

## **Children & Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Thursday, 24 January 2019**

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Improving Life Chances Strategy Update</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Director for Strategy &amp; Partnerships</b>

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

#### **Background**

The Improving Life Chances (ILC) steering group worked actively on delivery of the strategy from 2015-2017. The group evaluated the causes and impact of poverty, and the work underway through other pledge areas and agreed a focus on targeted action in geographical areas. Targeted 'pilots' were established in St James, Seacombe and Beechwood, and a range of initiatives were put in place working directly with local groups. The pilots completed in March 2018. However, the work in those areas is continuing and is linked to the Wirral Together model through the community services pledge.

In late 2017 the Wirral Partnership agreed that having a separate strategy group meant that action to tackle poverty was not embedded throughout the other themes and therefore did not get the visibility required to ensure the right targeted action. An annual "Improving Life Chances" event is now held once a year and 'champions' from this pledge attend other key Wirral Plan 2020 steering groups to ensure that reducing child and family poverty is a priority across the plan; champions can hold other pledge leads to account. From 2018-19 key measures were transferred to other pledge reports alongside relevant ongoing activities

This report provides an update to the Committee on the progress around tackling child poverty during since the update provided in March 2018.

#### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

The Committee is requested to note the report and provide feedback.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

Feedback is requested to ensure that Member's views are taken into account in the work that is going on across the Borough to tackle Child Poverty. It is important to ensure that feedback from surgeries and local work in the Wards are fed back into the work programme.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

No other options have been considered.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 3.1 Current Wirral Position

# Wirral Plan 2020 - Improving Life Chances 2018-19

Our ambition is to ensure that no child in Wirral lives in poverty. We will start by supporting 1,000 Wirral families to move out of poverty by 2018. This would mean we could reduce child poverty to 20.1%. In those we currently know will fall into our definition of child poverty. In addition to a range of activity across the borough, we will pilot a radical new approach in our communities, where there are particularly high levels of poverty.

To tackle child poverty in Wirral we will...

- Support parents into sustainable employment
- Improve life chances for children and young people
- Help families to become resilient
- Tackle the immediate effects of poverty.



**1)** In August 2013, 21.5% of children were living in low income families. This figure fell to 20.4% in 2015

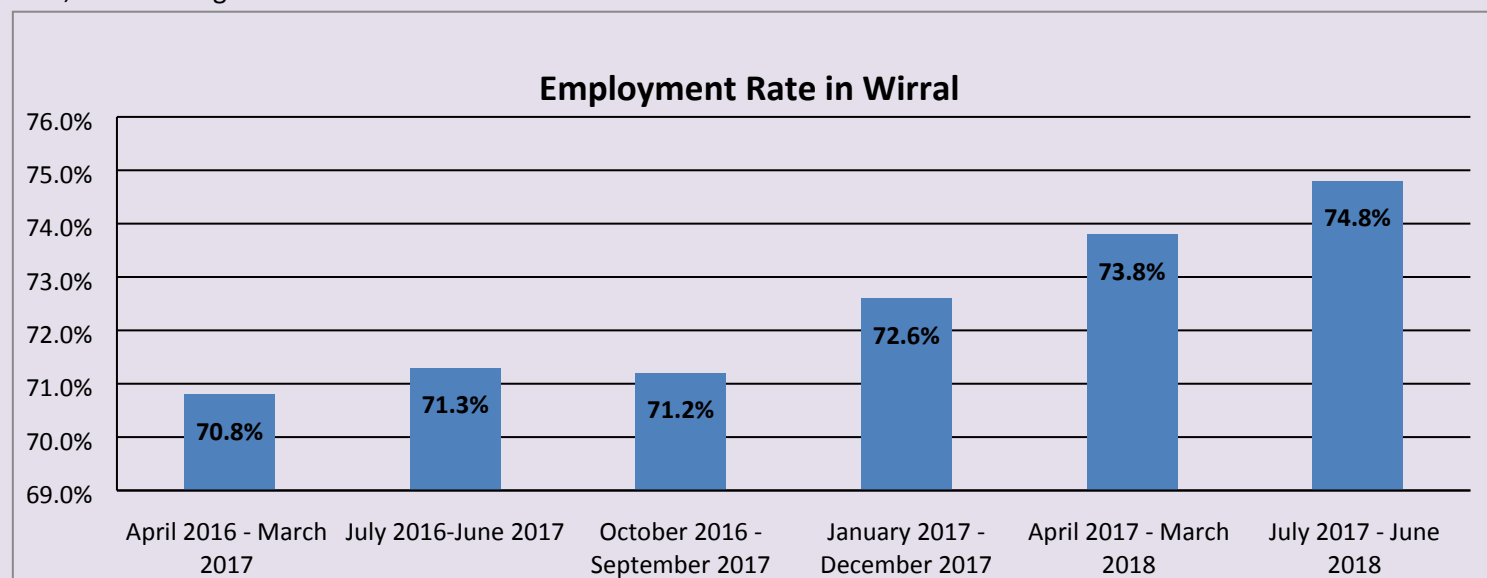
18.5% of children living in North West live in low income families (August 2015)

16.6% of children living in England live in low income families (2015).

**2)** The healthy life expectancy for males in Wirral has increased from 61.1 to 61.4 (January 2014 – December 2016). This is higher than the North West figure of 60.9

The healthy life expectancy for females in Wirral has worsened from 61.7 to 60.3 (January 2014 – December 2016). This is significantly below regional (62.0) and national (63.9) figures.

**3)** The employment rate in Wirral is 74.8% (July 2017 – June 2018). This is the highest figure since the start of the Wirral Plan, when the figure was 66.7%.



Wirral's employment rate is higher than the North West figure of 73.5% and only slightly below the national figure of 75.0%

**4)** 70.5% of children achieved a good level of development at Foundation Stage in 2017-18. This was higher than the regional figure of 68.9% and lower than the national figure of 71.5%.

This is an improvement of 23.3% since 2012-13

**5)** The percentage of permanent exclusions in Wirral secondary schools in 2015-16 was 0.28%. This was below the North West figure of 0.31% and higher than the national average of 0.20%.

Wirral's 2016-17 figure was a 0.17% increase since 2012-13.

**6) Two Year Old Funding:**

Take up of the two year old offer by eligible families as identified by the Department for Work and Pensions was 89% at the end of the 2017-18 academic year. This shows significant progress since the start of the Wirral Plan when take-up was just 70.0% (Q1 2015-16).

**8)** The percentage of women booked to access professional maternity services on or before 12+6 weeks gestation was 89.5% in June 2018.

**7)** 94.0% of early years childcare providers are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted (August 2018)

**9)** In Q1 2018-19, 215 young people received:

204 Direct Payments, 3 Education, Health and Care Plans

8 Personal Budgets

**10) Family Safety Unit:**

Between April – June 2018 there were 276 referrals to the Family Safety Unit. This was higher than the last quarter (238 referrals) - typically there is a seasonal spike in referrals from around May as weather conditions improve as this can be a catalyst for increased alcohol consumption.

In the last week of June 2018 there was a significant increase in the volume of referrals into the FSU.

**11)** Smoking prevalence in adults (age 18 and over) in Wirral has fallen from 17.2% in 2014 to 15.9% in 2017. Wirral's 2017 figure is lower than the regional figure of 16.1% but higher than the national figure (14.9%).

In 2017-18, 3,063 smokers were helped to stop smoking. In 2017-18, 50 pregnant women were helped to stop smoking.

**12) Social Care in November 2018:**

- Rate of looked after children (per 10,000): 122.4 (down from 124.0 in 2017-18)
- Children in need rate (per 10,000): 389.9 (up from 381.2 in 2017-18)
- Rate of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000): 68.2 (up from 46.4 in 2017-18)
- The percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals: 24.6% (up from 17.9% in 2017-18)

**13)** Excess weight in adults has worsened from 59.6% in 2015-16 to 63.3% in 2016-17. Wirral is in line with the rest of the North West (63.3%) and slightly above the National average (61.3%).

In 2016-17, 25.6% of children aged 4-5 years were classified as overweight or obese. This was an increase from 22.9% in 2015-16.

Wirral's 2016-17 figure was higher than both the North West figure of 23.9% and the national figure of 22.6%.

**14)** Anti Social behaviour SB is continuing to reduce. Annual figures at the start of the Wirral Plan were 11837 reports of ASB in Wirral, at the end of year 2017/18 it was 8617 a 37.4% reduction. .

**15)** The % of young people aged 16 and 17 who are not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or categorised as 'not known' in August 2018 was 6.4%.

**16)** The rate of under 18 conceptions (per 1,000) has fallen in Wirral from 33.7 (2013) to 26.2 (2016).

The regional figure in 2016 was 22.3, the national figure was 18.8.

# Wirral Plan 2020 - Improving Life Chances

Our ambition is to ensure that no child in Wirral lives in poverty. We will start by supporting 1,000 Wirral families to move out of poverty by 2018. This would mean we could reduce child poverty to 20.1%. In those we currently know will fall into our definition child poverty. In addition to a range of activity across the borough, we will pilot a radical new approach in our communities, where there are particularly high levels of poverty.

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Dataset Number and Title	Narrative
1)The proportion of children in low income families	The latest update available is a snapshot as at 31st August 2015. This was published in February 2018 due to a two year time lag. Further updates will be reported when they become available.
2) Healthy life expectancy at birth	It's encouraging that the healthy life expectancy at birth for males continues to improve on the baseline (Wirral Plan start). The healthy life expectancy at birth for males increased in Wirral during a period when it decreased across the North West and the rest of the country. On the contrary it's disappointing to see that the healthy life expectancy at birth for females has worsened. The healthy life expectancy at birth for females also decreased across the North West and the rest of the Country.
3) Increase the employment rate in Wirral	Wirral's current employment rate is 74.8% this is the highest recorded figure since reporting started in 2004.. This has resulted in Wirral having a higher employment rate than the North West but juts slightly lower that the national figure
4) Foundation Stage - % achieving a good level of development	Children achieving a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage is 70.6% (2017/18) an increase from 62.8% at the start of Plan. It is above the North West average of 68.9% and just behind the National average of 71.5%
5) Reduce the percentage of permanent exclusions in Wirral - secondary schools	Wirral's 2016-17 figures was a slight increase 0.17% increase since 2012-13.
6) Take up of 2 year old offer by eligible families as identified by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)	Take up of the 2 year old offer has steadily increased from 70% to 91% but this has plateaued following a peak of 95% in Q3 2017/18. The partnership have worked together to introduce a progress tracker for school readiness and are now tracking ~2000 pre-school children. Early years settings have a link Health Practitioner undertaking 2 year old integrated reviews. There has also been a joint approach with partners to improve engagement, including a 'Because I can't ask for your help' 2017 campaign encouraging professionals to link under 5's with local Children's Centres; Children's Centres are now reaching 2,499 more children under the age of 5.

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7) Percentage of early years childcare providers rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	The latest data available from Ofsted DataView is as at 31 March 2018 (93.0%). This shows a 15% improvement since the start of the Wirral Plan. This figure shows an increase of 2% in the percentage of early years childcare providers rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted, since December 2017. Wirral's figure is slightly below the regional and national figure of 94%.
8) The percentage of women booked to access professional maternity services on or before 12+6 weeks gestation	The percentage of women booking into maternity services before 13 weeks gestation has improved in the last year and reached a peak of 89.5% against a target of 90%, however the figure can fluctuate, last quarter dropped to 78%, lower than the start of the plan (80.8%). Of the three measures monitoring development and health visitor reviews, the 6-8 week check undertaken in GP surgery's has consistently performed lower than target (90%), uptake is currently 84% and analysis at ward level has been shared with GP's to identify issues and inform good practice.
9) The number of disabled people in receipt of personal budgets (including Direct Payments and Personal Health Budgets)	215 young people were in receipt of personal budgets which includes 204 direct payments, 3 Education, Health and Care Plan and 8 personal budgets.
10 ) Number of Domestic Abuse cases referred to the Family Safety Unit (FSU)	Between April – June 2018 there were 276 referrals to the Family Safety Unit. This was higher than the last quarter (238 referrals) - typically there is a seasonal spike in referrals from around May as weather conditions improve as this can be a catalyst for increased alcohol consumption. In the last week of June 2018 there was a significant increase in the volume of referrals into the FSU. Monitor the number of Wirral Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) cases: Cases per 10,000 of population are currently 59.3, higher than at the start of the Wirral Plan and significantly higher than England (37.0) and similar force groups (50.0).
11)Smoking prevalence in adults (age 18 and over) in Wirral	Smoking prevalence in adults (age 18 and over) in Wirral has fallen from 17.2% in 2014 to 15.9% in 2017. Wirral's 2017 figure is lower than the regional figure of 16.1% but higher than the national figure (14.9%). In 2017-18, 3,063 smokers were helped to stop smoking. In 2017-18, 50 pregnant women were helped to stop smoking.

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12) Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children in Need rate per 10,000 (0-17 population)</li> </ul> Rate of children who become subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 (0-17 population) The percentage of referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate of looked after children (per 10,000): 122.4 (down from 124.0 in 2017-18)</li> <li>• Children in need rate (per 10,000): 389.9 (up from 381.2 in 2017-18)</li> <li>• Rate of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000): 68.2 (up from 46.4 in 2017-18)</li> <li>• The percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals: 24.6% (up from 17.9% in 2017-18)</li> </ul>
13) Excess weight in adults  Percentage of children aged 4-5 classified as overweight or obese	<p>Excess weight in Adults has worsened from 59.6% in 2015-16 to 63.3% in 2016-17. Wirral is in line with the rest of the North West and slightly above the National average.</p> <p>In 2016-17, 25.6% of children aged 4-5 years were classified as overweight or obese. This was an increase from 22.9% in 2015-16.</p> <p>Wirral's 2016-17 figure was higher than both the North West figure of 23.9% and the national figure of 22.6%.</p>
14) Reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) to Merseyside Police	ASB is continuing to reduce. Annual figures at the start of the Wirral Plan were 11837 reports of ASB in Wirral, at the end of year 2017/18 it was 8617 a 37.4% reduction.
15) The % of young people aged 16 and 17 who are not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or categorised as 'not known' - Post Sept 2016	The % of young people aged 16 and 17 who are not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or categorised as 'not known' in August 2018 was 6.4%.
16) Under 18 conceptions - rate per 1,000	The rate of under 18 conceptions (per 1,000) has fallen in Wirral from 33.7 (2013) to 26.2 (2016). The regional figure in 2016 was 22.3, the national figure was 18.8



#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

Work around improving life chances is co-ordinated through existing staff resources.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Initial risks around delivery of the strategy have been identified and include:

- Availability of suitable employment (includes factors such as skills/experience/hours and transport)
- Parents who have not worked for some time being job ready and there being appropriate support for this to happen (when appropriate)
- Availability of affordable childcare
- Effective engagement with local communities
- Staff capacity to complete child poverty awareness training
- Reliance on small number of individuals within some agencies
- Impact of Universal Credit, money management and budgeting skills.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

The Improving Life Chances Strategy was developed through a partnership steering group and has been subject to wider consultation with residents, partners and other stakeholders through the development of the strategy.

A stakeholder event took place in October 2018 and the feedback from the event has been used to inform the refresh of the strategy.

Since the strategy has been published, the Improving Life Chances Steering Group, involving a number of different partners, has met bi-monthly to discuss progress, celebrate achievements and highlight any issues

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

An Equality Impact Assessment was prepared and published in December 2015.

The document can be found via the link below:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/communities%20and%20neighbourhoods/Equality%20Impact%20Assessments/EIA%20since%202014/Families%20and%20wellbeing/Improving%20Life%20Chances%20Strategy%20-%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment.pdf>

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**APPENDICES**

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date