



Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 21 March 2012
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

Members are asked to consider whether they have personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they are.

Members are reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 10)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January, 2012.

3. ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH CHECK PRESENTATION

Tracey Coffey, Strategic Service Manager, Children and Families, Children and Young People's Department, will give a presentation to the Committee.

4. CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 11 - 16)

5. **SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION UPDATE REPORT (Pages 17 - 38)**
6. **COUNCIL MOTION ON ADOPTION - BEING THE BEST CORPORATE PARENTS (Pages 39 - 44)**
7. **CHILDMINDER PROVISION ON WIRRAL (Pages 45 - 50)**
8. **WIRRAL SUPPORT FOR THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION (LCR) APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY (Pages 51 - 60)**
9. **2011/12 THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL REVIEW (Pages 61 - 74)**
10. **APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000 (Pages 75 - 78)**

11. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Report to follow.

12. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period March to June 2012 has now been published on the Council's intranet/website and Members are invited to review the Plan prior to the meeting in order for the Committee to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

13. **0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Following the recent changes in the Chair and membership of the Committee, the Committee is requested to confirm the membership of the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee as follows:

Councillors Ann McLachlan (Chair), Paul Hayes and Pat Williams together with the diocesan and parent governor representatives and the remaining Committee members serving as deputies.

14. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 26 January 2012

Present: Councillor S Clarke (Chair)

Councillors W Clements B Mooney
J Crabtree C Povall
D Dodd W Smith
P Hayes P Williams

Deputy: Councillor C Jones (in place of T Smith)

Co-opted: Mrs N Smith Mrs J Owens

Apologies Mr A Scott

44 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

Members were asked to consider whether they had a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare it and to state the nature of such interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with the item to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor Povall declared a personal interest in the item, 'Transition of Pupils from the Sanderling Unit to the Resource Base, University Academy, Birkenhead' by virtue of her daughter's employment (see minute 48 post).

45 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 November, 2011.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of 16 November, 2011 be approved as a correct record.

46 YOUTH PARLIAMENT PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2012

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report which outlined proposed arrangements, together with a timeline, for planning the next Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament. Both events were held on the Tuesday of Local Democracy Week, last year this was the 11th October. This year the date had not been confirmed but the 9th and 16th October were possible dates. The aim of both

events was to provide young people with an opportunity to influence council decisions by presenting the views of young people.

Responding to comments from Members, Maureen McDaid, Principal Manager (Commissioning / Participation) informed the Committee that youngsters taking part this year would be better prepared. There would be a paper outlining roles and responsibilities for all parties involved and a progress report would be brought to the Committee meeting in June.

Resolved – That a progress report be brought to the June meeting of this Committee.

47 **EARLY INTERVENTION GRANT SECOND QUARTER MONITORING REPORT**

The Chair introduced Tony Gallagher, Her Majesty's Inspector, and national adviser for Ofsted on youth support, who addressed the Committee on the Early Intervention Grant and commissioning of services. He suggested that getting the technical aspects of the commissioning process right was less important than getting the relationships right with service providers. There was a need to have a proper and real plan to involve and develop relationships with the community, voluntary and faith sector. Although it might be easy to associate commissioning with saving money but done well there was a need to think about achieving high standards.

Responding to comments from Members Tony Gallagher stated that he didn't see any difficulty in officers of the Council chairing commissioning groups as long as it was done well and in an inclusive manner. In respect of monitoring this had to be intelligent and informed and not about catching people out.

Maureen McDaid, Principal Manager (Commissioning / Participation), then introduced the Acting Director of Children's Services' report on the second quarter's performance of Early Intervention Grant commissioned services. After contracts were awarded, performance measures to underpin service delivery were agreed with each of the service providers. The Priority areas for which services were commissioned were:

- PA1 – Parenting/Compromised Parenting
- PA1 – Short Breaks for Disabled Children
- PA3 – Risk taking Behaviour in Children and Young People

Delivery against the performance measures had been RAG rated, Red, Amber or Green. A Red rating denoted underperformance; Amber reflected work in progress broadly in line with expectations and Green was meeting or exceeding expectations. Red and Amber ratings were followed up by commissioners in one to one discussions at which corrective actions were identified to improve performance.

Maureen McDaid and the Acting Director, responding to comments from Members, informed the Committee that commissioned providers could sub-contract services but they did inform the department of their intention to do this. The work was targeted with measured outcomes and these outcomes would be reported back to the Committee to see which services the Department would go forward with. Costs for each service area could be brought back to the Committee and the Chair suggested that this could be heard as an exempt item when the figures were evaluated.

In those cases where a contract had failed to deliver, the contract would be reduced accordingly and other options would be explored for delivery.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

48 **TRANSITION OF PUPILS FROM THE SANDERLING UNIT TO THE RESOURCE BASE, UNIVERSITY ACADEMY, BIRKENHEAD**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report on the progress of pupils who previously attended the Sanderling Unit at Rock Ferry High School and, upon the closure of Rock Ferry High, had transferred to a newly commissioned resource base at the University Academy of Birkenhead.

Not all the students who were attending the Sanderling Unit had transferred to the Academy and the reasons for this were detailed in the report. However, the majority of students who transferred to the new provision had done so successfully with only two requiring additional support from the Educational Psychology Service. The students had responded well to the new challenges they had faced and the new opportunities they were afforded and they and their families were to be applauded on how well they had responded to what was potentially a very difficult change process.

Lindsay Weeks from the University Academy of Birkenhead gave a presentation to the Committee on the resource base and along with Graham Mount, Strategic Development Manager, in the Children's and Young People's Department, responded to questions from the Committee. There were currently 35 pupils at the Resource Base, and a mechanism was in place to recoup funding or make adjustments for under provision of the 40 places which had been purchased. Funding of place would be reviewed annually. A number of methods were being tried for engaging with parents.

Resolved – That the report be noted and this Committee extends its congratulations to the children and young people and families involved in the change and the teachers and other staff in the academy who have supported them through the process.

49 **CORPORATE PLAN**

In accordance with Council minutes 77 and 78 (12 December, 2011), the Committee considered those parts of the Corporate Plan within its remit. The Committee had also had sight of a motion which had been referred to all Overview and Scrutiny Committees by the Council at its meeting on 12 December, 2011 (minute 76 refers) and which was considered in connection with the Corporate Plan.

The Draft Corporate Plan and report of the Chief Executive which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 8 December were considered by the Committee and the Chair invited comments from the Committee.

Responding to comments from Members the Acting Director stated that a full draft of the Children and Young People's Departmental Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan for the Children's Trust Board was also being developed and the Corporate Plan was to a template which had been issued across the Council from the

Corporate Policy team. Referring to the section, 'Provide early intervention and support for vulnerable children and families', he said he had requested that the sentence, 'Ensuring every child is school ready', should read, 'Working towards ensuring....'

The Chair suggested that there needed to be a section after 'goals' showing measurable targets. One of the strengths of the Corporate Plan was that Child Poverty had its own section to highlight the importance of addressing this issue.

Members made the following comments on the Corporate Plan:

- There needed to be references to foster care and adoption.
- There was no reference to deprivation.
- There was a need to know how things would be measured.
- No reference to further education or higher education.
- There was a vague reference to Sure Start but no mention of enhancement as there had been in the previous year.

It was then moved by Councillor Hayes, seconded by Councillor Povall that –

"This Committee believes that the draft Corporate Plan contains many well meaning sentiments but few tangible targets by which the people of Wirral can scrutinise the progress of their council."

It was then moved as an amendment by Councillor Dodd, seconded by Councillor W Smith that –

"Cabinet be asked to provide and identify some measurable targets within the Corporate Plan."

Councillor Hayes agreed to accept this as a friendly amendment and it was –

Resolved (unanimously) – This Committee believes that the draft Corporate Plan contains many well meaning sentiments but few tangible targets by which the people of Wirral can scrutinise the progress of their council. Cabinet be asked to provide and identify some measurable targets within the Corporate Plan.

50 REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL - EARLY INTERVENTION GRANT

The Committee considered a referral from Council, which on 12 December, 2011, had considered the following objection to the Cabinet minute 216 (8 December, 2011) – Budget Projections 2012-15,

'(1) That the decision to cut £1m from the Early Intervention Grant be referred to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.'

The Acting Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that he, along with his other Chief Officer colleagues, was reminded on a daily basis that he had a statutory duty to balance the budget. Good progress was being made on this year's budget to bring the projected overspend down. He assured the Committee that the services provided under the Early Intervention Grant budget of £17.9m could be

provided for £16.9m and going forward into 2012/13 the same services could be provided for this amount.

The Chair suggested that the £1m could be used to increase the staffing in the Children's Centres and that to cut it was depriving the Centres of the opportunity to grow. By restoring the £1m and investing it in services for young people would help in tackling child poverty.

Other Members referred to the position of the Council, which along with every other Council in the country had seen its grant cut by central government. There was a need to be responsible to the residents of Wirral and realistic in the budget setting process.

Responding to the Committee, the Acting Director stated that vacancies were filled across Children's Centres as they arose and there were no restrictions on the filling of these vacancies nor were there for Children's Social Workers and family workers. There were no proposals to alter service delivery as the same service could be provided with these resources.

It was moved by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Mrs P M Williams, that –

“This Committee endorses the widely held view that early intervention works and praises the work of our Sure Start Children's Centres and the many other projects which are funded by the Early Intervention Grant and do so much for Wirral's families and young people.

Therefore this committee records its concern at the proposal to remove £1 million from the Early Intervention Grant. We are unconvinced that the removal of £1 million from this grant will not have a detrimental impact on those families who are reliant on the services which this grant funds and on the life chances of the children who benefit from these services. We ask Cabinet to think again.”

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Dodd and seconded by Councillor W Smith, that –

“This Committee endorses the widely held view that early intervention works and praises the work of our Sure Start Children's Centres and the many other projects which are funded by the Early Intervention Grant and do so much for Wirral's families and young people.

Therefore Committee notes and appreciates the Acting Director of Children's Services assurances and assures him that he will be held to account over the coming year.”

The amendment was put and not carried (5:5).

The motion was put and carried (6:5) (on the Chair's casting vote).

Resolved (6:5) (on the Chair's casting vote) –

This Committee endorses the widely held view that early intervention works and praises the work of our Sure Start Children's Centres and the many other projects which are funded by the Early Intervention Grant and do so much for Wirral's families and young people.

Therefore, this Committee records its concern at the proposal to remove £1 million from the Early Intervention Grant. We are unconvinced that the removal of £1 million from this grant will not have a detrimental impact on those families who are reliant on the services which this grant funds and on the life chances of the children who benefit from these services. We ask Cabinet to think again.

It was further moved by Councillor Hayes and seconded by Councillor Povall and –

Resolved – That this Committee continues to scrutinise the Acting Director of Children's Services over the coming year.

51 **WIRRAL LIFELONG AND FAMILY LEARNING SERVICE**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an update on the work of Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service.

The service provided adult and family learning activity for learners age 19+, in line with the requirements of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), who provided the grant which fully funded this work. The Lifelong and Family Learning Service supported the Council's Corporate priorities by providing opportunities for adults to learn and develop their skills. The report highlighted the success of the service and potential government changes to the funding and planning of adult community learning.

Responding to comments from Members, the Acting Director informed the Committee that the department was working with Irish Community Care in respect of the travelling community to try and engage with them. Some case studies could be made available to Members.

Resolved - That Committee notes the work of the Lifelong and Family Learning Service and the Strategic Development Plan and ask for an update of any future changes following Department for Business, Innovation and Skills' announcements.

52 **OAKLANDS**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an update on the work of The Oaklands Centre. The Centre provided outdoor education for children, young people and adults. The Oaklands Centre supported the Council's Corporate priorities by providing opportunities for children, young people and adults to learn and develop their skills. The report highlighted the success of the centre and future planned developments for the service.

Resolved – That Committee notes the work of the Oaklands Centre and planned future developments and accords its thanks to the staff at the centre.

53 **THE '100 CLUB' PROJECT**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided information on the running and outcomes of Wirral's '100 Club' project, the aim of which was to narrow the attainment gap at key stage 4 between pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) and pupils not eligible for free school meals (non-FSM). A further aim was to determine the most effective strategies for this purpose.

The project, if successful, would support Wirral's corporate priorities in that it would support schools to improve educational provision for pupils eligible for free school meals, thereby ensuring that more were in a position to take fuller advantage of post-16 opportunities.

In response to comments from Members the Acting Director commented that decisions on funding were made on a pupil by pupil basis rather than a school basis and pupils in academies would be part funded as part of the project.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

54 **SICKNESS ABSENCE TRENDS IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an analysis of the levels of staff absence in the Children and Young People's Department (CYPD) over a 12 month period and identified trends in levels and type of sickness absence in comparison to the Council average.

The Chair commented that she would have liked to have seen some more in depth analysis of the figures as particular concern had been expressed at the Foster Panel with regard to sickness levels in social care. The Acting Director acknowledged that there were pockets of exceptional sickness absence and the nature of the job in Children's Social care could be very stressful.

Resolved – That the Committee receives a report to a future meeting specifically on sickness absence in the Children's Social Care section.

55 **APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000**

The Acting Director of Children's Services reported, in accordance with the Contracts Procedure Rules, on those instances where he had exercised his delegated authority to accept tenders and to appoint contractors. The contracts were in respect of a range of services, including:

- Capital contracts
- Children's Residential Care Placements

Resolved – That the report be noted.

56 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received an update on its work programme including the reports to be scheduled for the March meeting.

The Chair referred to Notice of Motion, 'Adoption – Being the Best Corporate Parents' which had been approved by Council at its meeting on 12 December, 2012 (minute 79 refers) and which had requested the Acting Director to bring a report to the Committee on a number of related issues.

Resolved – That the Work Programme be agreed with the above addition.

57 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee had been invited to review the Forward Plan prior to the meeting in order for it to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

Resolved – That the forward plan be noted.

58 **0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee, held on 7 December, 2011, were submitted. The Sub-Committee had considered a number of issues, in particular the Ofsted reports relating to the following establishments:

Early Years and Children's Centres

Satisfactory

Cloughton Children's Centre
New Brighton Children's Centre

Good

Ganneys Meadow Children's Centre

Primary Schools

Satisfactory

Fender Primary School

Good

Mount Primary School
West Kirby Primary School
St Peter's Catholic Primary School
Riverside Primary School
Manor Primary School

Outstanding

Liscard Primary School
St George's Primary School

Gayton Primary School

Secondary Schools

Satisfactory

Hilbre High School
Wallasey School

Special School

Good

Wirral Hospitals School and Home Education Service Community Base

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21ST MARCH 2012

SUBJECT:	CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR SHEILA CLARKE
KEY DECISION:	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The local authority has a statutory duty to work with partners to develop a Wirral Child Poverty Strategy as set out in the Child Poverty Act 2010.
- 1.2 This report sets out a further progress report on the work that has been undertaken to develop a Wirral child poverty strategy and action plan in partnership with local organisations and agencies, including the voluntary, community and faith sector. As set out in the previous report to the Committee, the local authority established a local advisory group to review the evidence and make recommendations to the Council and its partners about local action to tackle child poverty. Representation on this group (the Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group) is drawn from the voluntary, community and faith, housing, health, and education, employment and skills sectors. It is chaired by a representative from the voluntary, community and faith sector. It has Elected Member representatives from all parties.
- 1.3 The discussions of the Working Group have informed the development of a draft 'Roots and Wings' strategy which was considered at the last meeting of the Committee. Central to these discussions have been the need for all partners to work with each other to add value to existing provision and the need to utilise the positive assets of local communities in raising the aspirations of children and families.

2.0 PROGRESS REPORT

- 2.1 On the 13th October 2011, Cabinet considered a report relating to the draft Wirral Child Poverty Strategy and action plan and:

- Authorised the Chief Executive to undertake further consultation on the draft strategy and prepare a final version for approval and adoption by the Council and partners;
- Authorised the Chief Executive (and any other officer nominated by him) to undertake any other steps and action incidental and conducive to finalising the strategy and progressing the action plan, including working with relevant partners and stakeholders as considered necessary and appropriate;
- Agreed that the Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group should continue to meet to oversee the further development of the strategy.

2.2 Further consultation has been undertaken via the Local Strategic Partnership's Executive Board and the Children's Trust and will continue to be undertaken with a number of other key forums through attendance at partnership meetings. Consultation to further develop the action plan is being undertaken through a core officer group working with departments and partner organisations.

2.3 A number of other steps are underway in addition to the further consultation outlined in 2.2 above. These are critical to producing a final version of the strategy and action plan:

- Work is also underway to develop a new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for 2012-13 overseen by the Children's Trust Executive. Through this process projects and activities are being developed related to the child poverty agenda. These key projects and activities will be included in the action plan.
- Performance management and governance arrangements for delivering the strategy and action plan are being developed, these will be linked to refreshed arrangements for the Local Strategic Partnership;
- An Equality Impact Assessment is being produced to ensure that equality implications are addressed as appropriate;
- The work to develop Wirral's strategy and action plan is closely aligned with the Liverpool City Region (LCR) child poverty and life chances strategy, which has now been launched and is available at www.liverpoolcitystrategyces.org.uk; Wirral is working with colleagues across the Liverpool City Region to deliver the actions identified in the recently launched Liverpool City Region strategy; these links will be reflected in the final strategy and action plan;
- The Council's budget for 2011-12 included £10,000 to support targeted engagement in respect of developing the strategy. A project has been commissioned and is underway to evaluate the impact of existing local initiatives and programmes on families in poverty with a particular focus on identifying what interventions have been most successful in supporting parents into sustainable employment. The outcomes of this evaluation will be circulated widely to all partners and used to inform the development of the action plan.

- The findings of the consultation to develop Neighbourhood Plans for Wirral's Area Forum areas which took place at the end of last year questions are being analysed with particular reference to ensuring that the plan includes actions relating to developing the role of communities and neighbourhoods in addressing issues of poverty and deprivation.
- 2.4 The final version of the strategy and action plan will be discussed by the Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group at its next meeting on the 21st March 2011 will subsequently be referred to Cabinet for further consideration. The Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group has agreed to continue meeting to oversee the implementation of the strategy and action plan once this is finalised and a revised terms of reference is being produced to reflect this ongoing role.
- 2.5 The Child and Family Poverty Working Group has requested that proposals are developed for the final strategy and action plan to be launched; this will provide an opportunity to engage those who have contributed to the development of the strategy and who are delivering services at the front-line to children and families across Wirral. It is proposed that a child poverty pledge is developed to coincide with the launch of the strategy and action plan. This will be part of a wider communications plan to ensure that local people and organisations are aware of the work that is happening and that successes are celebrated.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The development of a risk register for the child poverty and action plan will be included as part of performance management and governance arrangements. Failure to develop and implement a child poverty strategy and action plan will expose the Council to risk of challenge for failing to discharge a statutory duty.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 This report sets out the approach being undertaken to identify a wide range of options for action by the Council and its partners in relation to eliminating child poverty in Wirral.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The approach set out in this report has been developed to incorporate a targeted approach to consultation and engagement with local partners, families and communities about child poverty issues.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 The role of the voluntary, community and faith sector in tackling the complex problems faced by children and families living in poverty and in identifying those at risk is recognised through appropriate representation on the Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group. In addition, the group is chaired by a representative from the voluntary, community and faith sector. The sector

continues to be a key partner in developing and delivering Wirral's strategy and action plan.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 The activities described in this report are being progressed using existing staff resources from a number of departments.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The local authority has statutory duties in relation to the Child Poverty Act 2010, which will be progressed through the delivery of the activities set out in this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Child Poverty Strategy will have a clear focus on supporting those who are disadvantaged, including the delivery of specific services and through ensuring that all of Wirral's diverse communities are equally able to access services. The final strategy and action plan will have a full equalities impact assessment attached, the initial stage of which will inform consultation and engagement activities relating to the draft strategy.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report has no specific carbon reduction implications.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This report has no specific planning and community safety implications.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 It is recommended that

- Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the progress made to date.

13.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 At its meeting of 17th October 2011, Council requested that regular updates on progress in implementing the recommendations in the report to Cabinet are provided to the Children & Young People and Economy & Regeneration Scrutiny Committees.

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APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

<http://www.liverpoolcitystrategyces.org.uk/> for the Liverpool City Region Child Poverty and Life Chances Strategy

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
CABINET: CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN	14th April 2011
CABINET: CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT	13th October 2011
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT	16th November 2011

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

21ST MARCH 2012

SUBJECT:	SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION UPDATE REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the progress made up to the 29th February 2012 in relation to implementing the areas for development identified in the Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection which was undertaken by OFSTED between 24 January and 4 February 2011.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 OFSTED inspected two areas of service delivery in the January/ February 2011 Inspection; Safeguarding Services and Services for Looked after Children. The inspection report provided grades and areas for development for both service areas, there were no priority actions identified. There were seven 'Areas for Development'. An action plan was established in order to track progress against these areas for development and also additional actions extracted from the body of the OFSTED report, which support the continuous improvement journey in order to make the transition to outstanding, in all areas. The updated action plan is provided for information as an appendix to this report.
- 2.2 Safeguarding Services overall effectiveness was rated as good, and capacity for improvement was rated as good. Four safeguarding outcomes were rated as outstanding; the contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe, partnership working, leadership and management and ambition and prioritisation. All other areas were grades as good. In the Safeguarding part of the Inspection, there were three areas for development.

Within 3 months:-

- ensure the records of assessments include the risk and protective factors

Within 6 months:-

- keep under review the capacity of the current electronic recording arrangement to ensure it is fit for purpose
- ensure all records of assessments, plans and reviews reflect a focus on the child's views and wishes and the cultural and identity needs of children and their families.

- 2.3 The action to deliver the first area for development “ensure the records of assessments include the risk and protective factors”, action 13, was reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.4 The second area for development “keep under review the capacity of the current electronic recording arrangement to ensure it is fit for purpose” comprised four actions (actions 14 to 17). Three actions were reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee, actions 14, 15 and 17. The fourth action was to establish the post of ICS/ESCR Training / Project Manager, action 16, this has now been completed.
- 2.5 The third area for development “ensure all records of assessments, plans and reviews reflect a focus on the child’s views and wishes and the cultural and identity needs of children and their families” had six actions associated with it, actions 18 to 23. Action 19 was reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Of the remainder actions 20,21 and 22 concerned with devising, delivering and then reviewing the outcomes workshop sessions to explore practice in depth with Social Workers have been completed. In addition, action 23 to ‘review Audit tools/process in order to evidence changing practice’ has also been completed. One action, action 18, remains outstanding this was to ‘Update and revise all procedures’ and had been due for completion by 1st September 2011 and had a revised timescale put forward as the 31st October 2011. This action is proving lengthier to complete as those tasked with completing this work are also called upon to develop and revise new procedures as new regulations are brought into force. In particular the new standards for Fostering and Adoption have created additional work. In order to ensure that our procedures are maintained the department has contracted a provider, Tri-X, who will undertake this work in future. Tri-X is a leading national provider of Children and Adults policies and procedures, providing updated to these as new legislation and regulations come into force. Tri-X currently hosts Wirral LSCB policies and procedures and provides services to other authorities such as Liverpool, Knowsley, St Helens, Sefton, Blackburn with Darwen and regional groups including West Mercia, West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire. The transfer of our procedures to Tri-X is expected to be completed by the 31st July 2012.
- 2.6 Services for Looked after Children the inspectors rated the overall effectiveness as good and the capacity for improvement as good. The inspectors graded the ambition and prioritisation and leadership and management for looked after children as outstanding. The inspectors graded each of the outcomes for looked after children; being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving and making a positive contribution as good. Economic well-being was graded as adequate. Four areas for development to be completed within three months were identified, these were to:-
- promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council
 - ensure children’s files give a clear picture of their life story and the reasons that decisions are made as well as reflecting their individual identity

- Improve further the effectiveness of strategies used to ensure that more young people complete their chosen course of study or training successfully post 16
 - Improve the consistency of the quality of the personal education plans for the youngest children in care and pathway plans for care leavers
- 2.7 The first area for development “promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council” had one action associated with it, action 24, this was reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.8 The second area for development “ensure children’s files give a clear picture of their life story and the reasons that decisions are made as well as reflecting their individual identity” had four actions associated with it, actions 25 to 28. Of these, action 26 was reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Since then action 27 ‘Pen Pictures to be checked and verified by the updated audit procedure’, action 28 ‘Provide two workshops on the recording of significant events and decision making / case chronologies’ and action 25 to ‘Review the Case Recording Policy’ have also been completed.
- 2.9 The third area for development “Improve further the effectiveness of strategies used to ensure that more young people complete their chosen course of study or training successfully post 16”, had six actions associated with it (actions 29 to 34). Actions 29 and 30 were reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The remaining four actions have now also been completed. These were, action 31 to ‘implement robust tracking and monitoring arrangements for post 16 learners, action 32 to ‘ensure that pathway plans incorporate EET actions, action 33 to ‘increase the range of employability opportunities offered by the local authority and action 34 to ‘seek to provide support to LAC through the role of a participation mentor’.
- 2.10 The fourth area for development “Improve the consistency of the quality of the personal education plans for the youngest children in care and pathway plans for care leavers” has four associated actions, actions 35 to 38. Of these action 37 was reported as completed to the 20th September Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The three remaining actions have now also been completed. These were, action 35 to ‘re-launch the guide to PEP writing and development of young children, including the involvement of the Early Tears Team’, action 36 ‘PEP workshops to be delivered to Social Care Staff and partners’ and action 38 to ‘develop understanding amongst Social Care staff of the framework for attainment of children in education’.
- 2.11 From the review of the text of the OFSTED letter a further 18 actions were identified (action 39 to 56). Of these, 17 actions have been completed. The one action that remains outstanding is action 41 to ‘Fully implement the safer Recruitment Action Plan’. Revised dates have been sought from the action leader in order to complete this action for the Children and Young Peoples Department.

2.12 Overall all the areas identified by OFSTED as a result of the inspection of Safeguarding Service and Services to Looked after Children have been addressed. It is acknowledged that in a small number of areas timescales have been revised in some instances.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 Safeguarding children at risk of harm, and parenting children in the care of the local authority are statutory responsibilities. Failing to fulfil these statutory duties exposes children to risk of harm and the potential for the local authority to be the subject of legal action by the children and their parents for failing to protect them. Failing to meet the standards set by OFSTED as the regulator can lead to intervention by the Department for Education to monitor improvements or in extreme cases to direct the takeover of services by another local authority or contractor.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 No other options were considered as this was an external inspection undertaken by the regulator of social care, OFSTED.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The inspectors consulted with a wide range of children and young people, their families and carers, staff and partner agencies.

5.2 The action plan developed included team and Branch plans and has been monitored on a monthly basis by the department. Progress on the action plan will also be reported to the Council's Safeguarding Reference Group.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 The voluntary, community and faith sector were part of the meetings that the inspectors had with a wide range of service providers.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 The action plan recommends training for staff in particular areas which will be met within current resources. The review of the capacity of the electronic recording system will involve WITS as part of making the adjustments to the system as planned. There may be a need to purchase services from the current provider Northgate (or an alternative provider) given there are likely to be further changes made following the Munro review into child protection. This review is critically examining if the current IT systems are fit for purpose. The government is currently making funding available through the Social Work Improvement Fund in anticipation of changes in social work practice and recording systems.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(c) No because of another reason which is that this report is a final update on progress towards addressing areas for development identified in the Ofsted Inspection in January 2011. While the inspection report highlighted equality as an area for development the action plan addressed how this will be improved.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no carbon reduction implications.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no planning implications.

11.2 The community expects that the authority provides appropriate and timely services to safeguard children and care for children in the councils care.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 Members are requested to note the progress made up to the 29th February 2012 in addressing the area for development identified in the Safeguarding and Looked after Children inspection.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 OFSTED is the regulator for children's social care services under the Children Act 2004 and will be responsible, through subsequent inspections, for monitoring ongoing compliance with statutory duties for children who need safeguarding and who are looked after by the local authority. Members have a responsibility to assure themselves that the council is taking appropriate action in addressing the areas for development identified by OFSTED.

13.2 Members received reports on 1st June 2011 outlining the positive and successful outcome of the inspection by OFSTED and requested that an update report be produced outlining the progress made in addressing the areas for development outlined in the attached action plan. An update report was provided to members on the 20th September 2011 indicating the progress made up to the 31st August 2011. Members asked for a final update report to be presented to the March committee.

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APPENDICES

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION ACTION PLAN

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	1 st JUNE 2011
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	20 th SEPTEMBER 2011

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of
Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

Contact, Referral and Assessment Action Plan

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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
1	Supervision is routinely undertaken, however the quality of staff supervision files is inconsistent with little recorded evidence of reflective supervision or consideration of personal development issues. Annual appraisals do not take place and as a result consideration is not given to how individual learning needs contribute to an overall training plan. <i>(Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessment Processes)</i> .	Strengthen supervision model to include reflective practice.	25/12/11 31/03/12	Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families	A
2		<i>Revise and implement new Supervision framework</i>	<i>Complete</i> 31/01/11	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G
3		<i>Managers to audit supervision at all levels as per the procedure.</i>	<i>Complete</i> 31/01/11	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G
4		<i>Key Issues briefing to be delivered to all Managers.</i>	<i>Completed</i> 22/09/10	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G
5		<i>Key Issues Exchange to be completed by 100% of all staff.</i>	<i>Completed</i> 31/12/10	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
6	Supervision is routinely undertaken; however the quality of staff supervision files is inconsistent with little recorded evidence of reflective supervision or consideration of personal development issues. Annual appraisals do not take place and as a result consideration is not given to how individual learning needs contribute to an overall training plan. (Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessment Processes).	<i>Complete audit of all staff training</i>	<i>Completed 01/09/10</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G
7		<i>Annual Training plan to be devised from aggregate Key Issues Exchange feedback.</i>	<i>Complete 31/05/11</i>	<i>CYPD Training Manager</i>	G
8		<i>Managers to target individual staff training based on requirements of job roles.</i>	<i>Complete 01/09/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of
Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).**

	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
9	The CADT provides a consultation service for professionals and other callers and the recording of these consultations is separate from the integrated children's system (ICS). In some cases this arrangement prevents the analysis and co-ordination of repeat concerns about children and families as consultations do not currently progress to being recorded as contacts and are filed on a separate database. (Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessment Processes).	<i>Clarify recording of consultations at CADT via ICS. ICS outcome field revised to include 'professional advice', following advice from Corporate Information Manager.</i>	<i>Completed 18/10/10</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G
10		<i>Consultation procedures updated.</i>	<i>Completed 31/12/10</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G
11	<i>While managers in district assessment teams and the children with disabilities team authorise assessments, they do not always record the rationale for management decisions in the assessment document on ICS. (Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessment Processes).</i>	<i>Managers directed to include rationale for their decisions at the end of completed assessments. (At the bottom of the Analysis box).</i>	<i>Completed 01/08/10</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of
Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
12	<i>The process for transfer of cases from district assessment teams to care management teams is not yet consistently established and this impacts on the capacity of district assessment teams to carry out timely assessments. (Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessment Processes).</i>	<i>Reinforce compliance with the Contact, Referral, Allocation and Transfer Procedure and monitor via monthly District Manager Meetings.</i>	<i>Completed 31/12/10</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

Safeguarding and Looked After Children Action Plan

[Note: Inspection areas for development are marked at the end with the section of the inspection they relate to e.g.: *(Inspection of Safeguarding Services)* where the area for development is a specific recommendation from the inspectors this is suffixed with the initials 'AFI' which stands for 'Area for Improvement'. Where the area for development was taken from the text of the report the suffix of 'Text' is used.]

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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
13	Ensure the records of assessments include the risk and protective factors. <i>(Inspection of Safeguarding Services AFI)</i>	Revise Initial and Core assessment practice guidance to confirm what should be included in the analysis section.	Complete 01/06/11	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	G
14	<i>Keep under review the capacity of the current electronic recording arrangements to ensure that it is fit for purpose for social workers and managers as well as producing documents that are user friendly for children and their families. (Inspection of Safeguarding Services AFI)</i>	<i>ICS board met and confirmed amendments to exemplar outputs for IA and CA.</i>	<i>Complete 20/04/11</i>	<i>Head of Branch</i>	<i>G</i>
15		<i>ICS board set deadline of 30 June 2011 for all ICS Exemplar amendments to be made</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Head of Branch</i>	<i>G</i>
16		<i>Establish post for ICS/ESCR Trainer / Project Manager (Fixed Term)</i>	<i>Complete 15/09/11</i>	<i>Business & Performance Manager</i>	<i>G</i>
17		<i>ESCR project plan to be confirmed</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Head of Branch</i>	<i>G</i>

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
18	Ensure all records of assessments, plans and reviews reflect a focus on the child's views and wishes and the cultural and identity needs of children and their families. <i>(Inspection of Safeguarding Services AFI)</i>	Update and revise all procedures (Tri-X)	01/09/11 31/10/11 Revised to 31/07/12	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	A
19		<i>Teams to have issues around equality and diversity (identity) as standing item on team agendas</i>	<i>Complete 01/09/11</i>	<i>Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers</i>	G
20		<i>Devise Workshops sessions to explore practice in-depth with social workers</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers</i>	G
21		<i>Deliver Workshops sessions to explore practice in-depth with social workers</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers</i>	G
22		<i>Review the outcome of the Workshops sessions to explore practice in-depth with social workers</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers</i>	G
23		<i>Review Audit tools/process in order to evidence changing practice</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
24	<i>Promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council to get their views across.(Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI)</i>	<i>Devise and implement the Children in Care Councils Communication Plan.</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
25	<i>Ensure that children's files give a clear picture of their life story and the reasons that decisions were made as well as reflecting their individual identity. (Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI)</i>	<i>Review the Case Recording Policy</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G
26		<i>Include a 'Pen Picture' at the front of the child's file (including photograph) to be reviewed and updated every 12 months.</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G
27		<i>'Pen Pictures' to be checked and verified by the updated Audit Procedure.</i>	<i>Complete 31/10/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G
28		<i>Provide two workshops on the recording of significant events and decision making/ case chronologies</i>	<i>Complete 31/10/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
29	<i>Improve further the effectiveness of strategies used to ensure that more young people complete their chosen course of study or training successfully post-16. (Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI)</i>	<i>Develop a training programme for foster carers, providers and practitioners to equip them effectively to support more young people to complete their course of study or employment post 16.</i>	<i>Complete 01/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
30		<i>Detailed actions to improve Foster Carer Training in relation to young people's employability to be implemented.</i>	<i>Complete 30/07/11</i>	<i>Kathy Kinear</i>	G
31		<i>Implement robust tracking and monitoring arrangements for post 16 learners.</i>	<i>Complete 01/11/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
32		<i>Ensure that pathway plans incorporate EET actions.</i>	<i>Complete 01/11/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
33		<i>Increase the range of employability opportunities offered by the Local Authority</i>	<i>Complete 01/11/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
34		<i>Seek to provide support to LAC through the role of a participation mentor (ESF Funded)</i>	<i>Complete 01/11/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
35	<i>Improve the consistency of the quality of personal education plans for the youngest children in care and the pathway plans for care leavers. (Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI)</i>	<i>Re-launch the guide for PEP writing and development for young children, including the involvement of the Early Years Team.</i>	<i>Complete 22/09/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
36		<i>PEP workshop to be delivered to Social Care Staff and partners</i>	<i>Complete 22/09/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
37		<i>Establish a development plan with the Pathway Team for improving how pathway plans develop economic wellbeing.</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
38		<i>Develop understanding amongst Social Care staff of the framework for attainment of children in education (e.g.: average attainment expected at KS1/KS2)</i>	<i>Complete 22/09/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
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Safeguarding Inspection comments from the text.

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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
39	<i>The scrutiny of completed common assessment records shows that children's views are at times missing or too cursory. (Safeguarding Text)</i>	<i>Review the Common Assessment training package and delivery revised training</i>	Complete 30/09/11	CAF Quality Assurance Officer and Area Team Leaders	G
40	<i>The equality and diversity needs of families were given consideration in most of the case files seen. However there were some instances in which issues of ethnic background and culture were not considered sufficiently. (Safeguarding Text)</i>	<i>Deliver the Social Care Diversity event and develop a subsequent action plan to address areas identified.</i>	Complete 30/06/11	Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources	G
41	Staff files are adequate overall although information is not always easily accessible in one place to provide a clear audit trail. (Safeguarding Text)	Fully implement the Safer Recruitment Action Plan	20/11/11 31/07/12	Strategic Service Manager Human Resources (Natalie McDermott)	A

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of
Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
42	<i>The quality of planning for children is variable. Inspectors saw examples of very good practice in planning. However in some cases seen by inspectors of chronic neglect insufficient regard had been taken of significant historical factors, leading to a delay before appropriate planning and intervention. (Safeguarding Text)</i>	<i>Include provision within the revised training plan for care planning with new regulations</i>	<i>Complete 30/07/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of
Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

Service to Looked after Children Inspection comments from the text.

	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
43	<p>The proportion of looked after young people gaining five or more good GCSEs, including english and mathematics is low. Ten young people were placed out of borough at the time of the 2010 GCSE examination. Almost all had severe special educational needs and 60% got at least one GCSE. Overall, results for looked after children compare well with results for the same children nationally but they are still well below all children in Wirral. The local authority confirms that more work needs to be done close this gap (Looked after Children Text)</p>	<i>Review and restructure the Looked After Children Education Service so that it focuses on championing improving outcomes for LAC.</i>	<i>Complete 01/09/11</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
44		<i>Improve further procedures for monitoring the performance of LAC placed out of borough and challenging where there is underperformance.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
45		<i>Provide high quality advice and training for schools and Designated Teachers.</i>	<i>Complete 31/03/12 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
46		<i>Rigorously track and monitor the progress of LAC placed out of borough and challenge where there is underachievement.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
47		<i>Ensuring that the educational needs of Looked after Children are identified at an early stage and that appropriate support put in place which increases levels of attainment. Support the effective co-ordination of response to pupils in difficulties.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
48		<i>Monitor on a monthly basis the attendance of LAC placed out of borough</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
49	<p><i>The level and appropriateness of courses available is an issue. For example, foundation learning is needed as well as multi-entry points so that young people can start the course when relevant to them. The effectiveness of strategies used by schools as part of their careers guidance and by Connexions requires consolidation so that more young people successfully complete their chosen courses of study or training. (Looked after Children Text)</i></p>	<i>Review and evaluate current career planning arrangements 13-25.</i>	<i>Complete 01/07/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
50		<i>Strategic Analysis to be completed to ensure breadth and sufficiency of provision.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
51		<i>Facilitate the delivery of a range of opportunities to develop employability skills through ESF funding (profit from Wirral Wise)</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11 ongoing</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
52		<i>Ensure that clear information, referral and monitoring systems are in place to manage employability opportunities for young people.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11 ongoing</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
53		<i>Seek to appoint employability officer using ESF funding.</i>	<i>Complete 01/12/2012</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
54		<i>Ensure that close collaboration between the LACES, Pathways Team, Connexions and education providers improves the employability of care leavers.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/11 ongoing</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of
Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
55	<i>Reviews are effective in monitoring and evaluating plans, although the views and wishes of young people are not always sufficiently recorded. (Looked after Children Text)</i>	<i>All Reviewing Officers trained to input on ICS, this aspect of ICS will be utilized to contain children's views in all files in line with the business processes for ICS.</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>Service Manager, Quality Assurance</i>	G
56	<i>Most young people seen were aware of the purpose of their reviews but some did not feel involved in the choice of the venue such as at school, which they felt compromised their confidentiality(Looked after Children Text)</i>	<i>The Quality Assurance Unit to consider a wider range of venues to undertake LAC reviews.</i>	<i>Complete 31/03/12</i>	<i>Service Manage Quality Assurance</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN February 2012
(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

Action plan for NHS Wirral following Care Quality Commission Safeguarding Children Inspection and Looked After Children Inspection January \ February 2011

No.	Recommendation	Action Required	Lead Officer	Completion Date	Status	Monitoring Committee
1	The Looked after Children health team should introduce a more effective performance management system and database.	Service specification for LAC to be reviewed\ revised to include requirements for systems to track the progress of LAC children.	Children and Families Programme Manager	Review to be completed by 31 st July 2011. Revised service specification to be fully in place by March 2012.	Complete On Target	Quality assurance monitored by quality team
2	Healthcare organisations should consider an audit programme to evaluate the quality of safeguarding supervision and the impact on clinical practice.	Audit of safeguarding supervision to be added as a contract variation for the following providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust • Wirral Community NHS Trust • Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Foundation NHS Trust 	Designated Nurse	Audit to be completed by 30 th September 2011	Complete	Quality assurance monitored by quality team

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

21ST MARCH 2012

SUBJECT:	COUNCIL MOTION ON ADOPTION – BEING THE BEST CORPORATE PARENTS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report is produced in response to a motion to Cabinet on 12th December 2011 which identified this work programme for the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.2 This report has no exempt sections.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The recent release in 2011 of the Children in Care Performance tables from the DfE show that, as an average for the 3 year period 2008-2010, Wirral Council was ranked 105th out of 143 authorities in terms of the percentage of children (69%) who were adopted, who were placed within 12 months of the decision being taken that adoption is in their best interests. These tables were subsequently updated in December 2011 when Wirral was ranked 74th with 76%.

How decisions around the adoption system are made (including the approval processes for prospective adoptive parents) and how they might be speeded up and improved for those children in care where adoption is likely to be the best outcome for providing a stable, permanent home.

When children become looked after they are subject to a regular review chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO); this Review is attended by key professionals, carers, and the child or young person as appropriate. Reviews take place within statutorily prescribed timescales, so at one month, then three months, and six monthly thereafter, if the child remains in the same placement. At the 4 month review of the care plan, it is a requirement that the plan for the child to achieve permanence is established. Assessments of parents and family members will be taking place during this early period after a child has become looked after, and if the child is subject to Care Proceedings there will be scrutiny by the Family Court. Occasionally very young children are relinquished by their parents for adoption, in these instances the Court do not become involved in the early planning.

Once the assessments are completed and if it is clear that there are no family members that the child can permanently live with safely; consideration is given to adoption. The child's needs, contact with family, school, health and development and family relationships are all considered in order to determine whether adoption is appropriate. A Looked After Children's Review will then consider all this information, and if appropriate endorse a plan for adoption. The child's case then must be presented to Adoption Panel within six weeks of this review and the Panel will then consider the case and make a recommendation regarding this plan to the Agency Decision Maker (Acting Deputy Director of Social Care, Children and Young People's Department). The Adoption Panel monitors this six week timescale (new Standard 2011). The Agency Decision Maker makes their decision within 7 working days of receipt of the recommendation and the final set of the Panel minutes (new Standard 2011). Once this decision is made the timescale starts for the child to be placed for adoption within the national target of twelve months.

The Adoption Service are ambitious in working with older children and in such cases the family finding, matching and placing can take more time, particularly where the focus is on moving at the child's pace. It could be argued that there should be an alternative target for these older children. In Wirral there is already excellent support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in the form of partnership arrangements to provide support for these children with a plan for adoption and post adoption, and this was recognised as Outstanding in the Ofsted Inspection of the Adoption Service in 2011. The Team has the child at the centre of what they do, with both the social worker for the prospective adopters and the child's social worker being based in one team and working under one leader. The Adoption Task Force in Wirral meets regularly to review performance and consider strategies to reduce delay in adoption; this is a multi agency group. The service also reports regularly to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee on performance. The Wirral service is also part of the regional Adoption 22 Group that shares good practice. There is also a Court User Group for Adoption where issues around Court timescales are raised.

In terms of improvement, the new Standards and revised regulation for Adoption are already providing a greater focus on reducing delay in adoption. There has also been a workshop held recently with all the relevant managers on supporting social workers to complete one of the key documents for adoption, the Child Permanence Report.

There are 2 Senior Practitioners who work with social workers in the Districts to tighten their care planning for these children. They will go out to Teams and discuss cases on a regular basis. Senior Practitioners consider the relevant case information and form a view about the suitability of adoption as a plan for children at an early stage. This includes identifying when other professionals are required to assist in reaching this judgement, in particular colleagues from the CAMHS partnership.

Decisions about adoption for children can be speeded up by accurate assessment of children's needs (in partnership with others), as soon as possible, including the early assessment of whether the child/children can return home, or live with family members. A good quality Child Permanence Report which fully captures the child's background information and the planning for them whilst they have been in care; supports the Adoption Panel to make confident and timely decisions. Good quality Child Permanence Reports assist with the early identification of prospective adopters to meet children's needs. This is the work plan which is overseen by the Adoption

Task Force; timeliness of Adoption is afforded a high priority within the Children and Young People's Department.

An explanation of the relational link between the Fostering and Adoption team, the support provided by foster carers when children move from foster care to adoption and any weaknesses in process highlighted, with recommendations to improve any issues.

The Adoption and Fostering Teams are based together in Conway Buildings in Birkenhead which facilitates their working relationship. The Fostering Service is facing high demands at present and a report is due at a future Committee on the service. In recent times the two services have lacked the additional management oversight of the Looked After Children's Service Manager; this post has been vacant since August 2011. An appointment has now been made to this post.

The move of children from a fostering placement to an adoption placement is a complex area of work; it frequently involves, very young children who foster carers have become attached to, moving to an adopter. It involves quite an intense period of interaction between sets of carers and this process has been described as the adopters almost moving in to the foster carers home. This presents a number of challenges, as the role of parenting transfers, quite literally, from the current foster carers to the prospective adopters. With this understanding, the teams work together to support both sets of carers equally, but the prospective adopters have a greater degree of input from their social worker at this stage. The Service is looking at how support plans for both sets of carers can be enhanced, and that this is covered in further detail in the matching meeting which is held in every instance prior to a child moving to live with an adopter.

The model of concurrent planning (American Model) is also being considered. This is where prospective adopters are recruited to foster children initially with a view to adoption. This is a difficult model to implement and there has been limited success with it in this country

An explanation of the impact of the Family Courts on the adoption process, with suggestions given as to how to better work with and strengthen the existing approach by the Merseyside Family Court Justice Council (MFCJC) to improve the likelihood of appropriate and timely adoptions, taking account of the recommendations and proposals set out in the Family Justice Review.

The Family Courts relationship with the Local Authority is significant in the child's journey to adoption. There is a concern that the numbers of children nationally and locally subject to care proceedings is causing delay in the Courts. The local authority has a Looked After Children Project, one aspect of which is focused on the plans for children in Care Proceedings being closely monitored at a senior level, in order to reduce delay wherever possible. Delays are identified at an early stage and if this is specific to the Court this will be raised with the Borough Solicitors. There is currently work in progress with the Merseyside Family Courts to reduce delay in Care Proceedings, training took place across 10 regional authorities on 21 February 2012, and a Pre Proceedings Protocol is being developed to reduce the timescale children's cases are before the Court. The Acting Deputy Director is working on this with the Senior Family Court Judge for Merseyside. The Family Justice Review does recommend that the Adoption Panel is not required, in future, to consider whether

children should be placed for adoption. It should be noted that in Wirral delays in considering children at an Adoption Panel is not an issue; Adoption Panels are held on a monthly basis, and more frequently, dependent on the volume of work, or the urgency of the need for a child to be considered.

The potential for further development of a peer mentoring scheme for new adoptive parents to provide more support in the early days of adoption and further reduce the risk of placement failure.

The Service already offers opportunity for prospective adopters to meet and have advice and support from parents who have adopted themselves. This is usually identified in the support plan and discussed at the Adoption Panel. There is a parent and tots group run by people with experience of adoption. There is a scheme for peer mentoring in fostering and consideration will be given to how this relatively new scheme can have an application in adoption. Each training group attended by prospective adopters then becomes a support group for the participants through to adoption and post adoption.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 The outcomes for children adopted may be affected adversely by delay.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 No other options relevant to be considered.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 There is no consultation planned in relation to this motion.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 There are no implications for Voluntary, Community and Faith Groups.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The recommendations seek to increase the opportunity for children and young people from diverse backgrounds to be adopted in a timescale that is appropriate for each child or young person.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No as this is a report and is not proposing a change in policy.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising from this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no planning and community safety implications linked to this report.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 The Committee is asked to note the report and consider its recommendations.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 To consider and respond to the motion to Cabinet on the matter of performance in relation to adoption.

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APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date: 12 December 2011

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

21ST MARCH 2012.

SUBJECT:	CHILDMINDER PROVISION ON WIRRAL
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to describe childminding services across Wirral, to include information on the wider aspects of childcare with a variety of providers in the private and voluntary sectors. This report is produced at the request of the committee as part of the response to the 2011 Ofsted Children's Services Assessment.
- 1.2 To describe the support available to providers in enabling the highest quality of service to families.
- 1.3 For the purposes of this report, the provision described is either:-
 - Registered and regulated by OFSTED as the statutory body, either independently or as part of a school registration
 - Defined as a childcare provider but not required to be registered as the scheme operates for under 2 hours.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Children's Services Assessment report of 2011 identified that;-

“A large percentage of child minders and some registered day-care settings are only satisfactory. This is below performance in similar areas and has not improved since last year. A very small percentage of provision in childminding services is inadequate.”

- 2.2 OFSTED has statutory powers to ensure that registered providers comply with all aspects of registration and regulation.
- 2.3 The responsibility of the Local Authority lies with what is termed “retained functions”, that is, to maintain an advice, support and guidance service to potential new and current childcare providers. This is contained within the Childcare Act 2006 which also includes a statutory duty on Local Authorities to ensure sufficient access to childcare for parents in work or training with a particular focus on areas of disadvantage and parents of a child with a disability.

2.4 A key element of the work of the SureStart team is to provide support in respect of improving quality in provision to improve the number of settings achieving a Good or better OFSTED inspection judgement.

2.5 A report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2011 described the support available through the SureStart team and the work the team undertakes to improve the quality of provision.

2.6 Support to providers includes:-

- Targeted support for those providers with an inadequate judgement from OFSTED. This which includes a visit from a Foundation Stage Consultant for early years settings, or from a Childcare Development Worker for childminders or out of school schemes. This will also include development of an action plan to support the provider in moving out of the inadequate judgement.
- Implementation of the Quality Improvement Support Programme with early years providers, leading to an action plan linked to focussed support from a Foundation Stage Consultant. This is part of the Local Authority's role in terms of support and challenge to providers.
- Access to a termly training programme that offers courses in statutory requirements such as Safeguarding and First Aid, as well as comprehensive Continuing Professional Development.
- Access to advice, including 1:1 support and site visits.
- Analysis of trends identified through scrutiny of OFSTED reports which is shared regularly with providers.
- A robust pathway for registration for potential childminders which includes a pre-registration briefing, a 9 hour preparation for registration course, First Aid and Safeguarding training and completion of a compulsory Introduction to Childminding Practice course.
- A bespoke registration support service for potential daycare providers wishing to open a day nursery, pre-school or out of school club.

2.7 In order to describe the scale of this group, numbers for childminders and other early years and childcare provision are detailed in the table below, together with a brief definition of the terminologies. Childminder numbers are approximate as there is a measure of regular movement in and out of childminding:-

Type of provision	Definition	Current Wirral numbers
Childminders	Registered by OFSTED to care for one or more children under the age of 8 on domestic premises for reward and for more than 2 hours per day.	272
Early Years and Childcare providers. (comprises pre-schools and day nurseries, but not maintained sector nursery provision. There are currently 67 day nurseries and 52 pre-schools)	Day nurseries are registered with OFSTED to offer care for children from birth to age 4 for a continuous period during the day. Day nurseries will also operate throughout the year and are generally open from 8 am – 6 pm. Pre-schools are registered with OFSTED to care for children from age 2 – 4. Most offer sessional provision for children although a growing number are able to offer care for	119

	extended periods	
Out of school care (including breakfast, after school and holiday clubs)	Registered to provide care for school –aged children before and after the school day and during holiday periods to enable parents to return to work or training	97 (includes 41 settings that are not required to be registered or are managed through the school and are covered by the school OFSTED registration)

2.8 The majority of day nurseries are privately owned and managed, whilst the majority of pre-school playgroups are run by voluntary management committees. Childminders are regarded as self-employed private businesses. For out of school and holiday schemes the picture is more mixed; the majority are in private ownership with a smaller but increasing number transferring to school control, being run through the school Governing Body.

2.9 Numbers of providers, particularly childminders are subject to fluctuation, an effect that can be especially noticeable following a legislative change, e.g. the introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

2.10 Current OFSTED outcomes for each type of provider are detailed in the following table:-

Type of provision	OFSTED - % Outstanding	OFSTED – % Good	OFSTED – % Satisfactory	OFSTED - % Inadequate
Childminders *13 new childminders are awaiting their first inspection and so we don't have an OFSTED outcome for them as yet)	6.25% (17 actual)	51% (139 actual)	37% (101 actual)	0% Note – since the CSA and report, there are no childminders with an Inadequate judgement
Early Years and Childcare providers	14% (17 actual)	63% (76 actual)	21% (25 actual)	0.85% (1 actual)
Out of school (these figures exclude the 41 settings identified on the previous table)	4% (4 actual)	36% (35 actual)	16.5% (16 actual)	1% (1 actual)

2.11 OFSTED inspection grades for registered early years and childcare providers are: Outstanding, Good, Satisfactory and Inadequate – with two levels of ‘Inadequate’; Inadequate 1 which is weak provision where the standard of care is not good enough and Inadequate 2 which is very poor provision requiring urgent attention.

2.12 Private and voluntary sector providers are required to work with the Local Authority when the judgement is made at Inadequate 2 “Notice to Improve”. A judgement of Inadequate 1 or above means the provider is not obliged to work with the Local Authority and responsibility to improve rests entirely with the provider.

2.13 All early years and childcare providers referred to previously are registered with the Local Authority as early education providers. This means that they are funded to

provide the 15 hour early education entitlement to 3 and 4 year olds, in addition to the provision the Local Authority makes through its nursery classes and schools.

- 2.14 In any given year, the numbers of children accessing their early education entitlement is split approximately 50:50 across schools and the private and voluntary sector.
- 2.15 Wirral has a developing childminder network. This is an externally approved group of childminders who have undertaken to complete an evidence portfolio demonstrating a higher level of professional competency as defined by the National Childminding Association. Within this network, some childminders complete an accreditation which enables them to claim early education grant for children whose parents prefer them to take their early education entitlement in the more intimate setting of a childminder's home.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 None identified for the purposes of this report.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 13% of all early years and childcare providers are within the voluntary sector.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 7.1 The SureStart Support team leads on the advice, guidance and challenge role to providers on behalf of the Local Authority.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Not applicable in the context of this report

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No because there is no relevance to equality.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Not applicable in the context of this report.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That this report be noted by Committee.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 This report serves to inform the Committee of the nature of childminding and other childcare services across the Borough.

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny meeting	16 th November 2011

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SRUTINY

21ST MARCH 2012

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL SUPPORT FOR THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION (LCR) APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on Wirral Council support for the key priorities identified in the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy, specifically in relation to the 16-18 year old cohort.
- 1.2 The report details work currently being undertaken by the Council Apprenticeship Strategy Working Group (SWG) to support the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy. Specific reference is made to approaches taken by the Council, through the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme and the Council's internal Apprenticeship programme.
- 1.3 Members will note that Cabinet adopted the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Apprenticeship Strategy on 23rd June 2011 and authorised officers to work with LCR colleagues, on behalf of Wirral Council, in the development of a local Apprenticeship Strategy Action Plan.
- 1.4 The LCR Apprenticeship Strategy details four key strategic priorities which include:-
 - I. To stimulate increased employer adoption of Apprenticeships.
 - II. To ensure that Apprenticeships meet the needs of the Liverpool City Region economy, including in the Transformational Sectors.
 - III. To promote Apprenticeships as a quality route to young people and to support the participation of young people in Apprenticeships.
 - IV. To ensure that Apprenticeships delivered in the Liverpool City Region are of the highest possible quality.
- 1.5 The report also details how Council Officers are supporting the corporate priority to improve access to employment and skills and tackle barriers to work.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Apprenticeship opportunities have historically always been sought after by Wirral young people. The level of penetration of Apprenticeships as a learning route for Wirral young people has always been high, particularly when compared to other Local Authority areas in the LCR.
- 2.2 The number of Wirral young people aged 16-18 that started an Apprenticeship in the 2010/11 academic year grew by 25 percent compared to 2009/10. Over the last three years the number of young people aged 16 to 18 starting an Apprenticeship has increased by 64.5 percent from 790 in 2008/09 to 1,300 Apprenticeship starters aged between 16 and 18 in 2010/11 (see table 1).

Table 1: The Number of Wirral and Liverpool City Region Young People Aged 16-18 that started an Apprenticeship by Academic Year

	Academic Year		
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Wirral	783	1,040	1,300
Liverpool City Region	4,149	5,233	4,670

(Source: The Data Service, February 2012)

- 2.3 During the 2010/11 academic year the number of Wirral young people participating in an Apprenticeship was 2,331. Participation is a measure of the number of young people starting an Apprenticeship in a given year plus the existing number of Apprentices continuing their learning from the previous academic year. Participation by Wirral young people in Apprenticeships grew in 2010/11 by 18 percent compared to 2009/10.
- 2.4 Growth in Apprenticeship participation by Wirral Young people aged 16 to 18 has been very much at the intermediate Apprenticeship level (the equivalent to a full level 2 or 5x GCSE's at grades A* to C). The number of young people starting an intermediate Apprenticeship in 2010/11 grew by 37.9 percent between 2009/10 and 2010/11. In the same period advanced Apprenticeship (the equivalent to a full level 3 or 4x AS qualifications) starts grew by 4.3 percent.
- 2.5 Early indications in this academic year (2011/12) are that the numbers of young people accessing Advanced Level Apprenticeships is significantly accelerating. Comparison of quarter one statistics illustrates an increase of 28.9% compared with quarter one in the 2010/11 academic year (The Data Service, February 2012).
- 2.6 The employment sectors with the highest levels of growth in Apprenticeship opportunities for Wirral young people (National Data Service, February 2012) include:-
- I. Business, administration and law (316 Apprentices)
 - II. Construction, planning and built environment (107 Apprentices)
 - III. Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism (158 Apprentices)
 - IV. Retail and commercial enterprise (252 Apprentices)
 - V. Science, engineering and manufacturing technologies (301 Apprentices)

2.7 Paragraphs 2.7 to 2.20 detail Wirral Council's approach and support for the LCR Apprenticeship Strategy.

Driving up Apprenticeship opportunities and participation through significant investment - Wirral Apprenticeship Programme (WAP)

2.8 In 2009 Wirral recognised that the impact of the then economic downturn was starting to have on the availability of apprenticeship places in the borough. Whilst demand for places from young people continued to be high, it was found that employers were finding it increasingly difficult to support the business case for employing apprentices and have access to a growing available 'job ready' labour supply.

2.9 Based on this evidence, the Council developed The Wirral Apprentice which was initially funded by £1.7m of Working Neighbourhoods Funds for the creation of 100 apprenticeship places. The programme offered an 18 month wage subsidy from an expected minimum of a 2 year employment contract.

2.10 The Programme was designed around a number of driving principles:

- direct support to businesses in the recession
- engaging new businesses with the launch of the new National Apprenticeship Service

In return, the employer had to offer a minimum 2 year contract of employment to the Apprentice. The original Programme criteria targeted certain groups including young people aged 16-18 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and looked after children.

2.11 A second wave of 67 places was funded by additional Working Neighbourhood Funds (£807,000) for 50 places that were ring fenced to 16-18 year old NEET and a small amount of ESF funds (£275,000) for the other 17.

2.12 The most recent tranche of the WAP was launched in January 2011 with funding coming from a mixture of Council funds (£1,058,579) matched to £655,960 LCR ESF PEP (pathways enabling programme) funds to create an additional 146 Apprenticeship opportunities. In line with the funding requirements, the programme targets 16-19 year old NEET and unemployed adults at a ratio of 65:35% respectively. These Apprentices have been funded at the national minimum wage again for a period of 52 weeks rather than the previous 18 months.

2.13 To date a total of 198 Wirral employers have benefited from the financial investment through the WAP. In addition some 313 young people and unemployed adults have also been supported to start and Apprenticeship and gain employment.

2.14 Since 2009 the sectoral mix of employers engaging in the WAP has subtly changed. In 2009/10 the key sectors engaged in the WAP included engineering (including motor vehicle), construction and administration / customer services. During the last recruitment phase (2011) new sectors have emerged from the 'knowledge economy' including graphic design / web design / technical IT industries and environmental / green industries.

2.15 In addition to the employer wage subsidy through the WAP, further support for young people was also secured as part of the most recent WAP tranche. The support included two elements; the first being, Apprenticeship awareness raising in schools. This programme focused on raising awareness of apprenticeships as a progression option to all year 9 young people to help inform key Stage 4 decisions. This service was targeted at those schools with the highest levels of leavers to NEET as a priority.

2.16 The second element to the support included a mental toughness programme. This programme was offered to support those young people who were unsuccessful in gaining an apprenticeship through the last tranche, and those young people in an apprenticeship and those preparing to start an apprenticeship. The course provided young people with the necessary tools, tips and techniques to make them more resilient.

The Council Internal Apprenticeship Programme

2.17 Between 2010 and 2011 the Council has significantly increased the number of internal Apprenticeship places offered, achieved in part through promoting the Apprenticeship framework to existing employees. There are currently 81 existing employees who have converted onto the Apprenticeship programme and 26 Apprentices who have been recruited externally up to December 2011.

2.18 The table below summarises the recruitment so far and the status of employment for Apprentices (excluding conversions).

Cohort	Commenced	Number	Frameworks	Status of training	Status of employment
Cohort 1	September 2010	12 (includes 1 Apprentice plus)	Business Administration I.T. User	5 completed framework, 4 in progress and 1 suspended learning 1 completed framework and 1 in progress	5 secured a permanent contract 1 secured a temporary contract 5 contract ends in March 2012 1 leaver
Cohort 2	January 2011	1	Animal Care	In progress	Secured part time contract
Cohort 3	May - July 2011	6	Business Administration	In progress	
Cohort 4	November / December 2011	7	Business Administration / Customer Services	Commencing December 2011	

2.19 It is desired that future apprenticeship activity is structured in such a way that it responds to organisational requirements as well as aligning with the LCR Apprenticeship Strategy. Planned support for the LCR Apprenticeship Strategy during 2012 to include:-

- Ongoing promotion for conversions to the Apprentice framework for existing staff. This activity was undertaken during National Apprentice Week 6 - 10 February 2012. It is hoped that this be repeated on an annual basis.
- Celebrate Apprenticeship success during May 2012, as part of Learning at Work Week and then on an annual basis.
- Continued liaison with schools to publicise the benefits of Apprenticeships and attend relevant promotional events to raise awareness.
- Work with the Leaving Care Team and the 14-19 Team to specifically promote Apprenticeships to care leavers as part of the Council's corporate parenting duties.
- Frameworks aimed at Higher Apprentices, undertaking qualifications at level four are now becoming available. This may be suitable for Apprentice Conversions and is currently being investigated to identify if the approach aligns to the needs of the Council and should be incorporated into the internal Apprentice offer.

2.20 Further work is currently being undertaken internally to support Wirral young care leavers. This work commenced February 2012 and fifteen care leavers have committed to a programme that will assist in preparing them for employment and /or Apprenticeship.

2.21 This new initiative is being managed by the 14-19 Team. The care leavers are engaged in an eight week proprietary programme delivered by Brathay. This proprietary training includes a residential outward bound course and will prepare the young people to be better able to sell themselves, improve their confidence, promote a positive attitude to employment and raise aspirations.

2.22 The second phase of the programme will include the young people engaging in an internship opportunity with an employer also for a period of eight weeks. Council departments are being canvassed to take part in this element of the programme and interest has been high. There will also be external opportunities offered. It is hoped that the young people at the end of the programme will have developed useful skills and knowledge that will ensure they are in the best possible position for applying for future Council Apprenticeship opportunities or other opportunities outside of the Council.

Influencing opportunities for jobs and training through planning and procurement mechanisms

2.23 The Council has developed a construction employment integrator model in 2009, known as Build Wirral. Build Wirral uses tailored training, procurement

processes and planning conditions to ensure developers / contractors enable young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and workless adults to access employment with training (Apprenticeship).

- 2.24 Businesses and organisations that are procured to provide services or works on behalf of the authority now have to provide training and employment opportunities for local people, where possible. This is aimed at target groups such as unemployed, NEET and those living in disadvantaged areas.
- 2.25 Although initially set up for schemes involving large scale construction, the principle of this has also been applied successfully to other areas such as the boroughs free insulation programme.
- 2.26 To date, this has involved sixteen construction opportunities; this includes twelve apprenticeships, two work experience positions and two jobs. It also includes a further fifty four non-construction positions being created as part of procured contracts.
- 2.27 Wirral is in early discussions and working with the LCR local authorities to develop a targeted recruitment and training approach to procurement. The Regeneration, Housing and Planning department are currently evaluating how Targeted Recruitment and Training can be best developed to meet future needs.

Council 14-19 Team and Strategic Dialogue

- 2.28 As part of the Wirral 16-19 Strategic Overview process, as reported through the 14-19 Social & Economic Wellbeing Strategy Group, the 14-19 Team complete a twice yearly multi agency strategic dialogue meeting with the National Apprenticeship Service, Skills Funding Agency and Young Peoples Learning Agency. The meetings function to enable the Council to formally challenge share its priorities for Apprenticeships, and other opportunities, for young people with the key lead funding bodies.
- 2.29 On a sub regional basis the Children and Young Peoples Department Strategic Service Manager (14-19, Skills and Regeneration) chairs the 14-19 Employment and Skills Strategy Group. This local authority officers group has responsibility for ensuring strategies are in place to enable and facilitate young peoples successfully progression in to either, education, employment and / or training. The group also directly reports into the LCR Learn Together Partnership and LCR Employment and Skills Board through the DCS representative.
- 2.30 Locally the 14-19 Team Principal Manager is a member of the Wirral Learning Provider Network. Attendance at this network is important for the Council because it enables officers to directly challenge Apprenticeship delivery providers and work closely with them to share information and lead change.

Challenges Facing Future Wirral Growth in Apprenticeship Participation

2.31 Wirral faces a number of challenges if it is to further develop the holistic Apprenticeship offer for young people across the borough. The key challenges include:-

- i. Delivery in our top four most popular Apprenticeship frameworks equated to 36.8 percent of all our Apprenticeship starts. The National Apprenticeship Services reports that there are over 250 approved Apprenticeship frameworks supporting over 1,200 different job roles. The diversification of Apprenticeship frameworks is a key challenge for the Council moving forward. The skills demands from employers are changing; this is illustrated in the section on the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme.
- ii. Further increase the numbers of young people accessing advanced level (Level 3) Apprenticeship opportunities. Increasing Level 3 take up is recognised as a key driver of business competitiveness and growth and a valuable tool in raising the skills levels of our workforce.
- iii. Promote the take up of the new and developing higher level (level 4) Apprenticeship frameworks to local employers as they become available.
- iv. Ensure growth in Apprenticeships is targeted at the key transformational sectors identified in the Council's Investment Strategy.
- v. Secure sufficient Apprenticeship opportunities to meet the demand from Wirral young people.
- vi. Maximise opportunities for increasing Apprenticeship opportunities through Council led procurement processes.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 There are no direct risk implications arising from this report.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Not applicable.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 This report does not contain a proposal(s). The report is for information only.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 This report does not contain a proposal(s). The report is for information only.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This report does not contain a proposal it is for information only.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct carbon reduction implications arising from this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct planning or community safety implications arising from this report.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 The Council Apprenticeship Strategy Working Group (SWG) draws officer expertise from Children & Young People, Economic Development, Business Support, Human Resources and Procurement. The SWG continues to taking forward a holistic view of Apprenticeship engagement and participation in the borough. The SWG also continues to develop a local action plan to support the LCR Apprenticeship Strategy.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 Members to note the Council's support and contribution to the delivery of the LCR Apprenticeship Strategy.

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REFERENCE MATERIAL

Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy –
(<http://www.liverpoolcitystrategyces.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/lcr-apprentice-brochure.pdf>)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Wirral Apprentice Programme	23rd April 2009
Cabinet – Additional Allocation of Working Neighbourhood Funds	26th November 2009
Cabinet - Extension of Wirral Apprentice Programme	14th October 2010
Cabinet - Liverpool City Region European Funding Proposal	4th November 2010
Cabinet - Tackling worklessness and supporting apprenticeships in Wirral through the European Social	9th December 2010

Cabinet - Tackling worklessness and supporting apprenticeships in Wirral through the European Social Economic and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Programme funding for the Wirral Apprentice Programme.
Economic and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Level 3 Apprenticeship Promotion and delivery of Functional Skills.

3rd February 2011

6th June 2011

5th September 2011

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

21ST MARCH 2012

SUBJECT:	2011/12 Third Quarter Performance and Financial Review
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	Acting Director of Children's Services
KEY DECISION:	No

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out performance of the Council's Corporate Plan 2011-14 and Departmental Plan 2011-12 for October to December 2011 (Quarter 3), in relation to children and young people and provides members with an overview of performance, resources and risk monitoring.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 Performance Summary

This report provides an overview of quarter three performance including corrective action for performance issues.

2.2 Your FAMILY: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

What's working well

- **Young people impress at Wirral's 9th successful Youth Voice Conference** - more than 100 young people from Wirral descended on Wallasey Town Hall in October to have their say on issues that affect them, which were taken to a special meeting of Wirral Youth Parliament.
- **Young people at St Mary's College Youth Club strike silver** - the Youth Club, operating from St Mary's College, Wallasey and run in partnership with Wirral Council's Youth and Play Service, has seen its most successful achievement since 1975 of 59 young people collecting their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards. This was for a catalogue of achievement including volunteering, skill and physical modules, including two 3-day expeditions to the Yorkshire Dales.
- **Award for diverting young people from anti-social behaviour (ASB)** - Merseyside Police and Wirral Council's Youth and Play Service has received an award for an innovative programme designed to divert vulnerable young people from crime and ASB. The 12-week Programme works with identified young

people for two-hours per week during the evenings, focusing heavily upon drug and alcohol misuse, gun and knife crime and ASB.

- **Council to create ‘children’s hotel’ as part of review of residential accommodation** – the ‘children’s hotel’ will be for young people with complex disabilities and will give the families and carers of the young people a break, while also making sure that the young people themselves have an enjoyable time in a high quality, rewarding environment. This is just one way that Wirral Council is looking at improving care and support for our most vulnerable children and young people.
- **Never too young to get yourself fit** - The Junior Invigor8 scheme, designed to encourage young residents to exercise regularly and set them on a road to a fitter and healthier lifestyles, was recently launched. An off-shoot of the extremely popular adult scheme offering residents under the age of 18 a wide range of benefits at all of the borough’s seven leisure centres, plus the Sailing Centre at West Kirby.
- **24 new Foster Carers have been approved**, 4 (20%) above the target.
- **67% of 0 - 5 year olds are registered at a Children's Centre**, 7% above the target.
- **70% of 0 - 5 year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds are registered at a Children's Centre**, 10% above the target.

2.3 Performance against Strategic Change project(s)


For quarter three the Looked After Children’s SCP Project has been rated as red. This project was scheduled to bring expenditure in line with the budget by March 2012, as well as deliver further revenue savings in 2012-14. The department is currently drafting a project variation report, advising there are no further revenue savings from this project and expenditure will not be brought in line with the budget until 2015.


2.4 Customer Feedback


The focus for complaints and wider customer feedback is ‘putting things right and learning from it’ with the CYPD reporting some positive organisational learning during this quarter from 6% of the complaints/feedback received.

2.5 Performance against Corporate Plan Indicators:

The following indicators have missed their quarter three target and are therefore assessed as **red or amber**:

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012		On target	Direction of travel
			Q3 Target	Q3 Actual		
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements	9.0% (Lower is Better)	10.7% (P)	Red	
Corrective Action:	The recruitment plans of Foster Carers have been refreshed in line with the needs identified in the recent sufficiency plan. The peer mentoring scheme devised by the Fostering Network has been adopted to formalise support networks for Foster Carers. This support will enable greater stability.					
Performance Analysis:	This is a provisional figure. Performance against this target has deteriorated since Q2, as the number of children in foster care having 3 placements or more has increased. A total 74 children had 3 or more moves in the third quarter up from 60 children in the first quarter. This indicator is forecast to miss the 9% target; however a figure of less than 15% is classified by OFSTED as good performance.					

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012		On target	Direction of travel
			Q3 Target	Q3 Actual		
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	Local 1400a	Number of looked after children	645 (Lower is Better)	689 (P)	Amber	
Corrective Action:	The revised Special Guardianship Order policy has been implemented and the relevant procedures have been recently updated. Staff briefings are scheduled throughout January and February. The Looked After Children Performance Board has been established and meets regularly to monitor, challenge and support managers with regard to the quality and robustness of the delivery of individual Care Plans.					
Performance Analysis:	This is a provisional figure. Performance against this target has deteriorated, with a rise in the number of looked after children of 10 from the first quarter 2011/12. Although corrective action is in place this indicator is not expected to hit the year end target.					

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012		On target	Direction of travel
			Q3 Target	Q3 Actual		
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	Local 7031	Percentage of under-age sales of alcohol during test purchase exercises	15% (Lower is Better)	50%	Red	
Corrective Action:	This will be achieved as the final Quarter test purchase exercises will focus on those premises given advice, guidance and training by Trading Standards Officers. It is anticipated that the risk of these premises selling to children will have been significantly reduced. There are difficulties with this PI as it does not reflect the reality of the market place and it will be reviewed for the next financial year					
Performance Analysis:	Performance against this target has deteriorated, with a rise in the percentage of under-age sales of alcohol during test purchase exercises of 28% from the first quarter of 2011/12 and by 40% when compared to the third quarter in 2010/11, but it is forecast to achieve the 2011/12 year end target. The high percentage was due to it not being a representative sample, with only one test purchase exercise for alcohol sales being conducted in the 3rd quarter, as the focus was placed on the sale of tobacco test purchasing. Four alcohol premises were targeted, based on intelligence that they had sold to children. Out of those four tested, two sales took place.					

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012		On target	Direction of travel
			Q3 Target	Q3 Actual		
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	NI 70a	Reduce emergency hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in 0-4 years	163	192 (E)	Red	n/a
Corrective Action:	Regular monitoring of the homes safety equipment scheme is undertaken by the Child Safety Implementation Group and actions to reduce accidents are included in all Children Centre delivery plans. This is linked in to the Healthy homes safety pilot in the Wallasey area. A Children's Accident and Emergency Needs Assessment has been commissioned and the findings from this assessment will inform future accident prevention planning.					
Performance Analysis:	This is an estimated figure. Performance has fallen compared to the first quarter, and it is forecast to miss the 2011/12 year end target.					

2.6 Performance against Departmental Plan Indicators:

For the third quarter of 2011/12 there are 25 departmental indicators that can be reported, of these 64% are achieving or exceeding target. The remaining 28% (7 indicators) are failing to meet targets and are listed below:

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012 Q3 Target	2011/2012 Q3 Actual	On target	Direction of travel
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	NI 53	Prevalence of breast-feeding at 6-8 wks from birth			Amber	
<p>Corrective Action: All midwives have now been trained in the 'Solihull' approach as a method to improve the breastfeeding initiation rates. The Homestart DVD has been produced and will be used to promote the breastfeeding peer support programme. The 'Breastmilk it's amazing' publicity campaign has been extended to include further radio coverage and advertising on buses for up to 12 months. A generic maternity dashboard is now being performance monitored to ensure consistent approach to breastfeeding promotion and data requirements across all maternity providers. An Infant Feeding Coordinator has been appointed to support UNICEF Breast Feeding Initiative implementation; we are working towards stage three. Plans are now in place to improve peer support at antenatal stage to increase number of women initiating breastfeeding which should have an impact on the number of women who continue to breastfeed at 6 - 8 weeks.</p>						

	PI no	Title	2011/2012 Q3 Target	2011/2012 Q3 Actual	On target	Direction of travel
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	NI 60	Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement	75%	54.3% (P)	Red	Deteriorated
<p>Corrective action: Children are seen and safeguarded. However, the volume and complexity of work requiring a detailed assessment continues as it has throughout the previous quarters. This has an impact on the timeliness. The department is ensuring that all staff vacancies and sickness absence are covered with agency staff to ensure there is not a further deterioration in performance.</p>						

	PI no	Title	2011/2012 Q3 Target	2011/2012 Q3 Actual	On target	Direction of travel
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	80%	66.7% (P)	Amber	Improved
<p>Corrective action: A total of fifteen adoptions have taken place up to the end of the third quarter. Of the five cases that were out of timescale, delay was due to specific matching requirements to meet the needs of the children involved and adoptions being contested in court. It is expected that as more children are adopted throughout the year that the year end outturn will be in the region of 80%.</p>						

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012 Q3 Target	2011/2012 Q3 Actual	On target	Direction of travel
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	NI 65	Percentage of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.	15.0% Lower=Better	17.5% (P)	Red	Deteriorated
<p>Context: The number of children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan is increasing. The number of children with a plan in December was 320, of which 82.5% were new registrations. The numbers who are being registered for a second and subsequent time has fallen from 20% in quarter two.</p>						
<p>Corrective action: The comprehensive study of children becoming subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time has been completed. Common factors for children being given a further CP plan include subsequent siblings since their last plan and recurring issues of neglect. The results of this study will help inform the identification of those children who are likely to be subject to a further plan and will enable early intervention or subsequent legal gate keeping procedures.</p>						

Portfolio	PI no	Title	2011/2012 Q3 Target	2011/2012 Q3 Actual	On target	Direction of travel
Children's Services & Lifelong Learning	LOCAL 1503	Number of Early Years settings judged as inadequate	0 Lower=Better	3 (A)	Red	N/A
<p>Corrective action: Settings include: 1 childminder, 1 out of school club and 1 preschool that have been judged as inadequate. Discussions have taken place with the settings and all are being supported through a planned course of action overseen by staff in the SureStart Quality Improvement team. One is due re-inspection shortly and is expected to come out of category. In addition one preschool previously judged as inadequate in 2011 has just been re-inspected and came out with a satisfactory judgement with some good elements.</p>						

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 Safeguarding arrangements for children remain under constant review. In response to the Munro review and the Delivery of Social Work Reform Board recommendations a national review of children's social care processes is being undertaken. Recruitment to outstanding vacant social work posts has continued within the period.
- 3.2 The department is facing pressures in managing within its budget due in part to the continuing adverse economic climate placing further demand pressures on services especially children's social care creates additional challenges.
- 3.3 The successful implementation of actions to deal with issues arising from the recent report into Corporate Governance issues is a key priority for the Council.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable for this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation in relation to the draft Corporate Plan engaged individuals and organisations from across Wirral's diverse communities.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan sets out commitments and clear actions in relation to working with voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to improve outcomes for local people.

The VCF sector is a key partner within Wirral Children's Trust Arrangements and their expertise is utilised in the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) commissioning process.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 7.1 Pressures within the 2011/12 budget are likely to result in a budget overspend of £1m at the end of the year. This is an improved position from previous quarters, largely due to the agreement of the Schools Forum to fund maintenance expenditure and the use of other one-off funding from balances and uncommitted funds. There are still significant underlying pressures within the Children and Young People's revenue budget. Those that are within Children's Social Care for looked after children and within the Integrated Transport Unit are likely to be ongoing requirements, at least in the short term. Work is ongoing with the aim of improving this position where possible. In the longer term the Strategic Change Programme for Looked After Children will help to stabilise the Social Care budget.

The approved Children and Young People's 2011/12 capital programme has increased by £1 million to £32 million (approximately 40% of the Council total). The addition is due to the permission received from the Department of Communities and Local Government for statutory redundancy costs to be capitalised. Expenditure at the end of the year is anticipated to be £23m. The slippage to future years is due to lower anticipated spend for schools modernisation and formula grant. The large schemes in progress include work at Birkenhead Academy, Cathcart Primary and

Pensby Primary/ Stanley Special School. Willowtree the Children's 'Home from Home' was opened in December 2011.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Legal implications relating to the actions set out in the Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Corporate Plan has a clear focus on supporting those who are disadvantaged, including the delivery of specific services and through ensuring that all of Wirral's diverse communities are equally able to access services.

9.2 Equalities implications relating to the actions set out in the Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate, and details set out in individual departmental plans. This work is also monitored by the Corporate Equalities and Cohesion Group and the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Carbon reduction is a specific goal in the Corporate Plan, with associated actions and measures as set out in the agreed Interim Carbon Budget 2011-12.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Planning and Community Safety is a specific goal in the Corporate Plan, with associated actions and measures.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That the content of this report be noted.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 Council approved the Corporate Plan on 18th April 2011. This report provides a quarterly progress on delivering the children and young people's section of the Council's Corporate Plan and the outcomes framework of the Children and Young People's Department Plan. It includes the performance of relevant projects and indicators and the associated financial and risk monitoring information.

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APPENDICES




Appendix 1 Department Performance Indicator Summary







Appendix 1 Department Performance Indicator Summary






Target Summary


% PIs	No. of PIs	
48.00%	12	Green (within +10/-5% of the target)
8.00%	2	Amber (missed target by between 5% and 10%)
24.00%	6	Red (missed target by more than 10%)
20.00%	5	Over-performing (more than 10% of the target)
0.00%	0	Awaiting data
0.00%	0	Target not set
0.00%	0	Not Applicable
100.00%	25	(Note: percentages rounded to 2 decimal places)

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
NI 51	Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) services	16	16	16	16 (A)	Green		
NI 53	Prevalence of breast-feeding at 6-8 wks from birth	35.1%	44.0%	35.1%	30.2% (A)	Red		All midwives have now been trained in the 'Solihull' approach as a method to improve the breastfeeding initiation rates. The Homestart DVD has been produced and will be used to promote the breastfeeding peer support programme. The 'Breastmilk it's amazing' publicity campaign has been extended to include further radio coverage and advertising on buses for up to 12 months. Generic maternity dashboard now being performance monitored to ensure consistent approach to breastfeeding promotion and data requirements across all maternity providers. An Infant Feeding Coordinator has been appointed to support UNICEF Breast

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
								Feeding Initiative implementation; we are working towards stage three. Plans are now in place to improve peer support at antenatal stage to increase number of women initiating breastfeeding which should have an impact on the number of women who continue to breastfeed at 6 - 8 weeks.
NI 60	Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement	75%	60%	75%	54.3% (A)	Red		The volume and complexity of work requiring a detailed assessment continues as it has throughout the previous quarters. Children are seen and safeguarded. This has an impact on the timeliness. The department is ensuring that all staff vacancies and sickness absence are covered with agency staff to ensure there is not a further deterioration in performance.
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	80%	80%	80%	71.4% (P)	Amber		A total of fifteen adoptions have taken place up to the end of the third quarter. Of the five cases that were out of timescale, delay was due to specific matching requirements to meet the needs of the children involved and adoptions being contested in court. It is expected that as more children are adopted throughout the year that the year end outturn will be in the region of 80%.
NI 62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements	9.0% (Lower is Better)	9.0%	9.0%	10.7% (P)	Red		The recruitment plans of Foster Carers have been refreshed in line with the needs identified in the recent sufficiency plan. The

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
								peer mentoring scheme devised by the Fostering Network has been adopted to formalise support networks for Foster Carers. This support will enable greater stability.
NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	70%	67.5%	67.5%	66.2% (P)	Green		
NI 64	Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more	4.0% (Lower is Better)	4.0%	3.5%	3.6% (P)	Green		
NI 65	Percentage of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.	15.0% (Lower is Better)	15.0%	15.0%	17.5% (P)	Red		The comprehensive study of children becoming subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time has been completed. Common factors for children being given a further CP plan include subsequent siblings since their last plan and recurring issues of neglect. The results of this study will help inform the identification of those children who are likely to be subject to a further plan and will enable early intervention or subsequent legal gate keeping procedures.
NI 66	Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales.	100.0%	95.0%	100.0%	96.6% (P)	Green		
NI 67	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.5% (P)	Green		
NI 68	Percentage of referrals to children's social	90%	95%	90%	100% (P)	Over Performing		This indicates that the referrals made are in line with thresholds.

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
	care going on to initial assessment							There has been over-performance as assessments have been entered onto the system beyond the projected completion date and hence a delayed reporting on conversion rate.
NI 70 a	Reduce emergency hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in 0-4 years	212 (Lower is Better)	246	163	192 (E)	Red	n/a	Regular monitoring of the homes safety equipment scheme is undertaken by the Child Safety Implementation Group and actions to reduce accidents are included in all Children Centre delivery plans. This is linked in to the Healthy homes safety pilot in the Wallasey area. A Children's Accident and Emergency Needs Assessment has been commissioned and the findings from this assessment will inform future accident prevention planning.
NI 103a	Percentage of final SEN statements issued within 26 weeks (Excluding exceptions).	100.0%	100%	100.0%	100% (A)	Green		
NI 103b	Percentage of final SEN statements issued within 26 weeks (Including exceptions)	100.0%	98.0%	100.0%	96.2% (A)	Green		
NI 113	Prevalence of Chlamydia in under 25 year olds	30.00%	28.0%	20.00%	20.2% (E)	Green		
LOCAL 117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	7.9% (Lower is Better)	8.9%	8.9%	8.9% (P)	Green		
LOCAL 1400a	Number of looked after children	645 (Lower is Better)	660	645	689 (P)	Amber		The revised Special Guardianship Order policy has been implemented and the

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
								relevant procedures have been recently updated. Staff briefings are scheduled throughout January and February. The LAC Performance Board has been established and meet regularly to monitor, challenge and support managers with regard to the quality and robustness of delivery of individual Care Plans.
LOCAL 1400b	Looked After Children - Placed Out of Borough in Residential Placements	39 (Lower is Better)	39	39	39 (P)	Green		
LOCAL 1405	Percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 10 working days of referral	70.0	65.0	67.5	65.8 (P)	Green	n/a	
LOCAL 1406	Number of Foster Carers	20	27	20	24 (P)	Over Performing	n/a	
LOCAL 1503	Number of Early Years settings judged as inadequate	0 (Lower is Better)	2	0	3 (A)	Red	n/a	Settings include: 1 childminder, 1 out of school club and 1 preschool that have been judged as inadequate. Discussions have taken place with the settings and all are being supported through a planned course of action overseen by staff in the SureStart Quality Improvement team. One is due re-inspection shortly and is expected to come out of category. In addition one pre-school previously judged as inadequate in 2011 has just been re-inspected and came out with a satisfactory judgement with some good elements.

PI No.	Title	Yr End Target	Yr End Forecast	Quarter 3 Target	Quarter 3 Actual	On Target	Direction of Travel	Corrective Action
LOCAL 1504	Number of EY settings delivering flexibility in relation to the 15 hour free entitlement	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	40.1% (A)	Green	n/a	
LOCAL 1505a	Percentage of 0 - 5 year olds registered at a Children's Centre	70.0	71.0	60.0	67.0 (A)	Over Performing	n/a	
LOCAL 1505b	Percentage of 0 - 5 year olds registered at a Children's Centre (Disadvantaged Backgrounds)	70.0	74.0	60.0	70.0 (A)	Over Performing	n/a	
LOCAL 1507	Percentage uptake of schools receiving School Improvement Services.	80	94.0	80.0	94.0 (A)	Over Performing	n/a	

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

21ST MARCH 2012

SUBJECT:	APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION – CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>All</i>
REPORT OF:	ACTING DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members, in accordance with the Constitution of the Council, of those instances where delegated authority has been used by the Acting Director of Children's Services with respect to the acceptance of tenders and to the appointment of Contractors.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The following tenders and appointment of contractors have been accepted by the Acting Director of Children's Services under delegated authority.

Capital Contracts

These are schemes approved by Cabinet as part of the CYPD Capital Programme.

Date	Scheme Details	Contractor	Amount
02/02/12	Overchurch Infant School – Replacement of HORSIA Kitchen	K & C	£635237.02 (£111637.92 fees) plus IT/FF&Equip £20000

Out of Authority Placements

This budget makes education provision for a number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) whose needs cannot be met in maintained schools. The placements not previously reported costing in excess of £50,000 per annum are listed below.

Start Date	School	Ref	Cost
20/02/12	Peterhouse School	LL	£117770

Children's Residential Care Placements

This budget makes provision for Independent Residential Care of Looked After Children. The placements not previously reported costing in excess of £50,000 per annum are listed below.

Start Date	Provider	Swift Reference	Annual Projected Cost
13/11/09	Foster Care Associates (Continuation)	167725	£70230
19/12/11	MCJA Supporting Futures	168591	£96200
30/12/11	Keys Child Care	179028	£179400
14/01/12	Keys Child Care	85937	£135200
31/01/12	Quality Products Children Ltd	464928	£114400
03/02/12	Northumberland County Council	183241	£286318
10/02/12	St Helens Council	109809	£218432
13/02/12	Care Today	118675	£130000
18/02/12	New Focas	417324	£70304

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The number of independent residential care placements increases the financial pressure on this budget, which has in previous years significantly overspent.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Decisions taken following tendering process or consideration of child's individual needs to identify the most cost effective response.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the appropriate bodies/partners before the decision is made.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 Voluntary, community and faith organisations are involved where appropriate.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 7.1 The financial implications are included in the regular monitoring reports to members.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Contractual agreements.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No – All decisions made under delegated authority by the Acting Director of Children’s Services will have been made in accordance with the authority’s equality and diversity policy.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Taking into consideration the needs of the child wherever possible the placements are made within the authority or as close to the authority as possible.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Any planning permission would have been completed prior to capital contracts being accepted.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That the report be noted.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 To inform members of significant items of expenditure in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

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APPENDICES

There are no appendices for this report.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Reference material not required for this report.

SUBJECT MATERIAL

Council Meeting	Date
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	26 th JANUARY 2012
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	20 th SEPTEMBER 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	1 st JUNE 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	15 th MARCH 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	26 th JANUARY 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	14 th SEPTEMBER 2010

