

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

4th September 2018

Update on Multi-Agency Forums (MAFs)

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Children's Select Committee on the current position in respect of the Multi-Agency Forums across Wiltshire, and specifically the support and input offered to them by the Support & Safeguarding Service.

Background

2. In December 2015 a Task Group of the Children's Select Committee conducted a deep dive meeting focused on MAFs. The deep dive had been prompted by the Committee's concerns following information received and some issues members had become aware of when attending MAF meetings. MAF's are intrinsically not directly run by the Council but it is our role to facilitate them and in light of that responsibility the Task Group made a number of recommendations for action.

4. The committee endorsed the Task Groups recommendations regarding MAFs at its meeting on 26th January 2016.

5. The Executive Response to the Interim Report of the Safeguarding Task Group was presented to the committee on 22nd March 2016, and monitoring of the outstanding actions taken up by the Safeguarding Children and Young People Panel.

6. Work on those recommendations was undertaken by the then Early Help Team Leader with Functional Lead for MAFs, Richard Harris, under the instruction of the then Early Help Head of Service Mal Munday. This work was tasked in June 2016, but did not commence until August 2016 due to staff illness. It then became part of the Children's Services Integration project, now Families and Children's Transformation program (FACT).

Main Considerations for the Council

Update on Recommendations from Task Group

7. The recommendations from 2016 were as follows:

- a. That the council should clearly state what it sees as the current purpose of the MAF which would then inform the terms of reference

Update:

This position was outlined in the executive response in 2016. This position has been promoted by what are now Early Intervention Advisors and Support and Safeguarding managers, prior to October 2017 CAF Coordinators and Early Help Team Leaders. We see MAF's as a critical aspect of our Early Help offer and intend as part of the work outlined below

b. That the council should work on the standardisation of the Terms of Reference for the MAFs to include the following as a requisite:

- Regular discussion of cases
- Meetings timings to allow for schools to attend
- Expectation that all schools would attend (head teacher, SENCO or any other appropriate representative)

Update:

This work was started, but not completed by the functional lead. Following CSI there was internal discussion about the proposed introduction of Local Allocation Groups, and this discussion has moved into FACT Discussions around Developing Local Pathways. An output of this work will be a revised TOR for MAFs, which will take into account the new Early Support Hub which is currently being trialled.

c. That the Council should produce template description of the job role for the MAF chair.

Update:

The Developing Local Pathways FACT workstream will be bringing MAF chairs together and this will be an item for discussion and progression.

d. That the Council should undertake comprehensive quantitative and qualitative reporting to monitor the effectiveness of MAFs which would be regularly reported to and monitored by the Safeguarding Children and Young People Panel.

Update:

The executive response outlined why this is not appropriate.

e. That there should be a clear line of responsibility for MAFs through head of service to associate director level within the council.

Update:

Following the creation of the Support & Safeguarding Service, this responsibility is now led by the Head of Service, Support & Safeguarding who is managed by the Associate Director for Families and Children's Services.

f. That the figures used to report on MAFs should include:

- CAFs number "against" the child population for that community area (e.g. x per 1000);

- More accurate way of reporting attendance of MAF (especially for schools).

Update:

The present recording of CAFS and Early Help activity is under development. The new integrated case management system which goes live in Phase One in November will improve both the capture and the reporting on Early Help interventions. At that juncture it will be possible to begin to design report at that level.

Update on activity of MAFS for academic year 2017/18

8. Wiltshire Pathways, the website of the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children’s Board, has publicised dates for 20 different MAFs. In the main, these mirror the 18 Community Area Boards, although there have historically been separate MAFs for Amesbury and Durrington (both in the Amesbury Community Area Board patch) and there has not been an operational MAF covering all of the South West Wiltshire Community Area Board, as there is no Wiltshire secondary school in this area. Previously, there had been attendance at equivalent groups in Shaftesbury and Gillingham by some Wiltshire Council staff.
9. In the 2017/18 academic year, the following MAFs operated:

Name	Last Meeting Date
Amesbury	January 2018
Bradford-on-Avon	9 th January 2018
Calne	19 th June 2018
Chippenham	28 th June 2018
Corsham & Melksham	18 th June 2018
Devizes & Lavington MAF	22 nd June 2018
Malmesbury	4 th July 2018
Royal Wootton Bassett	14 th March 2018
Salisbury West (SWAMAF)	4 th May 2018
Trowbridge Inclusion Forum	29 th June 2018
Westbury	5 th June 2018

The following MAFs did not meet in the 2017/18 academic year

Name	Last Meeting Date
Durrington	2016
Marlborough	February 2016
Pewsey	Spring 2018 – unclear if meeting took place
Salisbury & Southern	June 2017
Tidworth	June 2017
Warminster	January 2017

In addition, the Gillingham & Shaftesbury equivalent groups have not been attended by Wiltshire Council staff, and it is not known if they still run.

Present Position

10. Each of the five Support & Safeguarding Service (SASS) Teams (North, East, South, West 1 & West 2) now have in post an Early Intervention Advisor (EIA). They attend MAFs in their locality, providing data on the number of CAFs open to settings in that locality. They also offer a peer review exercise annually, although take up of this has been poor. It should be noted that some of these staff are part time, so depending on working days, may not be able to attend all meetings of the MAF.

11. Each SASS team has also committed a manager or senior social worker to attend each MAF to represent the service.

12. Other staff from SASS – Education Welfare Officers & Early Years Inclusion Officers have attended MAF meetings to network with professionals and promote their services.

13. Following the publication of Working Together 2018, Mark Gurrey, Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) chair is leading the work around what will replace the WSCB in order to fulfil the statutory obligations. He has expressed an interest in the current operation of MAFs, and we will work together with the FACT program to consider how the existing model could be built upon.

Safeguarding Considerations

14. MAFs provide an opportunity to build relationships between SASS staff and managers and local settings and hold case discussions to gain a wider perspective on the management of cases and possible interventions to promote better outcomes for children, young people and families. However, settings can also access their Early Intervention Advisor or consult with MASH for this purpose.

Public Health Implications

15. There are no public health implications.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

16. There are no environmental and climate change considerations.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

17. There is no equality impact to the proposal.

Risk Assessment

18. There are no risks associated with the proposal in this report. There may be risks in any proposed changes by FACT or the changes to WSCB arrangements.

Financial Implications

19. There are no financial implications to the proposal.

Options Considered

20. No other options have been considered

Conclusions

21. The Support & Safeguarding has clarified its commitment to MAFs, both in principle and in terms of resource, where they function.

22. The ongoing FACT program and changes to the WSCB arrangements may both influence the future direction and shape of MAFs.

Proposal

23. For the committee to be aware of the ongoing transformation work both under FACT and WSCB that may have an impact on the future of MAFs.

24. For the committee to be aware of the contribution SASS make to MAFs, and to endorse this.

25. For the committee to consider its future role in relation to the topic.

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22nd August 2018

Background Papers

Children's Select Committee Minutes 26th January 2016

Children's Select Committee Minutes 22nd March 2016

Memo from Mal Munday to Richard Harris, 24th June 2016

Family & Children's Services Transformation programme 'Developing Local Pathways' Draft 1

Appendices

None