

Committee: **Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **6<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

Report Subject: **Adverse Childhood Experiences**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Nigel Daniels**

Report Submitted by: **Rhian Bowen-Davies, Partnership Lead, Early Action Together Programme, Gwent**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	Info Item 17.12.19	17.12.19			06.01.20			PSB SSG

1. **Purpose of the Report**  
To consider the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) programme which aims to ensure that Public Service Organisations across Gwent are prepared for dealing with ACES through training key staff across key organisations.
2. **Scope and Background**
  - 2.1 In 2017, an all Wales collaborative bid was submitted to the Home Office Police Transformation Fund. The purpose of the application was to transform the way in which police and partner agencies deal with the most vulnerable people in society.
  - 2.2 The successful application resulted in a national Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) approach to policing vulnerability programme which aims to develop a system wide, workforce development approach to responding to vulnerability using an ACE approach. The programme, known as the Early Action Together Programme, is funded until 31 March 2020.
  - 2.3 The national programme has had four key strategic objectives:
    - A competent and confident workforce to respond more effectively to vulnerability using an ACE informed approach in both fast and slow time policing;
    - Organisational capacity and capability which proactively meets changing demands;
    - A 24/7 single integrated 'front door' for vulnerability that signposts, supports and safeguards encompassing 'blue light', welfare and health services; and
    - A whole system response to vulnerability by implementing ACE informed approaches for operational policing and key partners.

- 2.4 A National Programme Team has been responsible for the delivery of the overall programme, with delivery teams within each Welsh Police Force area responsible for the development and implementation of local delivery plans. DCI Andrew Tuck is the Police Lead for Gwent and Rhian Bowen-Davies is the Partnership Lead.
- 2.5 The Blaenau Gwent area was identified as one of the Pathfinder areas for the programme in Gwent. The other pathfinder area is Newport.
- 2.6 The programme has provided an opportunity to build an evidence base to further inform trauma informed approaches, early intervention and prevention; primarily in relation to policing and vulnerability but also has offered an opportunity to consider responses to vulnerability in partnership with statutory and voluntary sector partners.
- 2.7 The programme has not been about introducing another layer of intervention; rather it has offered an opportunity to consider existing responses to vulnerability and build into, rather than onto core provision; strengthening and sustaining the existing workforce.
- 2.8 The Programme has been running alongside a Welsh Government funded ACE Support Hub and there has been coordinated delivery between these on key areas such as delivering ACE and trauma informed practice training. Key deliveries from the programme, and the ACE Support Hub for Blaenau Gwent are outlined in the **Performance Section of the report**.
- 2.9 The Programme, in partnership with Public Health Wales, facilitated a workshop in July 2019, for key stakeholders that mapped ACE training across public services in Gwent to better understand the provision, uptake, challenges and opportunities to create an ACE aware Gwent. A report is being finalised and will be presented back to PSBs in Gwent highlighting a series of recommendations in order to deliver the objective of ensuring that Public Services are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) ready.
- 2.10 With the funded programme due to come to a close at the end of March 2020, and training for Police and Partners concluded in November 2019, the Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board in October 2019 received a review paper which noted key issues and agreed for a subsequent project closure report with supporting recommendations to be presented to the PSB in April 2020.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

#### 3.1 **Option 1**

The PSB Scrutiny Committee considers this report and supports the project closure report to be presented to the PSB.

#### **Option 2**

The PSB Scrutiny Committee considers this report, supports the project closure report to be presented to the PSB and makes recommendations for the PSB to consider on the programme.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan wants 'Everyone to have the best start in life' and identifies one of the ways in which they will deliver this by ensuring that *Public Services Are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) ready*.

The Well-being delivery programme 2018/19 included high-level actions relating to an ACE ready workforce to be delivered through delivery of level 1 training of key public services workforce and reviewing the scale of local issues associated with ACEs in 2019/20.

The plan recognises that the delivery of these high-level actions will impact on all five well-being objectives.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

An all Wales collaborative bid led by the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales, South Wales Police and Public Health Wales on behalf of the four Police and Crime Commissioners, four Chief Constables, and a range of criminal justice and voluntary sector partners was successful to the Home Office Police Transformation Fund.

Current Home Office funding for the Programme ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Whilst some project activity will continue, this will not include delivery of the multi-agency ACEtime training.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

A recent workshop facilitated by Public Health Wales and the Programme has identified a lack of consistency, coordination and monitoring in the current approach to ACE awareness and Trauma Informed Practice across Gwent. The report from this work, which is currently being finalised will outline options for Public Service Boards to consider to improve the current arrangements.

Whilst the Early Action Together Programme has provided a degree of oversight and reporting against the Well-being objective since 2018, the Programme has now completed its delivery of ACEtime training and is funded in its current format only until March 2020.

The risk that is foreseen for the delivery of the objective is that of ownership – where will coordination and oversight of the objective sit for 2020/21?

5.3 ***Legal***

None identified.

## 5.4 **Human Resources**

Workforce development – the need for a coordinated training needs analysis and training plan to ensure that all Public Services are 'ACE ready'.

Implications for Learning and Development / Workforce Development to identify relevant staff to receive ACE aware / Trauma Informed Practice and how best to cascade learning and ACE awareness.

## 6. **Supporting Evidence**

### 6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

#### **What has the Early Action Together Programme delivered in Blaenau Gwent?**

##### 6.1.1 **Early Intervention Project**

The Early Action Together Local Delivery Team has worked alongside key partners in Blaenau Gwent including Police, Children's Services, Families First and Education to develop a concept that builds into the Information, Assistance and Advice (IAA) service which provides a 'one front door' for referrals to Children's Services.

Police and partners recognised an opportunity to enhance the existing arrangements by co-locating a police resource with the IAA service to provide early, effective information sharing that can contribute to collaborative decision-making regarding safeguarding. Every referral is jointly screened by Police and Children's Services with safeguarding decisions being made by the delegated, responsible decision maker from Children's Services having received timely and relevant information from the Gwent Police resource.

If the referral meets the statutory safeguarding threshold, then the police resource participates in strategy discussions/ meetings.

For referrals that do not meet statutory safeguarding thresholds relevant police/children's services information is shared with the referral and screening officer based at IAA who will contact the family, understand what matters to them and act as social navigators; identifying whether a single agency or Families First intervention would best meet the needs as described by the family.

For single agency responses, the referral / screening officers have established points of contact with key stakeholders e.g. Housing providers, community and voluntary sector organisations, Education / Schools.

Referrals to Families First will be made by the Families First referral/ screening officer and the case allocated to a Family Support Worker within 48 hours.

As a result of earlier information sharing and identification of families who do not meet statutory safeguarding thresholds partners recognised the

potential for increased referrals to the Families First service and therefore the programme has funded two family support workers to respond to this anticipated increase in demand from police referrals.

The Early Intervention project went live on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and its first 6 months has supported 37 families whose referrals would otherwise have been categorised as 'No Further Action' (NFA) by Children's Services.

The Early Action Together Programme, Gwent Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner have funded the Detective Sergeant Resource co-located within IAA, two additional Family Support Workers within Families First and business support capacity.

### 6.1.2 **ACEtime training**

In addition to the Early Intervention Project detailed above, the Programme has coordinated and facilitated ACETime training for Police and Partners, alongside the Welsh Government funded ACE Support Hub.

All frontline staff and supervisors in Blaenau Gwent should receive the ACEtime training by the end of the Programme.

44 staff from partner agencies across Blaenau Gwent have attended the ACEtime training including staff from Families First, Domestic Abuse Support Services, Community Safety Partnership, Youth Offending Service, Youth Service and Education.

### 6.1.3 **Education Thematic**

Our vision for the Education Thematic is to develop and test an alternative Policing in Schools model where the following principles are integral to the development and delivery of an 'all age' schools policing model:

- Alignment with the new curriculum
- Authentic learning experiences
- Educational attainment
- Strengthening relationships between Neighbourhood Policing and Schools

A Police Schools Liaison Officer has been working alongside Ebbw Fawr Learning Community to:

- Support the introduction of Heddlu Bach / Mini Police for KS2 pupils.
- Develop and are deliver '**The Beat**' - a bespoke programme for Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils based on 'pupil voice' consultation events. The programme allows the groups of learners to identify what's important to them and deliver a project alongside the Police lead, #NXTGEN officer and neighbourhood policing teams. Projects for this first cohorts include focussing on improving a local skate park and a 'digital heroes' and peer support for internet safety. Projects will run over a term and learners will

have the opportunity to present to parents and partner agencies to celebrate their achievements.

- Develop and are deliver **#NXTGEN** – a 2-year bespoke programme for Year 10/11 pupils (KS4) to achieve BTEC Level 2 and City and Guilds qualifications

13 learners are engaged with the programme. Learners that have been accepted onto the project have been identified as vulnerable for a number of reasons e.g. they may be a looked after child; have or have had a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN); have speech or communication difficulties; be self-reported with emotional and mental health issues; be eligible for free school meals; be in low income families and be materially deprived; and, be subject to unseen ACES in the home or a wider contextual environment.

- Work with a range of partners including SWFRS, St Johns Ambulance and the University of South Wales to offer authentic learning experiences to young people on #NXTGEN
- Secure a number of exit routes from the programme including apprenticeships, public services foundation course, and offers of further education through the University of South Wales

An evaluation framework is being developed by the national research team to measure the impact and effectiveness of our education thematic including the Beat and #NXTGEN programme.

#### 6.1.4 **Welsh Government funded ACE Support Hub**

In addition to the Early Action Together Programme, the ACE Support Hub has developed bespoke training packages for the following sectors:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Education
- Youth and Youth Justice Services
- Health
- Criminal Justice Sector
- Early Years
- Fire and Rescue
- Generic Train the Trainer packages

Blaenau Gwent is an ACE enquiry pilot site for Health Visitors and relevant staff have received training to implement the pilot.

The Welsh Government funded ACEs Support Hub, supported by EAS Consortia has provided the following training in Blaenau Gwent:

- Phase 1 Ebbw Fawr 100 staff and teachers

- Phase 2 Ebbw Fawr 20 staff to cascade to departments in the school
- All schools in Blaenau Gwent except 3 have received ACE awareness\*
- 9 schools in Blaenau Gwent have received Train the Trainer to deliver Phase 2 by July 2020\*
- 9 schools in Blaenau Gwent have attended Train the Trainer to create an ACE friendly school\*

*\*Data correct as of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019*

The following training has been delivered by the ACE Support Hub across Gwent:

- 120 EAS Ambassadors
- 180 Housing professionals
- 20 individuals have completed the Train the Trainer module to deliver ACE awareness training within their organisations. Follow up activity will be undertaken to monitor the delivery of the training (this includes three individuals from Blaenau Gwent – 1 x Flying Start and 2 x Healthy Schools)

The ACE Support Hub has developed a Skills and Knowledge Framework which describes the knowledge and skills the workforce needs to be ACE-Informed, ACE-Skilled and ACE-Influencers.

Despite the challenges presented, ACE training is being delivered across different sectors in Blaenau Gwent improving the knowledge, awareness and responses of public services to Adverse Childhood Experiences however, the work to date has highlighted an opportunity to improve the planning, coordination and monitoring of this training to ensure that we have an ACE informed public service workforce that can take a Trauma-Informed approach in their work.

## 6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

An ACE aware, trauma informed public service workforce better able to identify and respond to root causes of vulnerability.

## 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

Listening to individuals, families and communities in order to better understand their experiences in order to continually review and inform improvements in responses. Recognition that ACE's are "everyone's business" and involving all agencies that can make an impact.

The programme is listening to the experiences of children and families, understanding their experiences of services and what could have been done earlier to offer support. The lived experiences of individuals and

families is directly contributing to the development of the intervention within Blaenau Gwent through direct engagement with families and consideration of engagement activity already undertaken e.g. Families First independent evaluation, the Blaenau Gwent We Want Engagement Programme.

The work in Ebbw Fawr Learning Community piloting an alternative approach to Policing in Schools has been informed by pupil voice consultations and the work of The Beat programme has been shaped by the pupils involved.

#### 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

Blaenau Gwent wants everyone to have the 'Best Start in Life'.

Over the long-term we want to break the cycles of Adverse Childhood Experiences being passed down to future generations through giving them the best start in life. We want to tackle the long-term negative impacts Adverse Childhood Experiences can bring to families, their future children and grandchildren.

The programme, with its defined objectives and deliverables offers an opportunity to contribute to the learning and evidence base in relation to ACEs and vulnerability.

The programme is focused on improving responses to vulnerability (including ACEs) from both a policing and partner perspective, improving earlier identification and developing a timely and appropriate 'early help offer' for families to address root causes and prevent long term impacts of ACEs.

As a transformational programme the focus provides an opportunity to identify, develop and evaluate 'what works' in terms of responses to vulnerability and a whole school approach to inform future strategic and service planning and commissioning.

#### 6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Prevention is at the core of the programme.

Ensuring the best start in life will require the Public Services Board to consider how it can focus its existing resources, to ensure everyone has the best start in life.

Early identification of those who are vulnerable, or at risk of becoming vulnerable will be important in taking a preventative approach to identifying Adverse Childhood Experiences at the earliest opportunity (e.g. from conception).

Ensuring families have access to public services which are integrated, citizen centred and have a preventative focus will be key. For example, families facing problems may require support in areas such as mental health, substance misuse, criminal justice, housing etc. By addressing the root causes effectively and helping families overcome life's

challenges will lead to happier and healthier families, now and for future generations.

Underpinning the programme is an understanding and recognition that prevention and early intervention are the overarching principles to tackling the challenges we face as a society and to improving outcomes for individuals and families.

Offering families, a timely, person centred, integrated and prevention focused response at the earliest point is a key objective for the programme and this will underpin the development of the model to be piloted in Blaenau Gwent.

The programme interprets prevention from a primary, secondary and tertiary perspective and will provide an opportunity to explore all as part of the pathfinder and education thematic area in Blaenau Gwent.

#### **6.6 *Collaboration / partnership working***

Collaborating across the regional and local statutory boards and with partners, communities and citizens to improve the planning and coordination of services and responses.

The Programme will work with Gwent Police, Public Health Wales, Blaenau Gwent Children's Services, Families First , Flying Start, Youth Service, Youth Offending Team, Community Safety, Education, Ebbw Fawr Learning Community, EAS Consortium, ACEs Support Hub, South Wales Fire and Rescue Services, WAST, EDT, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board including mental health services (not an exhaustive list) to better understand current responses to vulnerability and identify opportunities to improve responses.

#### **6.7 *Integration (across service areas)***

The Programme is seeking to identify how services can be better integrated to identify and respond to vulnerability; offering support to families at the earliest opportunity. The development of a service model in Blaenau Gwent is providing an opportunity to evaluate co-location, early information sharing and collective decision making regarding safeguarding, early intervention and prevention.

#### **6.8 *EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

### **7. Monitoring Arrangements**

- 7.1 Recommendations on monitoring arrangements will be made within the report by Public Health Wales which is currently being finalised and within the Early Action Together project closure report to the Public Service Board in April 2019.

### **Background Documents /Electronic Links**