

# A Voluntary Sector Perspective

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Gweithredu dros Blant



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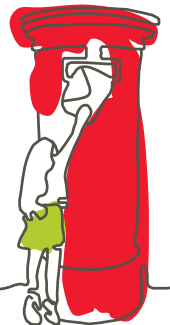
- Some of the challenges
- The key role of outcomes based accountability (provider perspective)
- Action for Children Outcomes Framework (general service delivery)
- Example of using outcomes based accountability (individual services)
- Commissioning for outcomes



# ACTION FOR CHILDREN – GWEITHREDU DROS BLANT



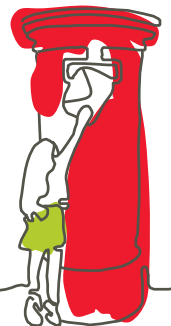
- Previously NCH Cymru
- Working in Wales for almost 100 years
- Working across Wales and across service areas
  - Family support
  - Residential care
  - Foster care
  - Services for disabled children and young people
  - Young Carers
  - CAMH services



# ALL – WALES CHILDREN'S VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS



- Working with other children's voluntary sector organisations:
  - Barnardo's
  - NSPCC
  - Save The Children
  - Tros Gynnal
- Unique overview
- Focus on the most vulnerable children and young people in Wales



## RECURRING THEMES/CHALLENGES

- Enduring gap between the most vulnerable and the wider population of children and young people
- Outcomes based focus and accountability not yet embedded
- Commissioning – reactive, not ‘intelligent’
- Engagement of children and young people and communities in commissioning is variable
- Voice/experience of voluntary sector in informing commissioning
- Early intervention
- Short termism



# POLICY FRAMEWORK

- Overall policy framework is basically sound
  - **Some Key Developments:**
    - Supporting Vulnerable Children and Families through a New Approach to Integrated Family Support Services
    - Development of the Commissioning Framework under the Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities Strategy
- Implementation has been variable
  - Not just local context
  - Vulnerable children making less progress across the board
  - Sharing of good practice still ‘patchy’
  - Capacity



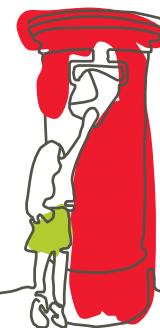
## SUSTAINED FOCUS

- The role of the Welsh Assembly Government in leading the system overall
- Particular need to sustain the vision and drive for reducing the gap between overall progress and that of the most vulnerable
- Focus on reducing child poverty in all policy and service delivery
  - recurring and critical factor in vulnerable children and young people achieving poorer outcomes



# OUTCOMES

- Performance systems need to focus on quality of life/outcomes rather than quality of processes
- Use data to identify gaps and trends-not just count
- Engagement of children and young people and parents/carers in policy development
- Early identification and intervention
- Personalised approach



## OUTCOMES – BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

- SSIA led work on Commissioning for Better Outcomes for Children in Need
- National programme planned to support inter-agency outcomes focused planning and commissioning
- OBA explicitly promotes the involvement of children and young people, families and the wider community in decision making re commissioning
- No single agency solely responsible for, nor capable of, improving outcomes
- Demonstrates the role of different contributions to overall improvement



# OUTCOMES BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

- Population Accountability
- Performance Accountability
- Focus on population accountability
  - central to commissioning services and monitoring performance
- More in-depth scrutiny of the progress of individual children and young people (performance accountability)



# PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

- Key performance measures which identify the service contribution to better outcomes
- Relationship between ‘quantity’ and ‘quality’ and ‘effort’ and ‘effect’
- Views of service users inform the ‘story’ behind the baseline
- Prioritises the demonstration of outcomes moving in the desired direction (‘turning the curve’) over short – term targets for ‘point to point’ improvement
- Quality of service and how well it is provided are the most important measures
- “How well are we doing?”  
“What proportion of users are better off?”

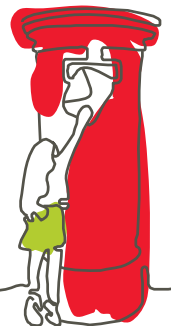


# ACTION for CHILDREN OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK



## WHY?

- Recognised the importance of outcomes focus
- Understand, analyse and demonstrate the difference for each child
- Robust evidence base derived from experience of individual service users
- Link effectively to the external context. The framework can report outcomes to commissioners and funders across the 4 nations of the U.K



## WHAT?

- Range of indicators for each service area
- Relevant indicators for each programme of intervention for each child
- Review
- Also looks at process of getting a service and the way it is delivered as well as the end result
- Need to focus on what happens when the professional interacts with the service user



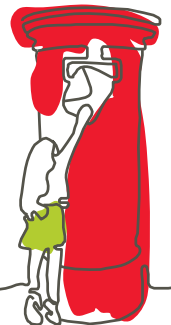
## BENEFITS

- Children and young people centred
- Rooted in individual outcomes – identifies changes for children, not the service
- Focuses planning, analysis and evaluation
- Consistent but flexible – can be aggregated in many ways
- Comparable data – improves capacity for organisational learning and building a knowledge base
- Motivational and engaging!
- “What difference are we making?”



# WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE INFORMATION?

- Help practitioners focus on the outcomes of their work, address shortfall, celebrate success
- Give feedback to children, young people and families
- Provide top line information about services
- Provide service specific information
- Inform business planning
- Inform future outcomes-focused commissioning



# PRACTICAL APPLICATION – INTENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT

## USERS

- 157 families in 6 local authorities who had been evicted or were at risk of homelessness due to anti-social behaviour
- Local communities experiencing ASB



## BASELINES

- 14% of families already evicted
- 77% at risk of homelessness and would be evicted without intensive support
- 38% of children at 'high' or 'medium' risk of entering care
- 79% of families with at least one vulnerable child
- 47% of families with a history of violence in the home
- 94% of families experiencing school problems with at least one child, particularly school attendance.



## ‘STORY’ BEHIND THE BASELINES

- A high level of complaints about serious anti-social behaviour in local neighbourhoods
- Most complaints were about young people making a nuisance of themselves, neighbour conflicts and disputes, damage to property, and noise which could usually be traced to a small number of families in each area with multiple problems
- The disruption caused by these families placed them at high or critical risk of eviction
- At the same time, the children and young people in those families risk exceptionally poor developmental and educational outcomes and long-term social exclusion
- All the families had already started down the route to eviction, from verbal and written warnings to formal eviction proceedings and homelessness



## DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Reduction in ASB by families
- More families able to remain in their own homes without threat of eviction as a result
- Better behaviour among children and young people in the families and improved school attendance.



## DELIVERY

- 3 models of intervention – some LA's using more than one
  - Supporting in existing tenancies
  - Supporting in a tenancy managed by Action for Children
  - Residential Unit



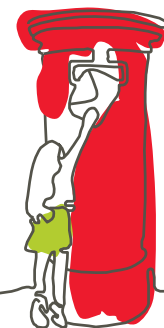
# OUTPUTS

- Number of families provided with intensive support
- Number of families provided with residential support



## PARTNERS

- Action for Children, Local Authority Intensive Family Support Teams, housing agencies, community safety groups, social services, police, schools, health services, Sheffield Hallam University



## ACTION NEEDED TO SUCCEED

- Specialist intensive support for the families with the greatest problems to help them to change their behaviour, involving a range of local agencies and flexible support
- Some residential provision for those with severe problems

## ACTION PLAN/STRATEGY

- Specialist teams established to support families, using a mix of disciplines and agencies, so they could draw on a range of resources to address childcare, health, education and parenting



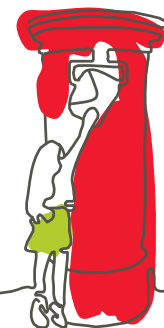
## QUANTITY/EFFORT

- 157 families received help from intensive family support teams, including 239 adults and 484 children.
- 11 families received residential support



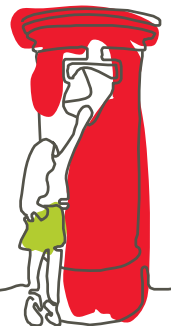
## QUALITY/EFFECT

- 85% of the families had no risk of losing their tenancy as anti-social behaviour had ceased or reduced significantly.
- 80% of the families were living in a stable tenancy without risk of homelessness
- Children's mental health was judged to have improved in 40% of families
- Children's school attendance improved significantly in 52% of families with attendance problem
- Children were no longer excluded from school in 50% of families where they had been before the intervention



# LEARNING POINTS TO INFORM FUTURE COMMISSIONING

- The involvement of relevant agencies is essential. Agencies need to be involved from the start and local people represented on the Steering Group. Keeping the commitment of all agencies is vital
- Joint training is helpful and so are multi-agency referral panels
- Project workers had to be very flexible, not bound by professional roles, and adapt to whatever needs arose
- Short-term funding inhibited the projects stability, such as continuity of employment for staff
- An external evaluation team was helpful in identifying baseline measures, and ways to monitor progress and maintain focus on outcomes



## OUTCOMES-FOCUSED COMMISSIONING

- Commissioning v procurement
- Commissioning – involving the service user and service deliverer in the design and delivery of services
- Allows innovation and service improvements to inform delivery (IFS example)
- Longer term outcomes for vulnerable children and young people rather than short-term results
- Clear focus on effecting change: ‘turning the curve’
- Which, after all, is the purpose of policy.



Thank you - Diolch

