

SOCIAL & HEALTHCARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 2 nd March 2023
Report Subject	Residential Care Services for Children and Young People
Cabinet Member	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Wellbeing
Report Author	Chief Officer: Social Services
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council has commenced an ambitious programme to develop in house Residential Children’s Care Homes as part of a ‘Care Closer to Home’ strategy (see Section 6: Accessible Documents). The strategy sets out our intention to build our own in in house residential care to provide local, high quality, registered care that meets the needs of our looked after children. Integral to this provision will be establishing a motivated and skilled residential workforce with effective and supportive leadership.

This report sets out progress in delivering the following projects identified in our ‘Care Closer to Home’ Strategy:

- Tŷ Nyth - a registered Home with MST therapy to support family reunification
- Y Dderwen - a registered Home providing long term placement stability
- Mesen Fach – a crisis flat offering short term placements in emergencies
- Small Group Homes supporting 1 or 2 children in bespoke community-based settings

The report also confirms progress with staff recruitment and workforce development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	The report seeks to update members of progress to develop our in-house residential care as part of our ‘Care Closer to Home’ strategy.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE RESIDENTIAL CARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE REPORT
1.01	Tŷ Nyth – Supporting Family Reunification
1.02	Tŷ Nyth (Nest House) has been designed to support the safe and appropriate reunification of looked after children from care to family. The service can also support young people to move from residential care to foster placements. The Home can support up to 4 children at any one time.
1.03	The provision is a grant funded partnership venture between Flintshire (host), Wrexham and BCUHB and builds on the well-established MST service that successfully supports families whose children are on the edge of care.
1.04	The model that will become operational at Tŷ Nyth is MST-FIT which stands for Multi Systemic Therapy - Family Integrated Transitions. The MST-FIT model consists of two distinct yet complementing parts.
1.05	Part 1: 12-week residential stay at Tŷ Nyth The residential care staff at Tŷ Nyth will have specialist training in DBT (Dialectical Behavioural Therapy). DBT is an evidence-based intervention for emotional regulation and distress tolerance. Staff will work with a child to learn skills to recognise and manage their feelings as well as social skills to help in family life. The DBT skills young people learn include: Mindfulness Skills for decreasing impulsiveness and rigid thinking, and for increasing awareness of thoughts and feelings. This will help children be aware of their surroundings and feelings and to act wisely. Emotion Regulation Skills for understanding the function of emotions and for managing difficult emotions. This will help children better understand emotions and ways of getting control over their emotions. Distress Tolerance Skills for managing stress and accepting parts of life that can feel unfair or painful. This will help children deal with upsetting emotions or situations without making things worse Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills & Social Skills for pro-social assertiveness, managing conflict, and building healthy relationships. This will help the child get what they want from other people in positive ways and to build healthy relationships. Practitioners keep in close contact with parents and carers who are welcome to join in skills sessions in the home.

	<p>During their stay young people increase their overnight stays with family every four weeks until at the end of 12 weeks they are living with their family full time.</p>
1.06	<p>Part 2: MST-FIT</p> <p>After 4 weeks at Tŷ Nyth, an MST therapist will begin to work with the family to prepare for their child's return home.</p> <p>An MST therapist will work with the family for 2 months before the planned return home. The work is intensive with 2-3 coaching sessions each week to help make sure the transition home goes as smoothly as possible.</p> <p>MST is a treatment model that targets systemic factors that create the context for problematic behaviour. The MST-FIT team will work both directly with the parents and where appropriate the young person utilising evidence-based intervention, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBT (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy) mirroring the work completed in Tŷ Nyth • CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) • Motivational Interviewing and relapse prevention • Family Therapy • Behavioural Interventions <p>The therapist will work on the behaviours that may have led to a child being in care in the first place. This could be aggression and violence at home, running away, committing crime or self-harming and other risky behaviours.</p> <p>The therapist will continue to work with the family for up to 4 months after their child returns home. Therapists from the Team are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.</p>
1.07	<p>A registration application has been submitted to CIW for Tŷ Nyth and we await their determination.</p>
1.08	<p>Y Dderwen – Long term home</p>
1.09	<p>Y Dderwen ('Oak Tree') has been designed as a long-term home for looked after children. We have developed a modern, homely environment that enables us to support 4 children locally. Like Tŷ Nyth the Home has been designed to meet very high RISCA (Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act) specification requirements including the installation of ensuite facilities for every bedroom and a sprinkler fire suppressant system.</p>
1.10	<p>We are seeking to train the residential care staff at Y Dderwen in Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP) therapy. DDP is a treatment for children who had experienced neglect and abuse in their birth families and suffered from significant developmental trauma.</p>
1.11	<p>Troubled children may have had many changes in the people who look after them and find it hard to trust adults. They may believe that parents</p>

	aren't safe and can't always be turned to for comfort and help. They may develop insecure attachments and try to stop their new parents from becoming emotionally close to them. The therapy helps the children learn to trust. It is family-based and involves the child with his or her caregivers.
1.12	A registration application has been submitted to CIW for Y Dderwen and we await their determination.
1.13	Mesen Fach - crisis flat / annex
1.14	Mesen Fach ('Little Acorn') is a crisis flat that has been designed to offer short term emergency support to children. The provision is annexed to Tŷ Nyth with its own separate entrance. One child at a time can be supported at Mesen Fach and the Home will have its own registration and operate separately from Tŷ Nyth. However, management oversight and leadership will be provided by the Manager and Deputy Manager at Tŷ Nyth.
1.15	The provision is a grant funded partnership venture between Flintshire (host), Wrexham and BCUHB.
1.16	Small Group Homes
1.17	There is a small cohort of young people who will not be suitable for shared living and will need either solo placements, placements with their siblings, or to live with a maximum of 1 other young person. The placements are difficult to source from the independent sector and where available they are very expensive.
1.18	2 local authority properties have been provided to Social Services to be established using a 'Small Groups Home' model. Small Group Homes provide community based registered Children's Homes for children with specific needs. One Home is in Mold and the other in Shotton. Both properties have been fully refurbished to the standards that are required under RISCA legislation. As these properties are smaller provisions, they do not require ensuite facilities.
1.19	A registration application for one provision is at its final stage with CIW with a variation being prepared to extend registration to the second property.
1.20	Workforce Recruitment: Residential Care
1.21	Strong, value-based leadership is integral to ensuring a compassionate, high quality and nurturing culture with Children's residential care. We have invested in recruiting, and developing, a management team to lead our service development in an area of service provision that is new to the local authority.
1.22	To support the establishment of the Service, the role of our RI (Responsible Individual) for Adults Services, has been extended on an interim basis. This has enabled organisational knowledge, experience and good practice to inform our service development. Once established we will be seeking to recruit a specific RI for Children's Services to then lead the service and oversee any further expansion of in-house children's residential provision.

1.23	<p>To meet registration requirements, requisite staffing levels and the infrastructure to provide effective support and oversight of the care provided, we will need to recruit:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Home</th> <th>Manager</th> <th>Deputy Manager</th> <th>Senior residential worker</th> <th>Residential worker</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Tŷ Nyth</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>8</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y Dderwen</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>8</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mesen Fach</td> <td>/</td> <td>/</td> <td>1</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Small Group Homes</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>12</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>35</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Managers Tŷ Nyth will also cover Mesen Fach.</p> <p>There will be one set of Managers covering the 2 Small Group Homes</p> <p>We will also need to recruit relief staff to ensure that there is sufficient contingency cover for staff absence.</p>	Home	Manager	Deputy Manager	Senior residential worker	Residential worker	Total	Tŷ Nyth	1	1	1	8	11	Y Dderwen	1	1	1	8	11	Mesen Fach	/	/	1	7	8	Small Group Homes	1	1	1	12	15	Total	3	3	4	35	45
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1.24	<p>Recruiting to all posts has been a challenge. As we have not run our own Children's Homes for at least 3 decades we do not have a supply of candidates experienced in working in Children's Homes. Positively, we have managed to recruit a small number of staff from within Adult Services, primarily with extensive experience in support young adults with learning disabilities. This cohort of staff have brought skills, insight and knowledge from that service area. However, the position is that we have had to seek to recruit from within a very competitive and vibrant workforce market. On the whole recruitment has been, and remains, a challenge and a risk for the programme. Initial progress in recruiting to all posts was slow but has picked up pace, particularly since the new year.</p>																																				
1.25	<p>Our current position is that by the end of March 2023 we will have sufficient workforce for Tŷ Nyth, Y Dderwen, and 1 Small Group Home. The residual vacancies within those establishments are for the 3 senior residential care worker posts.</p>																																				
1.26	<p>Recruitment initiatives continue to ensure the recruitment of 2 senior residential care workers and 13 residential care staff for Mesen Fach and one other small group.</p>																																				
1.27	<p>To date 3 relief staff have been recruited and that number will need to be scaled up as the provisions come on stream.</p>																																				
1.28	<p>Workforce Recruitment: MST-FIT</p>																																				
1.29	<p>The MST FIT Team will consist of a Supervisor/Team Manager, Relief Supervisor, 4 Therapists and a Business Support Officer. The recruitment process has taken a number of months, but we are now at the point that the only vacancy is 1 Therapist post.</p>																																				

1.30	As the majority of the team is in place they have been allocated cases that have been referred to our long standing MST Team to prevent waiting lists. Once Tŷ Nyth is open the MST FIT Team will have a mixed caseload supporting families and children in, and having just left, Tŷ Nyth as well as edge of care cases. This approach will ensure maximum use of their capacity and skills and enable us to extend the number of families supported.
1.31	Phasing of Opening
1.32	There are multiple factors that will determine the timelines for opening the provisions which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIW registration • Workforce recruitment, induction and training • Identification of children and assessment of compatibility
1.33	At this stage we are not able to provide a specific opening dates. With significant caveats we can provide the following indicative phasing as a guide of intent that will be continuously reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Home 1: April 2023 • Tŷ Nyth: May 2023 • Y Dderwen: June 2023 • Small Group Home 2: August 2023 • Mesen Fach: September 2023
1.34	When each provision opens there will be a phased plan for the number of children moving into the provision to ensure an appropriate pace and expansion to meet their individual needs.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	A combination of Welsh Government grant programmes and financial investment through the Council's Medium Term Financial (MTF) Plan are being used to fund the development of the Residential Homes. The funding will enable the establishment of in-house provision and the gradual rebalancing of expenditure from high cost out of county placements to support the revenue costs of in-house provision once grant funding ceases.
2.02	The Tŷ Nyth site was purchased with funding provided through the Welsh Government Intermediate Care Fund. The site purchase included the Y Dderwen and Mesen Fach buildings.
2.03	The renovation of Tŷ Nyth and Mesen Fach has been met in full through the Regional Integration Fund (RIF). Revenue costs for both provisions including the MST-FIT Team will be met by RIF for the next 4 years. There is an element of match finding for this grant which is being met by BCUHB through the provision of the MST Supervisor/Team Manager position. During the next 4-year lifecycle of the RIF fund there will be an

	<p>element of tapering of funding (currently subject of a national review) with any shortfall being jointly shared between Wrexham County Council and Flintshire County Council. Commitments and obligations are being set out in a legal contract which is at the final stages of completion.</p>
2.04	<p>The development and revenue costs associated with Y Dderwen and the 2 Small Group Homes are being met from two Welsh Government Grants. Firstly, a Safer Accommodation grant of £75k for 2022/2023 and an additional 3 year Welsh Government Grant that has been allocated to support a national programme of eliminating profit from Children's social care. £350k has been allocated from the eliminating profit fund for 22/33. Indicative allocations for the next 2 years are 2023/24 - £501,212 and 2024/25 - £561,000.</p>
2.05	<p>As identified in para 2.01 the next 3 years will mark a transition phase as we establish in house provision and, over time, seek to reduce our reliance on out of county. This will be a gradual phasing as children will need to continue to be supported in their out of county placements, where this is in their best interests, whilst local authority infrastructure is developed. We will continue to work closely with local independent providers to ensure that we achieve a sustainable market model to ensure placement sufficiency and the delivery of positive outcomes for our looked after children, within the 'eliminating profit' principles and framework set by Welsh Government. This will require joint working and a strong partnership approach with local providers.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>The prospective development of additional in-house residential provision will require significant workforce recruitment and staff development. Recruitment within the social care sector is challenging and an innovative approach towards both recruitment and retention will be necessary in a competitive employment market. This will include recruiting for 'values', funding intensive training on therapeutic models for support, investment in senior residential roles to provide visible and accessible role modelling with each provision and a programme of leadership development and coaching for managers.</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>The North Wales Population Needs Assessment (April 2022) collated stakeholder feedback relating to children's services and service providers.</p>
4.02	<p>We have worked with our Young Voices Out Loud Group, which consists of young people who are looked after as well as care leavers, to look at potential names for the Homes. The young people were clear that they wanted to keep the continuity of Tŷ Nyth and were keen that the names for the other Homes were aligned to nature, nurture, growth, strength and development. They suggested trees as names which has informed the final names for the provisions.</p>

4.03	Young people have also provided us with some very clear messages about the Homes needing to be homely, not having official notice boards up, and have been involved in the selection of some of the artwork and soft furnishing.
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5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	Care Closer to Home: Placement Commissioning Strategy approved by Joint Education, Youth & Culture & Social & Healthcare Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2022 https://committeemeetings.flintshire.gov.uk/documents/s71129/Placement%20Commissioning%20Strategy.pdf?LLL=0

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Craig Macleod, Senior Manager: Children Telephone: 01352 701313 E-mail: craig.macleod@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA): The Act became law on 18th January 2016 and provides the statutory framework for the regulation and inspection of social care in Wales.</p> <p>Responsible Individual (RI): The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 requires providers to designate a Responsible Individual (RI) for each place at, from or in relation to which a regulated service is provided as part of the registration process.</p> <p>Regional Integrated Fund: The Health & Social Care Regional Integration Fund is a five year fund from April 2022-March 2027. The fund is intended to enable integration of health and social care services.</p> <p>Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) : A strategy that provides a financial framework within which financial stability can be achieved and sustained in the medium term to deliver the Council's key strategic outcomes, priorities and sustainable services.</p>