

## Scottish Borders Council

### SECTION 1: Activities, WFWF Logic Model Outcomes, and Estimated Budget Allocated

#### Activity 1:

##### Question 1: Activity title and description: **The Scottish Borders Promise Team**

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund has enabled Scottish Borders to develop a Promise team to deliver the Promise locally. Initially, the team consisted of the Promise Lead Officer and the Promise Support Worker posts but was extended in June 2024 to include a full-time Promise Participation and Engagement Officer, a full-time Promise Quality & Improvement Officer and a part-time administrative post. The team works across all Children's Services in the Scottish Borders and works collaboratively to both strategically and operationally develop services and practice to deliver the Promise.

##### Question 2: a) Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to?

###### **Outcomes for Children and Families at the Centre of service design (Early)**

- Family support managers and practitioners develop engagement, feedback collection and co-design skills.
- CYPF are actively, regularly and meaningfully engaged in service design.
- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention).
- CYPF say that services are designed to be free of stigma; rights-led; and to meet their specific needs.

###### **Outcomes for Children and Families at the Centre of service design (Intermediate)**

- CYPF recognise available support is informed by them and feel their contributions influence service design.

###### **Outcomes for Leadership, Workforce, and Culture (Early)**

- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners (inc. 3rd Sector partners) are working more collaboratively and with adult services.
- Element 2 specific outcome: CSPPs demonstrate increased capacity and capability to do transformation work.

##### Question 2: b) For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing?

###### **Outcomes for Children and Families at the Centre of service design (Early)**

- Family support managers and practitioners develop engagement, feedback collection and co-design skills. Development of engagement, feedback collection and co-design is central to the Promise Team. In terms of participation and engagement with children and young people, the Champions' Board model, delivered both centrally in local high schools

continues to develop and be delivered across the Scottish Borders. This is a combination of both formal and informal participation and includes specific participation with Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Young People. The Youth Engagement Listen to Learn (YELL) Strategy (the Scottish Borders Participation and Engagement Strategy) was co-produced with young people and was launched at an event on 30th September 2024. This has been a significant piece of work and involved the direct participation and consultation with a large cross section of children and young people (embedded below).



YELL Strategy  
October 2024.pdf

- **CYPF are actively, regularly and meaningfully engaged in service design.**

See above. Young people are currently directly engaged in development of the Scottish Borders Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-28 and parents' views and experiences were used in the development of the Whole Family Support Service – see Activity 2.

Development of an Independent Advocacy Service has also involved the views of children, young people and their families. Consultation has also involved the 'quieter voices' with specific input from children and families involved with the Borders Additional Needs Group and the Champions Board. Scottish Borders Council also worked with CELCIS partnered with Coram Voice to bring the Bright Spots Programme, aims to ensure that the views and experiences of children are at the heart of decisions that are made about their lives, to the Scottish Borders. Bright Spots surveys were undertaken in mid-2024 - 'Your Life Your Care' (for children in care aged 4 – 17 years old) and the 'Your Life Beyond Care' surveys (for care leavers aged 16 – 25) and the findings were presented to the multi-agency workforce comprising the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership on 18th March 2025. The next step is to develop action plans to develop services in line with the views of care experienced children and young people.



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rders\_YLYC\_2023-24



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Borders\_Bright\_Spots.

- **Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention).**

The Promise team were involved in reviewing and reporting on the success of the Scottish Borders Council residential children's home and championing their approach to relationship-based practice. The subsequent report (embedded below) was discussed at both the Children and Young People's Planning partnership (CYPPP) and the Good Childhood Network group and it was agreed the approach should be presented more widely to enable transfer to other resources and services. This now sits as an action in the Good Childhood Network Action Plan 2025-26.



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Relationships Based R

- **CYPF say that services are designed to be free of stigma; rights-led; and to meet their specific needs.**

In February 2023 we published our Scottish Borders 'Reframing Our Language' guide. The Promise team has continued to raise awareness of the use of language and the reduction of stigma across agencies, with the most recent Each and Every Child reframing training taking place in October 2025. The team also work in partnership with Who Cares? Scotland to deliver local training on the Promise, the UNCRC and Corporate Parenting. Translation of these approaches, combined with approaches to participation mentioned above, to feedback

from children and their families that services are designed to be free of stigma; rights-led; and to meet their specific needs are not yet developed.

### **Outcomes for Children and Families at the Centre of service design (Intermediate)**

- *CYPF recognise available support is informed by them and feel their contributions influence service design.*

The embedding of the Champions Board and youth engagement participation models are beginning to evidence that young people feel that their support is informed by them and feel their contributions influence service design. This is however in the early stages and requires more development and evidence.

### **Outcomes for Leadership, Workforce, and Culture (Early)**

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners (inc. 3rd Sector partners) are working more collaboratively and with adult services.*

The Promise team works across agencies and organisations and the breadth of their workload and the type of developments they are involved in demonstrates collaborative work

- *Element 2 specific outcome: CSPPs demonstrate increased capacity and capability to do transformation work:*

Development of an independent advocacy service;

Implementation of the Transforming Psychological Trauma Knowledge and Skills Framework across agencies;

A GIRFEC refresh, development of multi-agency approaches to auditing (alongside the Child Protection Development Group and GIRFEC Group);

UNCRC implementation and monitoring;

Development of multi-agency auditing and quality improvement frameworks;

Embedding the new Promise monitoring framework, the mapping of participation work with children, young people, and families with quieter voices and/or who require additional support;

Development of Participation Forum/Network for practitioners and facilitators;

Organisation of Care Experienced Week; etc.

**Question 3:** Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds): £208,630

### **Activity 2:**

#### **Question 1: Activity title and description: The Whole Family Support Team**

2024-25 saw the development of the Whole Family Support Service which is the largest recipient of Whole Family Wellbeing funding. It is a team of 11 staff which operates across the whole of the Scottish Borders and became operational in December 2024. It delivers early intervention services to families and children in need of support. Types of support include parenting support, housing support, support for education, income maximisation and employment. Development of the service has increased the capacity of early intervention services significantly and, although still relatively recently operational, showing positive outcomes.

**Question 2: a)** Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to?

### **Outcomes for Children and Families at the Centre of service design (Early)**

- Family support managers and practitioners develop engagement, feedback collection and co-design skills
- Family support managers and practitioners collate and analyse service design feedback.
- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention).
- More CYPF receive whole family support through referrals or self-referrals.

### **Outcomes for Availability and Access (Early)**

- Family support managers and practitioners start to redesign/design delivery of new Whole Family support services (as per local strategic plans), including removing barriers for CYPF to accessing support.
- CYPF are aware of how to access relevant Family support.
- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention). (See connection to outcome: CYPF say that services are designed to be free of stigma; rights-led; and to meet their specific needs).
- More CYPF receive whole family support through referrals or self-referrals.

### **Outcomes for Whole System Approach (Early)**

- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.
- CSPPs plan to shift towards non-siloed and aligned Family support funding that matches scale of need.

### **Outcomes for Leadership, Workforce, and Culture (Early)**

- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.
- CSPPs' plans related to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities.
- Family support managers and practitioners say that there is cross-sectoral commitment that enables them to collaborate to deliver Holistic Family support and that children's services culture empowers them to innovate to deliver Holistic Family support.

**Question 2: b)** For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing?

### **Outcomes for Children and Families at the Centre of service design (Early)**

The Whole Family Support Service only became operational in December 2024 and is still developing both its approach to supporting families and its outcome reporting. It was designed on the much smaller Intensive Family Support Service (funded by the City Regional Deal). The Intensive family Support Service had very positive outcomes for the families who engaged with them in terms of parenting support, income maximisation and employability.

- *Family support managers and practitioners develop engagement, feedback collection and co-design skills.*

Engagement, feedback collection and co-design was a key aspect of the Whole Family Support Team's development. It was based on co-production and participation of families

who were supported by the Intensive Family Support Team. The most recent monitoring report from that service is embedded which evidences feedback (below):



SBC Quarterly  
Progress Report 2024

- *Family support managers and practitioners collate and analyse service design feedback.*

This was done throughout the existence of the Intensive Family Support Service. This will continue with the Whole Family Support Service, but a formal monitoring report has yet to be produced (see fourth bullet point).

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention).*

Development of the Whole Family Support Service was based on outcomes from its predecessor, the Intensive Family Support Service and feedback from those who used the service. Agreement to develop the new service was agreed by the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership who recognised the need to develop holistic early intervention services for families in the Scottish Borders. It is a council run service and sits within the Resilient Communities department. It operates at Stage 3 of the Keeping Children and Young People Safe and Well Tool and can be referred to by any service and takes self-referrals.

- *More CYPF receive whole family support through referrals or self-referrals.*

Although the Whole Family Support Service is yet to formally report on its outcomes since it became operational in December 2025, interim data of engagement has been collated (embedded below).

- The service has allocated 71 families
- 38 referrals have been signposted to other, more appropriate services
- The service has worked in partnership with 40m other agencies
- There are 86 referrals on the service's waiting list



WFS Stats 0525.docx

### **Outcomes for Availability and Access (Early)**

- *Family support managers and practitioners start to redesign/design delivery of new Whole Family support services (as per local strategic plans), including removing barriers for CYPF to accessing support.*

See report above. The Scottish Borders Council Whole Family Support Service was modelled on a successful Intensive family Support Service and examples of best practice from across Scotland. In order to remove barrier to children, young people and families accessing the service, the referral criteria is broad, essentially those who would benefit from additional support, and referral can be made by any stakeholder organisations or self-referral.

- *CYPF are aware of how to access relevant Family support.*

The service regularly attends community engagement events and drop leaflets (specifically for parents) to enable self-referrals. Posters have also been circulated. The leaflet has been

designed to be user friendly, and the service have spoken directly to parents at Parents Evenings, and Early Years Centre drop-ins, etc.

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention). (See connection to outcome: CYPF say that services are designed to be free of stigma; rights-led; and to meet their specific needs).*

The development of the Whole Family Support Service was designed to provide early intervention and meet holistic needs of families. As evidenced in the data provided in the WFS Stats 0525 document above, signposting and liaison with other services is a key component in the support offered, enabling provision of a broad range of specialist support, as well as more generic family support. The support offered is voluntary and led by the families themselves, rather than prescribed by referring professionals. It is hoped that further qualitative information on the person centred, rights-led approach will be expanded on and evidenced as the service progresses.

- *More CYPF receive whole family support through referrals or self-referrals.*

The data in the WFS Stats 0525 document above evidences the increase on whole family support.

### **Outcomes for Whole System Approach (Early)**

- *CSPPs plan to shift towards non-siloed and aligned Family support funding that matches scale of need.*

Development of the Whole family Support Service and other initiatives, such as commissioning of a new Independent Advocacy Service in the Scottish Borders evidence a shift towards non-siloed and aligned Family support funding. This is an area of on-going development.

### **Outcomes for Leadership, Workforce, and Culture (Early)**

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.*

Development of the Whole Family Support Service was based on models of best practice developed in other local authorities (see pages 4 & 5 of the attached Whole Family Wellbeing Fund / Commissioning Paper). Proposals for the development of the service were presented, supported and agreed by the multi-agency Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP).



Whole Family  
Wellbeing Fund Final

- *CSPPs' plans related to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities.*

See above.

- Family support managers and practitioners say that there is cross-sectoral commitment that enables them to collaborate to deliver Holistic Family support and that children's services culture empowers them to innovate to deliver Holistic Family support. See above. This is further evidenced by the increased collaboration between relevant support services which enhance holistic support – Housing, Education Social Work, Welfare benefits, Employability services, etc.

**Question 3:** Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds): £136,073

### Activity 3:

**Question 1:** Activity title and description: **Engagement with Children and Families**

**This activity is reported on in Activity 1 - The Scottish Borders Promise Team**

**Question 2: a)** Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to?

See Activity 1

**Question 2: b)** For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing?

See Activity 1

**Question 3:** Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds): N/A

### Activity 4:

**Question 1:** Activity title and description: **Family Group Decision Making**

The WFWF has been used to fund Children 1st delivery of a Family Group Decision Making service. Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) has at its core, the belief that families are the best places for children to grow up. With FGDM the family is empowered to create a plan for the child during a Family Group Meeting and then takes ownership of this. It is a strengths-based approach that seeks to involve children in a way that is appropriate to them but that seeks to ensure the child's views are listened to and inform the plan's made by families. Over 2024-25 (April to December 2024, quarter 4 monitoring report is not yet available), the service worked with 81 families and provided direct support to 36 in creating family support plans. Of the challenges and issues presented to the service over this period, the 5 most prevalent were:

- Family relationships
- Domestic abuse and coercion
- Parental health and wellbeing
- Poverty / money worries
- Child emotional wellbeing

The following information is from the Borders Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Service monitoring reports (April to December 2024) and reflects activity over that time period.



Children First FGDM  
Q3 October to Decem



Family Group  
Decision Making Repc

**Question 2: a)** Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to?

#### **Outcomes for Availability and Access (Early)**

- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention).

- CYPF say family support is accessible and provides early help and support where and when it suits them.

### **Outcomes for Availability and Access (Intermediate)**

- CYPF needs are met by the right service for their needs (spectrum between universal and targeted, intensive services).
- CYPF individual outcomes improve (e.g. confidence; social capital/connections; attendance at school; parental financial literacy).

### **Outcomes for Whole System Approach (Early)**

- Family support managers collect and analyse CYPF feedback and monitoring data.
- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.
- CSPPs' plans related to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities.

### **Outcomes for Leadership, Workforce, and Culture (Early)**

- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.
- CSPPs' plans related to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities.
- Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners (inc. 3rd Sector) and SG have clear & shared understanding of families' needs and how services are experienced across whole system.

b) For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing?

### **Outcomes for Availability and Access (Early)**

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners begin embedding national principles for holistic whole family support in their own systems and services (focus on prevention + early intervention).*

Since its funding through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, the Scottish Borders Children 1<sup>st</sup> FGDM service has worked with 81 families and provided direct support to 36 in creating family support plans. It has received referrals from across all teams in the Children and Families Social Work service and is embedded in practice. It is also an expectation of that all cases where there is a potential of family breakdown are referred for FGSDM support.

- *CYPF say family support is accessible and provides early help and support where and when it suits them.*

Monitoring reports include direct participation of children, young people and their families. An example of direct feedback is "I feel like I can be totally honest with you - even about the really hard stuff and it feels ok to share, and it feels safe."

### **Outcomes for Availability and Access (Intermediate)**

- *CYPF needs are met by the right service for their needs (spectrum between universal and targeted, intensive services).*

The Children 1<sup>st</sup> FGDM service is embedded as part of the continuum of support. Referral is by Children and Families Social Work only. It operates at Stage 3 of the Keeping Children and Young People Safe and Well Tool.



- *CYPF individual outcomes improve (e.g. confidence; social capital/connections; attendance at school; parental financial literacy).*

See monitoring reports (Question 1).

### **Outcomes for Whole System Approach (Early)**

- *Family support managers collect and analyse CYPF feedback and monitoring data.*

Feedback and monitoring data is discussed at the Children and Families Social Work Leaders Meeting and included in the Children and Families Social Work six monthly Quality Assurance Report.

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.*
- *CSPPs' plans related to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities.*

Use of the WFWF to fund the Family Group Decision Making service was agreed by the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership. It sits within the Whole Family Support priority of the Scottish Borders Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023-26.

### **Outcomes for Leadership, Workforce, and Culture (Early)**

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners use new knowledge of good practice.*

As above.

- *CSPPs' plans related to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities.*

The Scottish Borders Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023-26 and the associated Network Groups plans relate to holistic family support align with evidence of CYPF & local need (local and national data), and national priorities. The overarching policy umbrella for the Plan, CYPPP and the Network groups is The Promise.



Children\_and\_Young  
\_People\_s\_Services\_Pl

- *Strategic leaders, Family support managers and practitioners (inc. 3rd Sector) and SG have clear & shared understanding of families' needs and how services are experienced across whole system*

In addition to the governance structures and meetings within the Scottish Borders (CPP, CYPPP, Network groups, etc.), multi-agency events and workshops are held regularly to inform the direction of practice. The most recent event was focused on the finding of the Bright Spots Survey (CELCIS supported survey of looked after and care experienced children and young people) and the Promise Plan 2024-30. This took place on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Question 3:** Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds): £121,576

### Activity 5:

Question 1: Activity title and description: **Additional provision 2024-25 – TD1 Diversionary Programme and Holiday Provision**

**Additional provision was provided from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund over 2024-25:**

#### **TD1 Diversionary Provision –**

TD1 Youth Hub received £36,512 in a grant from the Scottish Borders Council Whole Family Well-Being Fund in July 2024. This was to develop some pilot work which had been undertaken in 2023-24 as a result of Corra Foundation National Drugs Mission targeting young people from the Eildon West area involved in or at risk of substance use.

The funding from WFWB allowed TD1 to undertake a preventative and early intervention approach to working with young people (aged 11-15) which broadly came under 3 approaches:

- 1 to 1 Support
- Diversionary Activities
- Partnership Work

These approaches were designed to positively impact on young people who were displaying signs of being involved in negative behaviours which would impact their futures. A brief report on the project is attached below.



TD1 WFWB Report  
2025.docx

#### **Holiday Provision –**

Third sector organisations were allocated funding from Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP) for vulnerable children and young people (aged 5-26) to access activities, childcare and food during the Easter and summer holiday periods.

The funded programmes were informed by the following 4 Scotland's Youth Work Outcomes: Outcome 1: Young people build their health and wellbeing; Outcome 2: Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams; Outcome 3: Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking; and Outcome 4: Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change.

All funded groups were required to support young people aged 5 to 26. The specific criteria identified included: Children from low-income households; Children from those priority family groups identified in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan; Care experienced children and young people; Young carers; Children in need of protection; Children supported by a child's plan; and Children who have undergone significant transitions including starting in ELC, starting primary school, moving to secondary school and leaving school.

**Question 2: a)** Which WFWF Logic Model outcome(s) does this activity contribute to?

**Question 2: b)** For each outcome above, what specific qualitative or quantitative evidence from this financial year (2024-2025) shows how these outcomes are progressing?

**Question 3:** Estimate of WFWF funding spent on this activity in this financial year (in pounds):

TD1 Diversionary Programme £36,512

Easter holiday programme £49,987

Summer holiday programme £77,842

## SECTION 2: Progress Narrative for your overall WFWF plans

### Question 4:

Please consider the key recommendations from the [Year 2 Evaluation report](#) that are most relevant for your area. These include the topics of planning for sustainability of the activity beyond WFWF; developing a whole systems approach; outcomes related to leadership, workforce and culture; providing feedback on children, young people and families (CYPF) involvement in design; and data and evidence (see pages 78-86 of the full report). From your activities in Section 1, please provide any specific examples of how they are responding to these issues (or planning to do so during Year 4), this does not need to be comprehensive but focused on the most important recommendations.

#### • Planning for sustainability of the activity beyond WFWF

Delivering the Promise and the actions contained within the Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023-26 are explicit. Aspects of on-going sustainability and funding of the activity are already confirmed (such as Independent Advocacy Service funding confirmed for 3 years and the permanent additions to staff establishment in the Out of Authority Project (see Question 5), however the sustainability of services directly funded by the WFWF are yet to be determined. This is an area of considerable challenge given the current financial climate and limitations within Scottish local government.

#### • Developing a whole systems approach; outcomes related to leadership, workforce and culture

There is an increasing commitment across the partnership to a focus on prevention and early intervention. This has been led by the CYPPP in both funding the Whole Family Support Service (using the WFWF) and the commitment to developing a service delivery model across multi agency landscapes that includes consideration of specialist education service delivery, family support service models, tailored support programmes and localisation of teams and services to be responsive and adaptive to meet needs (see question 5). Services being available locally, particularly in term of the rurality of Scottish Borders is a key consideration and, in single teams which operate across the region, delivery methods are being explored to enable early help and support where and when it suits those who need it.

Increasingly strategic leads, service managers and the third sector are working collaboratively. The governance structure of the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP) includes 4 multi-agency Network Groups (see question 6) whose purpose is to deliver the Promise and the Children's Services Plan operationally and make recommendations for strategic development. This is showing signs of success, with consensus over the use of the WFWF, the commissioning of an Independent Advocacy Service and, links with adult services in the Coming Home Project and transitions work. There is however still work to be done on integrated budgeting.

**• Providing feedback on children, young people and families (CYPF) involvement in design; and data and evidence (see pages 78-86 of the full report)**

The creation of a specific Promise Team within the Scottish Borders has greatly enhanced the partnership's ability to provide feedback on children, young people and families (CYPF) involvement in design; and data and evidence. We are currently only in the early stages of this work; however, agreement is about to be reached in establishing a partnership data set for children's services. Partnership and coproduction have been evidenced in the development of the Youth Engagement Strategy, the Service Specification for the Independent Advocacy Service, and the development of the Whole Family Support Service. These approaches have built the foundation for further embedding of engagement, participation and coproduction with children, young people and their families which will be increasingly evident in all service design and delivery. Evidence is attached in other documentation embedded in this report.

**Question 5:**

Based on your evidence provided in Section 1, please describe how the activities of the WFWF Programme overall are supporting services to shift towards (1) more preventative interventions and (2) early interventions.

Scottish Borders are developing services towards more preventative and early intervention services. The development of the Whole Family Wellbeing Service has vastly increased capacity and resource to work with families in need of additional support at an early intervention stage. The service was located in Resilient Communities to avoid it being perceived as statutory by those receiving support. Additionally, as part of the broader work of the CYPPP and Scottish Borders Council, there is a project to improve local services and reduce the number of looked after children and young people being placed outwith the Scottish Borders. The three key areas of the project are:

1. Early intervention and prevention – stopping the young people requiring Social Work services.
2. Crisis intervention / rapid response type models.
3. How do we bring young people in residential care back to the Borders area?

Following extensive work across the Children's Services partnership, a report (with recommendations) on Phase 1 of the Out of Authority Project was submitted to Scottish Borders Council on 24th October 2024. The report and recommendations were accepted and the Council agreed over £2,000,000 additional investment across Education and Children's Services.

In summary, the additional resource agreed was:

- Duty: 1 x team leader, 2 x social worker and 6 x Support Workers – to improve Children and Families Social Work intake responses to families and professionals.
- 1.5 x management/SW (to be determined), 3 x Support Workers; continuation of 4 hours financial inclusion support to develop a new Kinship Care Team.
- Aberlour Options extension from a 3-bed/5-day provision to a 4-bed/7-day provision – improve early intervention and short breaks support for children with disabilities.
- Aberlour 'Sustain Edge of Care' Service extension for a service for those aged 5-18 to provision to include pre-birth-4 years

- Educational Psychologists: 1.4FTE
- £900k for cluster “change fund” – a service delivery model across multi agency landscapes that includes consideration of specialist education service delivery, family support service models, tailored support programmes and localisation of teams and services to be responsive and adaptive to meet needs.

Phase 2 of the Out of Authority Project has now started, and it includes workstreams looking at early intervention, service delivery models, staff and volunteering models, etc. aimed at keeping children with their families and in the Scottish Borders.



OOA placement  
recommendations ref:



Out Of Authority  
Strategy Scottish Borc

**Question 6:** Describe the main successes to delivery and how specific factors enabled these successes.

The early and sustained focus on improving participation and co-production with children and young people has been a key driver for success. It has challenged the status quo and driven culture change across the partnership. Through development initially of the Champions Board, followed by school-based Champions Boards to broaden accessibility, then a focus on implementing the UNCRC and coproduction of the Youth Engagement Listen to Learn (YELL) Strategy, there has been an increasing understanding at both a strategic and operational level of the benefits of involving those who use services in the development of those services. These approaches have involved staff from across the partnership – Health, Education, Social Work, the Third Sector and Elected Members and are increasingly being regarded as the ‘normal’ way of doing things. Although it has already taken place in specific circumstances, the next phase of this work is to replicate the approach with children and young people with their families. This area of work has been the foundation to success.

The CYP PPP governance structure has also been a positive force in successes with multi-agency engagement at a strategic and operational level which has in turn, led to tangible service improvement. Aligning the Network groups – A Good Childhood, Whole Family Support, Supporting the Workforce and Planning and Building Capacity has enabled a broad partnership approach to service improvement and delivery across a wide range of children’s service areas, all underpinned by the Foundations of the Promise.

Both of these areas are evidenced in documents embedded in this report.

**Question 7:** Describe the main challenges to delivery, and how these have been mitigated or plans to mitigate them.

For the full development of the Promise team, the time required for the setting up of new posts and recruitment was underestimated, however the team is now firmly embedded in the development and delivery of improved children’s services in the Scottish Borders. The team’s role across the service landscape is enabling more effective understanding of the overlapping policy initiatives and their potential effect on outcomes.

Similarly, the Whole Family Support Service’s development period was longer than expected. Although built on an existing service and on the experiences of those who used the service, it still took longer than anticipated to become fully operational. It has yet to evidence the benefits of a shift from crisis intervention to preventative and early intervention,

but the focus of the team, combined with other initiatives, should start to become evident over time. There is considerable staff investment and ownership in the move towards greater preventative and early intervention services.

The risks and greatest challenge to on-going improvement remains sustained financial resourcing of new services to sustain the move towards co-produced, preventative and early intervention services. This risk is significant. The WFWF has enabled investment and medium-term sustainability of new services and approaches but continuing this investment once WFWF funding ends is very challenging in the current financial climate.

**Question 8:** Please give details of your spend for 24/25 and your expected spend in the following financial years:

FY 24/25: £643,466

FY 25/26: £947,128

FY 26/27: £778,000

FY 27/28: £778,000

**Additional:** Any other comments, innovative work, relevant learning, or unexpected changes identified during this year? No further comments