

## Women's Aid Bangor

### Additional information required to ascertain the effect of the proposed cut in funding.

**1. What does the funding provided by the Council contribute to?**

Gwynedd County Council contributes £20,400.00 per annum to the Children's Support Service operated by Bangor & District Women's Aid. This funding is used entirely for the employment of a specialist children's support worker, and the funding is used for: direct salary of the support worker (18.5hrs per week); employee NIC costs for the support worker; the support worker's share of the on-costs of the organisation in terms of office rental, utilities, insurances, administration costs etc; the support worker's mobile phone and mileage costs in relation to the role; the support worker's employer pension contributions; the cost of advertising for replacement support worker where necessary; training costs commensurate with the requirements of the role. The funding from Gwynedd County Council does not allow for peripheral costs within the role, such as therapeutic worksheets; therapeutic reading resources; materials for support sessions, such as craft items; stationery for recording purposes etc.

**2. What is the organisation's turnover? (so as to identify the proportion of funding under consideration)**

In 2014/2015, the organisation received a total of £144,483.00 from the Supporting People grant through the Welsh Government - £81,659.00 to the refuge service and £62,824.00 to the community support service. Within this, there is an agreed 3.5hrs per week 'child work allowance' for the support of children within the refuge setting. Therefore, the funding from the SLA is 12% of our total funding in the current year. Heading into 2015/2016, we are now confirmed as receiving a 6% cut, or a total of £8,668.98 across our main SP grant, which will drop to £135,814 for the year, which would bring the current SLA to 15% of our total income – a not inconsiderable amount. We have also received a small grant of £5,000 from Children in Need for the current financial year, giving our total turnover for 2014/15 of £169,883.00.

**3. What has the organisation done to attract additional funding?**

In the past 12 months, applications for further funding for the organisation have been submitted to: Henry Smith Charity; The Tudor Trust; Lloyds Foundation; and to Children in Need. The Children in Need application was specifically submitted with the aim of funding 2 x part-time children's support worker posts within the Children's Service, with a request of a total of £90k for 3 years of funding. This was because of the recognition that one part-time support worker was not sufficient to deal with the level of referrals being received by the organisation. With just one worker, working on a part-time basis, we have been forced to operate a waiting list for support, which is far from ideal when we are considering children and young people who have already experienced trauma and significant harm in their short lives, and now have to wait to be able to speak to someone regarding their experiences and to access support. Children who

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have experienced significant harm and trauma through domestic violence and abuse deserve to be offered support services, and to be offered those services in a timely manner, in order to be protected as best possible from future harm. Unfortunately, given the current economic climate, none of these funding applications was successful. The next planned application will be to Comic Relief for the support of children and families who are, or have been, subject to domestic violence and abuse.

### **4. Where to the referrals come from? i.e**

- **How many cases are received via the Children and Family Support Department?**
- **How many cases does the organisation refer to the Children and Family Support**
- **Other sources?**

In the period between April 2013 and December 2014, we received a total of 43 referrals to the outreach children's support service. Of these, 5 were referred from the local authority's Social Services department, 8 were referred via police incidents, 8 were referred via the local education authority system, through Headteachers, school nurses or EWOs, with the remained being referred via other third sector family support agencies such as Gyda'n Gilydd and Teulu Ni and via parents themselves. We did not refer any cases into the children's services via the Child Protection procedures from the community service as there was no requirement for such in the time period specified.

### **5. What specialist work do the workers funded by the Council carry out?**

The designated children and young people's support worker works primarily on a one-to-one basis with individual children according to their needs as identified within their initial assessment. The primary function of the work is to provide therapeutic support to children and young people displaying detrimental effects of having lived with domestic violence and abuse, enabling them to make sense of their feelings and their environments, to develop appropriate safety plans, and to develop appropriate relationships with others, allowing them to achieve their full potential. I have attached the job description here so as you can see the breadth and depth of work undertaken.

### **6. What is the effect and/or value and result of the service on those receiving the support?**

In all cases where a support service has been offered, accepted and completed, it is clear from the file audits conducted that the children and young people have experienced very positive outcomes from the service. In many of the cases, the children and young people are able to better verbalise their own feelings and emotions, and are less likely to simply display adverse behaviours in the home or at school. This means that their potential within the school environment is increased greatly, attendance at school increases, participation in lessons increases and improves, and attitudes to learning improve. Children and young

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people also state that they are able to deal with challenges in a more productive manner, and that they are grateful to understand that they are not the only people with such things going on in their lives. The children and young people are appreciative of having someone listen to them, of being able to map out a safety plan with the support worker, and of having a contact to go to when worried or frightened.

When we receive feedback from professionals concerning children and young people, we understand that the work completed has been of immense value to the lives and potential of these children and young people. We receive feedback that children are more settled within school, less problematic to their teachers, develop more appropriate and positive relationships with their peers as well as the adults around them, and are better able to deal with their feelings and emotions resulting from their traumatic experiences of domestic violence and abuse.

We have already submitted examples of the evaluations received by children and young people in recent months.

### **7. What percentage of children that receive support are on the Child Protection Register?**

In the past year, 10 of the 48 referrals have been on the child protection register, making a total of 20%.

### **8. What age groups are supported by the organisation?**

The children's service offers a service to all children and young people within the ages of 5 to 17 inclusive. Very often a younger child might be referred to the service, and we would consider this on the basis of the referral and may do an assessment, but very often children aged 4 and under are not of the capacity to undertake the therapeutic work offered. We can see a pattern where the majority of children that are referred in to the service are of primary school age, and these children are offered a one-to-one therapeutic service. The greater majority of older children receive preventative services through the delivery of the STAR programme, the Healthy Relationships programme and through the schools DEWIS and CRUCIAL CREW events, where all children within years 7 and 9 with the secondary school system are given support and information.

### **9. What is the Service's eligibility criteria?**

In terms of the receipt of referrals and the acceptance to the children's service, the criteria are very broad. The child needs to be within the age range of 5 to 18, and be resident or attending a school within the Arfon area of Gwynedd. Where preventative programmes are run, the service runs hand-in-hand with De Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Services to ensure that all schools within Gwynedd are offered the service. Children and young people being referred to the service

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will have a comprehensive initial assessment, completed by the child worker in post, in order to assess where the difficulties lie and to assess that our service is the correct and most appropriate service for them. Should referrals to other external agencies be required, such as to CAMHS, then this is done as a primary action.

As previously outlined, without the specialist services of our child support worker, a vast number of children and young people living in the Arfon area will remain suffering from significant emotional harm, and will not be afforded the support that they deserve at a basic level of humanity. Why would we leave innocent by-victims of the most abhorrent and invasive crimes without support?