

## Responses from the Director of Children's Services to Questions from the Overview and Scrutiny Board

<p>How is effective partnership working being embedded across Children's Services? In particular, how are Children's Services and Community Safety working together to address issues around domestic violence?</p>	<p>There are a number examples of effective partnership working to address issues of domestic abuse, examples include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Perpetrator work:</b> IDAP &amp; imminent community based interventions such as the <i>Making Change</i> project currently being delivered in by Probation in Plymouth through Carr-Gomm. Therapeutic intervention/provision</li> <li><b>2. Victim Work:</b> MARAC, Refuge, Sanctuary Scheme, Westcountry Support Worker, SEEDS, IDVAs x2, DASS Outreach/Floating Support, Pattern Changing, Victim Support, Routine Enquiry through Primary and Acute Care</li> <li><b>3. Mainstream including domestic abuse focus:</b> FIP, IVSS, Children's Centres, all mainstream front end services with a child protection focus</li> <li><b>4. Child and Family:</b> Children's Groups and Children's Worker (through Refuge) including therapeutic intervention/provision</li> <li><b>5. Preventative work:</b> awareness raising campaigns, RESPECT Toolkit</li> </ol> <p>Safer Communities Torbay is the strategic lead for Domestic Abuse in the council. They chair and run a bi monthly multi agency steering group to lead and develop activity and services to effectively tackle domestic abuse.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse strategy group is in the process of producing a partnership action plan which will also incorporate any outstanding CPIP actions in relation to Domestic Abuse and reflect the ambitions of the Integrated Working strategy.</p> <p>Whilst there is clear evidence of effective partnership working to tackle domestic abuse, both service areas recognise the importance of tackling this crime at the earliest opportunity and are committed to ensuring Torbay Council's staff are well trained and equipped to deliver the best outcomes for the people we serve.</p>
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	<p>Safer Communities are currently working with a number of agencies including children services, supporting people, police, probation and health to review the current service delivery both internal and commissioned services and an options paper is being prepared to recommend a way forward.</p>
What are the outcomes of the recent (ongoing?) recruitment campaign?	<p>Torbay's new 'make an impression' campaign was formally launched in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in August. First round of interviews have taken place and 1 Practice Manager, 5 Social Workers and 2 Service Managers have been appointed. This includes the promotion of 1 member of staff. Grow your own manager scheme planned to start November 2012 (9 identified for first cohort). Initial cohort includes a mix of recently appointed and aspirant managers. A further 9 applications received for short listing. In addition, 4 grow your own social workers will be offered priority interviews in December.</p>
What has been the result of the pilot in relation to multi-agency enquiry forms?	<p>Multi-agency partners involved in the development of the form</p> <p>Multi-agency partners involved in piloting of the form –  Health visitors – Torquay South;  Midwifery; Schools – selected primary and secondary,  Substance Mis-Use service,  IFSS,  Locality Services  Housing Options  Action for Children  West Country Housing – young parents</p> <p>Form piloted in some agencies with a view to integrating processes – this is still being developed to ensure smooth transition between Early Help and any new CIN processes</p> <p>Outcome: With a few amendments to the format the form will be presented to the Health and Well-Being Board (by John Skinner) for ratification. The proposal is that this form will be</p>

	<p>adopted as the document to make an enquiry into Torbay Safeguarding Hub by all professionals and agencies unless there are immediate safeguarding concerns.</p>
<p>How are Children's Services ensuring that joint working with the new health commissioners is effective? For example, how is the troubled families agenda being pursued on a multi-agency basis?</p>	<p>The Troubled Families Programme is progressing well locally. Troubled families have been identified as a priority group by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The families meeting the framework criteria have been identified using appropriate data sets from within the local authority and some partner agencies. The new Integrated working strategy has been published which sets out the future direction for working with families in an integrated way, the troubled families programme will be delivered through this approach rather than a standalone scheme. The community hub model is being progressed (led by health) following a number of start up consultation events with an initial prototype starting in Hele and Watcombe. The restructuring of early help services within Children's services will provide a platform for further integration and collaborative working at a partnership level as the implementation of the strategy progresses.</p> <p>There is already increased partnership activity with Job Centre Plus and Adult Substance misuse in particular to ensure families are being supported to access work and that parents have the opportunity to access parenting programmes. The investment already made in the FIP and IFSS provides the foundations of effective partnership working will be enhanced when combined with a new service delivery structure that meets the needs of all families in Need, including troubled families.</p>
<p>How are we progressing capacity building in communities to assist in the early intervention agenda</p>	<p>This is at the heart of the preventative approach of a community team, professionals and communities working together to build capacity within the community to enable them to be involved with sustainable measures for early support and identification for children and families. This model is to be piloted in Hele and Watcombe, commencing December 2012. At the same time work will be undertaken with other identified communities to assess their knowledge and progress with capacity building and identify development work that can be undertaken</p>

<p>At the last meeting, members also gave consideration to the Adoption Peer Review and it was agreed that the Board would consider the action plan (with completed actions and dates) and “draft review of fostering” at their next meeting.</p>	<p><b>Adoption:</b> The low level of performance has been thoroughly explored by an independent team who have also validated the plan put in place by Torbay to address these deficits. The following key actions have been undertaken:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service is now legally compliant – both the adoption and fostering panels has been renewed and new interim chair appointed. Statement of purpose has been updated. Job descriptions have been developed and evaluated.</li> <li>• Draft structure has been developed and 95% agreed and is pending the necessary HR processes.</li> <li>• Core business process have been mapped in readiness for the new structure and the full inclusion of all adoption information on to PARIS.</li> <li>• Key core information on adoption milestones has been added to PARIS – 30+ children are on the permanence pathway.</li> <li>• A permanence panel has been designed and will begin operating in OCT. This will review all children in care.</li> <li>• A short list of suitable candidates to lead the service will be interviewed in the next few weeks.</li> <li>• 8 children have been adopted so far this year compared to 4 during the whole of 2010/11.</li> </ul>
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