**Brief 3: Children & Young People affected by a disability**

1. **Introduction:** 
   1. Commissioning practice within Education & Children Services is aligned to Fife Council’s Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. The Framework is clear that any organisation in receipt of a recurring grant in excess of £10K must make a fresh application every three years. The current commissioning cycle is due to conclude in April 2024, at which point a new cycle shall begin.
   2. Commissioning priorities for 2024-27 have emerged from a high-level Strategic Needs Analysis (SNA), which reaffirms existing commitments to support families to remain safely living together through the provision of early intervention supports at the additional stage of the Child’s Wellbeing Pathway and targeted supports at the Intensive stage.   The SNA comprised three distinct elements (1) Policy Mapping & Analysis (2) Population Needs Assessment (3) Resource Analysis.
   3. Combined, these activities have helped to establish that poverty in the early years, unsupported caring responsibilities, disability, domestic abuse, mental health and substance use are the main vulnerabilities which cause suffering and distress within the family unit, lead to family breakdown and fresh experiences of trauma and loss. The work detailed within the SNA establishes that recovery is best supported through models of support which are family inclusive, rights- based, and which focus upon and promote the ‘wellbeing’ of the whole family unit.
   4. This brief sets out Commissioning priorities in regard to children & young people affected by a disability.

1. **National & Local Drivers, Legislation, Best Practice …**

2.1 UNCRC:

The Convention contains 54 articles which set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. The Convention recognises the family unit as the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and especially children. The Convention provides clear parameters about the responsibilities member states have to protect and support the well-being of children within the family unit, and the measures that must be taken to promote their voice within all decisions which affect them.

Core Articles which are relevant to this brief include, one, three, five, six, seven, nine, twelve, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-three, twenty-five, twenty-seven, thirty-three, thirty-four and thirty-nine.

2.2 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Parties to the convention are required to promote, protect and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy full equality under the law.

Articles twelve, sixteen, nineteen, twenty-six and twenty-eight are particularly relevant to this brief.

2.3 The Children Scotland Act 1995:

Section 22 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 places a duty on local authorities to safeguard and look after the interests of a ‘child in need ‘. The Act states that disabled children are defined as children in need.

Section 23 of the Act requires the local authority to undertake an assessment of need if requested to safeguard and promote wellbeing, promoting the upbringing of children by their families. Section 23 of the Act is designed to minimise the effect of a disability on a disabled child (or child adversely affected by the disability of another family member) offering the opportunity for children affected by a disability to lead a life as normal as possible.

2.4 Social Care (Self Directed Support) Scotland Act 2013:

The Act ensures that local authorities offer self-directed support to anyone who requires support to anyone who requires support services, including unpaid carers who require support to help them maintain their caring role. Self-Directed Support is a way of providing support that means people are given choice and control over what kind of support they get. It means people can choose and arrange some or all of their own support instead of having it chosen or arranged by other people.

2.5 Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC):

GIRFEC is The Scottish Government’s National Practice Framework designed to support the ‘wellbeing’ of children and young people within the family unit. GIRFEC contains a definition of Well-Being as Shared, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. The Framework provides services and practitioners with a shared language for assessing, promoting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children & young people against these eight indicators.

2.6 The Promise:

The Promise articulates the findings from the Independent Care Review. It describes the vulnerabilities which drive children, young people and families into the care system in the first instance and the ensuing trauma, loss and adversity they often experience whilst in receipt of services. The Promise is clear that more must be done to support children to remain within the family unit through the provision of family inclusive, rights- based supports which focus upon and promote the ‘wellbeing’ of the whole family unit.

2.7 Fife Council Children Affected by Disability Criteria & Standards Framework:

The specialist Children Affected by Disability Team in Fife defines a disability as …

*a profound physical and /or learning disability or chronic condition which has a significant and enduring health effect. These disabilities will have a significant impact on the child or young person’s ability to carry out everyday activities and on their quality of family life.*

1. **Service Model**

3.1 The service model should be cognisant of recent policy, research and evidence of interventions which contribute to improving outcomes for children affected by a disability and their families. The intention is that the delivery model and interventions will improve outcomes for the child/ young person and the whole family. A key driver is for children to remain within their family and community where it is safe to do so.

3.2 This service is focused on prevention and support for children and families where there are indicators of need and vulnerability due to the impact of a child’s disability which if not addressed will lead to breakdown, crisis and statutory measures. Intervention may be intensive in nature depending on needs of the child /young person. Critical features of this service model are:

* person-centred
* family centred
* respectful promoting equality
* inclusive
* participative
* empowering and rights focused
* easily accessible
* supports transitions
* knowledge, expertise and understanding of disability and it’s impact on families
  1. The service model should be strongly aligned to both the National Framework Principles for Holistic Whole Family Support and GIRFEC National Practice Model. Other essential aspects include …
* assessment framework to establish children and young people’s wellbeing needs and risks
* evidence-based approaches and interventions – reflecting expertise in disability practice
* support to families at times of crisis and stress
* support to access opportunities to promote wellbeing and development
* outreach support to access community activities
* direct support to the child/ young person in the family home
* practical support and advice within the family home including parenting advice
* flexible model available in the evening and weekends
* short breaks including unit-based respite for the child/young person
* collaboration and partnership working with key services (education & health)
* data and evaluation systems evidencing impact of support
* clear care planning processes subject to regular review
* mechanisms to obtain children, young people and family’s feedback on the service experience
  1. Fife Council has commissioned Fife Voluntary Action to lead on a review of existing children and families support which is aimed at establishing the conditions where the views and experiences of children, young people and families are central to system transformation and funding of future children’s services in Fife so that in turn children and families in Fife experience better outcomes and are able to thrive.
  2. This work is being undertaken using a co-production approach with the involvement of children, young people, and families alongside both third sector and statutory sector providers. The project is in its early stages but is expected to produce recommendations in March 2024. Commissioned Services will be expected to align their own models to the findings from this work as it emerges and adopt recommendations aimed at informing the future planning, design, delivery and commissioning of family support services in Fife.

1. **Outcomes**

4.1 To deliver this brief the service will require an outcomes/performance framework with tools to evidence the progress of children, young people on the impact of interventions. The Outcomes for this service are …

**Outcomes for Children and Young People**

* improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing
* improvement in family relationships
* increased access to wider education and community opportunities
* improvement in independent living skills
* improvement in influence and control over life decisions and choices

**5. Eligibility & Referral Criteria**

5.1 The service will be provided to Fife’s children and young people looked after in and out with Fife within the features outlined in section 3.

5.2 The pathway to the service is ordinarily via the Children and Families Self Directed Support mechanism, with support plans being co-produced with families using an indicative budget. There may, however, be some occasions where the Children and Families service will request a service outside of this mechanism to provide a more immediate response for families in crisis.

**6.Scale & Cost**

6.1 Drawing upon service levels established for the current commissioning cycle (2021-24) and routine monitoring data, it is anticipated that the service will provide 595 bed nights for children affected by disability, will provide 3090 hours (inclusive of travel) of Outreach supports to children affected by disability and 3375 (inclusive of travel) hours of whole family supports.

6.2 The budget envelope established for the delivery of the Brief is £532,097

**7. Networking & Communication**

7.1 Collaborative working to improve outcomes is a key requirement and the service should have a proven track record of working effectively on a multi-agency basis building strong relationships with a range of statutory and non-statutory services

7.2 The service should be visible and have a community presence across the 7 localities in Fife, contributing to local networks, sharing good practice and influencing service delivery and development both at a local and strategic level.

7.3 The service should provide detailed information on the service model and interventions raising awareness of provision and the ability to work in a flexible and agile way.

**8. Continuity of Care**

8.1 The service provider will be expected to provide consistency of staffing both in levels and personnel for children, young people and families, particularly through periods of absence, sickness and holidays. The service will share their organisation’s comprehensive recruitment, induction and workforce development programme for staff members of this service. This should evidence capacity building with the staff team to use effective evidenced based interventions for the specified groups.

**9. Risk Management**

9.1 For each service user, identify all situations which involve elements of risk to themselves or others, and evidence the planned response which attempts to reduce and control the risk/s.

9.2 To manage risks effectively the service must have policies and procedures on the following:

* Operational policy reflecting equalities legislation
* Staff absence and management policy
* Recruitment policies and procedures
* Procedure for lone working and working in service users’ homes
* Use of volunteers
* Risk assessment and management
* Dealing with accidents and incidents
* Responding to distress related behaviours
* Protection of vulnerable groups including both an Adult and Child Protection Policy
* Confidentiality Policy
* Training and staff development
* Job description and details of duties
* References and enhanced disclosure check for staff
* Procedures for the supervision, appraisal and disciplinary of staff
* Whistleblowing policy

**10. Recording & Monitoring**

10.1 The service must have a record management system in place compliant with GDPR guidelines with a workforce who are knowledgeable and competent to record accurately in respect to direct contact and reports for all groups.

10.2 Information regarding the overall service provided may be requested by Fife Council at any time for example, how many hours have been worked, the type of contact that took place, the work involved, changes to service plans/interventions, complaints, successful/unsuccessful outcomes and the reasons for these.

10.3 Records kept should ensure that information on the outcomes for the service can be collected for evaluation and analytical purposes

10.4 An Agreement Monitoring Meeting will be held every quarter and a report submitted to the meeting by the service.

10.5 The grant will be monitored via Fife Councils Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, a Link Officer will be appointed to work closely with the service. The Link Worker will be supported by the Social Work Service Monitoring Officer

**11. Complaints**

11.1For each quarterly Agreement Monitoring Meeting the service provider must provide a report detailing the following information:

* The number of complaints the service provider has had during the previous quarter, by type of complaint
* The number of complaints in respect of service provision funded by Fife Council
* The outcome of the service providers investigation
* The number of complaints which were upheld and details on complainants who were satisfied/unsatisfied with the outcome
* General changes to the service providers policies and procedures as a result of complaints and progress with implementing any changes
* The service provider will be required to co-operate in any investigation of a complaint as requested by Fife Council and to remedy any concerns that Fife Council has regarding the provision of the service