

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 3 July 2019

Present: Councillor W Clements (Chair)

Councillors	K Cannon	J Johnson
	Y Nolan	I Lewis
	J Robinson	C Povall
	S Spoor	A Wright
	P Stuart	C Carubia
	KJ Williams	C Cooke
	G Wood	

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Ian Lewis declared a personal interest as a trustee of the Leasowe Play Youth and Community Association.

Councillor Cherry Povall declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 7 (Scrutiny Review into Statutory Care Plans) by virtue of membership of the Wirral Fostering Panel.

Councillor Sarah Spoor declared a personal interest as a member of PCPW - Parent, Carer, Participation Wirral.

Councillor Chris Cooke declared a personal interest as a supply teacher in Wirral Merseyside.

Councillor Jean Robinson declared a personal interest as she was connected with an Early Years Contract.

Councillor Wendy Clements declared a personal interest as being employed as an Early Years Educator and Administrator for Moreton Baptist Preschool

Councillor Paul Stuart declared a personal interest as being a foster carer, with his wife, for the local authority.

There were no declarations made in respect of the application of a party whipping arrangement.

### **2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 February 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.**

### 3 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Wendy Clements proposed Councillor Cherry Povall as Vice Chairman

This was seconded by Councillor Alison Wright

There were no other nominations.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That Councillor Cherry Povall be appointed as Vice Chairman**

### 4 **2018/19 QUARTER 4 AND YEAR END WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE**

The Director for Children's Services presented the outturn end-of-year report relating to the 2018/19 Quarter 4 (January - March 2019) performance for the Wirral Plan pledges and provided data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

Members commented on several aspects of the report and were informed:

- That Members would receive updates where the report noted that they would.
- That Wirral scored relatively low for school attendance, being about third lowest for national primary schools and fourth lowest in national secondary schools. Actions had been taken to review the relevant services and see if they were fit for purpose and to identify and work with particular schools on attendance strategy. Work had been targeted on schools with relatively good attendance e.g. 85-90%, where a slight increase could give a higher developmental stage for pupils. Partnership working with communities was also being developed.
- Deliberate and unintentional injuries were collected together as it proved difficult to separate them accurately.
- That under pledge 6 Priority 01, the reason for the redefinition of the production of a guide for people moving to supported or extra care housing would be examined.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

### 5 **IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY & DATA TRACKER**

The Director for Children's Services updated the Committee on the work required to be done following the 2016 Ofsted inspection to improve outcomes for children. A lot of work had been done through Wirral Together partnership to tackle the underlying causes of poor outcomes, and partnerships had been broadened to include the voluntary sector and schools. Initially the work

focussed on the 'toxic trio' areas where the biggest positive impact would result: families with one of more of: domestic abuse; drug or alcohol dependency; and adult mental health conditions. Other areas of particular focus included:

- SEND and inclusion
- youth activities to be planned and presented by young people
- the impact on domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour of Safer Wirral which had been operating for three years
- the Family First intervention service which operated below Social Worker level
- Community Matters programme which directed support to over 900 families
- A joint commissioning strategy to ensure that where resources in different organisations were directed towards common objectives, they would avoid duplication in commissioning work

The outcomes were to go to Cabinet in November.

There had been a more recent Ofsted inspection which ended on 28 June and the formal results were awaited. However, informal feedback did not raise any surprises compared to the self-evaluation, and it had been noted that there would be annual themed inspections.

Members questioned different aspects of the report for clarification and reassurance.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the update be noted.**

**6 SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO STATUTORY CARE PLANS**

Councillor Tom Usher, who had been the Committee Chairman when the Scrutiny Review had been carried out, presented the report which provided the findings and recommendations emanating from the Statutory Care Plans Scrutiny Review. The Review had been arranged to consider criticisms about Care Plans in general, and had met with social workers, young people, partner agencies and housing providers.

Members appreciated the depth of the review and supported the recommendations.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1. the contents and recommendations of the Scrutiny Report, 'Statutory Care Plans' be supported; and**

2. **the report be referred to the next appropriate Cabinet meeting for consideration of the recommendations made.**

## 7 **REALITY CHECK VISIT TO MERSEYSIDE POLICE - FEEDBACK REPORT**

The report provided feedback from a visit to Merseyside Police on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

Members had met three teams:

- The Protecting Vulnerable People Unit (PVPU) domestic abuse team at Birkenhead Police Station and they had met with the Detective Inspector on duty. The Unit also investigated harmful practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage, honour based abuse and stalking.
- The team known as 'Compass' which consisted of officers from Children's Services, Merseyside Police and Catch 22 and investigated all allegations of Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation in Wirral. Members met the team at the Solar Campus in Wallasey, where they were based. The nature of the work was complex and often problematic due to some victim's reluctance to engage with services, however the location of the team within Children's services allowed for effective information sharing.
- A team of Police Community Support Officers and Local Authority staff who identified and supported vulnerable people who had either been victims of crime or high demand generators in terms of needing agency support. The team developed plans to reduce individuals' vulnerabilities and could refer them to third sector organizations or worked alongside them coaching them to overcome their challenges.

It was noted that there were a number of factual errors in the report and an amended would be circulated to members.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

## 8 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**

Committee Members considered the Work Programme for 2019-2020. The Committee, in co-operation with the other three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual Scrutiny Work Programme. The Work Programme was to align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which were within the remit of the Committee.

In February the Committee resolved to create a Tackling Obesity Working Group but some Members who had volunteered to take part in that were no longer on the Committee so new volunteers were requested.

It was also suggested and approved that the Modern Slavery strategy be added to the Work Programme, along with a visit to the Public Health Team.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) the updated Children & Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2019/20 be approved, with the addition of a Modern Slavery strategy and a visit to the Public Health Team;**
- 2) the Tackling Obesity Working Group be comprised of Councillors Chris Carubia, Wendy Clements, Chris Cooke and Sarah Spoor with one free place; and**
- 3) the Chairman and Spokespersons be given delegated authority to make recommendations prior to the next scheduled meeting on 25 September 2019.**

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