

Finance Committee

FIN(3) 08-09 proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure, further financial information

Date: Thursday 7 May 2009

Time: 9.30 – 11.30am

Venue: Committee Room 3

Proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Paper by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government

1. Introduction

This paper is provided to assist the Committee with its consideration of the potential financial implications of the proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure. The paper should be considered with information published¹ in the Explanatory Memorandum and an extract of the Regulatory Impact Assessment is set out in Annex A for ease of reference.

2. Background

The proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure makes statutory provision, through a legislative framework, to take forward the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment in terms of child poverty, and to take forward early development of its strategy for vulnerable children by bringing forward legislation to provide greater support to families where children may be at risk, and strengthened regulatory enforcement in children settings. It is a key legislative commitment of *One Wales* to reform the law to improve service delivery and outcomes for vulnerable children and their families, including those looked after and in poverty². The Measure specifically makes provision:

- For 'Welsh authorities' to make and demonstrate their contribution towards eradicating child poverty by preparing and publishing a strategy for contributing to the eradication of child poverty in Wales.
- For legislation which creates functions reflecting activity currently undertaken within the Cymorth grant programme including parenting support, the reduction of inequalities in health and participation including participation in education and training and in the community

¹ Children and Families (Wales) Measure - published 2 March 2009

² One Wales – Commitment Paragraph 3 - A Health Future refers

as well as helping young persons take advantage of opportunities for employment.

- For Welsh Ministers to make regulations which would require local authorities to secure provision of free childcare places for prescribed children and for parenting and health support services (health visiting) reflecting services currently provided using the Flying Start specific grant.
- To require local authorities to carry out assessments of play provision and secure sufficient play opportunities, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- To require local authorities to make arrangements to promote and facilitate participation of children in the decisions of the authority which effect them.
- To strengthen the range of regulatory enforcement options for child minding and day care settings for children under the age of 8.
- To require local authorities assisted by local health boards to establish integrated family support teams and boards.
- To require local authorities to appoint designated officers to promote standards and best practice in social work practice in children and family services.

3. Construction / Scope of legal provisions and potential financial impact

In the short to medium term the Welsh Assembly Government has no plans to make regulations to impose any additional responsibilities on local government or others beyond the stated policy intent set out in the Explanatory Memorandum and the principles we consulted on in 2008. We will consult on all aspects of any regulations (including the accompanying regulatory impact assessment) before final implementation and commencement of the provisions, with the exception of integrated support teams and boards where the detailed provisions will be developed in partnership with the three successful pioneer areas.

The transfer of specific grants to the local government general settlement is part of the journey we are taking in fulfilling our commitments in Freedom and Responsibility³ which is our longstanding commitment to reduce ring fencing in local government funding. To deliver on this, the role of Welsh Assembly Government is to create an environment in which local government has the freedom and support to work towards the best solutions in making decisions in the allocation of resources against their local priorities, while having agreed national priorities to provide strategic direction.

In the context of grants to children and young people, for example, the process started in 2003 with the merging of four grants into a single Cymorth grant. From 2008, the childcare funding element of Cymorth was identified and moved into Revenue Support Grant to support the local authority duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to secure the provision of sufficient childcare.

³ Freedom and Responsibility – in local government (WAG, 2002)

This process will continue with the staged transfer of the remaining Cymorth grant into Revenue Support Grant from 2011.

The Measure in part builds on and strengthens these arrangements by providing a broad legal framework to allow current and future Governments to respond to changing demands and implement policy priorities necessary to deliver on its main objectives to:

- Introduce a general duty on Welsh authorities to prepare and publish strategies for contributing to the eradication of child poverty.
- provide additional support to those who are the most vulnerable children and young people, including those in poverty, and who would be greatly disadvantaged unless targeted support was available.
- improve welfare for all children to have the best opportunities in life, but ensure targeted support and a greater emphasis on those children and their families who are most vulnerable and considered to be disproportionately disadvantaged.
- put in place positive action at national level to promote and enable public services to focus targeted action to support the most vulnerable groups.
- at a local level, to put in place the levers and to create the shift in re-balancing services to those most in need and placing greater accountability across all sectors to their contribution to shared aims.

In considering the financial implications of the Measure, there is a distinction to be made between the cost implications of two sorts of duty.

It is possible to identify two sorts of duty:

- General duties that provide discretion (within a broad framework) about the way that they are discharged and do not necessarily involve an additional financial burden.
- Specific duties which require defined actions which have an inevitable financial burden for the person on whom they are imposed.

In understanding the potential financial impact of the proposed Measure it is helpful if we consider the following examples:

3.1 Strategies Contributing to the Eradication of Child Poverty

The primary aim of the provisions in Part 1 of the Measure is to establish a coherent framework for action on child poverty across Welsh public agencies which will require Welsh Ministers to identify in their Child Poverty Strategy national objectives for the eradication of child poverty. Other Welsh Authorities, including local authorities, will be placed under a similar duty to identify their own strategies for eradicating child poverty at a local level.

Section 1 of the Measure sets out a number of broad aims that it is suggested are important in tackling child poverty. Section 2 (1) places a specific duty on Welsh authorities to produce strategies for the eradication of child poverty. However, each authority has wide discretion in the development of its strategy and in setting its priorities providing it chooses objectives that support the broad aims detailed in section 1.

This allows local authorities and their partners, through local needs assessments and service mapping, to develop solutions that respond to the particular needs of their local community. It also ensures services are planned to tackle discrimination and disadvantage and to make the important links between services, based on local and national priorities.

In this context, developing child poverty strategies should have no financial implications for local authorities and their partners. This is because section 2(8) of the proposed Measure provides that the requirement to prepare and publish local strategies to tackle child poverty can be discharged as part of the local authority's lead role in the preparation and publication of their Children and Young People Plans required under section 26 of the Children Act 2004. The Assembly Government has sought to minimise burdens on local authorities and to streamline administration arrangements, by combining these activities where possible within existing planning arrangements. For example, each local authority and its partners would be able to discharge their duty to prepare and publish a strategy for contributing to the eradication of child poverty by integrating the strategy within their Children and Young People's Plan. It should be noted that local authorities already seek to demonstrate action that they are taking to tackle child poverty in their areas through the CYPPs. The effect of the proposed Measure would be to provide greater emphasis and more detailed focus on to this element across the Plans of all local authorities.

Provision to make regulations under section 2 (1) (b) (c) and (5) allows Welsh Ministers to specify certain objectives for Welsh Authorities. The intention is that Welsh Ministers would hold these powers in reserve and only use them to provide a focus on an area of action which was already funded or if an authority had failed to set objectives in a relevant area at all.

3.2 Additional Responsibilities

This Measure seeks to make clear our commitment to preserving the delivery of those services that are provided by local government in Wales to some of our most disadvantaged children and families. At the same time, the proposed transfer of the Cymorth Grant into the local government revenue settlement demonstrates our commitment to providing local government with greater flexibility and reducing administrative burden to ensure that the most effective and efficient use is made of available resources.

In introducing the Measure due regard is also paid to the partnership arrangements between the Welsh Assembly Government and local government in Wales. This commits the Assembly Government to ensuring

that any new responsibilities arising from legislation will not be imposed on local government in Wales without the appropriate funding to allow the authorities to implement the new responsibilities

3.3 Monitoring local government discharge of duties in the proposed Measure

It is equally important that there is rigour in the system to ensure local authorities and their partner agencies are discharging the duties imposed by the Measure. This will be monitored in a number of ways through current and future performance frameworks including the proposed outcomes measures framework currently being developed to support the Children and Young People's Plans, as well as through agreed indicators and the Wales Programme for Improvement.

4. Costs associated with local authorities and partners implementation of the Measure and regulatory changes arising from it

Provided below is a summary of the current estimated financial impact (in terms of costs to external stakeholders) over the next three financial years in delivering on the stated policy intent. The tables also identify where the burdens will fall and the mechanisms the Welsh Assembly Government intend to put in place to resource and monitor the implementation of the Measure and the impact it will have in relation to meeting the short to medium term policy aims.

The tables are to assist Members in their consideration of the potential scope of the Measure. Annex B lists the provisions that may be utilised in the future to re-define policy requirements and may potentially carry associated costs with implementation.

Assumptions – The calculations do not take into account any inflationary increases or change in policy. They are based on the current position and may be subject to change in light of the recent budget announcements.

4.1. Eradicating Child Poverty - Immediate cost to deliver stated policy aims

The main financial implications of the element of the proposed Measure that will provide for the production of child poverty strategies will fall on Welsh Ministers. This is because although the Welsh Assembly Government has a Child Poverty Strategy in place ('A Fair Future for our Children', 2005), there is currently no statutory requirement on Welsh Ministers to prepare and publish a strategy. The Measure also provides that the Welsh Ministers' child poverty strategy must be reviewed every three years. There are therefore financial implications associated with this commitment.

In addition, the increased emphasis on the child poverty elements of the Children and Young People's Plans and the requirement that some of the

AGSBs will be covered by the new general duty will result in the need for additional guidance to be produced.

The Assembly Government's Child Poverty Unit will need to be strengthened to deliver on the above and this will result in some extra staff costs as outlined in the following table.

	£ 2010-11	£ 2011-12	£ 2012-13
Admin for Welsh Ministers	55K	55K	55K
Total	55K	55K	55K

Bodies impacted: Welsh authorities - those listed in section 12 of the Measure.

Where those AGBSs listed in section 12 of the proposed Measure are unable to fulfil the new general duty to produce child poverty strategies through the local Children and Young People's Plans then they will be required to produce a separate strategy. However, the Explanatory Memorandum makes it clear that such bodies will only be required to choose objectives as set out in the broad aims (Section 1) proportionate to their function and size. Many AGBSs already support one or more of the broad aims set out in section 1 and are expected to be able to demonstrate the action they are taking to contribute to the child poverty agenda at little or no extra administrative cost. In addition, it should be noted that the Assembly Government will seek to support such bodies in the fulfilment of the new duty through guidance and other support mechanisms.

4.2. Cymorth - immediate cost to deliver stated policy aims

The stated policy aim is to make legislative provision for Cymorth related activity in the fields of parental and health support services, participation and play. These reflect activity currently carried out under Cymorth Theme A (Family Support), B (Health Improvement), C (Play, leisure and enrichment), D (Empowerment, participation and active citizenship) and E, Training, Mentoring and Enrichment.

The funding allocated to Cymorth in 2007-08 was £51.7m. This increased to £52.3m in 2008-09, and will reduce to £51.7m in 2009-10. Cymorth allocations have not been finalised for 2010-11 onwards, but we do know that £7m is to be transferred to Flying Start from 2010. This transfer of funds will ensure a continued level of intensive investment in the Flying Start programme.

The regulatory impact assessment details that the total investment in 2007-08 for the Cymorth themes of Family Support, Health Improvement, Play, Leisure

and Enrichment, and Empowerment, Participation and Active Citizenship as £44.2m, with the balance consisting of Evaluation and Central Costs and Investment in Building Childcare Provision.

	£ 2007-08	% of £51.7m
Family Support	17.3	33.5%
Health Improvement	7.1	13.7%
Play, Leisure and Enrichment	6.3	12.2%
Empowerment, Participation and Active Citizenship	3.9	7.5%
Training, Mentoring and Information	9.6	18.6%
Evaluation and central costs	6.4	12.4%
Investment in Theme F (Building Childcare Provision)	1.1	2.1%
Total	51.7m	100%

As an illustration, assuming that the spread of local authority spending remains consistent once the grant moves into RSG, and using the above percentages as an indication of how funding is distributed by the local authorities according to local need across Wales, the estimated funding across the Cymorth themes for future years will be as follows:

	£ 2007-08	£ 2010-11 2011-12 2012-13 ⁴
Family Support	17.3	15
Health Improvement	7.1	6.1
Play, Leisure and Enrichment	6.3	5.5
Empowerment, Participation and Active Citizenship	3.9	3.4
Training, Mentoring and Information	9.6	8.3
Evaluation and central costs	6.4	5.5
Investment in Theme F (Building Childcare Provision)	1.1	0.9
Total	51.7m	44.7m

The apparent decrease in Cymorth funding between 2007-08 and 2010-11 represents a transfer of £7m from Cymorth into Flying Start. Flying Start was originally funded on the assumption that half the existing investments in Cymorth for the 0-3 age group would be adapted to support the delivery of Flying Start. In order to reflect this, the Assembly Government is transferring £7 million from Cymorth to Flying Start for the 2010-11 financial year. This should not cause significant changes to services where local authorities have been following the original guidance.

4.3. Immediate short term costs of fulfilling new duties to prepare and publish strategies contributing to eradicating child poverty in Wales

⁴ Assuming same level of funding as 2009-10 (£51.7m less £7m to Flying Start) each year.

It is the intention that the new duties in relation to the eradication of child poverty will be discharged through the publication of the Children and Young People's Plans and as such will not incur any additional costs. In setting their objectives to tackle child poverty through the planning process initial requirement for needs assessment and service mapping, local authorities will be able to determine the local needs of children, young people and families who are disadvantaged by poverty and direct resources accordingly. Until Cymorth is transferred into Revenue Support Grant in 2011, an annual lump sum element of £340k has been allocated within each local authority to resource central planning. With the transfer to Revenue Support Grant it will be for local authorities to determine how best to deploy these resources in order to fulfil their statutory planning and other obligations.

4.4. Flying Start - Immediate cost to deliver stated policy aims

Although there are no current plans to alter the funding arrangements for the Flying Start programme at the present time, the new powers for Welsh Ministers to require by regulations local authorities to secure availability of free childcare and other targeted services in areas of greatest need demonstrates Welsh Ministers' long-term commitment to this programme which supports the One Wales commitment to free childcare.

The funding allocated to Flying Start in 2008-09 was £27m. This increased to £28.1m in 2009-10, and will increase to £38m in 2010-11 (£7m is to be transferred from Cymorth as discussed in 4.2 above).

The regulatory impact assessment details the total investment in 2008-09 of:

	£ 2008-09	% of £27.6m
Free childcare places	12.3	44.6
Enhanced health visitor support	7.4	26.8
Parenting classes	1.6	5.8
Learning and play	1.1	4
Workforce	1.7	6.2
Central / evaluation costs	3.5	12.6
Total	27.6m	100%

Using the above percentages as an indication of how the funding is distributed by the local authorities according to local need across Wales, the estimated funding across the Flying Start services for future years would be as follows:

	£ 2008-09	£ 2009-10	£ 2010-11 2011-12 2012-13 ⁵
Free childcare places	12.3	12.5	16.9
Enhanced health visitor support	7.4	7.5	10.2

⁵ Assuming same level of funding each year

Parenting classes	1.6	1.6	2.2
Learning and play	1.1	1.1	1.5
Workforce	1.7	1.8	2.4
Central / evaluation costs	3.5	3.6	4.8
Total	27.6m	28.1m	38m

4.5. Enhanced Enforcement Duties in respect of Regulated Child Care and Child Minding settings

In summary, the enhanced CSSIW powers are:

- Section 29 – Protection of children in an emergency: changes to conditions of registration – will allow CSSIW to vary or remove existing conditions, or add new conditions as a matter of urgency where there is a risk of harm to a child. Currently the urgent imposition of conditions can only be undertaken by a Justice of the Peace. There is provision for an appeal against such a step to the First-Tier Tribunal.
- Section 39 Penalty notices – provides for the imposition of fixed penalty notices on registered persons where the regulator is satisfied that a person has committed a fixed penalty offence. The proposal to impose a penalty notice offers the registered person the opportunity of paying a penalty in respect of an identified breach, thus avoiding potentially protracted court proceedings. This new regulatory option will allow Welsh Ministers to take a quick and proportionate response to a regulatory breach, which also reduce the burden on the criminal court in relation to minor offences.
- Section 41 Time limit for proceedings – the proposal to extend the time limit in which criminal proceedings must be brought from 6 months to 12 months will assist Welsh Ministers in their prosecution functions by providing them with more time within which to investigate potential offences.

The effect and overall benefit of this proposal will be to ensure that the range of regulatory enforcement options is available to, and consistent across, all establishments and agencies that Welsh Ministers (through Healthcare Inspectorate Wales and Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) regulate, and that its enforcement policies do not differentiate between adult and child services. If these new regulatory powers are not available to Welsh Ministers in relation to children’s services which fall under Part 10A of the Children’s Act 1989, a regulatory breach cannot be acted on with the same degree of speed and proportionality as regulatory breach in relation to services regulated by CSSIW and HIW under Part II of the Care Standards Act 2000. This is not a sustainable option given the need for Welsh Ministers regulatory powers not to differentiate between adult and child services. This would result in weaker regulation in relation to children’s services which fall under Part 10A of the Children’s Act 1989. The proposal will address the anomaly in terms of regulatory powers between adult and children’s services – providing equality.

There are no additional regulatory costs or compliance costs arising from these proposals. Delivery of the strengthened regulatory enforcement will fall to CSSIW and can be absorbed into existing arrangements with no direct significant cost to CSSIW, no prohibitive communication or administration process/staff requirement. The only likely minimal cost would be additional sector specific instructions to existing guidance for inspectors.

Importantly there are no additional costs to providers. The new regulatory provisions are not requiring providers to do anything different to that which they are already supposed to be doing. The proposal will help improve quality of care (and outcomes) for children in regulated childminding and day care for children settings. This is likely to be welcomed by all – the new regulatory enforcement options and sanctions will strengthen the role of CSSIW and provide them with more options to take action and to work with the sector to improve the quality of childcare services for children. These new powers are seen as a positive step towards these improvements:

- Providing proportional regulation reducing bureaucracy.
- Providing decisive, quick address by regulator – CSSIW.
- Helping address concerns / issues quickly and proportionately.
- Improving / enhancing regulatory enforcement.
- Improving quality of settings

The CSSIW annual report 2007-08 Children’s Day Care Services⁶ identifies the number of child protection matters and complaints brought to their attention, across each of the different types of provision⁷:

Type of Provision	Child Protection	Complaints (resulting in suspension, imposing conditions of registration, monitoring, use of compliance notices)
Childminders	8	32
Full day care	5	49
Sessional day care	1	11
Out of school care	1	6
Creches	1	0
Open Access Play	0	0
Total	16	98

Not all of the above 98 complaints would attract court proceedings or penalty notices. If the complaint was such as to warrant a penalty, CSSIW first work with providers to try resolve issues and complaints through mediation, at all stages. The key to using this penalty notice process is about the provider’s admission of the offence. Once admitted, the penalty can be given *in place* of continuing with the court process.

⁶ CSSIW Children’s Day Care Services 2007-08 report – published October 2008.

⁷ CSSIW report a continuing overall reduction in numbers of child protection issues and complaints received from the last year.

If we assume that all the 98 complaints were of such a nature as to warrant court proceedings (unregistered childminder, unregistered day care provider, non-compliance with conditions or requirements of registration, suspended or disqualified childminder, suspended or disqualified day care provider, obstructing entry of an authorised person, or making a false or misleading statement in a registration application) and that all 98 potential offences were proven, a fine on the standard scale would be imposed. The severity of the offence determines the level of the fine (up to £1000 level 1, up to £5000 level 5) imposed by the court. In relation to 2007-08, this would mean that potentially, in the worst case scenario, between (up to) £98,000 for level one offences and (up to) £490,000 for level five offences (unregistered childminder or day care provider) could have been collected in fines.

If we assume that all the 98 complaints were of such a nature as to warrant issuing a penalty notice (as will be determined after consultation on the regulations), and that all 98 potential offences were admitted, a fine would be imposed by CSSIW, but the level of fine would generally be significantly less (about half) than the maximum which could be imposed through court proceedings. Under the penalty notice provisions in sections 39 and 40, these fines are payable to Welsh Ministers, but in the absence of specific provision in the Measure these funds must be paid into the Welsh Consolidated Fund.

In view of the above, the administrative costs to the Welsh Assembly Government (CSSIW) and to stakeholders (childminders and day care providers) are negligible.

Bodies impacted: Childminder and Day Care Providers

Assumptions: Depending on the severity of the offence proven in court proceedings, the childminder or day care provider could incur a fine of between up to £1000 (level 1) and up to £5000 (level 5) on the standard scale of costs. If the offence was of such a nature as to warrant CSSIW issuing a penalty notice, and if the childminder or day care provider admitted the offence, the fine could not be more than the half of the fine that could be imposed by the Courts.

4.6. Child minding and day care provisions within Part 2

At present, childminders and other providers of childcare for children under the age of eight in Wales are regulated by Part 10A and Schedule 9A of the Children Act 1989. Part 10A of the Children Act 1989 had already been amended on a number of occasions and was drafted in a way which was not compatible with the new constitutional arrangements in Wales and the transfer of executive functions from the National Assembly to the Welsh Ministers. The effect of this proposal will be to repeal and re-enact Part 10A of the Children Act 1989 together with Schedule 9A, to improve coherence and clarity around current legislation in respect of regulated child minding and day care services, whilst making new provision to enhance CSSIW regulation and enforcement powers. The majority of the provisions are technical in

nature and mirror existing arrangements. Ministers already have the powers under this existing legislation to make changes to registration requirements. They do not give rise to any significant new burdens on childminders or day care providers, and importantly there are no additional costs to providers.

In relation to section 13 (4) of the proposed Measure, it does allow Welsh Ministers to make adjustments to the legislative schemes for registration. There is discretion to keep the current definitions of childminding and day care in Part 10A of the Children Act 1989, or to make policy changes, following consultation with stakeholders. In the short to medium term the Welsh Assembly Government has no plans to amend the stated policy intent set out in the Explanatory Memorandum. It is also our intention to consult on all aspects of the regulations (including the accompanying regulatory impact assessment) before final implementation and commencement of the provisions. If, for example, the age limit for regulated childminding or day care for children was raised or lowered, this would have direct financial resourcing implications for CSSIW (the regulator) which would need to be addressed accordingly.

Also, section 48 provides the power to make regulations to deal with the position where a sole registered person dies, for the carrying on of the service. There is currently no such provision in Part 10A of the Children Act 1989. The new requirement will address this in relation to day care.

There are no additional regulatory costs or compliance costs arising from these proposals.

4.7. Establishment of Integrated Family Support Teams and Boards

Integrated Family Support Teams (IFST) will bring about significant changes in future delivery frameworks for support and care. Their impact will require a re-modelling of the way services are organised and provided and will have major implications, both on a strategic and operational level for key statutory bodies in local government and health, as well as the third sector. The establishment of new multi-agency IFST throughout Wales, starting with and learning from the pioneers areas, is key to promoting the type of systemic change in service delivery necessary to effect a whole family approach to service design and delivery.

Delivery of the provisions in Part 3 will place specific duties on local authorities and local health boards to assist authorities in discharging those duties and will be new burdens that will have associated cost implications. We are unable at this stage to provide potential full costs associated with the full implementation of Part 3, and the initial policy is to commence IFST in the area of substance misuse. Extending the professionals in the core teams to accommodate wider circumstances such as domestic violence, mental health and learning disability and commencing duties across all local authority areas will have associated costs in the order of £10 - £15m. There may also be consequential impact on wider service support in increased demand for services generally across both children and adults' service as the new

arrangements will provide for support to be given to the adult if there is a direct benefit to the child's welfare. These calculations are raw cost and should not be considered in isolation of the impact that policy is expected to have in terms of potential savings to the current expenditure by local authority social services for children in need and in care. For more detailed information on cost benefits please refer to section 9 of the Regulatory Impact Assessment.

There will also be costs associated with the establishment of IFS boards in terms of administration and remuneration payment that local authorities may wish to pay to co-opted board members. In addition a central resource will be available from the Welsh Assembly Government. This will include:

- Strategic support and direction;
- Intelligence and information sharing;
- Research and evidence based materials; and
- Consultancy support and training.

The Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA) will establish a central resource to support pioneer areas and staff in the design and functions of IFST over the pioneer period, including the development of training and resources, necessary to support IFST pioneers over the transition period. Annex C provides detailed information on support and resource to be available to the pioneers.

Costs below are representative of the resources to be allocated to set up and support the three pioneer areas and the central resource in developing the wider systems to support a phased implementation of the Measure provisions over 5 to 10 years. First year costs will include provision for a "change fund" to be available to the pioneers to start their preparations in 2009 including; the infrastructure in terms of accommodation, ICT equipment, recruitment and training of the core IFS team, staff and managers in the children and adult services on the transitional changes and connections to be made between existing and new arrangements for re-modelling the services in line with the functions of the IFS teams. The pioneer invitation process has started and selection will be completed by July 2009, following which preparation for a 2010 go-live date in the specified areas will begin.

Immediate cost to deliver stated short term policy aims – three pioneer areas with an anticipated commencement / go live date of early 2010

IFS Teams and Boards – Pioneer Areas

IFST Pioneer areas only	£ 2009-10	£ 2010-11	£ 2011-12
WAG – Central Resource	0.5	0.5	0.5
Change Fund	0.6	-	-
Running cost / team*	0.9	1.5	1.5

Admin / Boards	0.3	0.3	0.3
Total	2.3M	2.3M	2.3M

Bodies impacted; Largely Local Government and Local Health Boards

***Assumptions:**

Team costs - Calculations have drawn on the cost for running similar integrated support teams in Middlesbrough and Cardiff. Experience has shown that each team can support 100-125 families in their areas.

4.8. Improving Standards in Social Work

Section 59 when commenced will place a specific duty on local authorities to designate an officer of the authority to have a specific role to champion and promote best practice in relation to children and families within the authority. The provisions recognise the increasing emphasis of use of evidence and local authorities' commitment to continuous improvement within the service drawing on what they learn from research and development. The officers will build expertise in research and development and share their work across the local authority (and if appropriate its partners) to translate evidence of what works into social practice and to raise standards in the use of evidence based practice so that local organisations are continually learning and benefiting from research that can be effected into practice.

Enacting this provision may carry associated costs. The post already exists in varying forms across local authorities known as Link-Officers supported by the Wales College Network. The duty will strengthen these arrangements by requiring a dedicated officer who can attribute the time and expertise to developing the role. The associated cost for implementing this provision may be in the order of £0.5m - £1m depending on the functions, professional title and skills of the officer to be specified through statutory guidance.

Assumptions are underpinned by cost for each area or consortia areas in deploying a full or part time social worker average salary cost of £30,000. Following commencement of the Measure, it is our intention in 2010 to consult on the detailed role of the standards officer and to identify associated costs.

4.9. Play Sufficiency and Assessments

Section 60 places a new duty on local authorities to assess sufficiency of play opportunities and to secure sufficient play opportunities in their area in the light of that assessment, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Local authorities will be able to continue to use funding currently provided through Cymorth when it moves into Revenue Support Grant to undertake play sufficiency assessments (in line with current 2009 Cymorth guidance) and these assessments will form the basis of local authority decisions on

extending / revising provision in accordance with local needs and circumstances and available resources (i.e. in so far as is reasonably practicable). It is not the intention that the requirements of the assessment process should be so complex as to cost more than the existing Cymorth allocation, nor that the duty in respect of sufficiency of provision should be performed without regard to available resources.

4.10. Participation

Section 61 places a general duty on local authorities to make arrangements to promote and facilitate participation by children in decisions (of the authority) which affect their lives and, in particular, will require them to publish information about these arrangements.

Existing Local Participation Strategy guidance already informs local authority arrangements to promote and facilitate participation by children and young people in decisions of the authority which affect them. The guidance was developed by the Welsh Assembly Government with a range of national and local partners and with children and young people, and is designed to support and drive forward children and young people's participation in Wales.

Local authorities will be able to continue to use funding currently provided through Cymorth in respect of these activities to support the new duty when Cymorth funding moves into Revenue Support Grant.

Brian Gibbons
Minister for Social Justice & Local Government
May 2009