



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019-20

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE 8TH DECEMBER 2021

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR,
COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**

Agenda Item No. 8

**THE TRANSFORMATION OF
EARLY YEARS SERVICES IN RCT**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To brief Members on the progress made across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region towards the delivery of an integrated early years system as part of the Welsh Government's Early Years Transformation Programme and the transformation of Early Years services in RCT.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Scrutinise and comment on the information contained in this report.
- 2.2 Consider the findings of the Stage 1 external evaluation of the new delivery model being piloted as set out in section 6 of the report.

2.3 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in further depth any matters contained in this report.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 In July 2017 a report was presented to Cwm Taf Public Services Board requesting consideration be given to the adoption of a common set of regional principles to support the integrated delivery of the following initiatives in partnership with Welsh Government:

- Children First
- Early Years Co-Construction Project, and
- Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder

3.2 In support of establishing a co-ordinated strategic approach across the region, under the regional vision of '**Providing the right support, to the right people, at the right time, in the right place**', the Public Services Board agreed a set of principles that included the following early years specific actions:

- a) A single integrated approach to early intervention is developed across Cwm Taf that focuses on the principles of building of resilience; applies vulnerability profiling data to support the targeting of services; delivers an integrated Early Years system through improved collaboration on approaches to Team Around the Family (TAF).
- b) An Early Years Vulnerability Profile (0-7 years) is developed to identify the level of need of families and piloted in RCT as an alternative to the geographically based eligibility criteria of Flying Start.
- c) Information sharing arrangements are introduced to enable the secure and appropriate inclusion of Health data in the Early Years Vulnerability Profile.
- d) Health visiting services provided by the UHB are jointly commissioned across Cwm Taf with a new service specification that reflects these principles and subsequent developments; delivering a model of Universal progressivism.
- e) That a Cwm Taf governance structure be agreed for the integration of the Early Years system.

3.3 The PSB also confirmed the commitment of partners in Cwm Taf to progress the development of these principles into a practical proposal to deliver an integrated Early Years system in Cwm Taf, to be piloted in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Recognising early years as a priority for the region, commitment was also given to the removal of any potential barriers to information sharing across organisations and to extend the further development of proposals to include Bridgend CBC, given the changes to UHB boundaries.

3.4 The Council's Cabinet endorsed the proposals to transform the Early Years System in RCT in July 2019 including approving the plan to adopt a phased approach to providing funded childcare based on assessed need that is not limited to existing Flying Start postcode areas. As the proposals to pilot an integrated Early Years system in RCT had

implications for the national Flying Start Programme, approval was required from Welsh Government Ministers. Cabinet Members also approved the submission of a formal proposal to Welsh Government seeking Ministerial support to pilot further changes to the Early Years system in relation to the introduction of a needs based approach for childcare and changes to health visiting.

- 3.5 The formal request for Ministerial approval was submitted in December 2019 and approval to proceed was granted in February 2020 however this was on the condition that a hybrid model of childcare delivery was implemented; the geographical eligibility had to remain as well as the needs based eligibility proposed.
- 3.6 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Early Years Transformation Board oversees the wider transformation work across the region, providing strategic direction and leadership and reports progress to the PSB. The most recent update was provided to the PSB in October 2021.

4. PROGRESS WITH REGIONAL WORKSTREAMS

- 4.1 The ambition of the Welsh Government Early Years Transformation Programme is to deliver on the vision which is set out in Prosperity for All “to create a truly joined-up, responsive system that puts the unique needs of each child at its heart”. This means every service that families and young children come into contact with being clear how they can best support child development in the broadest sense. It will target parents as early as possible and sustain support where it is needed. Investing in the early years is an investment in the economy and workforce of the future.

‘We want children from all backgrounds to have the best start in life. Our aim is that everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential and maximise their chances of leading a healthy, prosperous and fulfilling adulthood, enabling them to participate fully in communities, the workplace, and contribute to the future economic success of Wales.’

Prosperity for All – the National Strategy (Welsh Government)

- 4.2 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Early Years Transformation Board oversees this work at a regional level and provides strategic direction and leadership to deliver on the following objectives:
- To explore how early years services might be re-configured,
 - To explore what it will take to create an Early Years system locally,
 - To work together to deliver services in a co-ordinated, integrated and timely way,
 - Focussing on coordination of services, planning, commissioning and identifying and addressing needs,
 - To identify barriers to integration and remove them.
- 4.3 The Early Years Integration Transformation fund was introduced by Welsh Government in 2020-21 and made available to Pathfinder regions. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Early Years Transformation Board is responsible for managing this grant funding across the region to ensure it supports the delivery of the regional objectives aligned to the principles agreed by the PSB. The 2021-22 allocation for Cwm Taf is £359,730, based on the 0-7 population figures for RCT and Merthyr which is used to fund activities in the following four areas of work:

- Key roles – Regional Transformation Lead Officer and Resilience and Wellbeing Health Programme Lead Officer
- External evaluation of the pilot delivery model in RCT – Stage 2
- Provision of wellbeing support to increase resilience and address inequalities resulting from impact of COVID-19
- Attachment Research project

4.4 A separate grant of £50k from Welsh Government supports the joint work underway on the development of the Early Years Vulnerability Profile and is used to provide additional technical capacity in the Education Systems Team in RCT.

4.5 Bridgend CBC joined Merthyr Tydfil CBC and Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC as part of the regional Early Years Transformation Board in 2018-19, formally becoming part of the Welsh Government's pathfinder programme earlier this financial year. As a pathfinder area, Bridgend will receive a local co-ordination grant this financial year to support the mapping, scoping and visioning work required by Welsh Government. Following completion of this work any regional Transformation Grant funding awarded by Welsh Government for 2022-23 onwards will include additional monies to account for the 0-7 population figures in Bridgend.

4.6 Whilst the majority of the operational transformation work is taking place in RCT, there are also two key research and development activities taking place across the region.

Attachment Research Project

4.7 The first stage of the Attachment Research Project work led by Merthyr Tydfil on behalf of the region commenced in 2020-21, including delivering baseline training to the wider workforce across the region on identifying attachment difficulties.

4.8 The Parent Infant Foundation was commissioned in March 2021 to map existing services and interventions which support and/or treat the attachment relationship; consult with parents; undertake training and skills audit of the workforce; provide recommendations on approaches and future practice across the region.

4.9 This research has been subject to significant interest from other parts of Wales and from Welsh Government due to its breadth and scope across the Early Years services. It is recognised and accepted that children's development does have a significant impact on the life trajectory of children, and for those whose development is impaired in these early stages can mean they can go on to be our most complex and most costly cases as they grow and progress through the systems be these Health, Social Services or Education.

Vulnerability Profiling Project an Information Sharing Arrangements

4.10 The aim of the Early Years Vulnerability Profiling Project is to develop a profile that facilitates the *“Early identification of children aged 0-7 who are at risk of not meeting the developmental milestones necessary to progress effectively through the early years as a result of the socio-economic and health factors they and or their families face”* in order to offer an alternative to geographically based eligibility criteria for early years services. This project builds on the experience and successful application of Vulnerability Profiling by Local Authorities to improve the educational outcomes for children and young people aged 7-16 years.

- 4.11 Overseen by an established Steering Group, this work is now progressing on two project fronts and activity is split between two separate workstreams:

Workstream 1 is the First 1000 days focused Health profile which considers a larger list of data sets that have been submitted to SAIL (Secure Anonymised Information Linkage) at Swansea University for analysis. This information will be combined with data SAIL already hold to produce a geographical map of risk factors and provide precedence rates that suggest the likelihood of future vulnerabilities.

Workstream 2 is concerned with the development of an Early Years Vulnerability Profiling model to be piloted in RCT that can add key data sets from Health to the existing LA vulnerability profile able to identify individual children and families likely to be in need of enhanced support to be piloted as an alternative model to support the planning and targeting of Early Years support. The work to date has focused on the technical considerations and the physical transfer of electronic data between CTM UHB and RCTCBC, in order to facilitate the testing of an initial profile in 2021-22.

- 4.13 To support this development work, Data Disclosure Agreements are in place between RCT CBC and CTM UHB with a view to WASPI Information Sharing Protocols being developed in the near future. The findings of the qualitative research undertaken by EMPOVA to gather citizen's and professionals' opinions about data sharing will be used to inform the way in which this work is communicated to both the public and professionals alongside information governance considerations.
- 4.14 Merthyr Tydfil has been developing its capacity around the Capita system and has been working alongside key individuals in RCT in order to benefit from the learning and work piloted by RCT and CTM UHB.

5. PROGRESS IN RCT

- 5.1 In preparation for delivering an integrated Early Years system for 0-7 year olds across RCT and piloting a new Flying Start delivery model, the reorganisation of the Council's Community Wellbeing and Resilience Service was required. This was undertaken in 2018 and reported in detail to Scrutiny Committee in March 2020. The costs of the reconfiguration of Council services were met within existing budgets, through the flexible use of Community and Children's Grant funding and the recommissioning of services.
- 5.2 The new approach being piloted in RCT builds on the pre-existing Resilient Families Service and sees the delivery of a new Resilience and Wellbeing Health Programme alongside the delivery of universal parenting support, early language support and a hybrid childcare delivery model.
- 5.3 An Early Years appraisal is undertaken for all families referred to the Resilient Families Service with a child 7 years or under. This enables the needs of younger children to be reflected in the Family Plan and where appropriate a package of support includes enhanced early years interventions. This work is undertaken by members of the Programme Flexibilities Team who provide specialist Early Years appraisal, Education Psychology assessment and therapeutic intervention. This team also hosts specialist posts commissioned by the Council from Health including Specialist Health Visitors,

CNN's, Midwives, Speech and Language Therapist, a Sensory Occupational Therapist and also the Regional Early Years Transformation Programme Lead.

Parenting

- 5.4 A universal Parenting Offer was implemented in April 2018, making support available for any parents in RCT with a child up to the age of 18 years and specialist support for parents with children with additional needs.
- 5.5 Following a public consultation in 2020 to identify the needs of parents as result of covid-19 and lockdown, parenting support services were recommissioned in February 2021 to provide an opportunity for the Council to deliver a multi-faceted response to the needs of parents, facilitating universal access to information advice and guidance and tailoring bespoke interventions that acknowledge the individual experiences of families. The feedback from the public survey is detailed in section 8 of this report.
- 5.6 As a result, any family in need of parenting support can engage in open access provision, informal parenting support or formal parenting programmes, all delivered both virtually and from community venues across RCT. A spot purchasing arrangement is also being introduced, supported by an approved supplier list which will enable informal parenting support to be delivered by locally based community groups and organisations.
- 5.7 In addition to this, the Resilient Families Service Parenting Team offer bespoke one to one parenting support for families, working with RFS as part of a comprehensive package of family support. In 2020-21 the RFS Parenting Team worked with a total of 513 families. Of these families:
- 445 received support as part of their RFS Family Plan
 - 56 received support as part of a statutory Care and Support or Child Protection Plan
 - 12 received ongoing support as part of RFS exit strategy plans – to ensure they were fully confident to employ new techniques and strategies

As a result, 474 parents received one to one support, 16 parents received a mix of one to one and group support and 25 received group support only. Of those parents completing sessions 80% reported positive improvements in their confidence to meet their children's needs.

- 5.8 In addition to one to one support the RFS Parenting Team also delivered 16 virtual Parenting Programmes. Of these programmes 14 were formal evidenced based covering the 0-18 age range and two were specialist programmes for parents of children with ASD.

Childcare

- 5.9 A hybrid approach to the delivery of childcare is currently being employed in RCT as a stipulation of Welsh Government approval for the implementation of the pilot. This comprises funded childcare places (2.5 hours a day, 5 days a week during term time) for children aged 2-3 years living in Flying Start postcode areas, and also the provision of short term funded childcare places for children outside of Fling Start postcode areas with an assessed need. This need is assessed by the Resilient Families Service and offered as part of a co-ordinated package of support to families in line with available places at that particular time. The original intention was to take a fully costed phased approach over a 3 year period to transfer from a postcode eligibility to a needs based model, however the hybrid approach directed by Welsh Government whilst costing significantly

more has not been accompanied by additional funding. Therefore, currently in order to provide funded childcare for children with an assessed need living outside of Flying Start areas, vacant Flying Start places are utilised. Unfortunately, this does not provide the level of flexibility required to ensure the provision of funded childcare is available to every child identified as benefitting from it. Whilst additional covid funding from WG has eased this situation recently, this is only a short term solution.

- 5.10 In 2020-21 there were 845 children aged 2-3 years living in a Flying Start postcode area and therefore eligible to be offered a Flying Start funded childcare place, however only 71.5% of families took up the place. This is substantially less than the 93.6% take up rate in 2019 and attributable to the current climate post pandemic where parents would prefer children remain home in light of local covid-19 infection rates. Additional focus has been placed on supporting the take up of places given the important role childcare can play in assisting children's developmental progress that is likely to have been affected by the restrictions of lockdown.
- 5.11 This has meant that there have been places available for allocation to those children living outside of Flying Start areas who have been assessed as requiring a funded childcare place as part of their family's involvement with the Resilient Families Service. A total of 99 children received this funded childcare since 1st January 2021, with 42 children currently in placement at the time of writing this report.

Enhanced Health Visiting

- 5.12 The Resilience and Wellbeing Health Programme replaces the previous Flying Start contract with Health and commissions the deployment of Family Health Visitors to provide universal access to enhanced health visiting services when required. The Resilience and Wellbeing Health Programme was launched in October 2020 despite the additional pressures and restrictions placed on partners having to adapt services in response to the pandemic. Adopting an approach of universal progressivism, this service is providing all families across RCT with children aged 0-5 years with the opportunity to access an enhanced level of Health Visiting contacts as required, regardless of geographical location. The universal offer delivered by Family Health Visitors provides the contact visits as described in the Healthy Child Wales Programme, with the additionality of an antenatal contact, as well as a contact at 20 months to undertake a Schedule of Growing Skills (SOGs) assessment. The assessments provide extra opportunities to identify developmental needs of children and inform the targeting of wider early years services and family support interventions delivered via the Resilient Families Service (RFS) in addition to the wider health support.
- 5.13 Since the introduction of the new Family Health Visiting programme in October 2020, Health Visiting referrals to RFS have been lower than anticipated. A joint LA/UHB Strategic Management group has been established to review the data and identify and implement measures to improve referral rates. The measures included training for all Health Visitors jointly facilitated by Council and UHB staff; the production of a new leaflet for HV's to share with families to explain the service changes and support available; and revisions made to the data recording templates and reporting procedures to improve data quality and timeliness.
- 5.14 The above has led to a steady increase in the number of referrals being made to RFS and families being supported, from 139 (October 2020 – April 2021) to 168 (April 2021 – September 2021), however they still remain far lower than expected (current referral

rates are 1.6% of children registered for the programme as opposed to 32% of registrations recorded as having a FRAIT score below 20 and therefore expected to require some additional support). One possibility for the low referral rate is that families are accessing RFS as self referrals as opposed to HV referrals, however regular Contract Monitoring meetings and Strategic Management Group meetings are taking place to look to address this as a priority.

Early Language and Communication

- 5.15 The delivery of both universal and targeted early language and communication interventions is undertaken by the Council's Talk and Play Team (TAP) that sit within the Resilient Families Service. Supported by the RFS Speech and Language Therapist the team undertake a specialist Wellcomm assessment for children identified as experiencing language delay by Health Visitors during their 20 months SOGS assessment. For those children scoring in the 'red' or 'amber' range on the Wellcomm assessment the TAP Team will undertake a block of early language intervention working with parents and children together. The team employ the Adult Child Interaction (ACI) approach 'Be Here Be Clear' which is a relational approach to supporting parents to support their own child's language and communication development which reinforces opportunities to build secure attachments.
- 5.16 In 2020-21 the Talk and Play Team (TAP) received a total of 132 referrals for early speech and language intervention via RFS. TAP undertook 107 Wellcomm Assessments with children of which less than 30% resided in Flying Start areas. This supports the rationale for extending Early Years services beyond the geographically determined parameters of Flying Start programme. Following TAP Team intervention 67% of children and 59% of parents showed positive improvements. As this is a new approach this data provides a baseline against which future performance can be measured. In addition to the one to one support provided, the TAP Team delivered Song and Rhyme weekly drop in sessions on Zoom, a Baby Babble programme and a Recycle, Reuse & Rebuild craft programme, engaging 35 families.
- 5.17 The demand on the service has significantly increased this year with 163 referrals made between 1st April and 31st August 2021; a 56% increase on the referral rate for the preceding 6 month period. Of the 84 children identified as having speech language and communication delays following Wellcomm assessment, 81% (68) scored within the red and 19% (16) scored within the amber categories, indicating a need for direct intervention.

6. MEASURING IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

- 6.1 To ensure the impact and outcomes of the pilot approach in RCT are effectively measured this work is subject to a three stage external evaluation, the first of which was completed by Miller Research in April 2021. The Stage 1 report evaluates the pilot since its launch, reviews the progress of implementation so far and the position across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region. The key findings are summarised below and the full report and can be found in Appendix 1.
- a. The pilot and its objectives appear fit for purpose and highly coherent with the policy context. It meets the explicit requirement for the coordination and integration of

existing early years programmes and the close cooperation of the local authority and health board.

- b. Progress has been made against the objectives of the pilot, which remain coherent and relevant to the policies and needs. As the programme is in the early stage of delivery there is still much to be done to fully realise the objectives, such as the removal of barriers that have been identified.
- c. The resources available are adequate in the eyes of stakeholders. Through collaboration and coordination, the existing skills, knowledge, and experience of staff is being better deployed to meet the needs of families and organisational needs. Where there are identified gaps, training is being provided to address them. The majority of funding for the pilot is being met with existing budgets, with transformation programme funds being used to support some aspects and develop regional working. There are deliberate management processes in place with governance structures including all teams involved.
- d. As the approach is built on the integration work that has already happened in Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, notably the establishment of the Resilient Families Service, delivery has begun successfully. Services are available to all in RCT with access determined by assessment of need. Reservations amongst stakeholders, notably over workforce capacity, have been overcome. COVID-19 has been a disruption but only with a similar impact as would have been the case on the sector without the pilot approach. The rapid adoption of remote communications has facilitated greater cooperation at the strategic level although there are concerns that there will be a greater strain on services due to the pandemic.
- e. At this stage there is already some evidence of the outcomes of the pilot. The distinction between generic and Flying Start health visiting has been removed, with caseloads shared across the workforce. All Health Visitors are now able to offer the same range of support, including an additional antenatal visit and a visit at 20 months for the SOGS assessment. There is evidence of the presence of new families receiving support who previously would not have been eligible due to where they live.

6.2 The commissioning for Stage 2 of the external evaluation is underway with a view to this work being completed by the end of the financial year. Stage 2 will focus on rigorous evaluation of the systems and processes underpinning the pilot delivery model.

6.3 A third stage of evaluation is planned for 2022-23 which will be a summative evaluation concerned with measuring the outcomes for service users and the impact on services and policy of the new delivery model and will mark the end of the pilot phase. The findings of this Stage 3 evaluation will inform local discussion about the adoption of this model on a regional footprint as well as formal discussions with Welsh Government about implications for national policy.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form was prepared in respect of the transformation of the Early Years System in RCT in 2018. The screening identified that as a pilot concerned with extending access to services the changes to the delivery model have limited impact on children and families, a full Equality Impact Assessment would not be required at this time.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation with parents and families was undertaken prior to the implementation of a universal parenting offer across RCT in April 2018. At this time parents reported wanting to see more informal support tailored to their needs that they could access in their local communities. They also requested support for specific elements of parenting such as managing behaviour and supporting the educational needs of their children.

8.2 A 'Parenting through Covid-19' Survey was created and public consultation undertaken in September 2020. The survey was accessible via the Consultation page on the Council's website and a link to it was promoted via the Council's social media platforms, the Family Information Service, WICID.tv and YEPS social media platforms. Council partners and commissioned providers were also approached to promote the survey and encourage parents they are in contact with to complete it.

8.3 A total of 200 individuals responded to the survey which asked questions about how, when and where they felt parenting support should be available; what barriers they faced to accessing support; specific support that would be helpful at different stages; specific help they require; what they may have received in the past that was helpful; and their suggestions for improving support. Key headline findings include:

- 58% said they would like to access online support with only 36% reporting they would like to be able to join a group
- 76% would like to see parenting support available advertised on local facebook groups and 59% would like to see it advertised in school settings
- 48% reported they did not know where to look for support
- 27% found the times support was available as a barrier to accessing it and 23% found the support did not meet their needs
- 69% with a child aged 4-11 felt they needed help to support their child's emotional wellbeing and mental health and this rose to 71% for those with children aged 11+
- 64% wanted support that was tailored to their family's needs

8.4 Analysis of this survey feedback was used to inform the detail within the new service specifications for parenting support as part of the formal procurement of revised parenting support services as set out in section 5 of this report.

8.5 Consultation with service users and stakeholders about the Early Years Transformation goals and their experiences of the pilot approach in RCT is ongoing. Informal consultation takes place on a regular basis with families receiving Resilient Families Service interventions and the UHB are currently developing a service user engagement strategy which will include gathering feedback on the new Health Visiting / RFS pathway in RCT. A regional survey is currently taking place for parents with children aged 0-7 years across Cwm Taf Morgannwg to seek their views on the support received during

their child's early years and how they would like to continue to be involved in the Transformation Programme.

- 8.6 Consultation with partners including; health, education, housing providers, childcare and play providers, and third sector organisations takes place on a termly basis via the Resilient Families Service Provider Forum meetings, and also on a one to one basis during contract monitoring visits. All commissioned partners are signed up to providing universal access to family support services as set out in the Council's Resilient Families Programme.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 The cost of Cwm Taf Morgannwg developments is being met from regional grant funding received as part of the Welsh Government's Early Years Transformation Programme. This funding is managed by RCT on behalf of the region.
- 9.2 There are no additional costs to the Council incurred as a result of the pilot work underway in RCT as these costs are being met from existing grant funding as part of the Children and Communities Grant the Council receives from Welsh Government.
- 9.3 As with all grant funding there is a level of risk to the Council should this funding be withdrawn at a future time, however the Welsh Government remains committed to the transformation of Early Years services within the wider anti-poverty and early intervention and prevention agendas.
- 9.4 The Children and Communities Grant offers far more flexibility than the Council has previously had to move funding where it is required to meet identified need, therefore should a reduction in the grant occur the Council remains in a good position to re-allocate funds to priority areas. As a result of Covid-19 the delivery of flexible early years services is a clear identified priority for both the Council and Welsh Government.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this work; however consultation with Welsh Government is ongoing via both the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Transformation Board and the Funding Flexibilities Pathfinder Programme to ensure transformation proposals do not contravene grant funding conditions.
- 10.2 The following legislation has been considered in relation to the development of the transformation pilot:

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014:

- Putting an individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control over reaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being
- Supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of this care and support
- Increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need
- Strong partnership working between all agencies and organisations.

The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:

- A more equal Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales

11. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

11.1 The implementation of the new Early Years System for RCT contributes to the Council's corporate priority that People are independent, healthy and successful, by improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do by:

- working in partnership with Welsh Government, strive to reduce child poverty, providing services that encourage and build resilience of children and their families.

11.2 The Early Years System has been developed in full consideration of the sustainable development principles. The work also supports the Council to contribute to all of the seven well-being goals:-

- **A prosperous Wales:** children who receive support at the earliest opportunity are more prepared for adulthood and achieving prosperous futures.
- **A resilient Wales:** children who are given every opportunity to meet their developmental milestones and overcome barriers to developing skills are prepared with the space to grow and the tools to build resilience throughout life.
- **A healthier Wales:** access to enhanced support that is not restricted by geographical boundaries supports all children who need it to meet their developmental milestones and develop social skills, enhancing their emotional wellbeing.
- **A more equal Wales:** by delivering services based on an assessment of need as opposed to being limited by geographically based eligibility criteria ensures that those children and families most in need of support have access to it irrespective of where they live.
- **A Wales of cohesive Communities:** access to services that are not restricted to particular communities promotes equality and harmony across communities and the means to share community resources in order to be responsive to need and build resilience.
- **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language:** children who are given the freedom to progress through the early years in the language of their choice learn to be tolerant and accepting, preparing them for a multi-racial, globalised adult world.
- **A globally responsible Wales:** children who have access to effective early years opportunities are afforded experiences that prepare them to be globally responsible adults.

12. **CONCLUSION**

- 12.1 This report has provided Members with details of the progress made across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region towards the delivery of an integrated early years system as part of the Welsh Government's Early Years Transformation Programme and the transformation of Early Years services in RCT.