

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**Tuesday, 15 June 2021**

REPORT TITLE:	PREVENTION
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an overview of the prevention approach recommended for adoption by Wirral Council, including a Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework. In addition, the report details the Breaking the Cycle programme, which seeks to demonstrate how a collaboration of preventative activity can maximise opportunity and lead to better outcomes for people, services, and organisations.

The report and strategy are aligned to priorities of Wirral Council's Plan 2025:

- Working for brighter futures for our children, young people and their families by breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and raising the aspirations of every child in Wirral.
- Working for safe and pleasant communities where our residents feel safe, and where they want to live and raise their families.
- Working for happy, active and healthy lives where people are supported, protected and inspired to live independently.

This matter affects residents across the borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that:

1. The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework be approved.
2. The Breaking the Cycle programme approach be endorsed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The emerging vision of Wirral Council is *equity for people and place and opportunity for all*, with emphasis on tackling health inequalities and improving outcomes. In this context, it is beneficial for the Council to outline a clear policy statement for prevention which promotes early intervention activity and approaches. The Prevention Framework is a tool for use by any public service to ensure that they are working to meet needs and resolve issues earlier, thereby contributing to Wirral Council's future vision.
- 1.2 Prevention is a cross-cutting theme of significance in Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and Public Health. It is therefore essential that there is cross-Council agreement to prioritise preventative activity and to outline the expectations and delivery methodology for preventative approaches.
- 1.3 The Breaking the Cycle programme is an example of how the Prevention Framework can be used to bring together a range of interventions working towards very similar outcomes. With eight projects, all working with people facing multiple disadvantage, it is anticipated that bringing them into a single programme will maximise the potential of the resource, reduce likelihood of duplication, and increase the chance of successfully supporting local people living in the most deprived wards to turn their lives around.
- 1.4 Supporting the Breaking the Cycle programme provides an opportunity to test the impact and potential of the Prevention Framework. Learning from the experience to then apply similar approaches to preventative work across people services.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is to continue delivering services without a cross-Council arrangements for prevention. However, with demand for acute services continuing to rise and budget pressures increasing, continuing with the existing status quo would make it unlikely that the Council would alleviate those pressures.
- 2.2 Existing arrangements, whereby individual departments lead prevention within their own scope of control, can lead to single-issue responses. Whilst this may be helpful to service providers, in that their single-issue objective is more easily responded to, it does not work well for people or families who experience multiple issues at once. There are many inter-dependencies between key life stages which require a more joined up response from services.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In September 2020, having been successful in securing funding for a range of preventative approaches, members of Children's Services Management Team presented an overview of activity to the Council's Senior Leadership Team. It was agreed that a cross-Council approach to prevention would support the work initiated by Children's Services to have greater impact.

- 3.2 The need for a cross-Council, cross-directorate approach is based on the understanding that the vast majority of children who enter the care system do so because of the circumstances affecting their parents, such as domestic abuse, poor mental health, and substance and/or alcohol misuse. Whilst the adult directly experiences these difficult circumstances, the impact of them is felt by the child and often compromises parenting.
- 3.3 The Council's Senior Leadership Team agreed that a more joined up approach, involving housing, community safety, leisure and library services, as well as Children's and Adult Social Care and Health departments, would lead to more effective prevention and potentially reduce the need for acute services and admission to care.
- 3.4 In the interim there has been a growing focus on health inequalities both at local and national level which add weight to the case for a bold preventative approach. Locally, the Health and Wellbeing Board has been refreshed to place greater emphasis on having an integrated approach to prevention and community-based health and wellbeing services that address wider determinants of health. The emerging vision for Wirral Council is focusing on *equity for people and place* and tackling problems which have become entrenched. Nationally, prompted by impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been many publications such as *The Marmot Review 10 Years On* and *Childhood in the Time of Covid* by the Children's Commissioner, which call for more joined up, preventative approaches.
- 3.5 Following a programme of engagement sessions with multi-disciplinary workers from across the borough, the Prevention Policy Statement, Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle Prospectus, included in the appendices of this report, have been produced.
- 3.6 The Prevention Policy Statement
The proposed policy statement is included in Appendix 1. The purpose of this is to enable Wirral Council to make a clear commitment to prevention within the policy context, highlighting the influential role of the Council and the benefits to people and services.
- 3.7 The Prevention Framework
The proposed framework is included in Appendix 2. This document aims to demonstrate how the Council's policy for prevention can be put into action. The framework is intended for use as guidance for anyone working in public services, as a practitioner, commissioner, manager or leader. It outlines the values and underpinning principles for prevention (as were articulated through the co-production activities) and provides a range of considerations as to how preventative services can be delivered to benefit local people.
- 3.8 The Breaking the Cycle Prospectus
The prospectus is included in Appendix 3. This preventative programme is an exemplar of the policy and framework in action. The programme will bring together eight separate projects, introduce adapted practice across Council services, and pilot an outcomes plan and data collation approach intended to improve understanding of impact.

- 3.9 As reflected within the Prevention Framework, there are many strands of preventative work which could be aligned to, or further developed, under the overarching framework. There is significant work in train to embed a new model of earliest help for children and families utilising the same principles. Likewise, for the new Youth Offer model, *Safer Adolescence Strategy* and emerging *Community Safety Strategy*, prevention is a key focus. Preventing need, such as hospital admissions or care, or extending early help to include those living with frailty, are within scope for a prevention framework approach.
- 3.10 Ensuring a strong relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board as well as the Committees will enable prevention approaches to grow and develop.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. It is intended that existing resources will be used differently as opposed to new resources being sought.
- 4.2 Over the initial course of the Breaking the Cycle programme, which continues up to April 2023, a total of £6.54m is being invested. This includes £682k invested by Wirral Council and £5.858m from other funding sources. Each programme has specific funding, contract management and oversight arrangements. The Prevention Steering Group will have oversight of performance, but responsibility for delivery lies with the nominated Project Sponsors and Project Leads as detailed in the Appendix of the Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.
- 4.3 A number of the catalyst prevention programmes featured within the Breaking the Cycle programme are evidence-based and provide anticipated cost avoidances. Further work to consider cost benefit and cost avoidance will be undertaken throughout the programme to understand how preventative activity can contribute to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework are intended to be beneficial for resources by supporting and enabling public services to deliver high-quality activity for early intervention.
- 6.2 The Breaking the Cycle programme seeks to improve coordination of resource without impacting on staffing or assets.
- 6.3 It is intended that improved data and intelligence will lead to better understanding of need and better understanding of which interventions, or combination of

interventions, lead to the best outcomes for families. An improved level of data maturity can be achieved within the existing ICT capacity and resource.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failing to deliver a co-ordinated approach to prevention programmes presents the risk of missed opportunity, both in terms of meaningfully tackling issues that lead to health inequality and in optimising the funding we have secured for these programmes. The Breaking the Cycle programme seeks to maximise the current opportunity and provide an evidence base for future, long-term preventative programmes.
- 7.2 A Risk Management plan has been completed for the Breaking the Cycle programme and is included within Appendix 3 - Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Over the months November 2020 to April 2021, considerable engagement has taken place to develop the Prevention Policy Statement, Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle Prospectus. Supported by external agency, Peopletoo, activity has included: workshops, focus groups, one-to-one conversations, use of online surveys and interactive message boards. Engagement has been across Council directorates, with partner agencies, third sector organisations and with youth voice groups.
- 8.2 Learning from other relevant engagement and consultation work, including the *Why Community Matters* report on early help, the Youth Offer consultation, and co-production activity for the *Domestic Abuse: No Excuse* and *Safer Adolescence Strategy* has also informed the prevention documentation and programme.
- 8.3 As detailed within the Prevention Framework, co-production is a fundamental building block of preventative activity. The framework outlines the commitment to ensure meaningful engagement and involvement of local people within all aspects of preventative work. The Prevention Steering Group, which will report to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, will have lay member representation for youth and adults.
- 8.4 The Partnership for Children, Young People and Families has had oversight of the engagement work, with progress reports being presented twice during this period. Monthly updates on progress have also been provided to the Programme Management Office.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

- 9.2 It is recognised that a disproportionate number of people facing multiple disadvantage have protected characteristics of the nine groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Breaking the Cycle programme and can be found via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

- 9.3 To ensure that equality implications are appropriately considered throughout the duration of the Breaking the Cycle programme and across further prevention activity, an officer with expertise in Equality and Diversity has been recruited as a member of the Prevention Steering Group.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework are intended for application across public services and relevant to each aspect of the Wirral Plan, including the *sustainable environment* domain. Both documents should be used to inform and support development of prevention activity with Wirral residents in relation to the environment and climate emergency.
- 10.2 There are no environmental or climate implications arising from the delivery of the Breaking the Cycle programme. It will have no impact on the emission of greenhouse gases.

REPORT AUTHOR: Elizabeth Hartley
Assistant Director: Early Help and Prevention
telephone: Tel: 0151 666 4238
email: elizabethhartley@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Prevention Policy Statement
Appendix 2- Prevention Framework
Appendix 3- Breaking the Cycle Prospectus

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Marmot Review report – 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives | Local Government Association](#)

[Health Equity in England The Marmot Review 10 Years On full report.pdf](#)

[Childhood in the time of Covid | Children's Commissioner for EnglandChildren's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
-----------------	------

N/A

NA