

ITEM No ...2.....

REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE –
26 OCTOBER 2020

REPORT ON: HUNTER FOUNDATION AND BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 273-2020

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides a 12-month update on work with the Hunter Foundation and BBC Children in Need as part of a What Matters 2 U initiative for children and young people considered to be on the edges of care. It also provides an update on developments relating to a number of aligned initiatives which continue to be progressed as part of an ambitious Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Improvement Programme designed to improve the early identification of family problems and related support in order to prevent problems from escalating.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee:

- i. Note progress made in the last 12 months of the continued implementation of What Matters to You (WM2U) in conjunction with aligned initiatives;
- ii. Note that this work will now be progressed as an integrated part of our response to the Independent Care Review and work with the Third Sector on commissioning;
- iii. Instruct the Executive Director of Children and Families to provide a further update including an outline of financial implications and proposals in 6 months.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Hunter Foundation and BBC Children in Need jointly committed to providing up to £1,000,000 inward investment to the city from 2018 to 2021. The purpose of this funding was to provide additional capacity, where required, to improve support to children and young people on the edges of care. There are no additional costs to the Council and aligned initiatives under the GIRFEC Improvement Programme were and continue to be progressed through existing resources. Details on how the programme will be sustained are outlined in the body of this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 GIRFEC

The national GIRFEC policy promotes a holistic understanding of the health and wellbeing needs of children, young people and families. It encourages a shared partnership focus on jointly identifying problems early to prevent them from escalating; involving children, young people and families in decision making on issues which affect their lives; and delivering services that are integrated, meaningful from their perspective and promote positive outcomes. The roles of both universal and targeted services in assessing concerns, developing plans, engaging with families and coordinating support are therefore central to the approach.

HUNTER FOUNDATION AND BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

- 4.2 The Hunter Foundation works collaboratively with the Scottish Government and other partners by injecting risk capital and developing 'self-sustaining interventions that can solve intractable problems. It seeks to jointly pilot, independently evaluate and replicate innovation in education, opportunity for all and poverty reduction. Similarly, BBC Children in Need award specific grants to organisations which support disadvantaged children and young people with a view to helping them prevent or overcome associated barriers in their lives.
- 4.3 Together, the Hunter Foundation and BBC Children in Need aim to work with organisations where they have identified a demonstrable leadership commitment and capacity to promote systemic change as opposed to developing isolated or short-term projects which only improve pockets of practice or end when time limited funding ceases. In addition to financial support, capacity building extends to them providing leadership and technical expertise and supporting organisations to make links with partners that have been involved in innovative and successful outcome focused work.

5.0 DEVELOPMENTS

In the last 12 months, developments with both the What Matters 2 U initiative and aligned initiatives have been interrupted by Covid-19 but the pandemic has also provided incentives and highlighted opportunities to now scale this work at pace. The findings of the Independent Care Review, published just before the outbreak in February 2020, also reinforce the importance of the approach. As outlined in the last report, the initiative promotes leadership collaboration between partners and within communities towards the development of a shared vision and more effective family support.

- 5.1 To this end, a dedicated Project Coordinator and a Learning Partner continue to work jointly with partners in identifying and consulting with children, young people and their parents/carers on the type of support they consider will make a positive difference to their lives. In January 2020, Columba 1400 facilitated a focussed leadership event to reflect on shared values and the extent to which services consistently involve and reflect the needs of families. Similarly, a number of community leadership events with parents/carers in the west of the city have been held. During the outbreak, an adapted model of engagement has included:
- Using the community garden at the Balgarthno Campus to engage with parents.
 - 1:1 coaching support at parents own pace
 - Online structured and themed virtual sessions for parents
 - Walks and talks for parents who are not comfortable with group-based activity
 - Providing practical support such as food/electricity supplies
 - Continued engagement with Local Authority senior leaders
- 5.2 Over the next 3 months, subject to ongoing restrictions associated with the pandemic, these leadership sessions will be extended to include a broader range of partners; the flexible engagement with parents will continue; Hunter Foundation and What Matters 2 U colleagues (the sessions will be supported by Columba 1400 in their coaching role) will form part of a new Flexible Family Support Project Board consisting of Council, Health, Health and Social Care Partnership and Third Sector partners to both inform and be informed by aligned initiatives. Reporting to the Children and Families Executive Board, the Project Board will develop proposals to coherently develop services which genuinely reflect the needs of families, whilst also exploring opportunities to contribute towards reduced costs. Its terms of reference include:
- **Fast Online Referral Tracking (FORT)** – building on the effective use of the system during the pandemic, when the system received referrals from 53 agencies and distributed over £148,000 in financial support to 473 families,

partners will explore how the system can be rolled out and serve as a single mechanism to access wider family support. The system allows for the secure exchange of referral information and joint case management between agencies, ensuring that people requesting services are quickly channelled to the most appropriate service.

- **Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing (ANEW) Programme –** with support from CELCIS, this continues to focus as a test of change on building the capacity, confidence and competence of Health Visitors and Head Teachers to better identify and assess children with additional support needs who are attending a nursery class or one of 3 Lochee Primary Schools. Despite the interruptions to work caused by the outbreak, this work has continued to progress over the last 12 months and is leading to more meaningful engagement with families in Team Around the Child Meetings.
- **Costs** - opportunities to reduce Third Sector commissioning costs within the context of the Committee Report (Article II of the Minute of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 5 March 2020) (Report No. 103-2020 refers). This report outlined proposals to reduce costs by £653k over a 2-year period, with a target of £150k in 2020-21. The Project Board, which includes representation from Dundee Voluntary Action and Third Sector partners, will develop proposals on how this can be achieved in the context of flexible family support delivered jointly across organisations in a way which ensures a consistent focus on key priorities.

5.3 Going forwards, these initiatives will also form part of our response to the 5 foundations outlined in the Independent Care Review's Promise, involving a greater focus on actively listening to families; delivering flexible support which reflects their needs and helps them to overcome both practical and personal difficulties; and thereby ensuring that, where children are safe, they can remain in a nurturing and loving family environment. As proposed in the Committee Report providing an update on Corporate Parenting over the last 12 months, our overall approach towards the review will be outlined in the next 3-year iteration of the Corporate Parenting Plan in December 2020.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This Report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness and poverty, environment and corporate risk. There are no major issues.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

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October 2020

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