**Notes and Actions from the Children First Pioneer Areas Meeting**

**Ladywell House, Park Street, Newtown, SY16 1JB**

**17 September 2019**

**Present:**

**Children First Pioneer Areas/Partner Organisations**

Lindsey Watkins (LW), Newport, (Millbrook Primary School)

Sarah Mutch (SM), Caerphilly, (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

Syd Dennis (SD), Cwm Taf, (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)

Diane Jones (DJ), Cwm Taf, (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)

Noeline Thomas (NT), Carmarthenshire, (Carmarthenshire County Council)

Caryl Alban (CA), Carmarthenshire, (Carmarthenshire County Council)

Deb Job (DJo), Conwy, (Conwy County Borough Council)

Claire Jones Barnett (CJB), Neath Port Talbot, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council)

Allison Harris (AH), Neath Port Talbot, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council)

**Welsh Government**

Sarah Melkevik (SMe)

Alwena Watkins (AE)

**Apologies:**

Wayne Warner (Welsh Government), Catrin Thomas (Gwynedd)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

SMe welcomed the group, including colleagues from Conwy and Neath Port Talbot.

Round table introductions were made.

1. **Expanding the Pioneer pilot**

SMe explained that the Deputy Minister had asked officials to explore with four Non-Pioneers the opportunities to join the Pioneer network. These include ACE - Action in Caerau and Ely (Cardiff), Newtown (Powys), Sandfields (Neath Port Talbot) and the whole borough of Conwy.

Work is ongoing and two expressions of interest have been received. SMe will inform the group when arrangements are finalised.

1. **Overview from Non-Pioneer areas**

Neath Port Talbot

* Neath Port Talbot have a Children’s Community in Sandfields West. Sandfields West is top of the deprivation list in Neath Port Talbot.
* The children’s community is based out of the Tir Morfa training centre. Services are already being delivered on site and there is a Flying Start setting on the grounds.
* Engagement and research work undertaken has led to two priorities; mental health and school readiness.
* Neath Port Talbot have a small project lead, with a small budget.
* Out of children’s community venue they run:
* early years work;
* have health visitors based on site;
* are setting up a Team around the Family;
* are undertaking target work around ASD;
* are adding SLC back into parenting sessions.
* Moving forward they will be using their draft Framework Evaluation to monitor and evaluate progress.
* Neath Port Talbot are one of the early year’s pathfinders.
* The PSB are supporting the children’s community.

Conwy

* As a borough, Conwy have adopted a whole county approach because deprivation isn’t limited to one area of Conwy.
* The county has been split into five areas, based on school catchments, each with a family support team.
* Three out of the five areas will have a physical family centre, the other two will have pop up family centre services. Llanrwst and Abergele have family centres in place, a third is being set up in Colwyn Bay.
* The five area approach has been adopted by health and youth work across Conwy in a more systems change approach.
* Children First wasn’t the only driver for this work, the County is responding, through this approach, to funding flexibility, pathfinders work, ACEs prevention and the first 1000 days.
* The model also arose out of qualitative research with families.
* The five family support teams are made up of family support workers. Each has a core team working with families in the area and a wider team of other interested parties.
* The family support teams offer a core set of work to families in each area and have a development pot of money to respond to local needs. They essentially use the best aspects of TAF and Flying Start.
* One of the benefits of using a family centre approach is to reduce the stigma for parents of accessing those services, since the family centres are open access to all and are pitched around the narrative that parenting is difficult and everyone at some point needs support.
* The services offered through the family centres aim to build resilient communities, offer the chance for parents to meet other parents and develop peer support groups.
* If more support is needed, families can have 1:2:1 support through a family support worker.
* Family support workers undertake ‘what matters?’ conversations with families through their Family Wellbeing Profile.
* The family centres also provide support for volunteers through the Homestart initiative.
* DJo spoke about the time and change management that had to be put in to make the teams successful. They needed to be given the time to get to know each other and to decide where they wanted to be based.
* The family support workers are funded by Flying Start and Families First funding, so they still need to report on how many people are being supported but the services are no longer postcode based. Whilst not all the families can get the intensive Flying Start support, they can be included through outreach.

1. **Alwena Watkins, Early Years Integration Project (EYIP)**

Early year’s intervention is a Prosperity for All commitment. Whilst Welsh Government has invested heavily in early years (conception to foundation phase) the system may not be working as well as it could and isn’t as joined up as it could be.

The project started with a co-construction project with Cwm Taf PSB in 2017.

The pilot involved:

* Mapping the journey of the child through services offered;
* Identifying gaps and interdependencies;
* Using vulnerability profiles to assess family need;
* Considering data sharing especially recognising the difficulties sharing information with the health sector.

The EYIP key points;

* Production of one set framework;
* Eight PSBs are on board as pathfinders;
* The project has defined core components of what an early years system should look like;
* Pathfinders role is to test the key components;
* Pathfinders are given two monthly workshops;
* Looking at developing an integrated pathway for referrals with robust data sharing;
* £50k is available for each PSB to appoint a project manager to deliver the project;
* Miller research will evaluate the pathfinders work;
* In the longer term, how the EYIP is scaled up will be through working with PSBs on a regional basis then on a national basis.

Caerphilly gave an update on their progress:

* Caerphilly is working with Newport and Blaenau Gwent, with each proving £15k into a regional pot;
* They have been mapping all services that touch children 0 – 7 years, including transition points, pinch points etc;
* They have mapped age groups antenatal, first year, second year and ages 3 – 7 against health, education and learning, childcare and housing;
* They have bought in capacity from Aneurin Bevan for two days a week to look at health systems;
* Vanguard has been commissioned for six days, with a commitment for senior managers continued involvement;
* Part of the Vanguard work will be looking at six family case files of five year olds, speaking to families about their experiences, considering what the system looks like and what the system should look like and checking back with professionals about what a perfect system would feel like.

Carmarthenshire gave an update on their progress:

* Within the Hywel Dda Health Board, two of the three local authorities are pathfinders (Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion);
* They are at the mapping stage, using Transformation, Innovation and Change (TIC) teams;
* They are following the Vanguard process;
* They are building relationships with midwifery;
* They are aiming to replicate Flying Start in non-Flying Start areas;
* They are doing some work around transition into schools;
* They are establishing an early year’s team in a non-Flying Start area as an early adoption pilot, before consideration of county wide roll out.

A copy of Alwena’s presentation is attached.

****

**Action 1:***SMe to look at utilising Cascade.*

1. **Cwm Taf and Data Cymru Evaluation of measures of success**

DJ and SD spoke about their work around evaluating measures of success. Most of their data exists at population outcome level. They are unable to get localised data especially health data.

They are using a set of qualitative questions to undertake a perception survey at every community event.

RCT spoke about their work with OCSI. For minimal data input, RCT can receive a range of up to date data, which includes community and social insights, through a social value tool. They have paid £5k with unlimited access to data provided by OCSI.

SD circulated examples of the data provided by OCSI.

**Action 2:** *SD to circulate OCSI contact information.*

More generally on evaluation, the group discussed how we can move beyond the population outcomes in the Theory of Change to more qualitative impact of what’s different as a result of the children first activity.

1. **Feedback on Systems Change Network**

There has been no progress, since agreeing to be involved with Save the Children’s System Change Network since agreeing when we met in June.

**Action 3:** *SMe to chase Save the Children regarding Pioneers involvement in their Systems Change Network.*

1. **Welsh Government update**

The main activity has been working with the Non-Pioneers to consider expanding the Pioneer pilot.

Other activity has included:

* The Deputy Minister visited Newport on 20th June;
* The Deputy Minister visited Gwynedd last week;
* Launch of the Ferndale hub on 11th July and the Calon Las hub on 11th September;
* The Finding your Voice community toolkit was launched on 18th July.

**6. Strategic updates**

**Newport Children First Pioneer update**

* LW updated on the ongoing work with Save the Children on the Bettws Early Learning Community. A project board is being established and a Lead and data Manager is in the process of being appointed. The Early Learning Community dovetails with Newport City Council work across the city.
* The Finding your Voice toolkit for children to undertake research within the community was launched in July with successful presentations from the children involved.

The finding your voice toolkit is attached

****

**Caerphilly Children First Pioneer update**

* Boing Boing have delivered resilience work with two schools.
* The Carnival on 29 June went well.
* The Heddlu Bach scheme is running successfully.
* SHEP provision during the holidays was well attended, with 45% take up by eFSM children. Four family trips were also run during the summer.
* Van community group are running their own play scheme.
* A kinship carers group is also running.
* A Dad’s worker is running two groups in the community and some low level mental health support work.

**Cwm Taf Children First Pioneer update**

Rhondda Cynon Taff

* Future work includes moving away from an implementation group to a community/engagement group.
* They are also going into year two of their delivery plan.

Merthyr

* Now that the Calon Las hub has been launched, Cwm Taf raised the difficulties around building costs. Cwm Taf are still providing significant financial support in the background for those who occupy the building.
* Next big project is the community coffee shop and once set up running it as a social enterprise volunteer model.
* Within the building they are offering for example dog surgeries and other softer things to get footfall through the door.
* The hub offers an Integrated Information and Advice (IIA) service, and are considering how other services can contribute to the IIA.
* They are developing an Early Help Hub to develop a TAF approach.
* £5k was provided to the youth service based in Calon Las to respond to holiday hunger.

**Carmarthenshire Children First Pioneer update**

* Recently visited Dusty Forge.
* Morfa Children’s Centre is putting on additional sessions to pick up on the issues that came out of the recorded stories.
* Trinity College are working with teachers to use the expressive arts for training, including building teachers own resilience.
* They are exploring the feasibility of a potential building to co-locate services.

**Gwynedd Children First Pioneer update**

* No update given.

**7. AOB and Finish**

SM asked for suggestions for further speakers, suggestions included:

* British Council.
* Welsh Government education colleagues to talk about the National Mission.
* Welsh Government to talk about community learning and 21st century schools.

**Action 4:** *Any suggested names of future guest speakers to SMe*

Some changes to the attendee list were noted. For ease future attendees will be

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Newport** | **Caerphilly** | **Carmarthenshire** |
| Lindsey Watkins | Sarah Mutch | Noeline Thomas  Caryl Alban  Joe Cudd TBC |
| **Cwm Taf** | **Gwynedd** | **ACE TBC** |
| Syd Dennis  Diane Jones | Catrin Thomas | Hazel Cryer |
| **Conwy TBC** | **Neath Port Talbot TBC** | **Powys TBC** |
| Deb Job | Claire Jones Barnett  Allison Harris | Jo Hughes |
| **General** |  |  |
| Welsh Government  Save the Children |  |  |

**Dates for next meeting: 9 December in Cardiff, (Ferndale have offered to host our spring meeting)**

**Summary of Action points:**

**Action 1:***SMe to look at utilising Cascade.*

**Action 2:** *SD to circulate OCSI contact information.*

**Action 3:** *SMe to chase Save the Children regarding Pioneers involvement in their Systems Change Network.*

**Action 4:** *Any suggested names of future guest speakers to SMe*