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# Evaluation of the Flexible Funding Programme

## Interim Report

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Evaluation of the Flexible Funding Programme: Interim Report  
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Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not  
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## **Glossary**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
CfW+	Communities for Work Plus
CRIA	Children's Rights Impact Assessment
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
EIPS	Early Intervention, Prevention, and Support
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (formerly the Department for Communities and Local Government)
NAO	National Audit Office
OBA	Outcomes Based Accountability
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PPE	Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People
PSB	Public Services Board
RBA	Results Based Accountability
RCCs	Regional Collaborative Committees
RCT	Rhondda Cynon Taf
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association

## Executive Summary

### Evaluation aims and method

This report provides findings of the interim phase of an evaluation of the Flexible Funding programme conducted between May and August 2018. A final phase of the evaluation work will be undertaken in early 2019 to follow up on progress made in the first year of the pilot.

The Flexible Funding programme is the latest approach to ensuring that different grants work together with the aim of providing greater local authority autonomy in service delivery, particularly around joint planning and commissioning to better support outcomes. This extra freedom aims to allow for a more strategic approach in delivering early intervention, prevention and support (EIPS).

Seven self-nominated pathfinder local authorities in Wales are testing approaches in 2018/19: Conwy, Cardiff, Newport, Torfaen, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil, as well as Cwm Taf Public Service Board<sup>1</sup>. These pathfinders have full (100 per cent of budget) flexibility across ten grants<sup>2</sup>. Flexible Funding also provides the remaining 15 local authorities in Wales ('non-pathfinders') with extended flexibility of 15 per cent movement across five grants<sup>3</sup> (Welsh Government, 2017).

In April 2018, following a competitive tendering exercise, the Welsh Government commissioned Wavehill to undertake an evaluation of the Flexible Funding programme. The aim of the evaluation work is to provide robust and timely information on programme implementation and to understand how its delivery will affect the achievement of outcomes in the longer term.

A wealth of information has been collated from interviews (62) with Flexible Funding programme and grant leads in local authorities (pathfinders and non-pathfinders) as well as the Welsh Government, partners and stakeholders. This has been supplemented by literature and policy review work and four workshops reviewing options for an outcomes framework for the programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Working jointly with Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

<sup>2</sup> The ten grants include: Supporting People; Flying Start; Families First; Legacy Fund; Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People; Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare); Homelessness Prevention; Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living); St David's Day Fund; and Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant).

<sup>3</sup> The five grants include: Supporting People; Flying Start; Families First; Legacy Fund; and Communities for Work Plus.

## Key interim findings

Although the Flexible Funding programme remains in an early stage of delivery, which means that a conclusive picture of the success, or otherwise, of the programme is yet to emerge, the interim findings do show initial signs of some positive developments in programme delivery. The common interim themes show that:

- it is still early in the day for programme implementation; review activities dominate, and a number of business cases are still being created in most authorities to help drive implementation forward.
- progress is most commonly linked to an existing 'framework' or a process for delivery of the programme agenda, and where time has been given already to work on that framework or agenda.
- several authorities (pathfinders and non-pathfinders) already demonstrate joint working including some 'flexibility' in the use of funding. Yet many local authority approaches to using flexibility in funding are 'non-strategic' and are often being used to avoid underspend rather than as a link to a wider service improvement ethos.
- a range of early delivery approaches have mainly focussed on bringing people together, facilitating 'new' conversations, reviewing and assessing the nature of the service user journey, and finding that the current programme management infrastructure (IT) doesn't currently provide the right information on service user journeys.
- many early approaches predate the operation of the different programmes demonstrating an underlying 'legacy' ethos of joint working. Alignment is most pronounced in authorities (pathfinders and non-pathfinders) across housing-related support services and those in non-housing-related areas like Families First, Flying Start, Legacy Fund and Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People programmes. Whilst some areas have joined these two paradigms together, a key challenge for the programme will be to bring greater alignment in both.
- Senior Leadership Team sign up to the aims and ambitions of the Flexible Funding programme, particularly those driving local delivery, is critical for successful progress but must be across a range of levels from the top down, to drive consistent messaging. It is important, that this is grounded in a good understanding of the needs and barriers/gaps in service delivery and the 'journey' users take to receive support.

- there is a reticence amongst some authorities to be innovative because they are not sure Welsh Government will continue with the Flexible Funding approach and are concerned that resources might be wasted without full implementation.
- outcomes so far have been limited to a local authority level primarily involving initiating joint grants groups with some meeting already, some organisational restructuring and the identification of working practice change and proposals for other change ‘vehicles’ (Community Hubs, Local Place Focus). However, it is important to note that, delivery of the Flexible Funding programme has only been undertaken for a short period of time (just over four months).

## **Conclusions**

- Early programme progress has been focussed upon pathfinders establishing reviews of services, assessing governance/management options, and establishing fora (if not already in place) where programme staff can review existing delivery. This facilitates the understanding of other approaches to service delivery and helps begin the process of identifying options for joint working and potential service integration. For non-pathfinders, the imperative is much less pronounced although some are already making strides.
- Literature evidence and early findings from pathfinder authorities suggest having a clear vision and ethos and strong senior leadership support provides solid foundations for progress on Flexible Funding aims to be made. Furthermore, early success is more likely where there are strong functioning partnerships, frameworks, or transformation programmes already in place. This means that the agenda is shaped by what is needed to achieve service redesign rather than an agenda diluted by a divergent focus on a wider cuts agenda as austerity continues.
- Due to the challenges of measuring impact in early intervention, a longer timeframe may need to be considered for genuinely measurable impact. Any successful outcomes seen in the short-term may only be proxy indicators for the longer-term desired outcomes. These are insights that will need to be reflected in the ongoing development of a common outcomes framework to support programme delivery.
- Work is now progressing across local authorities – particularly pathfinders. This needs to be given time to bear fruit and all local authorities will be supported if consistent messaging confirms that investigation of the agenda advocated by the Flexible Funding programme, and the potential EIPS grant is going to continue.

- Consistent messaging will embed the learning and practice from this early set-up work and evaluation of outcomes. It should emphasise that needs-based approaches to the delivery of support for vulnerable groups can be improved through single entry points, underpinned by single needs analysis work, and seamless support delivery. All of this requires a systemic approach to change underpinned by strong leadership and a transformative approach to support service design for vulnerable groups.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations identify key areas where interim insights provide some useful perspectives to influence the ongoing implementation and delivery of the Flexible Funding programme, and next steps for the evaluation work.

### *EIPS/Flexible Funding Programme*

- Local authorities and their staff need assurances that the agenda underpinning the potential EIPS grant is to continue for at least the next year, to allow full consideration of the actions that pathfinder authorities are currently developing when their reviews of service delivery conclude.
- Where possible, grant funding decisions should be made early and perhaps include commitments across a 2-3 year funding period to enable authorities to plan delivery over at least the medium term.
- The Flexible Funding programme evaluation should incorporate, in its next phase, an investigation of the two-grant option for the potential EIPS grant.
- The Funding Transition Team should continue to develop a systematic programme of updates and information provision including sessions by pathfinders that give detailed insight into their Flexible Funding programme delivery.
- Non-pathfinders could be invited to begin investigating options to move to full funding flexibility and, where appropriate, adopt new pathfinder status.
- Further consistent messaging should be provided about the aims and ambitions for the potential EIPS grant to ensure that understanding of the primacy of this focus is received more widely.

### *Next Steps for the Evaluation*

The focus of the final phase of evaluation work may consider:

- reviewing pathfinder delivery against their plans and the factors that have contributed to success (and failure) to learn lessons for future programme roll-out;
- consideration of the efficacy of the proposed two-grant option and its advantages and disadvantages compared to a potential single EIPS grant;
- assessing how appropriate specialisms around the most complex needs might be maintained amongst staff as they move into potentially more generalist roles;
- reviewing impacts and outcomes of further roll-out of the programme for local authorities and their staff, stakeholder and partner organisations (strategic and delivery), regional structures and PSBs, and particularly whether service users are beginning to see impacts from service redesign;
- and further work developing an overarching outcomes framework aligned to ongoing Welsh Government work assessing outcomes across existing grants.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 In Wales there are several programmes aimed at supporting vulnerable people or communities, which have been established over the years by the Welsh Government. They seek to tackle disadvantage, aim to prevent longer term negative outcomes for individuals and families and facilitate early intervention, and to build resilience in individuals and communities. However, each programme is underpinned by a specific grant with its own requirements and restrictions, and associated costs and administration.

1.2 Over the last few years, the Welsh Government has been working with local authorities to align various grants, with the intention of enabling service re-design to deliver sustainable improvements in outcomes for people across Wales.

### **Flexible Funding**

1.3 Flexible Funding is the latest in a series of steps to ensure that different programmes work together with the aim of providing greater autonomy about how services are delivered, particularly around joint planning and commissioning to better support outcomes. The extra freedom aims to allow for a more strategic approach to delivering early intervention, prevention and support (EIPS) for the most vulnerable in society in a strategic, cross-organisational way (Welsh Government, 2018a).

1.4 Seven 'pathfinder' local authorities in Wales are testing approaches to fulfilling these aims in 2018/19. Pathfinders were self-selecting, nominating themselves. The seven Pathfinders are: Conwy, Cardiff, Newport, Torfaen, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, as well as Cwm Taf Public Service Board<sup>4</sup>. Through Flexible Funding these pathfinders have full (100 per cent of budget) flexibility across ten grants (see Table 1.1).

1.5 Flexible Funding also provides the remaining 15 local authorities in Wales ('non-pathfinders') with extended flexibility of a 15 per cent movement across a smaller number of grants to support the start of their journey to more innovative thinking on service delivery. Table 1.1. shows which grants are included for pathfinders and non-pathfinders. However, the Welsh Government announced in October 2017

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<sup>4</sup> Working jointly with Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf.

(Welsh Government, 2017) that funding levels for Supporting People would be maintained in line with 2017/18 budget commitments such that:

*'It is Welsh Government's expectation that local authorities should allocate funding to the Supporting People programmes at least at the level of the Supporting People allocation unless they can demonstrate that they can be sure of delivering the same, or improved, services for less money as a result of efficiencies.'* (Welsh Government, 2018a, p.2)

Thus, this may mean for Supporting People that there may be some limits placed on the extent of flexibility in the use of the funding for this grant area.

**Table 1.1: Grants included as part of the 2018/19 Flexible Funding programme**

<b>Pathfinders</b>	<b>Non-pathfinders</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> <li>• Flying Start</li> <li>• Families First</li> <li>• Legacy Fund</li> <li>• Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People</li> <li>• Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)</li> <li>• Homelessness Prevention</li> <li>• Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)</li> <li>• St David's Day Fund</li> <li>• Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting People</li> <li>• Flying Start</li> <li>• Families First</li> <li>• Legacy Fund</li> <li>• Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)</li> </ul>

## **The evaluation**

- 1.6 In April 2018, following a competitive tendering exercise, the Welsh Government commissioned Wavehill to undertake an evaluation of the Flexible Funding programme, to provide robust and timely information on the implementation of the programme and to understand how its delivery will affect the achievement of outcomes in the longer term. The learning obtained through the evaluation will feed into the effective implementation of future grant alignment.

## **Background**

- 1.7 The way in which public sector funding is provided has long been used as a policy lever by government, both in Wales and internationally. Alongside advocacy and legislation, funding is central to delivering policy objectives across health, education and social care. Funding streams themselves provide a key source of revenue that underpins much investment in public infrastructure and services. Funding can also encompass broader objectives that seek to generate changes in the way public services are co-ordinated and delivered. This can include incentives that shape the focus and behaviours of practitioners and organisations, such as improving the quality and coherence of services (Hood and Margetts, 2007). Funding represents an important tool to shape and manage change in public services.
- 1.8 As a policy lever, funding has been configured in different ways. Funding is often used in conjunction with other levers, including the development of regulatory frameworks. Three or four levers are often implemented concurrently in working towards a single initiative or strategy. In working towards objectives around tackling homelessness, for example, the Welsh Government drew on its network and organisational capacity in bringing about change, alongside more traditional legislative reforms and funding streams (Connell and St Denny, 2016).
- 1.9 There is also considerable variation in the way funding is administered in local authorities. These are shaped by the overall objectives of a funding grant, and can include factors such as due diligence procedures, evidentiary thresholds, and match-funding requirements.
- 1.10 Historically, there has been a gradual evolution in the way funding has been applied as a policy lever. Across government, both in Wales and internationally, there have been marked shifts away from delivering services directly, towards purchasing services from partner organisations. This model continues to evolve and indeed is

prevalent within delivery models of pathfinder authorities for the Flexible Funding programme.

- 1.11 Other changes to funding models include examples that have placed greater emphasis on purchasing outcomes, (e.g. the number of parents reporting improved relationships with children following parenting skills support), rather than outputs (e.g. the number of families supported through parenting classes). There have also been shifts in focus, including a move away from prescriptive, legislative use of the regulation that surrounds funding, towards a greater emphasis on monitoring service standards, outputs, and most recently, outcomes.
- 1.12 There has been considerable debate amongst policy makers, practitioners, and researchers as to the efficacy of certain funding approaches in achieving policy objectives. Recent developments that link funding more closely to outcomes, for example, have generated conflicting evidence. In health services, there is evidence that payment-for-performance schemes can lead to a clinically-significant reduction in mortality rates, a crude measure of service quality (Sutton et al., 2012).
- 1.13 There is also evidence to suggest that rewarding performance can generate unintended consequences. Incentives for certain activities (through a payment by results/outcomes model) can divert attention from other activities that are important for broader outcomes (Maisey et al., 2008), but may not attract similar payments. This can lead to increasing numbers of indicators being added to outcome frameworks to ensure relevant activities are given enough attention. Inadvertently, this can lead to an increased workload, whilst also diminishing the coherence and value of subsequent data.
- 1.14 A significant challenge in accurately determining the effectiveness of funding models is the relative complexity surrounding implementation. The links between funding and outcomes are mediated by a range of factors, activities and processes. Funding programmes are created with the assumption that institutions and individuals will apply them to reflect both the policy intention and local circumstances. Providers and practitioners may, however, interpret and translate policy intention differently, particularly in relation to the specific needs of clients.
- 1.15 Within Flying Start, for example, practitioners have often found it difficult not to support families that lived outside Flying Start support areas who mirror, or even exceed, the needs of those who live within them. At an individual level, practitioners can interpret policy by applying their professional values that can produce

‘principled infidelity’ (Hoyle and Wallace, 2005). This can mean they may follow policy guidance, but workers may still apply their own or a specific local agenda that might be outside of the specific original intentions of the policy.

- 1.16 Translating insights generated from experience and research are important in this evaluation work. It will enable the evaluation to be sensitive to the possible empirical challenges of accurately determining the effectiveness of Flexible Funding across all its objectives. Furthermore, it will ensure sensitivity to differences in processes across local authorities, sub regional (combined Public Service Boards), and regional (Regional Collaborative Committees or City Deal arrangements) approaches. It will also seek to understand the role played by attitudes towards, and the existing culture around, integration, partnership working and communication. This will enable a full understanding of the key success factors and processes to help test and refine the rationale for the Flexible Funding programme.

### **The Flexible Funding programme**

- 1.17 The roots of the approaches that became the Flexible Funding programme (Welsh Government, 2018b) can be found in 2013/14 with an initial focus on the ways service redesign might bring particular benefit to early intervention, prevention and support to better address user needs. The specific development of the Flexible Funding programme was initiated in late 2016/early 2017 when the Welsh Government was examining options for flexibility in the use by Welsh local authorities of grants for Families First, Flying Start, Supporting People, and Communities First. This initially focussed on allowing a small degree of flexibility in relation to 5 percent of the total funding for these grants for local authorities so that they could move<sup>5</sup> funds between grants to support specific needs of those users the authorities were working with.
- 1.18 Following this, Ministers approved an approach where greater flexibility of the movement of grants was envisaged across a wider range of grants with an aim to support service redesign by Welsh local authorities, to better provide EIPS services to improve the ways such services addressed the needs of vulnerable groups and individuals.

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<sup>5</sup> This is often referred to as ‘to vire’ or the virement of funds

- 1.19 The Flexible Funding programme is a key part of the approach seeking to review the appropriateness of rationalising and simplifying ten grants into a single funding stream. This includes grants seeking to address several substantive issues in communities in Wales, from homelessness to early years provision.
- 1.20 The programme itself contains several key objectives (adapted from Welsh Government, 2018c):
- to provide greater autonomy about how services are delivered, particularly around joint planning and commissioning
  - to provide greater financial freedom and flexibility to enable local authorities to work differently
  - to enable local authorities to ‘plan strategically and holistically’
  - to enable service re-design
  - to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy.
- 1.21 These objectives seek to enable more effective and efficient coordination of resources at a local level. They contain the assumption that, with greater flexibility, autonomy and associated accountability, local authorities and the Cwm Taf PSB will be better able to respond to local needs. The direct actions of the Welsh Government – through the Funding Transition team and through the implementation of the programme – will also support local authorities and Cwm Taf PSB to develop competencies and experience around strategic and holistic planning, service review and redesign, and ultimately structural reform of the way their local authority operates.
- 1.22 Again, drawing directly from the evaluation specification, the second category of objectives includes a series of longer-term aspirations such as a desire:
- ‘to deliver sustainable improvements in outcomes for people across Wales’
  - ‘to reduce disadvantage for the most vulnerable in society’
- 1.23 These objectives seek to improve the outcomes of local people across a broad range of measures that are reflected in the grants included in the project. These outcomes are not linked directly to activity undertaken by the Welsh Government, but to activity undertaken by local authorities, Cwm Taf PSB, and partner organisations, including through the commissioning and delivery of front-line services.

## **Additional stakeholder perspectives<sup>6</sup>**

- 1.24 One set of stakeholders who have recently expressed particular views in the Flexible Funding programme are those representing the Housing sector. In a recent Housing Matters Wales (2018) report, a range of Housing sector stakeholders raised concerns about the proposals for the new Early Intervention: Prevention and Support Grant in 2019/20, to merge two homelessness grants (Supporting People and the Homelessness Prevention Grant) with funding for non-housing services such as childcare and health visitors to create a single EIPS grant. Their concerns are that a single grant would reduce focus on critical issues (such as homelessness and rough sleeping) and could potentially lead to services cuts.
- 1.25 The proposals included an option for one grant for homelessness and housing-related services and another for non-housing-related services covering Childcare and Play, Legacy Fund and Communities for Work+, Families First, Flying Start, Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People and the St David's Day fund.

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<sup>6</sup> These were collated from literature review work not as part of evaluation interviews.

## 2. Methodology

2.1 The approach to the evaluation involves two main phases of data collection and reporting. The **first, interim report, phase** (from April-September 2018) sought to identify early insights from all 22 Welsh local authorities following implementation of the Flexible Funding programme from April 2018.

2.2 In fulfilling this aim the first phase of the evaluation has involved:

- **Qualitative telephone interviews**<sup>7 8</sup> with:
  - local authority Flexible Funding programme leads in pathfinder and non-pathfinders
  - nominated leads for grants covered by the programme in Pathfinders and non-pathfinders with a greater emphasis on leads in pathfinder authorities. These were identified by using ‘snowballing’ techniques employed in discussions with flexible funding leads
  - leads and nominated representatives of four (Cwm Taf, Mid and West Wales, Western Bay, and the Vale and Cardiff) Regional Collaborative Committees<sup>9</sup>
  - Welsh Government leads for the Flexible Funding programme in the Funding Transition team and Welsh Government Knowledge and Analytical Services team staff
  - Welsh Government Grant leads for each of the ten grants covered by the programme

The breakdown of completed interviews by type is summarised in Table 2.1.

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<sup>7</sup> Details of the number of completed interviews can be found in Chapter 4 in the section related to the findings on early implementation of the Flexible Funding programme.

<sup>8</sup> Question schedules for these interviews can be found in Annex A.

<sup>9</sup> Regional Collaborative Committees (RCCs) oversee Supporting People delivery in their region and make recommendations to the Welsh Government on its spending in their region, although RCCs are advisory only and do not have executive powers or finance. They are hosted by a nominated local authority and arrange regular meetings to bring a specific regional focus to Supporting People delivery across Wales. There are six RCCs in Wales.

**Table 2.1: Overview of Completed Phase 1 Interviews – June – August 2018**

Interviewee Type	Number of Completed Interviews
Flexible Funding Leads (pathfinders)	7
Flexible Funding Leads (non-pathfinders)	14 <sup>10</sup>
Grant Leads (Local Authorities - 14 authorities)	23 <sup>11</sup>
Regional Collaborative Committee Leads	6 <sup>12</sup>
Flexible Funding Leads (Welsh Government)	3
Grant Leads (Welsh Government) <sup>13</sup>	9
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>62</b>

- **desk-based policy and literature review** to identify further context for our assessment of the Flexible Funding programme implementation to date
- **desk-based review of the financial monitoring, guidance and outcomes monitoring of the ten existing grants** – this reviewed existing grant guidance and the first overarching quarterly monitoring reports made by the Pathfinder authorities. Review of the guidance documents sought to identify eligibility criteria, financial reporting arrangements, and detail of expected outputs/outcomes from programme documents. It looked to identify any commonalities and differences between the grants, to identify where alignments may occur and how these may provide a context for identifying a common outcomes framework across the Flexible Funding programme.
- **case study** assessment of programme implementation in three pathfinder authorities – Conwy, Newport and RCT<sup>14</sup> – full details of the case studies can be found in Annex B
- four **outcome review workshops** to aid the development of a programme Theory of Change and outcomes framework.

<sup>10</sup> At time of writing we have been unable to secure an interview with Powys. Contacts have been supplied and arrangements are being made to conduct an interview. It is expected to involve a further two interviewees which will bring the total to 63.

<sup>11</sup> Eight local authorities, including one pathfinder authority, did not suggest additional contacts within their authority to interview as they felt the progress in Flexible Funding programme delivery was not sufficient for others to provide any additional comments on early programme progress.

<sup>12</sup> These covered representatives of four of the six RCCs in Wales. We were not able to interview representatives of the Gwent and North Wales RCC due to the non-availability of staff between July and August 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Refers to staff that are the nominated leads for each of the ten grants within Welsh Government, note some grants are overseen by the same leads.

<sup>14</sup> Case studies were chosen to provide a geographical split across North and South Wales, a focus on roll-out of common shared working practices, advancement of a Community Hub model, and insight into PSB focus for programme delivery. These case studies will be updated in Phase 2 work and supplemented by a further seven to provide a further rounded picture of programme delivery.

2.3 The limitations of this approach mean we have not sought any views on impacts for service users in the first phase of evaluation work. Original plans were to conduct up to five citizen impact scenario assessments (CISAs) in the interim evaluation phase in addition to the elements outlined above. However, these CISAs were postponed when the interviews revealed that pathfinder authorities felt it was too early to make a robust assessment of the client impacts of programme implementation only underway since April 2018. It was decided that it would be more beneficial to focus these evaluation approaches later in the financial year when there was a greater chance of identifying these important perspectives on change/outcomes arising from the Flexible Funding programme.

#### **Final phase of the evaluation**

2.4 The final phase of evaluation work will involve repeating elements of the data collection above to involve:

- re-interviewing respondents identified through the qualitative interviews above
- updating the literature, policy, and monitoring review work
- updating the three case studies and undertaking a further seven
- further developing the programme Theory of Change via workshops with Flexible Funding programme leads and related grant lead staff across pathfinders and non-pathfinders
- collating new perspectives on the impacts and outcomes of the Flexible Funding programme on service users through citizen impact scenario assessments (CISAs) to identify clients' experiences of services arising from the roll-out of the programme for c.15-20 identified clients.

2.5 The final phase work is due to commence in February 2019, providing an opportunity for the evaluation to capture more detailed experiences from Flexible Funding programme implementation in the latter part of the 2018/19 financial year.

### 3. Insight from Research and Policy Literature

- 3.1 In this chapter, we detail the emerging findings from the literature review undertaken for the evaluation, of relevant policy and research. There is a wealth of evidence across England on the issues raised in this chapter with much less specifically related to Wales. It is important to remember that in English local authorities' funding changes have primarily occurred through changes to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG)<sup>15</sup> (DCLG, 2013b), whilst in Wales funding changes have occurred through the specific grants that local authorities receive. Although these approaches are very different, examples in England provide an alternative perspective on how proposed spending arrangements might be altered. Furthermore, examples in England have also been included, because several Pathfinder authorities have reviewed work in Bristol and Cheshire as part of their early implementation work.
- 3.2 The literature review seeks to place the opportunities and challenges of the Flexible Funding programme into the wider context of change in local authorities across the UK. As the following sections will also show, many different approaches are already being utilised and yet there is no conclusive evidence on any particular approach being more successful than any other. There are however a range of common principles that do underpin most approaches outlined below.
- 3.3 WLGA (2018) show that since 2009/10 funding for Local Government in Wales, adjusting for inflation has declined by 22% and highlights the need for further improvements in value for money. Recent estimates (Wales Public Services, 2017) on spending show that it may need to increase by at least £129 million (23%) between 2015-16 and 2020-21 to get back to the equivalent spend per head in 2009/10, this amounts to a 2.5% year-on-year increase.
- 3.4 Both the UK and the Welsh Governments are faced with considerable funding pressures, the need to improve the efficiency of public spending, and review users engagement in public services. The Welsh Government's response to austerity has been to protect key services such as schools and social services (Welsh Government, 2015) and increase spending on the NHS to meet demand pressures. This has had an inevitable downward impact on the funding available to local authorities in England and Wales. Although, according to Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) research (Amin-Smith, Phillips and Simpson, 2016), cuts to Welsh local

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<sup>15</sup> The Revenue Support Grant finances revenue expenditure on any service, it is supplemented by money from other specific grants, plus the funding that is collected via the Council Tax in that area.

government grants were less than those to their English counterparts, the impact was still significant, and there was substantial variation between authorities.

- 3.5 For many Welsh and English local authorities, doing more with less or doing the same with less is not feasible after years of cost savings, and the only real alternative is identifying new ways in which public services might be delivered to work better with available resources. Local authorities have a very difficult task of balancing the competing demands - coupled with legislative requirements. It is without doubt a key priority for every local authority and an area of extensive focus across the UK.
- 3.6 The impact of reduced funding for local authorities in England has been highlighted recently with Northamptonshire Local Authority declaring they can only deliver core services. This concern is also highlighted in a National Audit Office report (National Audit Office, 2016) which outlines increasing concerns regarding the sustainability of local authorities. Increasingly, libraries and key services are either operating at a significantly reduced level or closing. An example of this might be children's centres in England, which were viewed by many as a model of good practice and a key support for children and families and are now reducing in number (House of Commons, 2016) and under tremendous financial pressure. Clearly this backdrop provides a real driver for service transformation and at a time when evidence (Devine, 2017) suggests the number of families in need of support is increasing.
- 3.7 The overarching proposal for a single-funded approach (currently for the 10 funding streams) needs to be located within the broader context of changes in prevention and early intervention services currently taking place through local authority initiatives across the UK. Many local authorities in England and Wales are innovating and trialling new ways of integrating children's services, the NHS and Public Health Services through greater strategic alignment of national, local and voluntary sector providers. The development of formula funding<sup>16</sup> is an ambitious proposal and the challenge for local authorities is considerable if long-term change that brings about improved outcomes for vulnerable people is to be achieved.

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<sup>16</sup> Where Governments seek to establish a standardised national funding formula to allocate funds to local areas in a more consistent way so that those local areas are clearer on their overall core funding because of its consistency of calculation based on underlying population patterns and trends and assessments of need in a particular area.

## **The case for early intervention**

- 3.8 Due to its perceived advantages, early intervention and deeper integration is a feature in many local authorities across Wales. Local authorities are required by laws set out in Acts of Parliament to provide certain statutory services. These laws cover such services as education, social care, environmental health inspection and planning. Councils provide some services directly, but many work in partnership with other organisations to provide others, and can commission organisations in the private and voluntary sectors to provide services on their behalf.
- 3.9 The concept of pooling budgets and integrated services is not something new: Integrating Children's Services (Office for Public Management, 2003) outlined key benefits for integration and a focus on early intervention. The development of Children's Trusts in 2008 and Community Budgets in 2011 in England had similar themes in terms of public sector transformation and a set of flexibilities which supported whole system change and transformation. There continues to be a range of programmes and initiatives, for example Families First in Wales and Troubled Families in England, which focus on service transformation, integration and early help approaches.
- 3.10 The case for early intervention has been clearly made by the Early Intervention Foundation<sup>17</sup>, established in 2013, which has taken a pivotal role in developing research, tools and resources to support the development of early Intervention approaches.
- 3.11 Understanding the costs avoided from early intervention is an important factor when considering the resource and cost implications of re-modelling services. In terms of costs avoided, there is mounting evidence of the strong association between early behaviour problems and delinquency and later criminality, even after controlling for family characteristics (see for example Murray and Farrington, 2010). There are also links between conduct problems at ages 10 and 16 and poor education and unemployment. As a result, there is a case for intervening as early as possible, both in a child's life as well as with parents and the family more broadly.

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<sup>17</sup> See [Early Intervention Foundation](#) for more details on the foundation.

- 3.12 However, estimating assessments of the rate of return on early intervention is extremely challenging for at least three reasons:
- initiatives like Flying Start and Families First include diverse interventions with different delivery models and outcomes. This will make it very difficult to specify a single, specific rate of return for early intervention in Wales
  - they also have multiple fiscal, social and/or economic benefits which range from short term to very long-run effects spanning generations, which means there are lags between investment in early intervention and the realisation of its full benefits
  - costs and benefits accrue to diverse agencies and levels of (national and local) government as well as to society as a whole in addition to the families and children themselves (Public Policy Institute for Wales, 2015).
- 3.13 Multiple interventions from across a range of services can often be required for early identification of families whilst also providing the right support to overcome limitations in family functioning, the cognitive and emotional development of family members, and limitations in parenting skills/capacities.
- 3.14 Models combining these services have been trialled and some with evidence of cost effectiveness. Results from a cost-effectiveness study are often expressed as a cost to savings ratio (e.g. does this family support programme demonstrate sufficient costs avoided to the public purse which are greater than the cost of providing that service?). One example is provided from a Multi-systemic Therapy (MST) programme, an intensive, family-based intervention that aims to reverse established patterns of anti-social behaviour in teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17. MST delivers highly intensive support for families for however long it is required to address problems at the level of the child, family, school and community. Young people identified through the juvenile court system are assigned an MST therapist who is available to the family on a 24/7 basis, but typically provides individual and family therapy through weekly visits for periods of between four and six months. Although the young person is already presenting costs to the state due to their delinquency, evidence from several rigorously conducted randomly controlled trials of reducing youth offending and improving family harmony demonstrate benefits in terms of reduced child maltreatment and problematic youth sexual behaviour. A long-term study in the US found that every \$1 invested in the programme returned a

saving of \$6.60 to taxpayers via reduced crime costs (Klietz, Bordui, and Schaeffer, (2010).

3.15 Another example is Cheshire West and Chester Council who is delivering many of its Early Intervention services through an Integrated Early Support service, introduced in October 2013. The service brings together the work of over 20 different agencies and data systems into a single and coherent model. This includes a single 'front door' into services, a single assessment model, shared IT and co-located workers in seven multi-agency locality teams. A menu of evidence-based interventions is available for children and families; for more complex cases a range of different professionals act as the lead worker, developing a clear family plan that meets the needs of the particular family. An independent evaluation is being commissioned to test the impact of this changed way of delivering Early Intervention. Initial monitoring data is showing a range of positive trends since the new system was put in place which all result in costs avoided to the State. Specifically:

- 13 per cent reduction in children in need
- 23 per cent reduction in inappropriate referrals to Children's Social Care
- an increase in the proportion of family support cases managed below the statutory level
- 54 per cent reduction in violent offences among domestic violence perpetrators, and
- an estimated 20 per cent reduction in demand on Cheshire Constabulary for a sample of people whose cases were managed through Integrated Early Support (Chowdry and Oppenheim, 2015).

3.16 In Croydon, services are being brought together through multi-disciplinary locality teams of health visitors, nursery nurses, family support and specialist workers who will deliver the Healthy Child Programme and targeted family support services across the community. Croydon has carried out financial modelling work and this estimates that a total investment of £2.9 million will provide a return of £2.34 for every £1 invested. Over the life of the ten-year transformation programme there will be estimated efficiencies from the new ways of working of over £4 million.

3.17 Whilst we may not have the full picture regarding the cost and effectiveness of early intervention, given its complexity, we do have a fairly good idea what the cost of late intervention is. Late intervention is invariably costly, lengthy and often too late to be fully effective in the long term, the damage is often done (Department for Education, 2010). That said, there will always be some families and individuals which will require continued intensive support, although there is a consensus that if more people accessed early help and prevention services, fewer people would require these more complex service interventions. Savings have been evidenced; The Early Intervention Foundation (2015) demonstrated that the immediate fiscal cost of late intervention for children and young people in a single year amounts to nearly £17 billion (Chowdry and Oppenheim, 2015) in England and Wales. This cost is spread across different local and national agencies, and the picture in each local area varies depends on the needs of the population (Chowdry and Oppenheim, 2015).

#### **The case for service integration**

3.18 According to the National Audit Office, integration can be designed across a range of models throughout the UK:

- 'horizontal' integration of activities between bodies involved or interested in a service or programme, or with a shared interest in a particular client group, for example a family on the edge of social care
- 'vertical' integration through greater coordination of the delivery chain and reduced managerial functions involved in service or programme delivery
- 'back-office' integration of functions and/or management processes which support frontline services or programmes, and
- 'strategic' integration measures which encourage integration or seek to apply a coordinated approach across government (National Audit Office, 2013).

3.19 In principle, integration at the local level has a range of advantages:

- collaborative purchasing reducing potential duplication of services (e.g. assessment, intervention and outcomes)
- cutting of property costs because of co-location
- reallocation of staff resources, particularly 'back office' and managerial posts
- significant promise for frontline services: better coordinated assessment and care and better experiences for patients in local areas
- longer-term professional and cultural impact where multi-agency, co-located services operate and practitioners joint work cases

- significant promise for frontline services in better coordinated primary, acute and social care settings that has already led to cost savings and better services for patients in some local areas (National Audit Office, 2013).

3.20 Across the UK, there are several examples, both in policy and programme design and local authority commissioning, that provide insight into the key practice underpinning the successful development of integration:

- *Troubled Families Programme* – this is a programme of targeted intervention for families with multiple problems. Local authorities in England identify ‘troubled families’ in their area and assign a key worker to act as a single point of contact. The model is based on whole family working and a concept of ‘one family one plan one worker’. Many local authorities report that it has supported a cultural shift within a range of services and has improved case management, data sharing and partnership working. One of the key messages from the recent evaluation was that there is still more work to do to engage with health services at both the strategic and operational levels, and a large percentage of family support workers reported partnership with health services as a barrier to service transformation (MHCLG, 2018).
- *community/locality hubs* - several local authorities in Wales are developing community hubs which bring a range of services together under one roof and act as a one stop shop for communities and residents. Services include housing, job centres, debt advice, community safety and addiction support. This approach often involves co-location of staff, promotes partnership working and has a single access point for families and individuals which is seen, as the quote below shows, as much more accessible than trying to navigate individual services. *‘This model has many advantages – more-fit-for-purpose buildings, a better public service offer and a more accessible and cost-effective approach. They also support a preventative approach by enabling families to access support as early as possible’* (Councillor R Lewis, 2018)
- *data and intelligence* - some local authorities are beginning to invest much more in IT systems that bring together a whole range of data sources and developing predictive analysis. One example is Bristol where predictive modelling is being used to make better use of the data and to understand the citizens of Bristol now

and in the future, our interviews identified that Newport had drawn strongly on the Bristol experience in their own work.

- 3.21 Bringing services together to work within a common framework or set of aims as proposed in Wales, (for example reducing the risk of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs<sup>18</sup>) (Public Health Wales, 2015) has some inherent challenges due to the multiple, and sometimes divergent, service targets and outcomes to which agencies are working. In addition, professionals from different services work within different professional discourses; some services are more client and solution focussed, for instance employability services such as Communities for Work+, and some more punitive and directive, such as services associated with the provision of Universal Credit delivered through JobCentre Plus (amongst others), and this can be confusing to clients. Many local authorities in England and Wales have sought to address these differences by introducing a common approach and working practices based on developing resilience among adults and families, an approach favoured in both Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) and Torfaen programme pathfinders.
- 3.22 In RCT and Torfaen, the focus on developing resilience aims to build the capability of those worked with to respond to the challenges of life so that individuals' or families' lifestyles and behaviours and life skills are improved to support less chaotic living. This can focus on improving parenting skills to support child development and regular school attendance, to help with budgeting and debt management to bring more stability to financial circumstances. Underpinning this is an emphasis on providing a more holistic support approach that enables those supported to have a more settled home life, lessening the chance that there may be a need to access other statutory services such as social services or child protection services.
- 3.23 Another approach in UK local authorities is based around developing models centred on relationship-based practice. These approaches include Signs of Safety, Restorative Practice and the use of Family Group Conferencing. Key principles here are based on 'working with' families and not 'doing to', recognising and building on the strengths of the family and helping people to help themselves. These approaches include a focus on co-production with services users, and emphasis on resilience and building community capacity such that *'working with families and building their own strengths and capacities rather than spending tens of millions*

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<sup>18</sup> ACEs refer to Chronic Stressful Experiences in Childhood.

*fighting parents in the family courts, is the only realistic game in town'* (Tickle, 2018). Leeds local authority also reports that Family Group Conferencing has contributed to a reduction in the Looked After Children figures and cost savings for the local authority. (Troubled Families Annual report, MHCLG, March 18)

- 3.24 Several local authorities in England have delivered training across their public sector services including the police, education, welfare, youth offending and social services to ensure that key agencies and professionals work together using the same language and strengths-based approaches with families. Creating Strong Communities in North East Lincolnshire (Department for Education, 2017) was designed to fundamentally change the way local practitioners and partners in North East Lincolnshire worked together to safeguard vulnerable children. The training of staff on common assessments, and working methods supported a culture change and system shift necessary to dramatically reduce the number of families with high-level safeguarding concerns.

#### **Evidence of integration reducing public sector spending**

- 3.25 Further examples of local authorities in England developing a shared service approach show that such initiatives can result in dramatic costs savings. In a report to the Local Government Association (LGA), research (Drummond Mcfarlane, 2012) carried out on five local authority shared service arrangements in England identified some important findings and key lessons from each case study including:

- a fundamental change in the way services were delivered encouraged a wider review of what customers needed/wanted, a greater focus on performance management and improved focus on outcomes
- the amalgamation of services into a new business model enabled an expansion of delivery to include other agencies and services, including a range of business support and training services to schools, the NHS and private and not-for-profit organisations
- wider benefits included renewed investment in IT (which in turn delivered ongoing savings through greater systems integration and shared information), rationalised use of buildings and facilities, and procurement; procurement in one county council area made direct savings of £9 million in its first three years through improved procurement practices

- set-up and integration costs were modest with less than a two-year payback period for all shared service arrangements
- all areas made considerable savings on their annual spend. For example, one group of authorities in its first year of operating made ongoing savings of £3.79 million, largely from consolidation of management positions and integration of services and procurement efficiencies

### **Challenges in designing and developing integrated services**

- 3.26 Allowing local authorities increased flexibility in designing and redesigning services for vulnerable people will no doubt lead to differences in support across the pathfinders. Already there is evidence of pathfinders adopting quite different approaches from realigning to restructuring departments, to looking at community hub one-stop-shop approaches. This is a key challenge in terms of considering the user's experience of the services and outcomes achieved.
- 3.27 Sustainability of initiatives is a key concern when considerable restructuring is being attempted. Innovative and transformative approaches need to pay particular attention to issues of sustainability. Approaches to innovation are, by definition, vulnerable to short-termism in relation to funding, specifically among pilot initiatives. In the Children's Services Innovation programme, sustainability was a major issue that emerged across the project. Some projects had sustainability plans and received transition funding from within the local authority, but many did not. A common finding was that projects continued in a reduced state, and many lost momentum before the evaluation ended:
- 'Many projects started to flounder once key leaders moved on. Hence, building the capacity for change gradually into the organisation without investing too much in one or two people alone, seems to be a key message.'* (Sebba, Luke, McNeish and Rees, 2017, p.66).
- 3.28 The role of commissioning services is also critical in terms of ensuring services are integrated as part of a whole menu of support and not working within silos. Clearly, commissioned services are much harder to manage and control than internal delivery. However, this should not detract from looking at how they might add value to existing provision. There is also some way to go to bring adults' and children's commissioning together to meet the holistic needs of families in terms of children's and adults' needs. Although we are now seeing this much more in the adults' work

with health and social care but these principles need to be adopted into children's and families services.

- 3.29 For shared services to operate effectively, leaders need to have a clear understanding of the mechanisms of change and need to be able to inspire others to adapt and play a part in designing new ways of working. However, in a report by Solace, research showed that 30 per cent of public sector employees at middle management and below believe that a lack of clear leadership and direction is holding back effective change in local authorities (Solace and Civca, 2016).

### **Challenges in partnership working**

- 3.30 The services encompassed by the Flexible Funding programme, by their very nature, are intended to provide support to individuals across organisational boundaries. Rather than individuals accessing multiple services, organisations are required to work together, co-ordinate or co-deliver assessment, planning and support.
- 3.31 Relevant learning points can be drawn from a study by Cameron et al. (Cameron, Macdonald, Turner, and Lloyd, 2007) of the Supporting People Health Pilot in England. This pilot was delivered in six local authority areas which identified several key lessons from the pilot study around successful partnership working in this context including:
- partnership working needed clear arrangements in respect of governance and managerial responsibility; insufficient thought was often given to the management of complex initiatives
  - staff needed a clear understanding and appreciation of the benefits of joint working to fully 'buy-in' to the concept and adapt their practice
  - service designers needed to consider the knowledge and working practices of different organisations and address any gaps with training
  - organisations that had a history of joint working helped to shape expectations of working practice
  - frontline staff needed specialist supervision particularly when working with vulnerable people or people with chaotic and complex lifestyles
  - professional supervision was required to ensure staff-maintained care standards and made appropriate decisions on support.

- 3.32 Co-location was an aid to joint working but did not ameliorate the challenges presented by different professional expectations and boundaries. According to Cameron et al. (2007), these were considerable, particularly across statutory and voluntary sector boundaries and health and social care. *'In integrated teams, people can get precious about their roles.'* (Cameron, Macdonald, Turner, and Lloyd, 2007).
- 3.33 Challenges existed around the sharing of personal data which is particularly important when clients have complex needs and chaotic lives. Secker and Hill (2001) have referenced this as *'a reluctance or structural inability to share information and a lack of clarity about the constraints of confidentiality'*. These challenges have no doubt intensified as a result of the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### **Success in service integration**

- 3.34 Evidence (DCLG, 2013a) from studies of service integration in UK local authorities suggests there are several key principles that aid success for service integration of particular interest for the Flexible Funding programme. Critical to this is having a clear ethos and vision, strong leadership, shared understanding of the aims and objectives, a common discourse and working practices and ensuring that children, families and communities are key partners in the development of new services. It is clear from the evidence and research that local authorities need to look at different ways of delivering public service transformation. A key message in the report is that they cannot do this in isolation and that local authorities need to work collaboratively with all partners and stakeholders. Establishing a culture of collaborative working, engagement of the third sector and workforce development are all key factors that can support and enable the change process.
- 3.35 Lessons can also be drawn from other examples of approaches to redesigning early intervention services at the local level. Neighbourhood Community Budget pilots provide a useful example. They were initiated by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in England to help progress decentralisation and the localism agenda and ran from April 2012 to March 2013 (DCLG, 2013a). Twelve pilot areas developed Operational Plans with local communities to decentralise services to the neighbourhood level, accepting that a locally-based initiative could respond more rapidly to local need. Pilots were set up to test how control of

services and budgets could be pushed down to neighbourhood level, and to capture learning from their experiences.

3.36 Pilots worked through different pathways to develop their programme. Some started with the vision first and used existing knowledge from partners to design the project; some started with the data to develop community profiles; some began with community consultations and created the vision from there. All areas emphasised the need to break down the silo-based working models so that services are designed around the needs of the community and not the working practices of the local authority/services. This is a common theme identified by those working in programme Pathfinder areas, particularly Cardiff, Conwy, Newport, and Torfaen.

3.37 The research (DCLG, 2013a) generated several 'top tips' messages for neighbourhood budgeting from interviews with key stakeholders. These were centred on:

- developing a clear (outcomes-based) focus and vision
- using existing knowledge and data about problems/issues
- developing an understanding of community priorities
- considering partner openness to engage
- collaborating with the community to address problems and co-design services
- establishing joined-up working to redesign and reshape the way services are delivered
- taking commissioning decisions focused on the needs of the neighbourhood and in partnership with the community
- developing a clear business case
- using Cost Benefit Analysis to clarify outcomes based on best evidence
- working towards local control through devolving budgets and resources, including aligning or pooling at neighbourhood level.

## **Developing appropriate monitoring and outcomes**

- 3.38 In Wales, a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach was adopted by the Communities First Programme which operated in the 52 most deprived communities of Wales. The evaluation found that management staff felt clearer on the overall strategic direction of the Programme because of the RBA approach and the requirements of activities delivered within their local areas.
- 3.39 However, there was a highly varied approach to evidencing outcomes across the Communities First areas (Clusters) and a very large number (112) of indicators to report against. The RBA's effectiveness would have been improved were a more robust and sophisticated framework in place to monitor activity through to the achievement of outcomes and thus avoid interpretations that Communities First was providing limited outcomes for those it was working with. It also illustrates the importance of an outcomes framework for the Flexible Funding programme that adequately reflects the complexity of delivery through a higher-level yet simplified approach to outcome monitoring, whilst also avoiding large increases in administrative burden on those delivering the services (Ipsos MORI and Wavehill Consulting, 2015).
- 3.40 In North East Lincolnshire, the local authority used Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) for their Creating Stronger Communities children's services innovation project (York Consulting Ltd., 2017). Over 180 key management staff were trained in the principles of OBA and a champions' network was established to embed the working practice. Score cards were designed for each operational area which clearly linked back to the framework. There were some challenges in the number of indicators that were aligned with each key measure (e.g. feel safe and be safe) and how easy the indicators were to evidence. However, having a common outcomes framework to which the authority was working helped services work towards the common aims.
- 3.41 There is general agreement that monitoring and attributing outcomes for prevention and early intervention services is particularly fraught with difficulty due to a wide range of factors, such as assessing which part of a multidisciplinary intervention made the most difference, and agreement about what counts as an outcome. Many professionals would argue that real outcomes can only be measured later in life and need a longitudinal approach to really evidence change and whether outcomes have been sustained.

- 3.42 Many local authorities across the UK are using tools such as the Outcomes Star, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, and the Daily Hassles questionnaire, which generally evaluate outcomes in relation to parenting and family functioning. It is critical within the context of formula funding that baselines are established from the onset and key performance indicators agreed collaboratively.
- 3.43 Case file audits, case studies and feedback from referrers and service users can also form part of a broader outcomes framework. These often provide real nuggets on what is working well or not so well. This aspect should not be underestimated, as it often brings the practice to life and provides valuable insights which can be used to inform service development. Islington Children's Services have a practice week each month when managers focus on evaluating practice using a range of methods and then feed back to inform service development.
- 3.44 Clearly, measuring outcomes is a challenging and complex task; it is one, though, that needs to be given priority and resource, and developed collaboratively. The engagement of individuals, families and stakeholders is essential, adopting a co-production approach would support greater ownership and shared outcomes.
- 3.45 This literature review has highlighted the strong case for early intervention; costs savings have been evidenced across a range of interlinked services and meeting the needs of families earlier prevents needs from escalating.
- 3.46 The Flexible Funding programme is piloting approaches to move to a single early intervention grant that is premised on a flexible single grant, which, by its very nature, requires a greater level of co-design, co-delivery of services and joint working.
- 3.47 There are potential benefits from greater levels of integration: collaborative purchasing reducing the potential duplication of services, a reduction in back office and managerial staff, better coordination of services at the front line and a better outcome for service users.

*Literature review summary*

- 3.48 There are many models of working that provide insight into how Welsh local authorities can respond to the opportunity within the Flexible Funding programme. Examples have indicated the challenges that local authorities have faced in developing strategic and operational alignment across social care, health, mental health, and a range of other services including voluntary services. Local authorities

have developed different responses, some designing co-located teams, clear referral pathways and information sharing, and some redesigning procurement models as shown in the cases from the LGA review of shared services in English local authorities (Drummond McFarlane, 2012).

- 3.49 Increasing the level of autonomy to local authorities in taking forward a potential EIPS grant will no doubt lead to different models and potentially an uneven level of access to service users across Wales. Understanding the needs and projections for population growth will be crucial in terms of longer-term service planning and targeting and use of resources.
- 3.50 Sustainability of the service needs to be factored into the design of programmes and local authorities should be encouraged to take the long view regarding governance and the strategic alignment of funds.
- 3.51 It seems important, therefore, that any redesign of services pays careful attention to governance, and to maintaining or improving the quality of frontline services. Services need to work to a common set of outcomes, defined by an outcomes framework (e.g. RBA) and work with a common understanding or set of operating principles (e.g. a strengths-based approach focussing on resilience). Indicators that provide evidence of change should be agreed which will allow the authority to clearly understand impact, whilst also having qualitative data that evidences softer outcomes and how the services are been experienced by families.
- 3.52 Training of staff at all levels should not be overlooked when initiating considerable change and where existing partnerships may be disrupted. If existing partnerships are disrupted or new ones are to be forged, staff need the operational understanding and principles to guide their practice.
- 3.53 Critical to any change process is having a clear vision and ethos underpinned by strong leadership. This appears to be the golden thread in all of the literature reviews, having a leader who can inspire, is passionate and creates an energy is a key ingredient for success. There appears to be no magic blueprint to follow but clearly the biggest resource in any service is its workforce, so finding ways to involve, collaborate, inspire and take people on the journey has to be part of the solution.

## 4. Programme Theory of Change

- 4.1 A Theory of Change provides an overview of the elements of programme delivery that need to happen to achieve its intended final outcome(s) and address the need (and rationale) for its intervention (i.e. programme, scheme or project). It also enables identification of the assumptions that underpin programme delivery, and the barriers that need to be overcome and mechanisms in place to overcome those barriers.
- 4.2 The key components of the Theory of Change are:
- inputs: the resources that go into the programme to enable its delivery
  - activities: the things done to deliver a programme day to day that are under the control of an organisation or project
  - outputs: the products, services or facilities that result from the programme activities - often expressed quantitatively e.g. the number of families supported
  - outcomes: the things that result from the activities undertaken
  - impacts: the broader changes and final goals that a programme achieves as a result of the outcomes achieved.
- 4.3 A Theory of Change can be very useful in testing how, and why, a policy or intervention will work and can be useful in helping decide on which policy to implement or how its design might be improved.
- 4.4 Following workshops in July 2018 with a range of Flexible Funding programme leads, and grant leads from pathfinder and non-pathfinder authorities, we have revised an outline Theory of Change presented there to address missing elements identified by workshop participants.

### *Theory of Change rationale*

- 4.5 There are multiple funding streams used by local authorities in Wales, that target the most vulnerable in society that often have very closely aligned or the same overarching objectives. The Flexible Funding programme seeks to tackle this by providing greater autonomy to Welsh local authorities and their partners around how Early Intervention, Prevention and Support (EIPS) services are delivered to those in need, particularly around joint planning and commissioning to better support outcomes. It is intended that the extra freedom around the use of different funding streams will enable local authorities to take a more strategic approach to delivering

services to better address the needs of their residents, that is intended to reduce future demands on statutory services. However, there is also an expectation that through appropriate outcome measures, local authorities will be fully accountable for grant alignment and more flexible use of funding (with support from the Funding Transition team in the Welsh Government). The programme seeks to identify how a single-grant approach to future funding might best operate to improve outcomes for users and reduce their potential need for statutory services and/or the complexity of the cases that might subsequently be presented.

4.6 The revised assumptions that underpin the Theory of Change in Figure 4.1 are:

- that increased autonomy for local authorities in Wales improves their ability to strategically plan and deliver services to vulnerable groups
- that greater autonomy also enables local authorities to plan delivery more flexibly and reshape services accordingly, but that this may bring additional accountability challenges
- local authorities have the capability and resources to undertake the relevant reviews and reshaping of services
- outcomes and impact will be sustainable and the needs of service users will be better addressed.

4.7 We would expect that, to drive forward Flexible Funding delivery, local authorities would seek to identify activities and processes through which:

- a more joined-up approach to identification of need, that identifies gaps in provision and any potential duplication, is being taken
- needs analysis is being used to jointly plan and commission services across traditional departmental boundaries
- information sharing across services to aid planning and delivery is improved/enhanced
- planning of services across the 10 constituent grants is increasingly aligned with a single outcomes framework, and
- administrative arrangements have been reviewed and opportunities for reallocation of staff resources have been considered as a way of reducing the overheads associated with grant administration.

**Figure 4.1: Theory of Change – Flexible Funding programme**

Inputs	Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes (Short Term)	Outcomes (Medium/Long Term) and Impacts
<p>Support from Funding Transition Team (Welsh Government 4-5 personnel) Funding derived from the ten grants associated within the Flexible Funding Programme</p>	<p><b><u>Programme Wide</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of Supplementary Guidance on Implementation of Flexible Funding programme to support Delivery Planning.</li> <li>• National Pathfinder group established and facilitated to enable information and practice sharing.</li> <li>• Support from Welsh Government to implement the programme through Pathfinder Steering Groups and support to non-pathfinder authorities.</li> <li>• Supported information sharing on process and practice between local authorities.</li> <li>• Commissioned evaluation of pathfinders to identify ongoing learning and best practice to help shape delivery through the life of programme delivery.</li> <li>• Administrative, monitoring and evaluation processes established.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of service provision.</li> <li>• Review of needs analysis work.</li> <li>• Redesign of service provision.</li> <li>• Review and redesign of Governance Structures.</li> <li>• Full use of funding flexibility.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Non- Pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of service provision and redesign.</li> <li>• Review of needs analysis work.</li> <li>• Use of funding flexibility in specified grants.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Programme Wide</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery plans completed by local authorities.</li> <li>• Better information and practice sharing.</li> <li>• Enhanced support to pathfinder and non-pathfinder authorities.</li> <li>• Identification of ongoing learning to shape delivery.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviews completed.</li> <li>• Number of service redesigns completed.</li> <li>• Revised governance structures set up.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Non-pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviews completed.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Programme Wide</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced number of referrals to Welsh Government for fund transfers.</li> <li>• Reduced administrative overheads to service less grants.</li> <li>• Single outcomes framework developed to cover all EIPS delivery.</li> <li>• <b>Changed culture around joint working, reduced silo working.</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authority services redesigned to reflect local needs and respond to them.</li> <li>• <b>User needs better addressed.</b></li> <li>• Number of service users reporting greater satisfaction with the support received rises.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Non-pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service redesign.</li> <li>• Improved needs-based delivery.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Programme Wide</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authorities take a more joined-up approach to identification of need, enabling them to identify gaps in provision and any potential duplication</li> <li>• Needs analysis drives joint planning and commissioning of services across traditional departmental boundaries</li> <li>• Better information sharing across services to aid planning and delivery</li> <li>• Planning of services across the 10 constituent programmes is aligned with the single set of outcomes</li> <li>• Administrative arrangements reviewed and reallocation opportunities for staff resources considered as a way of reducing the grant administration overheads.</li> <li>• Demands for support from statutory services decline.</li> <li>• Single referral and support service for vulnerable people.</li> <li>• Learning and sharing on success and failures is improved.</li> <li>• <b>Estimated costs savings made.</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved outcomes for service users.</li> <li>• LAs have greater financial flexibility</li> <li>• Alternative commissioning approaches by LA.</li> <li>• <b>Cost savings recorded.</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Non-pathfinders</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved outcomes for service users.</li> <li>• LAs have greater financial flexibility</li> <li>• Alternative commissioning approaches by LA.</li> <li>• <b>Cost savings recorded.</b></li> </ul>

## 5. Early Insight from Programme implementation

5.1 The findings in this section highlight key themes and insights drawn from analysis of notes of the qualitative interviews undertaken with key Flexible Funding programme staff and grant leads in Welsh Government, programme and grant leads in local authorities (pathfinder and non-pathfinder authorities) and lead contacts for Regional Collaborative Committees. 62 interviewees were interviewed in 57 interviews<sup>19</sup> between June and early September 2018.

5.2 The analysis of the qualitative data from interviews is undertaken using a thematic matrix approach. This comprises an analysis grid for the classification and interpretation of qualitative data. The key themes and topics are identified through an initial review of the interviews. Once the analysis framework has been agreed, each theme is then translated to a column heading in a matrix chart. Each interview is then reviewed, and relevant data extracted and summarised for input into the matrix. This process allows the full range of experiences and views to be documented, as well as capturing possible explanatory variables.

5.3 In the following sections, we highlight key findings against the following themes:

- strategic alignment of programme implementation
- aims and ambition
- early delivery approaches
- governance, partnership and regional focus (PSBs and RCCs)
- early outcomes

5.4 Without exception, all local authorities (pathfinders and non-pathfinders) identified how their Flexible Funding programme delivery was in its earliest phases and that relatively few specific outcomes in terms of service redesign or delivery had been noted thus far. As this respondent highlighted:

*'we're still at the beginning of the process, understanding how delivery fits together and where there might be any duplication, and then looking to initiating where conversations could take place on those overlaps'*

(Local Authority grant lead)

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<sup>19</sup> A number of interviews included up to two interviewees who wanted a joint interview, though one interview was completed with three participants.

- 5.5 This is to be expected given that explicit delivery for the Flexible Funding programme only began in April 2018. Furthermore, no authorities identified that any outcomes for service users could be robustly assessed thus far that could be explicitly linked to the implementation of the Flexible Funding programme.
- 5.6 Overall, there is a wealth of information that has been collated from the interviews that illustrates a range of different approaches being adopted in different local authority areas (pathfinder and non-pathfinder). Given the early stage in delivery it is not surprising that, thus far, there is very little that is conclusive to identify the approaches that are likely to be more successful. However, there are a number of common themes that we have been able to draw from our analysis that illustrate some commonality in approach. This is facilitating greater forward momentum in some local areas compared to others.
- 5.7 Across the emerging findings there is a dichotomy between areas where many have 'seized'/'bought in to' the initiative and are actively working to drive work forward, and those that are a little further behind (this applies across pathfinders and non-pathfinders).
- 5.8 A consideration here is that a particular local authority is more likely to be ahead in its programme if it has an 'infrastructure' or 'process' on which the implementation can be taken forward.
- 5.9 Where this is not in place there seems to be less movement and a great deal more focus on the need for work generating cultural change and change management process to help drive the Flexible Funding Programme forward. In addition, in these authorities (that have not driven forward) there is a much greater focus on the potential for funding cuts, rather than delivering flexibly. As this interviewee highlighted:
- 'Many still see it as very grants focussed, lots focussed in our authority on 'what will I lose' because the big strategic picture isn't there yet'*  
(Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)
- 5.10 Therefore, amongst the Pathfinders, four of the seven have made strong strides forward initiating a range of review and mapping processes and structures to identify an evidence base for the further implementation of the Flexible Funding programme. Two pathfinders have made a little less progress and review work continues, and another is yet to initiate the detailed strategic review of the grants covered by the Flexible Funding programme undertaken in other areas.

### Case Study Insight

**Newport** has been working on the concept of Community Hubs since 2016 and this will dovetail into their wider Flexible Funding programme. This runs alongside a focus on developing a more outcome focussed approach that seeks to move away from support approaches that were too funding focussed to those through alignment of funding that are better able to support clients more quickly and appropriately. The vision for delivery in Newport is to make more effective use of funding to ensure it meets local needs by aligning programmes and identifying new ways of working and potential for the redesign of services.

- 5.11 Amongst non-pathfinders there is a similar pattern with ten (of 14 interviewed) having initiated reviews of EIPS with a further four planning to initiate reviews in the next few months following receipt of further insight on programme progress amongst other local authority areas.

### Strategic alignment of programme implementation

- 5.12 Across pathfinders and non-pathfinders there is a strong commonality of strategic focus on policy areas with work aligned to the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) and local [Tackling Poverty Strategies](#) and the National Prosperity for All agenda. As this interviewee identifies:

*'we've aligned to PSB priorities and local Wellbeing plans, it's useful because it seeks to align the grant delivery more with our key Wellbeing priorities'* (Local Authority grant lead)

- 5.13 However, it was often a local agenda that provided the strongest local 'drive' for Pathfinders, and this was often seen to facilitate buy-in across a range of staff.
- 5.14 Implementation has gained greater momentum if aligned to an ongoing authority transformation agenda with the Flexible Funding programme being used as a further vehicle for the implementation of that agenda. This facilitates sign-up, endorsement, and drive by the authority senior leadership team through the authority which is critical for moving the Flexible Funding programme forward. If lacking, then implementation has tended to flounder and be wracked by less, new joint working, increased protectionism, and a focus on the minutiae of delivery (for example referral processes, needs assessment practice, and moving funding between grants) than developing a clear strategic context and ambition for delivery. As this response highlights:

*'The driver is our wider Authority transformation agenda we're looking at supporting resilience better so they are less reliant on public service interventions later on so helps reduce demand that might not be sustainable in the longer term'* (Local Authority grant lead)

- 5.15 For success the strategic drive and senior leadership support and consistent articulation of the drive seems to be critical at this early initiation phase.

### **Case Study Insight**

**Conwy** have focussed on an approach that seeks to develop localised delivery arrangements as part of their wider, pre-existing transformation agenda – Team Conwy. The authority area has been divided up into five areas. The work in respect of identifying the areas was developed because of detailed consideration of the boundaries that exist in the county such as school catchment, health boundaries, and town and community council structures.

Initial work is focussed on establishing an early intervention set of support services for families that includes delivery through Families First, Flying Start and Supporting People. The Flexible Funding programme has come at the right time, enabling them to move an agenda forward that they have been focussed on for some time now.

The core of the implementation approach is focussed on a detailed programme management model developed over the last few years in the authority and predates the programme. Five different Heads of Service have been brought together. These Heads of Service lead on each of the ten grants involved in Flexible Funding. A delivery team has been established that focusses on a series of work packages to be delivered 1) Research on needs and existing delivery; 2) Opportunities for Co-production; 3) Commissioning/Decommissioning options; 4) Monitoring and Evaluation; 5) Administration.

The work the group is taking forward is overseen by three Scrutiny committees and is also aligned to the Tackling Poverty Board that is being established in the borough. The PSB thus far has had a minimal role in the roll-out of this approach, though a greater role is expected further down the line.

- 5.16 Non-pathfinders are yet to reach this position as the imperative for them to move the Flexible Funding programme agenda forward is much less pronounced. They understand the need for the approach but at present await more insight from Pathfinders on how to drive a strategic approach forward although some review work is underway. Many are currently undertaking reviews of their services across the ten grant areas, with the intention of identifying strategic opportunities within these within the next six (or more) months.
- 5.17 In some pathfinders, a strong driver is an increased customer focus seeking to move delivery away from a sole focus on the specific grants, to what needs can be addressed in the round by this delivery. In Cardiff, Conwy, Newport, and Torfaen this is being used as a key mechanism to counter resistance from some grant leads, delivery staff and senior managers to the changes that are proposed through the Flexible Funding programme in those areas, by seeking to ensure that support needs are being addressed in the most effective way possible.

### **Aims and ambition**

- 5.18 There is a generally good understanding of the national aims and ambitions of the Flexible Funding programme amongst Flexible Funding leads across all local authorities in Wales (pathfinders and non-pathfinders), though it is strongest in the Pathfinders.
- 5.19 However, this dissipates outside of this group of staff and some grant leads in pathfinder authorities, and particularly in non-pathfinder authorities, are concerned that a key driver is one just focussed upon making cost savings and reducing the overall funding 'pot' for EIPS.
- 5.20 This comes from a working environment that has been dominated by the austerity agenda since 2010/11 and the perception from many authority staff, particularly those in frontline delivery roles, is that future 'cuts' or 'reductions' in spend in services for vulnerable groups might be one area that experiences such reductions. This view may be underpinned by the Welsh Government budget statement for 2019/20 (Welsh Government, 2017) that highlighted the need for savings of £13.4m in this area.

Therefore, many staff being asked to review/revise links/working arrangements with other grants or funding streams have one eye on these challenges. Thus, the perception from this agenda will tend to focus on where further cuts might be

coming and how these might remove 'critical' services for those they are supporting/working with rather than just a focus on grant alignment and integration.

5.21 A key response to this in the most advanced Pathfinders has been to ensure a focus upon the support journey experienced by support users: It is not appropriate that users engage with staff from multiple grants, or that service users are unable to access services (examples include the accessibility of refuge spaces in South West Wales, geographically influenced limits to the availability of debt advice and family support services in North, Mid and South East Wales, and delivery of duplicate parenting support services across Wales).

5.22 Some authorities report that there is some reticence about being truly innovative in delivery approaches, because there are fears that the proposed changes may not go through because of some of the political sensitivities around some of the potential changes that might emerge from the EIPS agenda. As these interviewees highlighted:

*'It's still to go up to Ministers, what happens if it doesn't happen. Do we then undo all that's happened up to then?'* (Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)

*'Is Welsh Government going to go ahead with this remains a concern a further commitment would be useful. We could do it without them, but it is harder'* (Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)

5.23 Furthermore, there are concerns about how any future grant alignment might be structured. If Supporting People were not included in a single EIPS grant or other alternative approach, a number of interviewees highlighted that this could substantially affect the funding 'landscape' and level of funds available to other grants and limit the potential flexibility options:

*'If Supporting People isn't in that 'pot' then in total there's much less cash to play with and perhaps that limits what might be possible because SP makes up such a big part of the funding in this area'* (Local authority grant lead)

*'The uncertainty on whether Supporting People is in, or out, is challenging as it is such a large proportion of the funding pot for EIPS. If it's out that could limit what you can do with an EIPS grant that doesn't include it'* (Local authority grant lead)

- 5.24 An alternative view however, is that the impact of such a move may not be on the same scale as a move to a single grant. This is a set of perspectives that could be further investigated in the next phase of the evaluation work to review the two-grant proposal highlighted in paragraph 1.26.
- 5.25 There are also concerns across pathfinders and non-pathfinders that any savings arising from Flexible Funding programme delivery that might then be redistributed into vulnerable people support may not be as large as first thought. Authorities in Wales have in some cases already reduced many back-office functions and although there might be duplication in some administrative functions, interviewees identified that likely efficiencies resulting from rationalisation may only bring small savings. Moves from full-time to part-time roles for staff who are often on lower-scale salaries is one way in which such efficiencies might be achieved. Previous funding pressures have meant that some authorities have undergone several restructuring rounds already and with further savings and overspends identified in 2018/19 and projected beyond by planning leads, local authorities are already working extensively at efficiency savings.
- 5.26 Initial aims of the early implementation work (pathfinders and non-pathfinders) tend to focus on setting up appropriate reviews and assessments to identify a key evidence base to identify where changes and alignment are needed. As these interview responses show:
- 'Get people in a room to scope up from bottom up, start from service user using people from different support areas and then identify areas where there is conflict in service delivery and then look at what needs to happen to make a change'* (Local Authority grant lead)
- 'Started looking at inputs and seeing where they matched up in certain cases. Also looking at commissioning at a local level as well including the staffing structures to look at how bringing it together could improve outcomes'* (Local Authority grant lead)
- 5.27 Across all non-pathfinder local authorities interviewed<sup>20</sup>, understanding of the initiative is good and well aligned with the national priorities as outlined in the programme statutory guidance.

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<sup>20</sup> Due to staff availability issues we were unable to interview any representatives of Powys County Council in time for inclusion in this report.

- 5.28 In addition to this narrative, there is a second perception amongst interviewees, which sees the programme against the context of the general reduction in budgets for local authorities. Flexible Funding is thus viewed by some interviewees as a way of encouraging councils to do more with less, and perhaps forcing local authorities themselves to make difficult decisions about what gets funded and what doesn't.
- 5.29 None of the non-pathfinder local authorities have yet identified clear aims or ambitions for the Flexible Funding programme that they were able to articulate in interviews. This is because they are further behind in developing specific aims and ambitions in terms of how the programme might enable more effective delivery in their areas. As work continues, they expect to be able to formalise these in more detail in the coming months so that they have a vision that Flexible Funding will be able to support moving forward.

### **Early delivery approaches**

- 5.30 Most Flexible Funding delivery, where it is taking place, predates the programme, particularly in Pathfinder authorities where the change agenda is being driven by a wider transformation agenda (for example Cardiff, Conwy, Newport, RCT, and Torfaen).

*'Our needs-based delivery has predated Flexible Funding'* (Local Authority grant lead)

*'We were already using several grants to fund support and using it flexibly, but Flexible Funding joined people together to discuss this more'* (Local Authority grant lead)

- 5.31 Early approaches to delivery include:
- establishment of forums for the ten grant leads to meet regularly
  - the fact that 'new', 'different', conversations are now ongoing at a local level about how grants might start, or continue, to work together
  - planning activities and commissioning them together
  - groups of staff involved in sharing and learning together
  - some thinking about how programmes are being structured or might need to be restructured
  - review and mapping of opportunities to identify ways of integrating services/grants including the mapping of client journeys where existing

monitoring systems allow links to be made for records for individuals/families in receipt of support.

- looking at community hub models for delivery where clients can find all services in one place
- strategic restructuring to realign directorates with new ways of delivery
- changed working practices across departments
- review and development of single referral routes (Gateway arrangements) and needs analysis approach
- using specialist consultants to help shape changed practice and process e.g. develop a new estates strategy or utilisation
- establishing new Governance structures
- aligning admin/back office functions and perhaps rationalisation of them.

### **Case Study Insight**

In **Rhondda Cynon Taf** Implementation began in July 2018 after proposals for moving to the Flexible Funding programme approach were signed off by the Public Services Board (PSB). Key to this sign-off was the Board recognising that approaches needed to reflect local differences between Merthyr Tydfil and RCT (the PSB is a joint board covering both authority areas) but that a set of general principles were being agreed through which delivery in RCT will now move forward.

Implementation of an integrated delivery model for early intervention and prevention is focussed on the vision of providing the right support, at the right time to the right people and will involve the following:

- inclusive target groups to meet individual, family and community needs, to facilitate closer alignment of services and deliver the current benefits of existing individual programmes as a bare minimum
- clear identification of need for early intervention and prevention support
- a clear pathway of support as part of a continuum that provides the right support to the right people at the right time via universal access to a single 'front door'

- a common set of operational delivery principles and a focus on joined-up working that ensures support access to the right individuals at the right time and in the right locations with services like parenting available universally
- development of an effective single outcomes framework

The catalyst for this integrated model will be the Resilient Families Service which is multi-funded across grants but also includes core funding from the local authority, and that the Flexible Funding programme will enable delivery not restricted by eligibility criteria, through a single point of access to simplify the overall referral process.

5.32 With a strong Senior Leadership Team (SLT) steer, initial delivery challenges can be overcome because there is a clear sense that the agenda is a strategic one for the authority.

5.33 Timescales around a one-year pilot for roll-out of cultural change, service review and redesign, and new working practices, are very concerning for five of the seven pathfinders. As these interviewees highlight:

*'A one-year pilot is very short. There is a risk for us if Flexible Funding doesn't happen what would we do regardless against what would be good to do'* (Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)

*'Clear picture on our grants will only be really clear at year end, or perhaps by quarter 3. This is because of the way demands for the funding shift throughout the year. At moment it is difficult to say conclusively.'* (Welsh Government grant lead)

*'This is something that can't be rushed, there is a process it needs to go through to have the proper evidence base to show it's leading to change, demonstrating understanding and a common language to identify what difference is being made'* (Welsh Government grant lead)

5.34 Some Pathfinders are less concerned although they each have been working on this agenda for more than 4-5 years illustrating the timescales that are involved in this work.

5.35 However, there was a strong view across Pathfinders that the Flexible Funding programme has acted as a catalyst for change, bringing some elements of additionality related to the driving through of the agenda facilitated by the programme in those areas, as these interviewees highlighted:

*'Flexible Funding has got groups together formally. We hadn't gone forward before because of the justifications that had to be made to join the funds together'* (Local Authority grants lead)

*'Funding flexibility has accelerated the local focus on integration, it's drawn it further forward. Are they living breathing it? No, they are still worried about loss and want to protect their own areas'* (Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)

*'We've used Flexible Funding as a vehicle to drive change here, we could have done it anyway, but it has helped to have that drive through a Welsh Government project like this'* (Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)

5.36 Cultural change of the type involved in the Flexible Funding programme has been time-consuming in the past, as changing structures and ways of working needs time to be handled properly and experience of it is different for different levels of staff. This is because local authority processes are often very slow-moving and bureaucratic. Some Pathfinders have deliberately sought to co-locate staff leading such change with teams to support the transition to new approaches and facilitate a faster process of change.

5.37 Expectations amongst the most advanced Pathfinders, are that full flexibility will be in operation in 2019/20, although this may not cover all EIPS and thus may involve the operation of a single community hub, or thematic delivery around certain support areas such as Family Support, Older People's Services, and Wellbeing for instance, rather than flexibility across all grant areas. This is because there is a wish to further test this roll-out, to fine tune models before moving to full roll-out across the authority.

5.38 Moves to initiate joint commissioning of activity are already happening in Pathfinders and at least 10-11 non-pathfinders, however these are complicated by contractual arrangements in some authority areas where Supporting People contracts often run for 3+ years whilst other grants tend to work on an annual commissioning cycle. This is not insurmountable if contract termination clauses do not place a significant burden on authorities, but this is not always the case and

some early joint commissioning work has not involved Supporting People arrangements because of the nature of existing longer-term service contracts in this area.

- 5.39 In terms of grants beginning to work together, this varies considerably from local authority to local authority (pathfinders and non-pathfinders). A few patterns emerge, however with family-related grants (Flying-Start, Families First, Communities First/Legacy Fund) which often work together, whilst housing-related grants (Supporting People, Homelessness) also commonly work together.
- 5.40 In Pathfinders there seem to be stronger, more historic working and funding relationships between Flying Start, Families First and Supporting People grants with the Legacy Fund and PPE also being involved, although there were examples across a range of non-pathfinders as well. Examples in both pathfinders and non-pathfinders that all predate the implementation of the Flexible Funding programme include:
- joint contracts including health-related support (Families First & Flying Start)
  - money advice (Families First and Supporting People)
  - domestic abuse (Families First and Supporting People)
  - parent forums (Families First, Flying Start and Legacy Fund)
  - parenting (Families First and Flying Start)
  - targeted youth and family support (PPE and Families First)
  - early speech and language development (Flying Start and Families First).
- 5.41 No non-pathfinders responded that grants have started to work together, because of the possible Flexible Funding initiative. In some areas, committees have been formed to get grant leads/commissioners round the table, but this has not really led to joined-up delivery yet.
- 5.42 Many local authorities (pathfinders and non-pathfinders) have existing collaborations between grants within the Flexible Funding programme (and some outside the current grants within the programme). They have found that where grant leads meet and work together regularly, there is more enthusiasm for the initiative. Respondents suggested that building on these structures will be central to the approach ultimately taken.

5.43 Several Flexible Funding programme leads questioned why the Rent Smart Wales Enforcement and St David's Day Fund were included in the ten grants covered by the programme. These leads found it difficult to understand how these grants could be adequately linked to other areas of service delivery, or be used to support flexibility in other areas, as demands for funding from them were likely to be highly unpredictable.

#### **Governance, partnership and regional focus (PSBs and RCCs)**

5.44 Public Services Boards (PSBs) have had a limited role to date in Pathfinders although they have been called on to sign off Flexible Funding proposals (Cwm Taf - Merthyr/RCT), to ratify initial review work, or to just hear further information about the Flexible Funding programme agenda. Cwm Taf are testing out the Flexible Funding programme approach as a PSB, but as yet major change in the operation of the PSB there is awaited whilst early elements of implementation are undertaken. As these interviewees highlighted:

*'Up until sign off the PSB had a watching brief really, but now it's implementation we expect them to be much more involved now'* (Local Authority grant lead)

*'for the PSB, we haven't worked out where they sit yet, but there is potential for a process there and there are options to consider to work out a role for the Board'* (Local Authority grant lead)

5.45 More extensive engagement is expected as business cases for change are drafted and PSBs are expected to be consulted more extensively on these. However, full knowledge of the Flexible Funding programme is limited amongst many PSBs (other than Cwm Taf PSB) and Flexible Funding leads are planning information programmes for these groups. It is likely that invites for Welsh Government staff to attend PSB meetings will continue.

5.46 In non-pathfinders, PSBs have yet to have any extensive engagement with the Flexible Funding programme other than information sharing about the impending opportunity presented by the programme.

5.47 Regional Collaborative Committees<sup>21</sup> (RCCs) report concerns regarding their involvement in the roll-out of the Flexible Funding programme. There is a perception that they have not been fully consulted, and that providers in these groups are very

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<sup>21</sup> Interviews were able to be conducted with four of the six RCCs in Wales due to the availability of interviewees.

worried about the implications of implementation on funding levels, mirroring positions articulated by the wider Housing sector about the move of funds to more 'politically popular' areas such as childcare or family support. The groups are also expressing a willingness for ring fencing of funding for Homelessness Prevention and housing support services to ensure a key focus on this delivery remains.

- 5.48 RCCs welcome the information presentations they have received from Welsh Government staff but they would welcome more 'live' information and even a communications strategy about the progress being made in Pathfinder areas, how things are being done and the outcomes resulting from them.
- 5.49 Across RCCs there is a sense that the local authority staff tend to be better informed about what Flexible Funding means and are taking forward whilst provider staff are less clear, as there has been a distinct difference in different authorities about how messages about the Flexible Funding programme and EIPS have been passed on within local authorities, and to external agencies. There is a thirst for significantly greater amounts of information on this amongst all RCCs from local authorities.
- 5.50 RCCs are not clear whether a regional dimension for delivery under EIPS would remain; they note that some of the strategic work they have been involved in has led to the development of regional strategies for Homelessness Prevention work or reviews of supported housing.

### **Early outcomes**

- 5.51 With only 3-4 months having elapsed since the Flexible Funding programme has been implemented, outcomes are extremely limited at this stage. The key outcome thus far across authorities (pathfinder and non-pathfinder) is the establishment of a joint group for all ten grants leads to meet, understand each grant's activities, responsibilities and existing delivery, and discuss joint working arrangements.
- 5.52 At least four Pathfinders have altered organisational structures to bring responsibilities for the 10 grants within one directorate with others planning this, once ongoing reviews and service mapping activities are completed.
- 5.53 The early review work in Pathfinders highlights early potential for changes in approaches to strategic planning of grant delivery, new needs analysis approaches, some options for rationalisation of services, and identified opportunities for more joined-up working though they wish to complete the review work first before committing to these.

- 5.54 Moving to the end of 2018/19, there is an expectation that the Flexible Funding programme will result in improvements in the strategic planning of grants, innovation in delivery approaches, some small areas of rationalisation, some changes to organisational working, and more joined-up working, but to date, there is limited evidence of these patterns at such an early stage in programme implementation. Many authorities feel it is too early to say whilst review work continues and await a full evidence base before committing to specific future outcomes/impacts. However, the Theory of Change will provide a key mechanism through which progress against key measures will be reviewed.
- 5.55 Amongst non-pathfinders, most local authorities reported considering making changes to structures/forming new committees. Others said that they will wait for confirmation of the scheme going ahead before proceeding with any significant changes. New joint working is likely to be a short-term outcome, even if it is only groups/key personnel within the organisation becoming more aware of one another and what they do creating the opportunity for consideration.

#### **Flexible Funding programme monitoring and shared outcomes framework**

- 5.56 Having reviewed existing grant guidance and the first overarching quarterly monitoring reports made by the Pathfinder authorities, we are able to identify some useful context for identifying a common outcomes framework across the Flexible Funding programme.
- 5.57 Review of the existing guidance and monitoring requirements across the ten grants (see para 2.5) involved in the Flexible Funding programme shows that, in terms of eligibility criteria, almost all of the grants are national programmes which are delivered in every local authority. The exception is the Legacy Fund which is only delivered in local authorities that had Communities First. Communities for Work+ (CFW+) also has a specific focus on Communities for Work areas, although it can be delivered in other areas too. Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People (PPE) can be delivered regionally through partnership work between local authorities as well as locally.
- 5.58 The age groups targeted by the ten grants vary. For example, Flying Start is targeted at 0-4 year olds, and Childcare and Play grants are targeted at school aged children; Families First at whole families; PPE at children and young people; St David's Day Fund is for young people aged 16-24; and CFW+, Legacy Fund, Supporting People, and Homelessness Prevention are for all working age adults aged 16+.

5.59 There are very specific target groups for these programmes, and although there is some overlap, it is not universal and the full programme of 10 grants does not support all constituents of these groups, thus:

- CFW+ and Legacy Fund support the unemployed and underemployed, focussing on the most deprived areas
- Families First, Flying Start, St David's Day Fund, PPE and Legacy Fund all support the development of children and or young people who are disadvantaged and face challenging circumstances, including Looked After Children and those leaving Care
- Families First and Flying Start also support developing parenting skills and provide specialised services for families for a wide range of areas including health, financial, and accommodation needs
- Homelessness Prevention and Supporting People are specifically targeted at alleviating homelessness or providing supported housing services.
- Homelessness Prevention, Supporting People, St David's Day Fund, PPE, Legacy Fund and Families First look to develop the independence of the young people and adults they support and promote empowerment amongst them.

5.60 There are some clear commonalities between the financial reporting across many of the ten grants and this has led to the development of a single financial claim form for the ten grants by Welsh Government.

5.61 Across all ten grants, most of the previous claims were made quarterly. All the financial systems require forecast and actual spend figures and they are now done on a quarterly basis for all ten grants in 2018/19.

### **Proposals for an outcomes framework**

5.62 Following the analysis above and review of the outcomes, we have identified the following proposed content for an outcomes framework to underpin the delivery of the Flexible Funding programme, to provide foundations for a further framework that would underpin assessment of any future EIPS fund.

- 5.63 Interview responses outlined a few key principles that need to underpin the outcomes framework including:
- the need to move away from very specific outcome measures related to specific grants
  - that outcomes avoid the need for micro-management of delivery by the Welsh Government
  - that outcomes provide good links to cost-saving measurement to illustrate where improved needs analysis might be generating such savings
  - that identified outcomes link specifically to national Wellbeing outcome measures thus linking to local Wellbeing Plans
  - making explicit links to the Early Intervention Foundation’s Maturity Index (Early Intervention Foundation, 2014) as there are clear parallels between it and the needs for this framework. This includes strong alignment with Welsh Government priorities – creating wealth and prosperity, facilitating health and wellbeing for all Wales residents, raising ambition and learning, and resilience and fulfilment of potential as outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It also includes key elements of the critical components behind successful delivery as highlighted in the literature review in Chapter 4, namely planning, delivering, evaluating and leading.
- 5.64 The ongoing development of the outcomes framework should also consider options for further work to ensure alignment to RBA principles, so that the outcomes at a national level are expressed as a condition of wellbeing for people. This would also act as a statement of the aspiration of where grant alignment might be in the future. Additionally, it should include approaches to enable the co-production of measures through service user groups so that an alternative perspective be brought to its development.

**Table 5.1: Outcome Measures Proposed by Workshop Delegates (June – July 2018)**

Short-Term Outcomes	Medium-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
Maintain low numbers of children & young people entering statutory services.	Seamlessness of support (no postcode lottery)	Single, common, streamlined data returns
Understanding of needs enhanced	Distance travelled by users	Less escalation to statutory services
Broader single strategic needs analysis	Local political and senior buy-in and [leadership] – ownership	Re-commissioning services through joint agreement of teams
Common measurement arrangements	Use of flexibility - support delivered where previously wouldn't have been delivered	Culture shift towards to new working practices
Re-design of services to reduce duplication	Clear pathway for user	Cash efficiencies
Reduction in number of decision steps in referral/service pathways	Common language that enables creativity and innovation	Greater levels of regional working, including health, police, and other statutory services
Numbers of referrals of same people/families across all programmes.	Developing posts and workforce planning better without funding inhibiting delivery	Service users rate services more highly
Staff understand principles and aims of EIPS	People are resilient and maintaining lives	Allowance of local variation built on a set of core principles
Local political and senior buy-in and [leadership] - ownership		User and Referral staff knowing where to go for the right help at the right time

Source: Theory of Change Workshop Notes – June-July 2018 (see para 3.2) for further details on the workshops

## 6. Lessons Learnt from Flexible Funding Programme Implementation

6.1 Reviewing the insights from the literature review work and findings from the interviews, with those involved in the implementation of the Flexible Funding programme at Welsh Government and local authority level (pathfinders and non-pathfinders), highlights that even at this early stage there are several themes within which key lessons can be learnt.

6.2 These lessons relate to the following main themes:

- programme implementation
- future programme roll-out
- sharing best practice.

### *Learning from programme implementation*

6.3 Specific relationship-building work by Flexible Funding leads in all local authorities with grant and programme leads is critical to tackle perceived threats to roles and protectionist attitudes towards funding that might prevent flexible use of those funds.

6.4 Honest engagement with grant and programme leads at local authority level is critical to roll out the Flexible Funding programme effectively, and these conversations need to focus on the fact that some clients are not receiving the services they need because of the complexity of some of the funding systems already in place. These complexities were outlined by these interviewees:

*'When we've looked at it we wonder how service users got through the system. It's so complicated because of the needs involved and we've lost users because of the lack of join-up. If we were starting again we wouldn't design the support system like it is now'* (Local Authority grant lead)

*'Something does need to change, families are still struggling, and we need to do something different'* (Welsh Government grant lead)

*'Nobody would establish the system we have ended up with once you've mapped it out'* (Local Authority Flexible Funding lead)

6.5 Time needs to be given to this process, with possible engagement taking place in the offices of those being enrolled in the new approaches. It is important to realise that these staff are worried about ongoing local authority restructuring that predates the Flexible Funding programme, their current jobs, any future job roles that might

arise out of changes resulting from programme and EIPS roll-out, and the potential impact on vulnerable people's access to support services.

- 6.6 Critical success elements include specific clarity on the aims and objectives of the Flexible Funding programme, and the potential EIPS grant across a range of stakeholders, to ensure flexibility but also to ensure that the original intentions of the grants continue to be addressed. Just because they are included within one funding pot does not mean those support needs go away.
- 6.7 Senior management buy-in, support, and advocacy is critical if this agenda is to move forward at speed. Buy-in at this level can offer clear, independent support for the way forward, and reinforce the importance and relevance to the local authority of the need to pursue the wider agenda that the Flexible Funding programme and the potential EIPS grant seek to bring to service delivery in Wales.
- 6.8 Key experience shows the need for clear, simple governance, a set of driving principles, a clear vision, consistency across Welsh Government leads on implementation at their end, and a focus on a bottom-up approach driven by support needs.
- 6.9 The ongoing joint working arrangements work because of regular communications between grants. Through these arrangements, the leads understand which staff work in them and the service users they work with, and they are also then able to regularly share ideas on delivery and support, whilst being open to a wider set of ideas as a result, that facilitates thinking in a wider context about potential service redesign options.

#### *Lessons for future programme roll-out*

- 6.10 Local authorities and their staff would value a 'steady as she goes' approach, as early review work is showing that there is much that needs to be formalised and properly planned for the programme to have a proper set of impacts. This is because Pathfinders identify that any pilot needs stability and reassurance to continue to progress and that people need time to move to where they need to be.
- 6.11 Evidence from the pilot thus far may not yet be conclusive because of the stage of implementation reached, but local authorities are keen that the Welsh Government are resolute in supporting the pursuit of this agenda, so that further piloting work can proceed and that local authority staff feel supported to be as innovative as possible in implementing the Flexible Funding programme.

- 6.12 Another year of waiting for detail on outcomes and impacts to facilitate further decision-making on the future options of EIPS delivery may be beneficial, as set-up could need at least 12 months - there is a lot of preparatory work for local authorities to do, plus new systems to put in place.
- 6.13 Local authority leads for Flexible Funding are very clear that the process of review and redesign cannot be rushed. A more substantive and sustainable set of changes around EIPS will result if the early work through the Flexible Funding programme follows a process that local authorities need to go through, and the journey is needed to develop understanding and a common language of how it can be taken forward.
- 6.14 Local authority pathfinders and non-pathfinders were very clear that they need notice ahead of change. Recent changes on validation of data in T&Cs for Supporting People were made in March 2018, and some authorities found these impossible to adhere to in the time available, given the lateness of change. For appropriate planning and preparation for the scale of change, EIPS is likely to bring a lead-in time of a minimum of nine months; this is more helpful, however, 12 months would be ideal.
- 6.15 All local authorities would welcome further collaboration between Welsh Government grant leads. There appears currently to be a natural alignment between different housing-related grants, replicating a similar alignment across non-housing-related grants (Families First, Flying Start, the Legacy Fund for instance). Some local authorities have, however, managed to align both areas and further investigation is needed to see how this might be replicated across all local authorities.
- 6.16 The final make-up of the proposed grant alignment could, if Supporting People were not included within it, lead to substantial impacts on the quantity of funds available for EIPS in the future, potentially limiting future options for flexibility. There are, however, some stakeholders who believe the scale of this impact might be less pronounced under a two-grant solution than the one-grant solution originally proposed.

### *Lessons for Sharing Best Practice*

- 6.17 Non-pathfinders want more input from Pathfinders to help them shape their next steps, learn from mistakes, and identify where grants should sit in future. Local authorities are very interested to hear from neighbouring authorities on their experiences.
- 6.18 Existing practice-sharing from Pathfinders is especially welcomed and all local authorities want Welsh Government to continue identifying ways in which regular updates on progress can be shared across Wales. This needs to provide:
- an update on what is happening with regard to implementation, pitfalls and lessons learnt
  - insight into what works
  - an update on the practice and process of implementation and delivery
  - how delivery and implementation might incorporate more specific regional dimensions, and
  - detail about difficulties associated with implementation and delivery being experienced and solutions identified to address them.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The interviews with leads and key stakeholders, plus analysis of the first overarching quarterly monitoring reports and delivery plans for the Flexible Funding programme, show that following programme commencement (from April 2018), some progress has been made.
- 7.2 This progress is primarily focussed on pathfinders establishing reviews of services, assessing governance and management options, and establishing fora, if not already in place, where the ten grants covered by the programme can review existing delivery. This facilitates understanding of other approaches and helps begin the process of identifying options for joint working and potential for service integration. For non-pathfinders, the imperative to establish something similar is much less pronounced although some are already making strides.
- 7.3 Across both pathfinders and non-pathfinders, there appears to be a natural alignment between housing-related grants and a separate alignment between non-housing-related grants. Although these alignment boundaries have been crossed in some areas, there are opportunities to see how these groupings might be better aligned.
- 7.4 There is broad acceptance of the principles that have been articulated about the Flexible Funding programme's aims and ambitions and understanding of these is generally good. However, this is not universal and those who are furthest removed from Flexible Funding programme developments tend to have the poorest appreciation of the aims and ambitions of the programme.
- 7.5 In place of this, there remains an underlying sense of suspicion, that the ultimate narrative being pursued by these changes is one of reducing the total amount of funding overall for vulnerable groups, or an unintended consequence that grant alignment might mean the focus of funding moves away from less 'politically popular' groups. Communication of the wider aims and ambitions of the Flexible Funding programme has been undertaken, but it needs to be made consistent and ongoing, so that those messages reach all levels of local authorities involving multiple strands of messages to meet the spread of responsibilities for the programme across various tiers in local authorities.

- 7.6 All providers (for instance local authority, third sector and the private sector) across grants also need to hear similar key messages as the understanding of what Flexible Funding and the potential EIPS grant are seeking to achieve is poorer amongst these groups.
- 7.7 Communication at all levels is key in terms of future implementation. It is evident that some staff and partnerships feel more informed than others which can cause early tension. Developing a strong communications plan that addresses the audience and delivers key messages, through a range of methods, may support greater ownership and understanding of the programme.
- 7.8 The current context of repeated cuts to services does not provide a healthy environment to generate motivation and energy for new programmes, especially one so ingrained in some of the key grant funded routes for local authorities. It requires strong leadership and commitment at all levels to drive the service transformation that the Flexible Funding programme is likely to require. If the right ingredients are in place though, positive change and outcomes can be achieved. It is critical therefore, that the messaging from Welsh Government and the work taken forward by Flexible Funding staff in local authorities ensures that the austerity-driven cuts agenda is clearly disentangled from what the Flexible Funding programme is trying to achieve.
- 7.9 This is critical because literature evidence and early findings from Pathfinder authorities suggest that having a clear vision and ethos, and strong senior leadership support, provides a solid foundation to build on. Early evaluation suggests it is more likely to be successful where there are strong functioning partnerships, frameworks, or transformation programmes already in place. This means that the agenda is shaped by a specific focus upon what is needed to achieve service redesign, rather than an agenda diluted by a divergent focus on a wider cuts agenda, as austerity continues.
- 7.10 The challenges of evidencing outcomes and impact are well documented and although it is early days, inconsistencies in reporting – where different monitoring systems and outcome measurements across different grants make consistent reporting challenging – are already emerging. Establishing clear frameworks for evidencing impact and reporting needs to be a key consideration. Given the flexibility of the funding, there may need to be a creative approach that allows for some variation but has some clear givens and bottom lines for what is mandatory reporting. Interview findings suggest this needs to move away from the micro-

managed approach of previous funding rounds, but at the same time maintain a common core of outcomes that can apply to all potential EIPS grant delivery.

- 7.11 There are many opportunities to give users of services a say in how those services are provided and be involved in a co-production approach for outcomes measurement alongside this. This could include what success would look like for them. There are early signs that customer-led approaches are having a positive impact and this may also support longer-term sustainable outcomes.
- 7.12 Due to the challenges of measuring impact in early intervention, a longer timeframe may need to be considered for genuine measurable impact. Furthermore, the linking of administrative datasets, as undertaken through the SAIL databank at Swansea University<sup>22</sup>, and/or the development of single monitoring systems by local authorities, will be critical to the development of more effective outcome measurement. Any successful outcomes that are seen in the short term are only proxy indicators for the longer-term desired outcomes. Agreeing a shared outcomes framework, or approaches to be used, may provide a good starting point and further work is needed to develop an overarching outcomes framework for the programme.
- 7.13 Work is now in train across local authorities – particularly Pathfinders. This needs to be given time to bear fruit and all local authorities will be supported if consistent messaging confirming that instigation of the agenda advocated by the Flexible Funding programme, and the potential EIPS grant is going to continue. Reassurance on this will be particularly helpful to those authorities who are showing reticence around being truly innovative because of concerns that future decisions may show such work to be wasted
- 7.14 From a proper time-bound opportunity to embed the learning and practice from this early set-up work and evaluation of the outcomes of it, arises the possibility that needs-based approaches to the delivery of support for vulnerable groups could be improved through single entry points underpinned by single needs analysis work and seamless support delivery. This route offers the best opportunity to deliver service enhancement, more effective and efficient delivery approaches and any

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<sup>22</sup> SAIL stands for Secure Anonymised Information Linkage. The SAIL Databank is funded by the Welsh Government and aims to provide a range of anonymised individualised data drawing on a range of datasets across Welsh Government and linking these at an individual level to support policy-making and delivery to improve health, wellbeing, and wider public services. By linking population, health and social care data it aims to provide a key, consistent information source to monitor and track outcomes for those in receipt of a range of public sector services. Existing datasets include data drawn from Supporting People and Flying Start programmes, with Families First being further targeted. The [SAIL databank](#) offers significant opportunities to monitor some of the key outcomes of the Flexible Funding programme.

savings that might then be reinvested back into further EIPS delivery, though this must be delivered through a systemic approach to change. An approach with an explicit targeted focus on the needs of vulnerable people to better support them in the right, timely way, improving immediate outcomes and longer-term life chances.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 The recommendations below are based on our analysis of the evaluation findings. They identify key areas where interim insights provide some useful perspectives to influence the ongoing implementation and delivery of the Flexible Funding programme, and suggestions for the next steps for the evaluation work.

### **EIPS/Flexible Funding Programme**

- 8.2 Local authorities and their staff need confirmation that the agenda underpinning the potential EIPS grant is to continue for at least the next year, to allow full consideration of the actions that Pathfinder authorities are currently developing when their reviews of service delivery conclude. This should emphasise that the Welsh Government is actively encouraging innovative approaches to future review and delivery work (see paragraphs 5.22, 6.10-6.11).
- 8.3 Where possible, grant funding decisions should be made early and perhaps include commitments across a 2-3 year funding period to enable authorities to plan delivery over at least the medium term (see paragraphs 6.10 and 6.14).
- 8.4 The Flexible Funding programme evaluation should incorporate in its next phase an investigation of the two-grant option for the potential EIPS grant proposed by Cymorth Cymru and its partners to identify the efficacy and efficiency of such an approach. This could be covered in interviews with local authority staff, to identify the implications of this approach and their view on its potential efficacy, in line with their aims and ambitions for programme delivery (see paragraphs 1.25 – 1.26 and 3.4-3.5).
- 8.5 The Funding Transition Team should continue to develop a systematic programme of updates and information, including sessions by Pathfinders that give detailed insight into the approaches being adopted in their Flexible Funding programme delivery. This should draw on evaluation findings, quarterly reporting, and content from Pathfinder Meetings (see paragraphs 7.18 and 8.5) and emphasise the importance of a strong senior leadership focus on implementation of the programme, the need to identify strategic links to the programme within an authority, and that frontline delivery staff may need specialist supervision and workforce development to drive the agenda forward (see paragraphs 3.34 and 5.15).

- 8.6 Non-pathfinders could be invited to begin investigating options to move to full funding flexibility and where appropriate adopt new Pathfinder status where initial progress suggests such status is appropriate (see paragraphs 5.29 and 5.31).
- 8.7 Further consistent and ongoing messaging should be provided about the aims and ambitions for the potential EIPS grant to ensure that understanding of the primacy of this focus is received more widely. This should include consideration of whether different ways of disseminating this messaging might be needed across local authorities (pathfinders and non-pathfinders), their partners and providers, and stakeholders (see paragraphs 5.18 – 5.19, 5.45, 5.49 and 6.18).

### **Next Steps for the Evaluation**

- 8.8 The second phase of work will commence with a detailed inception meeting that will review emerging policy agendas for the programme, outcomes from interim reporting in September 2018, and any Ministerial decisions to then shape the subsequent evaluation work. This will then provide the best possible opportunity for the final evaluation findings to reflect a fuller overview of Flexible Funding programme implementation.
- 8.9 The focus of the final evaluation phase may consider:
- how pathfinders have specifically delivered against their delivery plans, and the factors that have contributed to success and failure to learn lessons for future programme roll-out
  - consideration of the efficacy of the proposed two-grant option and its advantages and disadvantages compared to a single potential EIPS grant
  - assessing how appropriate specialisms around the most complex needs might be maintained amongst staff, as some staff move into potentially more generalist roles
  - reviewing the impacts and outcomes of further roll-out of the programme, particularly for local authorities and their staff, stakeholder and partner organisations (strategic and delivery), regional structures and PSBs, and particularly whether service users are beginning to see impacts from the service redesign areas that are beginning to be implemented

- further work to continue development of an overarching outcomes framework for the programme that is aligned to ongoing Welsh Government work assessing outcomes across existing grants
- testing of the Theory of Change and Outcomes Frameworks for the programme with real-life examples of delivery across pathfinder and non-pathfinder authorities.

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## Annex A – Scoping Interview Question Schedules

### Evaluation of the Flexible Funding Programme

Discussion guide and background for interviews with:

(a) Flexible Funding Leads – Local Authorities (ALL)

#### Questions / points for discussion

1. Name of Interviewee:

2. Local Authority?

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Bridgend County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Monmouthshire County Council
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Cardiff Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Newport City Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Carmarthenshire County Council	Pembrokeshire County Council
Ceredigion County Council	Powys County Council
Conwy County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Denbighshire County Council	City and County of Swansea
Flintshire County Council	Torfaen County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Gwynedd Council	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council	Wrexham County Borough Council

Pathfinder	Non-Pathfinder
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3. Can you tell me your job title please?

(a) Can you give me an overview of your role, and how it relates to the Flexible Funding programme?

## **Understanding of the Flexible Funding Project**

4. What is your understanding of the key aim(s) of the Flexible Funding programme?
5. What are the aims of the Flexible Funding programme in your local authority area?
6. What is the specific ambition for Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
7. How is your local authority using Flexible Funding to meet:
  - (a) The aims for its delivery?
  - (b) The ambition for its delivery?
8. What are the main drivers for your approach to Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
9. Why these drivers?

## **Project Implementation and Governance**

10. What approaches for the implementation of Flexible Funding is your local authority considering?
11. Of these approaches do any pre-date the implementation of Flexible Funding?
12. And which approaches are planned because of the implementation of Flexible Funding?
13. What approaches for the implementation of Flexible Funding are already underway in your local authority area?
14. What progress has been made in this implementation?
15. Has the implementation had any effects on any specific grant, or grants that you are aware of?
16. What have been the most significant challenges/barriers so far in this implementation process in your local authority area?
17. How are these challenges/barriers being addressed?
18. What changes have occurred because of Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
19. What role has your local public services board (PSB) played in this implementation?

20. At this stage, do you think there is any need to change or alter the implementation of Flexible Funding in your local authority area?

21. Why do you say that?

22. At the start of your Flexible Funding project which of the following grants have/are worked(ing) jointly together to deliver support and services to users?

	Supporting People	Flying Start	Families First	Legacy Fund	Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	Homelessness Prevention	Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	St David's Day Fund	Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)
Supporting People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Flying Start	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Families First	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Legacy Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Homelessness Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
St David's Day Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## **Monitoring**

23. How effective are existing monitoring and financial reporting approaches for capturing the key outcomes of the Flexible Funding programme

- (a) In terms of Welsh Government requirements for data collection
- (b) The tools currently being used?
- (c) The time and resources required to undertake it

24. In what way/s do you think the existing monitoring and financial reporting approaches could be improved/revised?

- (a) In terms of Welsh Government requirements for data collection
- (b) The tools currently being used?
- (c) The time and resources required to undertake it

25. Are there any examples of approaches you think that could be used here?

## **Outcomes – Short, Medium, Long Term**

26. For your local authority area, what have been the most significant outcomes the Flexible Funding programme has achieved so far, if any?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Probe: [Any other areas?]

27. Since implementation of the Flexible Funding project, which grants are now, or have plans to be, working together to deliver services and support to clients?

	Supporting People	Flying Start	Families First	Legacy Fund	Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	Homelessness Prevention;	Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	St David's Day Fund	Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)
Supporting People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Flying Start	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Families First	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Legacy Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Homelessness Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
St David's Day Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

28. Given your experience so far, what do you think the Flexible Funding programme will have achieved in your local authority area by the end of this financial year (ie. end of March 2019)?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

29. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

30. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements to March 2019?

31. What do you think the Flexible Funding programme will be able to achieve in your local authority area beyond March 2019?

- (a) of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (b) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (c) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (d) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (e) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (f) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (g) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (h) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (i) More joined-up working
- (j) Any other areas?

32. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

33. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements beyond March 2019?

### **Developing Outcome Measures**

34. What key things should we measure to illustrate the impact the Flexible Funding programme is having your local authority area?

## Key Lessons Learnt

35. What aspects of the Flexible Funding programme have:

- (a) Worked well so far?
- (b) Worked less well so far?

36. Based on your experience, what areas would you say are critical for the successful implementation of the Flexible Funding programme going forward?

37. Based on the questions you have answered for us today, do you think there is anyone else in your local authority we should speak to about the Flexible Funding project, particularly specific leads for particular grants?

Name and Job Role:

Email:

Telephone:

38. Are there any other comments about the Flexible Funding project that you wanted to make?

## Evaluation of the Flexible Funding Programme

Discussion guide and background for interviews with:

(a) Grant Leads – Local Authorities (All)

### Questions / points for discussion

1. Name of Interviewee:

2. Local Authority?

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Bridgend County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Monmouthshire County Council
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Cardiff Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Newport City Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Carmarthenshire County Council	Pembrokeshire County Council
Ceredigion County Council	Powys County Council
Conwy County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Denbighshire County Council	City and County of Swansea
Flintshire County Council	Torfaen County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Gwynedd Council	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council	Wrexham County Borough Council

Pathfinder	Non-Pathfinder
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3. Which of the following grants do you have responsibility for in your main work role? (Please Tick All That Apply)

<b>Grant</b>	<b>Have Responsibility For</b>
Supporting People	
Flying Start	
Families First	
Legacy Fund	
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	
Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	
Homelessness Prevention	
Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	
St David's Day Fund	
Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)	

4. Can you tell me your job title please?  
 (a) Can you give me an overview of your role, and how it relates to the Flexible Funding programme?

**Understanding of the Flexible Funding programme**

5. What is your understanding of the key aim(s) of the Flexible Funding programme?
6. What are the aims of the Flexible Funding programme in your local authority area?
7. What is the specific ambition for Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
8. How is your local authority using Flexible Funding to meet:  
 (a) The aims for its delivery?  
 (b) The ambition for its delivery?
9. What are the main drivers for your approach to Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
10. Why these drivers?

## **Project Implementation and Governance – Flexible Funding and Its Impacts on Grant/s**

Thinking about the Grant/Grants you are responsible for:

11. What approaches for the implementation of Flexible Funding is your local authority considering?
12. Of these approaches do any pre-date the implementation of Flexible Funding?
13. And which approaches are planned because of the implementation of Flexible Funding?
14. What approaches for the implementation of Flexible Funding are already underway in your local authority area?
15. What progress has been made in this implementation?
16. Do you think these have had any particularly different impacts, or outcomes, on the Grant/Grants you are responsible for compared to any other Grants?
17. What have been the most significant challenges/barriers so far in this implementation process in your local authority area?
18. How are these challenges/barriers being addressed?
19. What changes have occurred because of Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
20. What role has your local public services board (PSB) played in this implementation?
21. At this stage, do you think there is any need to change or alter the implementation of Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
22. Why do you say that?

23. At the start of your Flexible Funding programme which of the following grants have/are worked/ing jointly with the grants you are responsible for together to deliver support and services to users?

Grant you are responsible for	Grants worked with									
	Supporting People	Flying Start	Families First	Legacy Fund	Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	Homelessness Prevention	Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	St David's Day Fund	Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)
Supporting People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Flying Start	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Families First	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Legacy Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Homelessness Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
St David's Day Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## **Monitoring**

24. How effective are existing monitoring and financial reporting approaches for capturing the key outcomes of the Flexible Funding programme
- (a) In terms of Welsh Government requirements for data collection
  - (b) The tools currently being used?
  - (c) The time and resources required to undertake it
25. In what way/s do you think the existing monitoring and financial reporting approaches could be improved/revised?
- (a) In terms of Welsh Government requirements for data collection
  - (b) The tools currently being used?
  - (c) The time and resources required to undertake it
26. Are there any examples of approaches you think that could be used here?

## **Outcomes – Short, Medium, Long Term**

27. For your local authority area, what have been the most significant outcomes the Flexible Funding programme has achieved for the grants you are responsible for so far, if any?
- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
  - (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
  - (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
  - (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
  - (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
  - (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
  - (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
  - (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
  - (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
  - (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
  - (k) More joined-up working
  - (l) Any other areas

28. Since implementation of the Flexible Funding programme, which of the grants the grants you are responsible for are now working, or have plans to work, together to deliver services and support to clients?

Grant you are responsible for	Grants worked with									
	Supporting People	Flying Start	Families First	Legacy Fund	Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	Homelessness Prevention	Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	St Davids Day Fund	Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)
Supporting People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Flying Start	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Families First	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Legacy Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Homelessness Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
St David's Day Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

29. Given your experience so far, what do you think the Flexible Funding programme will have achieved in your local authority area by the end of this financial year (i.e. end of March 2019) for the grant/s you are responsible for?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

30. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

31. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements to March 2019?

32. What do you think the Flexible Funding programme will be able to achieve in your local authority area beyond March 2019 for the grant/s you are responsible for?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

33. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

34. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements beyond March 2019?

### **Developing Outcome Measures**

35. What key things should we measure to illustrate the impact the Flexible Funding programme is having your local authority area?

## Key Lessons Learnt

36. What aspects of the Flexible Funding programme have:

- (a) Worked well so far?
- (b) Worked less well so far?

37. Based on your experience, what areas would you say are critical for the successful implementation of the Flexible Funding programme going forward?

38. How do you think these lessons could best be shared?

39. Based on the questions you have answered for us today, do you think there is anyone else in your local authority we should speak to about the Flexible Funding programme, particularly related to the grants covered by the project?

Name and Job Role:

Email:

Telephone:

40. Are there any other comments about the Flexible Funding programme that you wanted to make?

## Evaluation of the Flexible Funding programme

Discussion guide and background for interviews with:

(a) Grant Leads – Welsh Government (All)

### Questions / points for discussion

1. Name of Interviewee:

### Your Responsibilities

2. Which of the following grants do you have responsibility for in your main work role?  
(Please Tick All That Apply)

3.

Grant	Have Responsibility For
Supporting People	
Flying Start	
Families First	
Legacy Fund	
Promoting Positive Engagement for Young People	
Childcare and Play (formerly Out of School Childcare)	
Homelessness Prevention	
Rent Smart Wales Enforcement (formerly Independent Living)	
St David's Day Fund	
Communities for Work Plus (formerly the Employability Grant)	

4. Can you tell me your job title please?

(a) Can you give me an overview of your role, and how it relates to the Flexible Funding programme?

### Understanding of the Flexible Funding programme

5. What is your understanding of the key aim(s) of the Flexible Funding programme?

6. What is the specific ambition for Flexible Funding programme:

(a) In general

(b) In relation to the grants you have responsibility for?

### Project Implementation and Governance

7. In relation to the grant/s you are responsible for do you believe Flexible Funding will work/be effective in achieving its:

(a) Aims

(b) Ambition

8. Are there any concerns about the implementation of Flexible Funding that:
  - (a) You have?
  - (b) You are aware of?
9. Can you describe in broad detail some of the processes local authorities have gone through to implement the Flexible Funding programme and what implications, if any, this has had for the grants you are responsible for?
10. Of these approaches do any pre-date the implementation of Flexible Funding?
11. And which approaches are planned because of the implementation of Flexible Funding?
12. What are the main changes that have occurred because of Flexible Funding in the grant/s you have responsibility for?
13. What role/s are local Public Service Boards (PSB) playing in the implementation of the Flexible Funding programme in relation to the grants you are responsible for?
14. What have been the most significant challenges/barriers so far in the implementation process for the Flexible Funding programme for the grants you are responsible for?
15. How are these challenges/barriers being addressed?
16. At this stage, do you think there is any need to change, or alter, the implementation of Flexible Funding in relation to the grant/s you are responsible for?
17. Why do you say that?

## **Monitoring**

18. How effective are existing monitoring and financial reporting approaches for capturing the key outcomes of the Flexible Funding programme
  - (a) The tools currently being used?
  - (b) The time and resources required to undertake it
19. In what way/s do you think the existing monitoring and financial reporting approaches could be improved/revised?
  - (a) The tools currently being used?
  - (b) The time and resources required to undertake it

## Outcomes – Short, Medium, Long Term

20. For the grant/s you are responsible for, what have been the most significant outcomes the Flexible Funding programme has achieved for the grants you are responsible for so far, if any?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

21. Given your experience so far, what do you think the Flexible Funding programme will have achieved in your local authority area by the end of this financial year (i.e. end of March 2019)?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

22. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

23. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements to March 2019?

24. programme will be able to achieve in your local authority area beyond March 2019?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

25. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

26. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements beyond March 2019?

27. What key things should we measure to illustrate the impact the Flexible Funding programme is having your local authority area?

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

28. What aspects of the Flexible Funding programme have:

- (a) Worked well so far?
- (b) Worked less well so far?

29. Based on your experience, what areas would you say are critical for the successful implementation of the Flexible Funding programme going forward?

30. How do you think these lessons could best be shared?

31. Are there any other comments about the Flexible Funding programme that you wanted to make?

## Evaluation of the Flexible Funding programme

Discussion guide and background for interviews with:

(a) Stakeholders and Partners including PSB and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector

### Questions / points for discussion

1. Name of Interviewee and Organisation:

2. Local Authority?

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Bridgend County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Monmouthshire County Council
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Cardiff Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Newport City Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Carmarthenshire County Council	Pembrokeshire County Council
Ceredigion County Council	Powys County Council
Conwy County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Denbighshire County Council	City and County of Swansea
Flintshire County Council	Torfaen County Borough Council <b>(Pathfinder)</b>
Gwynedd Council	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council	Wrexham County Borough Council

Pathfinder	Non-Pathfinder
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### Your Responsibilities

3. Can you tell me your job title please?

(a) Can you give me an overview of your role, and how it relates to the Flexible Funding programme?

## **Understanding of the Flexible Funding programme**

4. What is your understanding of the key aim(s) of the Flexible Funding programme?
5. What are the aims of the Flexible Funding programme in your local authority area?
6. What is the specific ambition for Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
7. What are the main drivers for the approach to Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
8. Why these drivers?

## **Project Implementation and Governance**

9. What approaches for the implementation of Flexible Funding is your local authority considering?
10. Of these approaches do any pre-date the implementation of Flexible Funding?
11. And which approaches are planned because of the implementation of Flexible Funding?
12. What approaches for the implementation of Flexible Funding are already underway in your local authority area?
13. What progress has been made in this implementation?
14. Do you think these have had any particularly different impacts, or outcomes, on the Grant/Grants you are responsible for compared to any other Grants?
15. What have been the most significant challenges/barriers so far in this implementation process in your local authority area?
16. How are these challenges/barriers being addressed?
17. What changes have occurred because of Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
18. What role has your local public services board (PSB) played in this implementation?
19. At this stage, do you think there is any need to change or alter the implementation of Flexible Funding in your local authority area?
20. Why do you say that?

## Outcomes – Short, Medium, Long Term

21. For your organisation/job role, what have been the most significant outcomes the Flexible Funding programme has achieved, if any?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

22. Given your experience so far, what do you think the Flexible Funding programme will have achieved by the end of this financial year (i.e. end of March 2019)?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

23. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

24. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements to March 2019?

25. What do you think the Flexible Funding programme will be able to achieve beyond March 2019?

- (a) Strategic planning within the organisation
- (b) Any changes to Needs Analysis approaches
- (c) Examples of the Flexible Use of Funding
- (d) Innovation in Service Delivery / Service Delivery Pilots
- (e) Emerging Outcomes for Service Users
- (f) Rationalisation of Services / Delivery Efficiencies
- (g) Commissioning/De-Commissioning of services
- (h) Project Governance including how the programme is overseen and managed
- (i) Changes to the way my organisation works
- (j) Regional and Sub-regional delivery approaches
- (k) More joined-up working
- (l) Any other areas?

26. What do you think will be key factors in driving these achievements?

27. And what are likely to be the key barriers to any achievements beyond March 2019?

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

28. What aspects of the Flexible Funding programme have:

- (a) Worked well so far?
- (b) Worked less well so far?

29. Based on your experience, what areas would you say are critical for the successful implementation of the Flexible Funding programme going forward?

30. How do you think these lessons could best be shared?

31. Based on the questions you have answered for us today, do you think there is anyone else we should speak to about the Flexible Funding programme?

Name and Job Role:

Email:

Telephone:

32. Are there any other comments about the Flexible Funding programme that you wanted to make?

## Annex B – Implementation Case Studies



### Flexible Funding Programme Case Study – Conwy

#### **Background**

Conwy is looking to use the Flexible Funding as an opportunity to make better use of the ten grants included in the programme, seeking better coordination between them to deliver more support through EIPS. At the outset of programme delivery, they were finding it difficult to readily align them to take the work forward, particularly as, within the authority, the reporting systems for each of the grants were different. Whilst funding pressures remain significant, recent demographic changes mean there are demands for family support services, but in areas with newer housing stock rather than the estates that were the original focus of that work.

A key focus in the authority is to move to an approach that shapes services to meet the needs of local people more readily than the other way around – people being asked to fit the requirements of particular grants. This aligns with a wider transformation agenda in Conwy – Team Conwy.

#### **Interesting Features of Approach**

Conwy have focussed on an approach that seeks to develop localised delivery arrangements. The authority area has been divided up into five areas. The work, in respect of identifying the areas, was developed because of detailed consideration of the boundaries that exist in the county such as school catchment, health boundaries, and town and community council structures. By overlaying these, 5 natural boundaries developed that were agreed with partners via the Public Services Board.

Initial work is focussed on establishing an early intervention set of support services for families that includes delivery through Families First, Flying Start and Supporting People. The Flexible Funding programme has come at the right time, enabling them to move an agenda forward that they have been focussed on for some time now. Thus, they have had a Parenting Officer through Flying Start who has moved to also working half time under Youth Justice to join these two areas together in early intervention terms.

### **Programme Implementation Learning**

The agenda was one that Conwy was already looking to drive forward. Flexible Funding, although still in its earliest implementation, is being used as a tool to further support the drive for change. These discussions, which have been initiated by the drive to implement the Flexible Funding programme, have raised awareness between all grant leads about what each of the grants is delivering and improved understanding of where links/integration might occur. This has brought some 'skeletons' out of the cupboard, but the honest conversations this has involved are creating opportunities for new ways of working.

The core of the implementation approach is focussed on a detailed programme management model developed over the last few years in the authority and predates the programme. Five different Heads of Service have been brought together. These Heads of Service lead on each of the ten grants involved in Flexible Funding. A delivery team has been established that focusses on a series of work packages to be delivered 1) Research on needs and existing delivery; 2) Opportunities for Co-production; 3) Commissioning/Decommissioning options; 4) Monitoring and Evaluation; 5) Administration.

The work the group is taking forward is overseen by three Scrutiny committees and is also aligned to the Tackling Poverty Board that is being established in the borough. The PSB thus far has had a very minimal role in the roll-out of this approach, though a greater role is expected further down the line.

### **Early Impacts and Outcomes**

The group is working together daily, and implementation is well underway, there are some emerging impacts and outcomes already. These include:

- Initial anxiety and nervousness are very apparent but is being overcome by the consistent approach to joined-up working facilitated by the coordinated programme management approach. This provides a clear line of sight about how review activities and service delivery redesign fit together.
- There remain challenges with Supporting People, which has a very strong position with the areas of grant funding, which seeks to reshape some of the delivery in ways relevant to its priorities rather than, in some cases, the specific needs of those the Flexible Funding programme is seeking to support.
- Review of services/support is now undertaken in a much more systematic way so that review of grants is done in an equal way that relates to evidence about delivery experience.
- Attitudes towards the programme are beginning to change as people are brought together to report jointly on practice, process and progress.
- The early work has involved significant amounts of time from participants and the team is concerned that expectations about what would be possible in the first year of delivery were very high. Their experience thus far suggests the work will need to extend beyond this financial year.
- Progress is being made in strategic planning, although there is much work to do following the findings of the reviews that are already underway. There are some small examples of flexible use of funding and the development of a Family Centre is demonstrating some innovative practice. Commissioning has moved forward quite far and is now being influenced by the five Heads of Service where once it was not, they expect this will be in place by March 2019.

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

- The value of a coordinated programme management approach that applies to grants and provides a clear line of sight for review and any resulting delivery challenges.
- Flexible Funding does enable/facilitate joint working to happen sooner than might otherwise have been possible, and, coupled with the programme management approach, has widened the scale of the work that has been possible across five heads of service.
- Those involved have felt part of a wider team as a member of the Pathfinder group but would value more engagement with other members and opportunities to share practice and experience on a more regular basis as things change so fast.
- These approaches do take time and enough must be allowed to facilitate contacts between different grants teams to build trust and foster integrated working.

### **Recommendations for EIPS Consideration**

- There is value in the approach adopted in Conwy, but Pathfinders need time to see through to fruition the results of the work being undertaken now. A commitment to, and reinforcement of, the aims and ambitions of Flexible Funding and a move to EIPS would be welcomed.
- Any outcome and monitoring approaches need to avoid being too prescriptive, otherwise they will not be flexible enough to reflect the full circumstances and needs of all vulnerable people. This will help to reduce the chance of any 'micro-management' of the programme by Welsh Government; authorities want to have the autonomy to make the key decisions on how they will deliver the support, perhaps varying it in different geographical areas if needs assessments suggest that is an appropriate way forward.

## Flexible Funding Programme Case Study – Newport



### Background

Newport has been working on the concept of Community Hubs since 2016 and this will dovetail into their wider Flexible Funding programme. This runs alongside a focus on developing a more outcome focussed approach that seeks to move away from support approaches that were too funding focussed to those through alignment of funding that are better able to support clients more quickly and appropriately. The vision for delivery in Newport is to make more effective use of funding to ensure it meets local needs by aligning programmes and identifying new ways of working and potential for the redesign of services.

### Interesting Features of Approach

The authority is advancing on a Community Hub model with developments and funding already committed to the first one to open in 2019. Insight is provided into infrastructure developments to support colocation and joint working and a different approach to using the local authorities' estate of offices. The development approach includes a specific emphasis on 'smart working' as a good demonstration of how cultural change is being driven forward and could offer good insight of the scale of thought and implementation required for delivery.

### **Programme Implementation Learning**

An external consultant (Wavehill Ltd) has been appointed to undertake a review of customer experiences, corporate/governance structures and management structures, service commissioning and service duplication. This is to build on existing reviews of grants to identify more detail on the customer user experiences and an appraisal of the options that might then be open to Newport.

A steering group for the project has been established that has met three times setting a communication strategy. This is supported by a resilient communities' board which will develop an aligned structure and service plan to drive the Flexible Funding programme in the authority forward.

Further ongoing key components of work will involve:

- designing a single monitoring system for the authority and the understanding of the requirements of any future IT system will be critical to successful roll out
- implementing a customer first approach delivered through a range of neighbourhood hubs
- review and identification of administrative and management efficiencies
- review delivery impacts on partners third sector and regional working.

The authority is particularly focussed on how they can alter their use of their working environment (Council offices and other buildings to accommodate staff and customers working alongside each other). The review work leading up to the identification of the hub model identified that the authority was not utilising its available space effectively, or actively seeking ways of using digital technologies to enhance service delivery for clients.

All grants have already been aligned in one department and this is facilitating links between them and enhancing opportunities for joint working.

### **Early Impacts and Outcomes**

Progress in the four months since April 2018 has been limited thus far, as initial reviews are completed that have allowed the scoping out of the next phases of work.

Significant cultural change is going to be required and this is likely to be very different for different levels of staff with the authority. Key to future delivery is the roll out of a Community Hub model of delivery. Cabinet approval for this model was received in July 2018 with the first Hub refurbishment due to commence in January 2019, with the Hub operational from June/July 2019. These proposals have required investment of up to £9 million which is to be drawn from the projected savings arising from the improved alignment and integration of services.

A need for a further three-month review has been identified that will identify changes needed against each of the grants to facilitate moves to deliver against a single set of outcomes across the authority.

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

- Mid-level managers need to be engaged in the process and time needs to be invested with them to explain the purpose and positive outcomes likely to arise from the changes the authority is going to make
- The development of a shared agenda across the approach has been critical in achieving the moves forward thus far. This has meant that grants understand the wider picture but also where they are able to contribute. This also facilitates these staff on joining the journey the authority wants to go on
- Creative use of existing premises can be especially valuable, but investment is needed to affect change particularly involving hard infrastructure like buildings or supporting IT systems.

### **Recommendations for EIPS Consideration**

- For many staff a move to a future single EIPS fund will be a major cultural change. Some see the individual grant as the main focus of their 'identity' at work. The single fund proposal seeks to change this and will need to engage all in the process to keep them on board. Clear and regular communication of the aims and ambitions for the fund will be needed and this may need to be repeated many times to reiterate to staff that the agenda is one of better supporting vulnerable groups.

## Flexible Funding Programme Case Study – Rhondda Cynon Taf



### Background

RCT have been working on a Resilient Families Programme since 2016/17 and are using the Flexible Funding programme to drive this agenda forward. The Resilient Families Programme enables the Council to direct and hold to account the collective efforts of public, private and voluntary sector partners in the delivery of effective services to families in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Resilient Families Service delivers an enhanced and fully-integrated team around the family arrangements as part of the wider Programme, the philosophy of which is to remove barriers to improve family resilience. This focus on early intervention and prevention is part of a wider transformation agenda being taken forward by the Council.

### Interesting Features of Approach

RCT were actively looking to pool resources across the authority prior to the development of the Flexible Funding programme, and early intervention and prevention is one of the authority's corporate transformational themes. The Resilient Families Service is used as the single approach across the authority area to deliver support to vulnerable families, whether through the council's own work, or that undertaken by other partners and stakeholders across the private and voluntary sector. The service aims to reach families before they reach crisis point, or support those no longer needing statutory intervention, to ensure they each avoid where possible further engagement with such services.

The ten grants covered by the programme were already working together and the establishment of these joint arrangements predates the roll-out of the Flexible Funding programme. It also has a geographical focus with the wider transformation agenda being used to establish a network of community zones across the authority area that will seek to co-locate services to support vulnerable individuals and families. RCT is using the Flexible Funding programme as a key vehicle to deliver this integration agenda. One key philosophy behind the approach, is to focus on service user experience, and initial reviews have shown the sheer complexity of the support network that users have had to navigate previously in order to access support, and that many service users have been lost during transition between programmes/grants. Through integration, the aim in the authority is to simplify the system to make the user 'journey' easier to navigate via a single point of access to a range of different support services, to ensure that users receive the right support at the right time.



## **Programme Implementation Learning**

Implementation began in July 2018, after proposals for moving the Flexible Funding programme approach were signed off by the Public Services Board (PSB). Key to this sign-off was the Board recognising that approaches needed to reflect local differences between Merthyr Tydfil and RCT (the PSB is a joint board covering both authority areas) but that a set of general principles were being agreed through which delivery in RCT will now move forward.

Implementation of an integrated delivery model for early intervention and prevention is focussed on the vision of providing the right support, at the right time, to the right people, and will involve the following:

- inclusive target groups to meet individual, family and community needs, to facilitate closer alignment of services and deliver the current benefits of existing individual programmes as a bare minimum
- clear identification of need for early intervention and prevention support
- a clear pathway of support, as part of a continuum that provides the right support, to the right people, at the right time, via universal access to a single 'front door'
- a common set of operational delivery principles and a focus on joined-up working, that ensures support access to the right individuals, at the right time, and in the right locations, with services like parenting available universally
- development of an effective single-outcomes framework.

The catalyst for this integrated model will be the Resilient Families Service which is multi-funded across grants, but also includes core funding from the local authority, and that the Flexible Funding programme will enable delivery, not restricted by eligibility criteria, through a single point of access, to simplify the overall referral process.

## **Early Impacts and Outcomes**

With implementation only signed off in July 2018, impacts and outcomes have been limited. However, it has been noted that there is much more collaboration between grant-funded activities on the ground, and that referrals are being organised more strategically through a single point of access. There is also a much greater focus on the positive impact integrated delivery has on outcomes for service users, rather than the barriers created by the eligibility criteria of different grants.

Teams involved with Substance Misuse and Domestic Violence have self-elected to be part of Funding Flexibility discussions to explore how they might best be sequenced into the continuum of support on offer and whether there is scope to mainstream some of this support.



### **Key Lessons Learnt**

- The link to the wider transformation agenda in the authority, led by Cabinet Members and senior Officers, has been particularly helpful in bringing people together to discuss integration.
- Getting leads and delivery staff ‘in a room’ to scope out service delivery from the bottom up is critical. This has made clear that the ‘journey’ that some service users were taking through different grants and support was very complex and included clear areas of conflict or mismatch to need. This set of perspectives has been very important in persuading staff to engage with the work and the changes that are to be implemented. The fact that some users have been lost to services, because of complex transition or delivery arrangements, has focussed minds. Programmes are realising they are not supporting people as they thought they were.
- This, though, is an ongoing process; as understanding of delivery extends, then the delivery responses need to be reframed from the bottom up, so individuals are not left behind by new/revised processes/delivery.
- Development of the Resilient Families Service has taken 2-3 years of research and testing; full understanding of service delivery needs and opportunities for integration take time and a continuing commitment to the agenda will ensure the identified opportunities can be worked up properly.

### **Recommendations for EIPS Consideration**

- A bottom-up, service-needs, user-based experience is critical in understanding the support requirements of vulnerable groups, but also in understanding the complexity of the journey those individuals often currently experience. For success EIPS needs a systematic, structured approach to needs analysis and subsequent service delivery.