card and access to welfare fund to all Social Workers within the duty team and expand to health visitors. In Inverclyde and Glasgow city, health visitors can provide support directly to those who need it at the visits.		31/03/25	

Policy has a negative impact on an equality group, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.

No negative impact was identified.

Will the impact of the policy be monitored and reported on an ongoing basis?

Yes the impact of this project will be monitored via the HSCP programme management office.

Q7 What is your recommendation for this policy?

Introduce

Please provide a meaningful summary of how you have reached the recommendation

this is the next step of the project plan.