



## Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>Date:</b>  | <b>Wednesday, 1 June 2011</b>                |
| <b>Time:</b>  | <b>6.00 pm</b>                               |
| <b>Venue:</b> | <b>Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall</b> |

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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 - 6)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March, 2011.

**3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

If the Council has not appointed Vice-Chairs of Committees, the Committee is invited to appoint a Vice-Chair.

**4. EQUALITY FRAMEWORK - REFERRAL FROM SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD (Pages 7 - 12)**

The Scrutiny Programme Board at its meeting on 2 March, 2011 (minute 56 refers) referred this report with the following resolution:

'That each of the five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees be requested to receive the presentation by the Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager, to assist them in further developing the Council's scrutiny function so that the Council is on course to achieve Excellent status of the new Equality Framework for Local Government in November 2011.'

Jacqui Cross, Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager, will give a presentation to the Committee.

**5. PRESENTATION ON FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2010/11**

The Fourth Quarter Performance Report on activities relevant to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is available to view in the web library and a presentation will be made to the Committee.

**6. SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION REPORT (Pages 13 - 72)**

**7. SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES - DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE (Pages 73 - 88)**

**8. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENTAL PLAN 2011-12 (Pages 89 - 118)**

**9. APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000 (Pages 119 - 122)**

**10. WORK PROGRAMME**

Report to follow.

**11. FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period June to September 2011 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.

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

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 March 2011

|                         |             |   |  |
|-------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| <u>Present:</u>         | Councillor  | C Meaden (Chair)  |  |
|                         | Councillors | W Clements<br>K Hayes<br>P Hayes<br>T Harney<br>A McArdle | C Povall<br>T Smith<br>W Smith<br>P Williams |
| <u>Co-opted Member:</u> |             | J Owens   |  |
| <u>Apologies</u>        |             | A Scott   |  |

### 52 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 P Hayes declared a prejudicial interest in minute 55 (Scrutiny Review of Access to Alcohol by Young People) by virtue of him deputising at the forthcoming Licensing, Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee on Monday 21 March which would be considering a report, 'Consultation – Minimum Price for Alcohol'.

Councillor C Meaden declared a personal general interest because of her daughter's employment within the Children and Young People's Department.

### 53 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced that she had received the resignation of Richard Neale, Church of England Diocesan representative, and that she had written to him to thank him for his work on the Committee. The diocese would notify the Authority as soon as a replacement was found.

### 54 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meetings of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 January and 16 and 24 February, 2011.

**Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 26 January and 16 and 24 February, 2011 be approved as a correct record.**

55 **PRESENTATION ON THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2010/11**

Nancy Clarkson, Head of Planning and Performance, gave a presentation on the third quarter performance report and upon key activities which were relevant to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

She gave details of what was working well and also of key performance issues which had not met their targets and key risks including:

- The implementation of Council budget savings, management of the early voluntary retirement and severance schemes and changes in human resources procedures would have the potential to impact on the levels of service delivery across the Department's responsibilities. This would require careful management to minimise volatile service delivery, reduced Service Level Agreement take up and income from schools, reputation issues and to ensure continued focus on critical issues.
- The need to review and re-state the relevant PFI contractual documentation in respect of the Birkenhead University Academy occupying the current Park High School was a risk in respect of the turnaround required. This problematic situation also applied to other PFI schools moving to Academy status.
- Every effort was being taken to ensure negotiations regarding the Greater Merseyside Connexions contract did not result in disruptions to continuity in service provision.

In respect of the financial position, the latest projected budget variation was £1.3m (a reduction from £1.8m previously reported). There had been further increases in residential care, adoption and projected court and legal costs. Residential care placements (48 at 31st December 2010) had exceeded the target of 39, as did the numbers of agency foster placements.

Responding to comments from Members, the Interim Director stated that staffing was regarded as a risk as the Department needed to ensure that any changes made would have minimal impact. Out of the 327 taking EVR or voluntary severance only 27 of these were in the Children's Social Care Branch. He also elaborated on the negotiations which were ongoing in respect of the Connexions contract.

The Interim Director reported that the National Strategy Programme for schools and a number of other initiatives were coming to an end in March, but with falling rolls in secondary schools it was the intention to continue providing the same level of service to schools even with a reduction in staffing levels. Packages of support would be designed in partnership with schools, the Department's role being as a co-ordinator with advisory teachers and other staff being seconded as much as had happened in the past.

The Interim Director stated that he would bring a report to the September meeting of the Committee on the restructure of the Department which included a reduction in the number of branches from 4 to 3.

**Resolved – That the presentation be noted.**

56 **COMMITTEE REFERRAL - SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ACCESS TO ALCOHOL BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN WIRRAL**

(Councillor P Hayes, having declared a prejudicial interest (see minute 52 ante) left the meeting whilst this item was considered.)

The Chair introduced and commended the report on the Alcohol Scrutiny Review which had been referred by the Scrutiny Programme Board on 5 January, 2011 (minute 44 refers) to a number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The review had been managed by the Scrutiny Programme Board due to the cross-cutting nature of the topic and the impact on a number of areas such as health, young people, anti-social behaviour / community safety, trading standards and licensing.

The Panel of 4 Members, chaired by Councillor Dave Mitchell together with Councillors Sue Taylor, Chris Meaden and Ann Bridson had focussed its review on “access to alcohol by young people in Wirral” due to the high profile and significance of excessive drinking among young people.

The report gave details of the main issues for review which had been identified in the scope document. The Panel had used a number of methods to gather evidence for the review, including meetings with key officers, visits to local communities accompanied by Youth Outreach Workers and written evidence. The final report contained eleven recommendations, which would be presented to Cabinet on 17 March.

Members of the Committee welcomed the report giving their own personal insight into some of the issues raised. The need for multi-agency partnership working involving young people was acknowledged and the need to change the attitudes of some adults. The Interim Director welcomed the reference in the report to the outreach work being undertaken by his department.

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

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

The Interim 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:

- Out-of-authority placements
- Children’s residential care placements
- Safeguarding for children and young people

**Resolved – That the report be noted.**

58 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received an update on its work programme.

The Chair referred to the “Narrowing the gap” – Impact of deprivation funding’ scrutiny review, and suggested that this be carried forward to the work programme for the Committee in the new municipal year together with the proposed scrutiny review of work at Oaklands (minute 47 (26/1/11) refers).

**Resolved – That the report and suggestions of the Chair be noted.**

59 **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.**

60 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair informed the Committee of a number of items of urgent business which needed consideration prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

1. Ofsted Inspection

The Interim Director of Children’s Services gave a brief summary of the Ofsted inspection into safeguarding of children and its services for children in care (looked after children) which had been published on Friday, 11 March, following an inspection undertaken in January and February. The Ofsted report stated that the leadership, management and partnership working were ‘outstanding’ and that services for children and young people in both areas were ‘good’ with a ‘good’ capacity to improve further.

He reported that he would bring the report to the next meeting and would arrange for its circulation to Committee members. The Committee asked that its congratulations be conveyed to all the staff in the Department.

2. Falling Rolls

In respect of this item, the Chair declared a personal interest on behalf of all Committee members who were governors of secondary schools.

The Interim Director gave a breakdown of the falling rolls for secondary schools over the next 4 years as follows:

- 2011 – 418
- 2012 – 397
- 2013 – 362
- 2014 – 327

In September 2011, out of the 4210 places available in Year 7 in secondary schools the intake would be 3451 pupils a gap of 759 places. Of the 22 secondary schools, 11 were within 10 or less of their admission number, 4 were 15 or more outside their admission number and 7 had 50 or more places available.

The Interim Director alerted the Committee to the possibility of potential redundancies within schools and outlined the budgetary implications, although with schools having only just received their budgets a more detailed picture would emerge in the next few weeks. He stated that he would be happy to bring a report to the next meeting.

### 3. Pay harmonisation

At the request of the Chair, the Interim Director reported upon the latest situation in respect of pay harmonisation and gave details of the funding available and the ongoing work to broker a solution and address the issue of back pay which included seeking a majority view from the Schools Forum. A report on the issue would be considered by the Cabinet on 17 March.

### 4. Commissioning

The Interim Director gave an update in respect of commissioning. With tender documents going out shortly, due back in early May, new contracts were due to be in place in June.

The Committee also expressed its thanks to Simon Garner, Caroline McKenna and Tracey Coffey, Strategic Services Managers within the Children and Young People's Department, for their very informative training session on child protection and children in residential care which they had given to Committee members on 7 March.

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2011

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>  | <b>EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT<br/>– COUNCIL PROGRESS TOWARDS EXCELLENT STATUS</b> |
| <b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>  | <b>ALL</b>   |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>  | <b>DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>  |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER: LEADER (FINANCE AND BEST VALUE)</b> | <b>COUNCILLOR JEFF GREEN</b>   |
| <b>KEY DECISION</b>  | <b>NO</b>  |

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 4 March 2010 the Programme Board received a report entitled Equality and Diversity – Council Progress and agreed to further develop the scrutiny function to incorporate the criteria of the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to remind Members of the Council’s achievements in being awarded Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in November 2009, to highlight the role for scrutiny to ensure that the Council reaches ‘Excellent’ status of the new Equality Framework for Local Government by November 2011 and to propose that the Scrutiny Programme Board and the five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees each receives a presentation on the criteria of the Equality Framework for Local Government, at their first meetings in the new Municipal Year, so that Members are fully equipped to provide effective scrutiny in the areas identified as being necessary for Excellent accreditation by the November 2011 deadline.
- 1.3 It is proposed that the presentation is made by Jacqui Cross, Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager, who is leading the Council’s programme to reach ‘Excellent’ status.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That**

- (1) the progress made to date with regard to the Equality Standard for Local Government be noted; and
- (2) this Programme Board and each of the five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees be requested to receive a presentation to help them further develop the Council's Scrutiny Function so that the Council is on course to achieve excellent status of the new Equality Framework for Local Government in November 2011.

## **3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 3.1 To ensure the Council is fulfilling all of the criteria necessary in respect of the Scrutiny Function for it to progress and be awarded excellent status in respect of the Equality Standard for Local Government in November 2011.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 At the Scrutiny Programme Board meeting on 4 March 2010 the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services provided Members with a report that contained an overview of the Council's achievements, which led to the award, in November 2009, of Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- 4.2 Achieving Level 3 had been a major milestone for the Council. Members had been made aware that the Improvement and Development Agency assessors had considered it to be a 'good and solid level 3'. Details of a number of appointments, which had significantly improved the Council's capacity to provide the necessary leadership had been provided and it had been noted that expertise to ensure that equality and diversity issues had been embedded across the organisation. The report had also set out examples of the ways in which the Council had led the way in Wirral in relation to the equality agenda.
- 4.3 The report had informed that the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) had developed a new Equality Framework for Local Government, which had now replaced the original Equality Standard. Instead of reaching Levels 1 to 5, Councils would now work towards the following three levels:
  - Developing
  - Achieving
  - Excellent
- 4.4 The Council had automatically migrated to 'Achieving' status of the new Framework and would need to be assessed for 'Excellent' status by November 2011 or risk having 'Achieving' status removed. Therefore, an action plan for reaching 'Excellent' status was currently being developed by the Corporate Equality and Diversity team.
- 4.5 The report had also set out a number of areas, highlighted by the new Equality Framework for Local Government, as being in need of effective scrutiny in order for the Council to reach 'Excellent' status by November 2011 and the Chair of the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee had indicated that Equality and Diversity had been a major focus of her Committee

and she had referred to the work that had been undertaken to achieve Level 3 of the original Equality Standard.

## **5.0 BEYOND LEVEL 3 – EXCELLENT STATUS**

5.1 The Action Plan for reaching ‘Excellent’ status, developed by the Corporate Equality and Diversity team, is currently being refreshed following:

- The publication of the Government’s equality strategy, ‘Building a Fairer Britain – December 2010, and
- The publication of the Council’s Corporate Plan – publish date not yet known

## **6.0 THE ROLE OF SCRUTINY IN REACHING ‘EXCELLENT’ STATUS**

6.1 The Equality Framework for Local Government highlights the need for effective scrutiny in the following areas:

- (a) Is the Council meeting its equality objectives in partnership with others?
- (b) Is the Council able to identify how communities are changing and the impact this may have on equality priorities?
- (c) Can the Council demonstrate improvements and outcomes as a result of its Equality Scheme?
- (d) Is the Council scrutinising its own and its partnerships’ performance with regard to equality objectives and outcomes?
- (e) Can the Council demonstrate that commissioned/procured services are delivering the Council’s equality objectives?
- (f) Are communities involved in the scrutiny process?
- (g) Do Members and Senior Officers demonstrate personal leadership and understand the relevance of equality and cohesion to their local communities?
- (h) Are equality impact assessments built into all aspects of decision-making, scrutiny and policy reviews?

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 The report sets out the improvements necessary to the Scrutiny Function for the Council to attain Excellent status in respect of new Equality Framework for Local Government by November 2011. If the Scrutiny Function does not develop as indicated in the report the Council runs the risk of not attaining Excellent status.

## **8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8.1 There are no other options to consider at this time. The Council has indicated it wishes to pursue Excellent status.

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

9.1 The Council's single equality scheme 'Equality Watch Scheme 2009 – 2012 is due to be refreshed during April to June 2011 to take into consideration the Equality Act 2010. Consultations will take place across the Council, with partner agencies and among members of the Council's equality watch scheme.

## **10.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

10.1 Any voluntary, community, faith sector organisation providing services on behalf of the Council will need to adopt acceptable equality practices as prescribed by the Council.

## **11.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

11.1 There are no additional resource implications.

## **12.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (b) advance equality of opportunity, and c) foster good relations.

## **13.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (b) advance equality of opportunity, and (c) foster good relations.

13.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- (a) Is an EIA required? No
- (b) If 'yes', has one been completed?

## **14.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 No

## **15.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 No

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## **APPENDICES**

None

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

### **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

| <b>Council Meeting</b>          | <b>Date</b>         |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Scrutiny Programme Board</b> | <b>4 March 2010</b> |

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2011

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                      | <b>SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION REPORT</b> |
| <b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>              | <b>ALL</b>  |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>                    | <b>DAVID ARMSTRONG</b>  |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b> | <b>COUNCILLOR MRS SHEILA CLARKE</b>                             |
| <b>KEY DECISION?</b>                 | <b>NO</b>   |

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the outcome of the Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection which was undertaken by OFSTED between 24 January and 4 February 2011.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the positive and successful outcome of the inspection by OFSTED and the action plan which has been produced to meet the areas for development.

#### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 OFSTED is the regulator for childrens 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.

#### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The inspection was led by a Lead Inspector with 3 Inspectors, a shadow Inspector and an Inspector from the Care Quality Commission who inspected health services.
- 4.2 The inspection took evidence from a number of sources. These included discussions with children and young people and their families who receive services, social workers and their front-line managers and senior officers including the Interim Head of Safeguarding, the Head of Branch for Children's

Social Care, the Interim Director for Children’s Services, and the then Interim Chief Executive. Elected Members and a range of community representatives were also seen by the inspection team.

- 4.3 The inspectors undertook a structured review of 20 case files and took evidence from a further 29 cases which they randomly selected. They also reviewed a number of documents, reports and procedures. This enabled the inspection team to form a view of services provided over time and the quality of reporting, recording and decision making undertaken.
- 4.4 The grades which OFSTED use to judge services are: inadequate (fails to meet minimum requirements); adequate (only meets minimum requirements); good (exceeds minimum requirements) and outstanding (significantly exceeds minimum requirements). The following chart sets out the grades received in this inspection.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Safeguarding services</b>  |             |
| Overall effectiveness   | Good        |
| Capacity for improvement  | Good        |
| <b>Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people</b>                    |             |
| Children and young people are safe and feel safe                              | Good        |
| Quality of provision  | Good        |
| The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe | Outstanding |
| <b>Services for looked after children</b>                                     |             |
| Ambition and prioritisation   | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management   | Outstanding |
| Performance management and quality assurance                                  | Good        |
| Partnership working   | Outstanding |
| Equality and diversity  | Adequate    |
| <b>Services for looked after children</b>                                     |             |
| Overall effectiveness   | Good        |
| Capacity for improvement  | Good        |
| <b>How good are outcomes for looked after children and care leavers?</b>      |             |
| Being healthy   | Good        |
| Staying safe  | Good        |
| Enjoying and achieving  | Good        |
| Making a positive contribution, including user engagement                     | Good        |
| Economic well-being   | Adequate    |
| Quality of provision  | Good        |
| <b>Services for looked after children</b>                                     |             |
| Ambition and prioritisation   | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management   | Outstanding |
| Performance management and quality assurance                                  | Good        |
| Equality and diversity  | Adequate    |



## **Safeguarding Services**

- 4.4 In Safeguarding Services, the overall effectiveness of services was rated as good, and capacity for improvement was rated as good. The inspectors noted the council and its partners were able to demonstrate improvements in service provision, and leadership at all levels across the partnership was active, visible and effective. It was also noted that there was outstanding multi-agency commitment to service development, and workforce planning to develop managerial and professional expertise is outstanding with a healthy culture of investment in staff development. The inspectors commented positively on the range of services and support for disabled children and their families through Aiming High.
- 4.5 The inspectors also grade safeguarding outcomes for children and young people. In this area, the inspectors said that children and young people were safe and feel safe, and rated this outcome as good. The quality of provision provided to support children to feel safe and be safe was rated as good. Performance management and evidencing how services were monitored and overseen was also rated as good.
- 4.6 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. In each of these areas the inspectors highlighted outstanding work in supporting children and families. These included the active role of health visitors in the childrens centres, the senior strategic commitment to developing services across agencies, the political consensus in ensuring services are appropriately resourced, the support and direction provided to frontline staff by senior managers and workforce planning in ensuring there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced staff. The Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Childrens Trust were seen as providing clear leadership and direction.

## **Services for Looked After Children**

- 4.7 The inspectors graded the overall effectiveness of services for looked after children as good and the capacity for improvement as good. In particular, the inspectors commented on the strong leadership of the Corporate Parenting Group and the shared political commitment across all parties and key partners to improve outcomes for looked after children. The inspectors also commented on the strong track record of improvement and the clear vision and strategy for looked after children.
- 4.8 The inspectors graded each of the outcomes for looked after children. Being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving and making a positive contribution were graded as good. The inspectors undertook a survey of looked after children and of those who responded, 94% reported that they felt very safe and 91% said there was at least one person they could talk to if they felt unsafe. The report reflects the finding that access to specialist health support was quick and health needs were addressed through good health plans. A significant number of placements were stable and foster carers reported good support and

access to training. Inspectors view was that high priority is given to improving the educational outcomes for all looked after children, and there were robust systems to monitor the attainment and progress of all looked after children from the early years foundation stage to the final year of compulsory schooling. The Children in Care Council were praised for their involvement in the strategic planning for the delivery of services. The survey of children in care revealed that more work is required to publicise the existence of the Children in Care Council to all looked after children. Children and young people reported that they felt well supported by their social workers and carers and were able to express their views.

- 4.9 Economic well-being was graded as adequate. The inspectors acknowledged that the strategy and procedures were in place to improve performance, but were yet to have a positive impact on outcomes. Care leavers reported that they were very satisfied with the support they receive and accommodation options for care leavers were well developed with partners. The inspectors noted that compared with care leavers regionally and nationally, fewer care leavers in Wirral were in education, employment or training and that too many young people drop out of their chosen courses and find work hard to find. The quality of pathway plans was also inconsistent, in planning for appropriate targets and support. However, the inspectors noted a number of initiatives are now underway and that the service knew the young people leaving care very well.
- 4.10 The inspectors graded the quality of provision and performance management as good. They commented that there was robust scrutiny of independent placements and there was very good support for children based on individual needs. Progress in responding to the last adoption inspection was positively commented upon and the reviews for looked after children by independent reviewing officers were well attended by relevant partner agencies.
- 4.11 The inspectors graded the ambition and prioritisation and leadership and management for looked after children as outstanding. Multi-agency planning at the Childrens Trust Board and the Corporate Parenting Group were seen as delivering effective, integrated multi-agency working and there was an excellent focus on user engagement.

### **Equality and Diversity**

- 4.12 In both the Safeguarding and Looked After Children elements of the Inspection, equality and diversity were rated as adequate. The needs of children were often identified, but the inspectors commented that there was a lack of depth in the assessment, planning and recording in the case files, evidencing how these needs affected each individual child; and how their individual needs would be met. Also, inspectors found that a full picture of the child did not come across in as much detail as required in their records.

## **Areas for Development**

4.13 The inspection report gives a number of areas for development. These are areas which will be reviewed and progress monitored, in future inspections. There are no areas for priority action, which would mean a higher degree of monitoring by OFSTED in future inspections.

4.14 In the Safeguarding part of the Inspection, there are 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.

4.15 In the Looked After Children part of the Inspection, there are four areas for development to be completed within three months. These are 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

4.16 A detailed action plan has been drawn up by the department encompassing the areas for development and also additional actions extracted from the body of the OFSTED report, which will support the continuous improvement journey to make the transition to outstanding, in all areas. This action plan will be developed in team and Branch plans and will be monitored on a monthly basis by the department. Progress on the action plan will also be reported to the Council's Safeguarding Reference Group.

## **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

5.1 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 sued 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.

## **6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

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

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

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

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

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

## **9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

9.1 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.

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no legal implications.

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The inspection report highlights this as an area that is currently adequate. The action plan addresses how this will be improved.

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no carbon reduction implications.

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no planning implications

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

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**APPENDICES**

**INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SERVICES - OFSTED 11 MARCH 2011**

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION ACTION PLAN**

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

| <b>Council Meeting</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|
|                        |             |

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# Inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council

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**Inspection dates:** 24 January-4 February 2011

**Reporting inspector** Ralph Trevelyan-Butler

**Age group:** All

**Published:** 11 March 2011

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## About this inspection

1. The purpose of the inspection is to evaluate the contribution made by relevant services in the local area towards ensuring that children and young people are properly safeguarded and to determine the quality of service provision for looked after children and care leavers. The inspection team consisted of three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), one HMI shadowing the inspection and one inspector from the Care Quality Commission. The inspection was carried out under the Children Act 2004.
2. The evidence evaluated by inspectors included:
  - discussions with children and young people receiving services, front line managers, senior officers including the interim Director of Children's Services and the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, elected members and a range of community representatives
  - analysing and evaluating reports from a variety of sources including a review of the Children and Young People's Plan, performance data, information from the inspection of local settings, such as schools and day care provision and the evaluation of a serious case review undertaken by Ofsted in accordance with *'Working Together To Safeguard Children', 2010*
  - a structured review of 20 case files for children and young people with a range of need and an analysis of key documents from a further 29 cases selected by inspectors. This provided a view of services provided over time and the quality of reporting, recording and decision making undertaken
  - the outcomes of the most recent annual unannounced inspection of local authority contact, referral and assessment arrangements undertaken in July 2010
  - interviews and focus groups with front line health professionals, managers and senior staff from NHS Wirral and health provider trusts.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

3. All inspection judgements are made using the following four point scale.

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Outstanding (Grade 1) | A service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements |
| Good (Grade 2)        | A service that exceeds minimum requirements               |
| Adequate (Grade 3)    | A service that only meets minimum requirements            |
| Inadequate (Grade 4)  | A service that does not meet minimum requirements         |

## Service information

4. Wirral is a very distinct area: a peninsula covering 60 square miles between the Mersey and Dee estuaries. Almost two-thirds of the population live within the urban area to the east of the M53 motorway, the largest towns within this being Birkenhead and Wallasey, with also several smaller dormitory towns situated in the countryside or along the coastline. It is well served by the motorway network, and is connected via Merseyrail to mainline rail routes leaving Liverpool and Chester. The birth rate had been falling for some time, although there has been a slight upturn since 2006. The proportion of residents from minority ethnic groups is small, and consists mainly of Chinese, Indian, Bangladeshi, African-Caribbean and Polish populations with the Chinese and Bangladeshi communities the largest of these. The ruling political administration is formed from a Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition, which delivers all the local authority services as a metropolitan borough.
5. The range of socio-economic circumstances in Wirral is huge. Some of the coastal areas on Liverpool Bay and the Dee are very prosperous. However, the Birkenhead conurbation, which was once a centre for the shipbuilding industry, contains some of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in England. This means that in Wirral the proportion of children living in low income households ranges from 1.2% in some areas to 86.4% in others. Overall, disadvantage predominates and the unemployment rate in Wirral is above the national average. The borough as a whole was ranked as the eighth worst out of the 354 English districts for employment-based deprivation in 2007.
6. Wirral Children's Trust Strategic Partnership is comprised of all organisations who work with children, young people and families in Wirral. It is led by the Wirral Children's Trust Board, which has representatives

from a range of agencies including the borough council, NHS Wirral, Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue, a range of school representatives including governors, a further education representative, Merseyside Probation Service, Jobcentre Plus and representation from voluntary and community bodies. There are multi-agency service groupings such as the Drug and Alcohol Team and agencies focussed on youth offending.

7. There are three local authority children's homes and 303 foster homes. Residential and foster home placements are commissioned from registered and approved independent providers. At the time of the inspection there were 660 children and young people looked after by the council.
8. Community-based social care services are provided in four districts, each with assessment and care management teams. Services for children with additional needs are supported by 11 local area teams, each covering a political area forum. One area team has been co-located as part of a pilot and the remaining teams are due to be co-located later in 2011. There is a borough wide Central Advice and Duty Team and an out of hours child and adult duty team.
9. There are three maintained nursery schools, 91 maintained primary schools, 22 maintained secondary schools, 11 maintained special schools, one pupil referral unit and a hospital school. The arrangement of secondary schools and colleges is diverse. There are grammar schools and all-ability comprehensive schools. Four secondary schools are Catholic in ethos, two of which are single sex grammar schools. Within the maintained provision are an 11–16 academy and an all-age academy (3–18) for girls. Half of the secondary schools are single sex, and 17, including some high schools, have a sixth form. There is a sixth form college and a general further education college.
10. The Wirral 14–19 strategic partnership is the key forum for driving forward 14–19 reform and developments. Membership of the strategic partnership includes representation of third sector representation, Greater Merseyside Connexions partnership, training providers, further education colleges, sixth form colleges, schools, the local authority and the faith sector. Apprenticeships are delivered by a wide range of private training providers and Wirral Metropolitan College. Post-16 foundation learning in the borough is currently delivered by a core of five private training providers, including Scientiam Ltd, Morthyng Vocational College, The Vocational College, Shaw Trust and Rocket Training. Substantial foundation learning provision in the borough is also provided by Wirral Metropolitan College. Provision of Community and Adult Learning and wider family learning is provided by the local authority, schools and Wirral Metropolitan College.

11. Within Wirral, the commissioning and planning of national health services and primary care is undertaken by NHS Wirral. Universal children's services including health visiting are delivered by the provider arm of the trust. Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust provides all acute services at Arrowe Park Hospital. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are provided by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Foundation NHS Trust through commissioning contracts with NHS Wirral.

## Safeguarding services

### Overall effectiveness

**Grade 2 (good)**

12. The overall effectiveness of safeguarding services is good. Statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding are met. The council and its partners are able to demonstrate improvements in service provision through good use of findings from inspections and audits and from user feedback. Good quality assurance processes are embedded and support continual improvement of services provided jointly and by individual agencies. Leadership at all levels across the partnership is active, visible and effective in improving services and is based on a strong commitment to safeguard the most vulnerable young people in Wirral. Strong political commitment across all parties ensures the prioritisation of services to protect children and provides stability in long term planning. Good change management is achieved through careful planning for continuity at a senior level. Risks including those posed by budget reduction are known and well managed.
13. Representation at a strategic level on the Wirral Children's Trust Board is a strength, as is the commitment from all partners to active participation. The extensive range of members includes very effective representation from the voluntary sector, community groups and commissioned services. Strong engagement of the education sector, including school governors, maintains continued involvement of schools and colleges as the control of the local authority is reduced through the creation of academies. The Wirral Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) is effective and the lines of accountability between the WSCB and the trust board are clearly defined and understood. The outstanding multi-agency commitment to service development is the basis for the development of a programme to co-locate staff in area teams. Following a successful pilot scheme there are firm plans to establish the remaining 'virtual teams' in 2011. This development is supported well through the work of the children's centres, particularly in the most disadvantaged communities.
14. Workforce planning to develop managerial and professional expertise is outstanding. The strategy outlined in the children and young people's department plan ensures there is a healthy culture of investment in staff development. The extensive MBA programme promotes the skills of senior managers and there are excellent opportunities for all staff to develop their practice and managerial skills. Staff view this very positively and state that this, along with clear managerial support and direction, is why they applied to and have remained working for the council.
15. Clear thresholds established by the WSCB are understood by all agencies. Compliance is monitored through regular audits and workers in all agencies use the escalation process to challenge decisions they consider

inappropriate. As a result there are fewer and more appropriate referrals to children's services, improving the capacity of the borough wide central advice and duty team to deal with contacts. The integrated working guidance summary is clear and is of very good quality, and the guide to completing the common assessment framework (CAF) is excellent. This demonstrates strong leadership by the safeguarding board and embodies safeguarding as the responsibility of all workers and agencies.

16. The central advice and duty team is effective in providing a prompt and appropriate initial response to all contacts for social care. The work is actively reviewed by the team on a weekly basis to monitor and improve the service to children and families. Good links with the out of hours team ensure a prompt response and both teams make good use of the electronic recording system (ICS). However other teams report that the system does not support good practice and is slow to use, especially alongside the requirement to maintain duplicate paper files. There is evidence of improving practice in initial and core assessments, although these need to consistently reflect the child's views and wishes. Direct work with children and families is judged as adequate or better. There are effective arrangements in place to monitor performance in terms of the quality of work and timescales. The council accepts there is more to be done to ensure the needs of children and families from minority ethnic communities are fully taken account of and recorded in assessments, plans and reviews.
17. Users are involved and consulted in service review and design. The Wirral Children in Care Council is consulted on new plans and schemes through presentations at their meetings and through representation as a lay person on the WSCB. Parents have been actively engaged in decisions on how to use the 'Aiming High' funding to develop short breaks for young people with disabilities. The local authority engaged parents very well in the analysis of need and service planning to develop creative schemes to meet the needs of young people including those with more complex needs. Parental involvement included the drawing up of specifications and the tendering process.

## **Capacity for improvement**

## **Grade 2 (good)**

18. The capacity for improvement is good. The local authority and its partners have clearly identified their joint priorities to deliver and sustain improved outcomes for children. They have a clear and shared understanding of the needs of the most vulnerable children and families. The local authority demonstrates a strong commitment to service improvement. An additional investment of £690,000 to children's services was made in 2009 in recognition of the need to improve management and social work capacity.
19. Succession planning in children's services to support continual improvement is very good. An interim Director of Children's Services was

appointed in November 2010. The quality of leadership provided by the interim director is excellent, and the internal appointment has ensured a seamless transition. The strong commitment to funding children's services by politicians and senior managers has minimised the impact of current spending cuts on front line social care services. Where savings have been made, the challenging process of reducing staff required through budget savings has been handled sensitively by the interim Director of Children's Services and senior managers.

20. There is a good focus on action required following the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements undertaken in July 2010. The action plan deals appropriately with all four areas for development, with clear timescales for completion and close monitoring of implementation. There is a very good cross agency focus on learning the lessons from serious case reviews, with good evidence of a track record of improving outcomes. There is evidence of progress and some good quality recording and direct work with children. However in some instances seen by inspectors the quality of recording and direct work is only of an adequate standard.

### **Areas for improvement**

21. In order to improve the quality of provision and services for safeguarding children and young people in Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, the local authority and its partners should take the following action.

#### **Within three months:**

- Ensure the records of assessments include the risk and protective factors.

#### **Within six months:**

- 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.
- 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.



## Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people

### Children and young people are safe and feel safe

#### Grade 2 (good)

22. The effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people are safe and feel safe is good. The scrutiny of children's social care files randomly selected for this inspection and the previous unannounced inspection provides evidence that appropriate action is taken to respond to risks by suitably qualified and experienced social workers. In cases analysed by inspectors children had been appropriately safeguarded. Managerial oversight of these cases is consistently well evidenced and ensures that effective and timely intervention is taking place. Ofsted inspections of schools, residential settings and colleges in the local authority show that arrangements for keeping children and young people safe are almost always good
23. The leadership and challenge to partners shown by the Children's Trust Board and the WSCB are strong, and contribute to the safeguarding of children. The local authority conducts an annual "Feel Safe" survey of all young people and the latest results show that the large majority feel safe. Any concerns raised such as fear of being alone or of bullies are taken seriously and followed through by staff in partnership with schools. A survey of the views of children and young people, conducted as part of this inspection, found that children felt safe and had been advised well about strategies for keeping safe. Very few children expressed concern about bullying. Generally children and young people were clear that anti-bullying strategies in schools are effective in reducing the incidence of bullying. They told the inspectors that they learn about a range of safety, health and wellbeing issues through the work of different agencies, such as the police and health. Internet and mobile phone safety are given a strong focus in schools and support young people's understanding of the potential dangers in social networking. Children and young people on school councils demonstrated excellent understanding of tolerance and equality issues.
24. The management of allegations is overseen by the local authority designated officer (LADO) and scrutinised by the safeguarding board to ensure high standards of safeguarding practice. The role of the LADO is clearly defined in accordance with statutory guidance and the post holder has established effective links with other agencies. The partnership has a clear understanding of the difference between the LADO function and disciplinary and criminal processes. Referrals in 2010 increased significantly on rates recorded in 2009, demonstrating that awareness has been raised. Allegations are managed appropriately, leading to improved levels of safety for children and young people. The management of

complaints made by children against staff is understood well by the council and its partners on the WSCB.

25. Early intervention services are very good and effectively identify and take account of the needs of families and children who require support. The model of practice developed in the co-located team is outstanding and integrated working is well embedded. The Aiming High programme has developed a wide range of services, with good quality safeguarding practice, to ensure children are safe. As a result, families have access to an increased number and range of short break services.
26. Arrangements in place for responding to children and young people missing from education, home and care are good. All children who go missing are debriefed through a service commissioned from Barnardo's. The police and other agencies have a good understanding of the needs of these children and intervene well in related issues that may need to be considered, for example, to support young people who are missing and at risk of being sexually exploited.
27. The contribution of multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) to keeping children safe is good with excellent attendance from a range of agencies. Commitment from the police is very good. They have a strong focus on early identification of offenders who present a potential threat to children and families and act to reduce the risk. There are regular meetings involving the police and senior managers to review information on missing children and families. The partnership has a specific framework in place to support young people who are missing and at risk of being sexually exploited.
28. The participation of children and parents in case conferences is good, as is the access to advocacy support. Managerial oversight of cases is consistently well evidenced, and ensures that effective and timely intervention takes place when children and young people are thought to be at risk of harm. The children and young people who met with inspectors reported that they were fully involved in reviews and planning meetings. However, the scrutiny of completed common assessment records shows that children's views are at times missing or too cursory. 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. Overall parents and carers state that their diverse needs are recognised and taken into account.
29. Robust policies and processes ensure full compliance with safer recruitment guidance. The inspection of personnel records and feedback from front-line staff demonstrate that there is a rigorous tracking and reviewing system within children's social care services to ensure that staff who work with children and young people are appropriately vetted. Staff

files are adequate overall although information is not always easily accessible in one place to provide a clear audit trail. The shortfalls have been recognised and an electronic system is being introduced. Contracting arrangements by health partners to safeguard children are robust.

30. Partnership arrangements work very well to safeguard children and identify needs at an early stage. The family intervention project is effective in supporting hard to reach families and promoting positive outcomes, including reducing the need for young people to become accommodated. The project is well regarded by service users, who find their contact with the team positive and helpful. Family centres are used well to inform child protection and care proceedings. They undertake parenting assessments, and supervise contact in a child-centred environment.

## Quality of provision

## Grade 2 (good)

31. The quality of provision is good. Early intervention services are very good. The model of practice adopted by the initial pilot to develop the co-location of all teams is outstanding. The Rockferry area team has established strong inter agency working at a local ward level. The model supports the team around the child and CAF activity very well, enhanced by the role of the dedicated area social worker. There is evidence of cases being appropriately escalated to and de-escalated from social care intervention. This ensures agencies are appropriately engaged to provide varying levels of support to children and families based on their individual needs.
32. The team around the child and the CAF processes are well embedded across Wirral. The lead professional role is assumed by a range of partners such as teachers and health professionals. The continuum of need approach to threshold management is well established and ensures that the appropriate level of response for children and young people is identified. Practitioners across all agencies share a common understanding of thresholds of need and eligibility for both preventative and protective services. Good examples were seen by inspectors where support for children and their families was timely and led to improved outcomes.
33. The Central Advice and Duty team within the children's social care service offers a good level of responsiveness to all initial contacts. These are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner, with a good standard of management oversight and decision making. A particular strength is the explicit rationale for decision making noted on all cases within the team. Services to support preventative work with young people are of good quality or better. There is a range of imaginatively commissioned services such as the early intervention project for children and young people at risk of offending. All key youth support services managed by the local

authority are co-located, ensuring greater opportunities for dialogue and targeted provision of services to those in most need.

34. The disabled children's team offers a comprehensive and responsive service to children and their families. The quality of response to crisis situations via their family support team is good. The response service provides bereavement counselling for children.
35. All child protection cases are allocated to social workers and the timeliness of completion of initial and core assessments is improving. Recent data shows 70% of initial assessments are completed within timescale and the council's own un-validated data records an improvement in the timeliness of core assessments in spite of a rise in volume. The out of hours emergency duty team has a range of systems, partnership arrangements and resources in place to deal with requests for out of hours services and intervention. The team has good 24 hour access to legal advice to support the quality of decision making.
36. Child protection investigations are comprehensive and of good quality. They are completed by suitably qualified and experienced social workers, within timescales that have the welfare of the child at the centre. The disabled children's team undertakes child protection investigations that are of good quality and consistent with practice in district teams. Assessments effectively safeguard children and young people and the quality of analysis is at least adequate and good in some cases. However risk and protective factors are not always made explicit within assessment reports.
37. The involvement of children and families in assessment processes is good and is promoted by a number of initiatives including family group conferences, advocacy services and interpreters. The use of the CAF is well embedded within education and health services. The multi-agency team around the child processes are well established and in cases inspected the quality of meetings and their recording was of good quality.
38. The timeliness of reviews and planning meetings is good and monitored by the WSCB. However 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. The council's own quality assurance systems had identified this concern prior to the inspection and subsequent actions on the cases ensured safeguarding concerns had been recognised and acted on.
39. Case recording is up to date and provides an adequate account of case activity. Management oversight is evident in case records and actions to be taken are appropriately recorded. Staff report they are well supported in case planning processes by the legal gate-keeping panel. It is a

strength that the local authority has acted to increase the capacity of the legal team to meet the growing demand.

40. Families report that they are aware of how they will be supported to achieve the aims of child protection plans and what they have to achieve to fulfil the plan. It is clear from case files and from service users that children in need and their families are informed and involved in the planning and provision of services to meet their needs.
41. Child protection reviews are held within statutory timescales and there is a robust quality assurance system that ensures high standards of practice and the progress of plans. Overall, case planning, reviews and recording are good. Children are visited regularly and in most cases the purpose and intended outcome of particular visits are clearly recorded. Child protection plans are sufficiently focussed and in most cases include achievable and measurable outcomes. Agency reports presented to initial child protection conferences are generally of good quality.

### **The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe** **Grade 1 (outstanding)**

42. The contribution of health agencies to joint commissioning is outstanding. There is a strong and effective joint commissioning framework in place for health, supported by a sustained and committed investment from both Wirral Primary Care Trust and the council. As a result there has been improved access to CAMHS across the borough. The commissioning lead for children and families maintains a strong focus on targeted service delivery. The well established joint funding arrangements with the council provide the framework to deliver the key priorities agreed in the Wirral Children and Young Peoples Plan, for example, to increase resources in the children's disability service.
43. Performance of service delivery by provider organisations is robustly monitored. This is against comprehensive service specifications, quality schedules and the priorities agreed within both the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Wirral Children and Young Peoples Plan. There is significant health representation at the WSCB and its sub groups from the primary care trust, the acute trust and the CAMHS provider trust. There is good strategic representation on the Wirral Children's Trust Board.
44. There is strong and effective leadership across the designated and named lead professionals. Particularly good progress has been achieved with training for GPs across all practices, supported by an enthusiastic named GP. A flagging code has been devised to alert staff on any child or young person with child protection or safeguarding issues. This has been implemented by a number of practices across the borough. There is a good focus on engaging dentists with increasing numbers attending

safeguarding training. Dentists interviewed demonstrated a good understanding of child protection and safeguarding issues.

45. Partnership work with other key agencies is outstanding. All healthcare professionals interviewed referred to excellent partnership working in place by all health agencies, as well as schools and colleges, social care and housing and voluntary agencies. The team around the child framework is used very successfully to bring all partner agencies together to deliver earlier interventions and targeted work with children and their families.
46. Health professionals contribute well to child protection conferences and core group meetings either by attending or submitting reports. There is improved access and attendance at safeguarding training, with more robust monitoring of implemented training. Staff from across the health agencies are attending the NSPCC safeguarding supervision training. They are now able to act as supervisors to facilitate increased access to supervision.
47. There is outstanding targeted work in children's centres with the most vulnerable children and families. Excellent multi-agency programmes have been implemented involving health visitors, speech and language therapy, social care, education and housing, which have seen increased engagement with families and improving outcomes. Parents interviewed expressed a high level of satisfaction with services across health. Some had experienced a delay in accessing services initially, reported to be due to lack of communication and inconsistency of social workers, but once receiving services, they were very satisfied.
48. A recent reconfiguration of health visitors into geographic locations has been implemented. This enabling improved targeting of resources on early intervention with most vulnerable families. The universal health programme is being delivered with a risk based, skill mix approach. Packages of care, once agreed, are faxed through to the relevant GP and social workers, so that if any family miss appointments the GP is fully aware of the agreed care pathway and the family is contacted sooner. There is very good liaison with the social workers in area teams, which has improved communication; health visitors attend regular meetings. Family nurse partnership midwives are well established and effective prioritisation ensures they have a manageable case load of between 20 and 25 of the most vulnerable families. This enables more targeted interventions, particularly for young mothers.
49. School nurses report much improved multi-agency working, particularly with CAMHS. There is much better communication with social care and school nurses feel better informed about thresholds when making referrals. Team around the child is seen as key to expedite interventions with children and young people from all key agencies.

50. The post of primary mental health worker has recently been introduced to deliver earlier interventions to more vulnerable children and young people, and create a more comprehensive CAMHS across the borough. This is already having a positive effect in improving both the appropriateness of referrals into the service and the timeliness of response. There is a well established Tier 3 service across the borough. Waiting times for the service reflect the national average of around six to eight weeks. Fast track access to CAMHS is available for looked after children, of around one week and other urgent referrals are assessed according to individual need.
51. Emergency and unplanned care is delivered in a dedicated children's emergency department within the Acute Trust. There is an excellent system in place for tracking children and young people, overseen by the paediatric liaison manager who screens all attendances within the department and the adjacent out of hour's emergency centre. Health visitors, social workers and school nurses are alerted to all safeguarding issues including repeat attendees and those who do not attend follow up children's out patient's clinics.

## **Ambition and prioritisation**

## **Grade 1 (outstanding)**

52. Ambition and prioritisation is outstanding. There is an outstanding level of commitment to improving services for children and young people in Wirral shared by the leader, Lead Member, Interim Chief Executive and the interim Director of Children's Services. The commitment is shared by partner agencies at a very senior level. There is a political consensus that services to children, young people and their families are a priority that must be appropriately resourced.
53. Partners on the well established Wirral Children's Trust Board have a clear vision set out in the Children and Young People's Plan. There is a good track record of target setting and delivering improvements to safeguarding services for children. This is demonstrated in the remodelling of the workforce and co-location of staff to provide good quality early intervention services. The commitment of all agencies is exemplified in the decision to retain the Wirral Children's Trust Board, even though this is no longer a statutory requirement.
54. Wirral Council's commitment to developing its children's workforce management group is outstanding. The consequence is that service development is planned and implemented with contemporary expertise at its core, positively effecting outcomes in the safeguarding of children and young people. The workforce is motivated and committed to improving safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.
55. Senior managers in children's social care offer outstanding support and share a clear vision with front line managers who in turn consider they are professionally valued and well engaged. Social workers consider that their views are appreciated and welcomed, and that there is a strong learning

culture. The investment in management capacity has enabled social workers to feel more confident and better supported in the challenging decisions that they make.

56. Issues local to Wirral, such as high levels of domestic abuse in particular areas, are identified and prioritised leading to very effective multi-agency working to improve safeguarding outcomes.

## **Leadership and management** **Grade 1 (outstanding)**

57. Leadership and management are outstanding. The interim Director of Children's Services and senior managers know their services well. Areas requiring improvement are known, the risk is assessed, and appropriate action is taken. The excellent commitment to workforce development is not only reflected by the head of social care's work with the National Social Work Reform Board, but by the recent Director of Children's Services work with the Association of Directors of Children's Services as lead on workforce development. His appointment as Director of Adult Services in Wirral ensures continuity and has already improved cooperation with adult services with joint representation on the two safeguarding boards. Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council fully supports senior managers to complete the MBA programme with Chester University. Change in the council is driven by managers using the most contemporary methods and underpinned by an advanced level knowledge base. There are clear pathways for management training and development across all tiers of managers.
58. The good workforce development plan ensures that there are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced staff. There is ongoing recruitment of social workers to minimise risks posed by staff turnover. There is a strong commitment to ensuring sufficient social work and management capacity through the use of experienced and committed agency workers who receive good support and incur no additional charge for participation in training. There is a good focus on tackling staff whose performance is not of an acceptable standard. Good systems are in place for managers to tackle poor performance and unjustified absences in a sensitive and yet effective manner.
59. Joint commissioning arrangements are effective and demonstrate good leadership that has resulted in a range of imaginative services that support the safeguarding of children and young people. There is good user engagement in the groups that determine how the Aiming High funding for children with disabilities is spent. Parents are represented on all groups and gave examples to inspectors of how services have been developed to meet the individual needs of children and young people and which ensure good value for money. They consider that their contribution is valued and listened to and 'you are treated as an equal'.



60. Financial resources are used effectively. The recent investment in children's social care has been used well to strengthen management capacity and oversight. This has led to improvements in the quality of assessment and decision making and the promotion of joint working. The good family group conferencing service has supported the return home of children placed outside of the borough, and made significant savings as a result. Resources have been used effectively to commission the young carers project. Good pre-commissioning activity and tendering processes ensured value for money and the project worked with 84 children and young people in 2010.
61. The views of children and young people have a direct impact on service development. The Children in Care Council is routinely involved in the review and planning of wider services other than those directly related to looked after children. The Lead Member and interim Director of Children's Services attend meetings when invited. A representative of the Children in Care Council is a member of the WSCB. Young people on the edge of care told inspectors that they are respected and fully included in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their programmes. There is a well established complaints and representation process that is valued and used by young people.
62. There has been excellent work to engage headteachers in multi-agency working to improve safeguarding and outcomes for all children and young people including the most vulnerable. The interim Director of Children's Services worked very closely with schools to re-model the service in his former role. All headteachers spoken to state that they have shaped and influenced the development of area teams, and there is very good communication with the representatives on the WSCB. They consider that the management of change has been led very well, and have confidence in the leadership of the Department.

## **Performance management and quality assurance**

### **Grade 2 (good)**

63. Performance management and quality assurance are good. There are rigorous audit systems in place that are having a direct impact on improving the quality of work. There are regular monthly audits by the quality assurance team, which consist of a detailed and clear analysis of casework. The summary reports for managers and staff incorporate the independent reviewing officers' quarterly returns on the quality of reviews and case conferences. Ownership by staff is gained through periodic audits led by the Head of Branch that include representation of managers and practitioners from a range of teams. The robustness of the local authority auditing of the case files randomly selected by the inspectors was good. The clear analysis includes criticism of the historic slowness to recognise the increasing risks to the children and shortfalls in assessments. Management information is contemporary, accessible and

relevant to the role of the service and there is a positive culture of challenge by peer managers. Managers' rationale for decision making is discussed and case planning amended where it is considered to be inappropriate. The council recognises that the quality and recording of supervision is an area for development identified at the unannounced inspection and have a robust action plan in place to deliver improvements.

64. The WSCB is robust in auditing the work of agencies and their compliance with action plans arising from serious case reviews. There is a good system in place for multi-agency auditing of CAFs and team around the child work. The group is chaired by the CAF coordinator with health, education, and the third sector as well as social care. It meets monthly to audit 30 cases. Impact is evidenced by the improved feedback from parents and children on the forms. The MAPPA board ensures performance is maintained in line with national guidelines and Key Performance Indicators and provides good quality accountability and transparency.
65. The information team in the local authority provide team managers with an accurate weekly analysis of activity ensuring managers know their business very well. The contact duty and assessment team has a weekly team meeting where data and thresholds are appraised, future activity is planned and thresholds are constantly reassessed. Health partners have strong and effective performance and quality frameworks in place. Monthly meetings are held with commissioners to monitor performance against clear contractual arrangements for safeguarding.

## **Partnership working**

## **Grade 1 (outstanding)**

66. Partnership working in Wirral is outstanding. Partner agencies work very closely together at a strategic level through the Wirral Children's Trust Board, which provides strong leadership at a high level to deliver the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan. The engagement of the third sector at a strategic, operational and commissioning level is outstanding. This high level of cooperation is supporting the establishment of co-located teams to develop strong partnership working in service delivery and particularly early intervention and support to children and families.
67. There is highly effective partnership working in the WSCB to safeguard children and deliver high quality and accessible multi-agency training opportunities underpinned by a good workforce strategy. Attendance from different agencies is monitored and action taken to increase the participation of target groups. A high priority is given to learning the lessons from serious case reviews and includes regular reporting from all agencies and multi agency audits of whether there have been improvements to practice. Good partnership working was promoted through piloting a review of a serious incident using the Social Care

Institute for Excellence model. Staff were engaged well and found it to be a positive learning experience.

68. The frameworks developed to promote partnership working in service delivery are very good. The integrated working guidance is very well written and is a user friendly tool for frontline practitioners. The guide to completing the CAF is excellent. It demonstrates strong leadership by the safeguarding board and embodies safeguarding as the responsibility of all agencies. Information sharing protocols are in place and include the third sector.
69. There is a very good focus on reducing incidents of domestic violence. This is given a very high priority across the safeguarding partnership. The multi-agency risk assessment conference arrangements are strong. Prompt interventions facilitated by a specifically developed electronic information sharing database give all professionals instant information about activity and interventions undertaken across the partnership. The police make a very active contribution and engage schools through the confidential sharing of information about domestic violence.

## Services for looked after children

### Overall effectiveness

**Grade 2 (good)**

70. The overall effectiveness of services for looked after children is good. Statutory requirements are well met by the council and its partners and the majority of outcomes are good. There is strong leadership in the Corporate Parenting Group that promotes good outcomes and acts as an advocacy and challenge process. There is a shared commitment from key politicians and all political parties as well as key partners to improve outcomes for looked after children. The highly articulate representatives on the Children in Care Council are strongly engaged in service reviews, development and design. However the survey conducted for the inspection found that the Children in Care Council is not sufficiently known to all looked after children. Case files inspected were at least of a satisfactory quality with evidence of some good direct work. However the identity needs of children and young people were not consistently identified or met, and did not sufficiently tell the child's story
71. Good outcomes are achieved in looked after children's education through good prioritisation and strong partnership working. This is evidenced in the council's key strategic plans and in the high level of commitment and aspirations of managers and front-line staff in schools, the pupil referral unit and other alternative provision. However personal education plans are not of a consistently good quality. The engagement of health agencies to promote the health and well being of looked after children is good with prompt access to services such as CAMHS. The reducing number of children in out-of-borough placements is well managed and monitored. The local authority recognises that the engagement of looked after children in education, employment or training is low and has taken steps to improve performance in this area.

### Capacity for improvement

**Grade 2 (good)**

72. The capacity for improvement is good. The council has a consistent track record of sustained improvement in outcomes for looked after children and young people. The council and its partners have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the service, and the shortfalls are identified and acted upon. Partners have a clear vision and ambition, with agreed priorities to sustain improvement. There is a good strategy in place to develop both the quality and the capacity of foster carers including the jointly funded therapeutic fostering scheme. The local authority and its partners have invested in a good range of interventions to reduce the need for children to become looked after. However this has yet to be reflected in the numbers looked after.

73. Workforce planning to develop managerial and professional expertise is outstanding. The strategy outlined in the children and young people's department plan ensures there is a healthy culture of investment in staff. This contributes to improving the quality of direct work and planning as well as providing greater stability reducing the number of changes in social workers for young people. The excellent engagement of young people through the Children in Care Council ensures the review and planning of services takes account of young people's views and wishes. The involvement of Children in Care Council representatives in the training and interviewing of social care staff ensures practice is sensitive to their views and experiences.

### **Areas for improvement**

74. In order to improve the quality of provision and services for safeguarding children and young people in Wirral, the local authority and its partners should take the following action.

#### **Within three months:**

- Promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council to get their views across.
- 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.
- 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 personal education plans for the youngest children in care and the pathway plans for care leavers.

## How good are outcomes for looked after children and care leavers?

### Being healthy

**Grade 2 (good)**

75. Health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers are good. Direct work with looked after children and young people is accessible and of good quality. There is fast track access to services across health including joint funded CAMHS workers, speech and language therapy and sexual health services. Training has been provided to help foster carers support young people when discussing sexual health and wellbeing issues and to help signpost to appropriate services. A weekly health clinic, including well being and mental health, is provided in the care leaving team for young people.
76. The quality of health records examined is good. All records contained health care plans and there is good evidence of tracking young people who do not attend for health assessments and appointments. All files examined contained a good chronology of health events. Sharing of information across agencies is good, with looked after children review summaries included in health files.
77. The number of completed initial and review health assessments is reported to be 89%, and 87% of looked after children and young people have received the recommended immunisations, which is good compared to similar authorities. However there is no comprehensive performance management tracking system to verify these figures. A spreadsheet has been implemented to track the flow of looked after children both in and out of the borough. There is good communication from children's social care services with notifications, such as change of placement address, being received within two working days.
78. A high number of looked after children are placed by other councils in independent placements in Wirral. The commissioners plan to improve funding for the provision of healthcare for these children through a recharging mechanism. Monies will then be redirected into the looked after children health team to support safeguarding activities.

### Staying safe

**Grade 2 (good)**

79. Safeguarding arrangements for looked after children are good. The young people spoken to by the inspectors said they felt safe. Of the looked after children and young people who responded to the survey undertaken as part of the inspection, 94% reported that they feel very safe or fairly safe and 91% said that there was at least one person they could talk to if they felt unsafe. In total 77% found the advice that they got from adults about keeping safe was useful.

80. The council recognises that the relatively high number of looked after children placed with parents represents a potential risk. These placements are effectively scrutinised by senior managers to regularly review progress of the plans. This, together with accessible legal advice, ensures cases are promptly returned to the court where orders can be safely discharged or for action where placements are considered unsafe. The judgement for protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them to stay safe was good in the inspection of the local authority fostering service in 2008, and satisfactory in the inspection of the local authority adoption service in the same year. In the most recent inspections of the three local authority children's homes the judgement for protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them to stay safe was good or better. The development of a good range of multi-agency early support initiatives and improved screening by the central advice and duty team reduce the risk of children becoming looked after.
81. The stability of placements is improving both in terms of long term stability and a reduction in the number of changes of placement, resulting in young people feeling safer and more secure. Foster carers consider they have good access to training to improve their ability to meet young people's needs and reduce the risk of placement disruption. Foster carers report that there is better matching of placements and fewer requests for them to take placements which fall outside of their approved registration.
82. Good commissioning and monitoring arrangements promote the safeguarding of looked after children placed out of the borough. Almost 90% of placements are within 20 miles of the young person's family. Effective strategies and planning are in place to identify which looked after children can return home, with good use made of family support. Missing from care arrangements are effective and promote the safety of children and young people. Looked after children and foster carers receive training from the Wirral Looked After Children Education Service via the internet on bullying issues.
83. A sound and well established complaints procedure is supported by good links with the independent advocacy service and children's involvement officer, enabling young people to raise their concerns. The complaints service provides good support to children and young people who make complaints. This includes following up with them to ensure that they are satisfied with the outcome. Only half of the young people surveyed as part of the inspection knew how to make a complaint. The Children in Care Council has identified raising awareness about how to complain as one of its priority actions in 2011-12.
84. The advocates participate in the monthly young people's meetings in the children's homes. The availability of independent visitors is good, with no delays in appointments; this provides access to independent adults to share concerns or issues over safety.

**Enjoying and achieving****Grade 2 (good)**

85. The impact of local services on helping looked after children and young people enjoy their learning and achieve well in their education is good. High priority is given to improving educational outcomes for all looked after children. This is well articulated in the council's key strategic plans and reflected in the high level of commitment and aspirations of managers and front-line staff in schools, the pupil referral unit and other alternative provision. In the survey conducted as part of this inspection 96% of looked after children say they go to school at present, 87% feel that they are getting a good education and 73% feel that they always or usually get help with their education.
86. The virtual school, through its committed headteacher and staff, provides effective leadership across Wirral for the education of looked after children. The training for designated teachers has been successful and there is improved identification of gaps in learning. Support to improve literacy and numeracy has had a positive impact on outcomes. One to one tuition, tailored resources, mentoring and the good use of personal educational allowances to provide enrichment and other activities contribute to good learning in school.
87. The virtual school headteacher and the Wirral Looked After Children Education Service support schools well. They have in place robust systems to monitor the attainment and progress of looked after children from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to the final year of compulsory schooling. Senior officers have recognised the need to challenge outcomes beyond the statutory age of 16 so that young people are better prepared for further education or training.
88. Personal education plans (PEPs) are completed for most pupils and the completion rate stands at 85% at the time of this inspection. The virtual headteacher has identified the need to improve the completion of PEPs for the youngest children and to formally feedback to staff on their quality as this is currently inconsistent. The Children and Young People's Plan clearly identifies that more needs to be done to close the gap in attainment between looked after children and all other children in Wirral. In order to achieve this high numbers of looked after children are placed within Wirral, and they do not move schools if at all possible especially when studying for their GCSEs. Those educated out of borough usually have the highest levels of needs. Their progress and attendance at school are rigorously monitored. The headteachers of out of borough schools contacted during this inspection said that communication with Wirral officers and front line staff was 'superb'.
89. Over the past three years the proportion of looked after children with special educational needs has remained stable and in line with the national figure. Twenty five looked after children participated in the test of 11-



year-olds in 2010. Thirteen achieved Level 4 and above in English, (52%) and, in mathematics, fourteen children reached that level (56%). The target set for 2010 was met in mathematics and almost met in English. These results matched those of similar authorities and were above the national average for looked after children. Of the fifty looked after young people who took their GCSE in 2010, thirty-one were in mainstream schools, twenty were in special schools and three were in alternative provision. The proportion of young people who sat at least one GCSE exam was well above the England average, at 83% in 2009 and 84% in 2010. Results overall are above average for looked after children with 78% achieving at least one GCSE at grades A\* to G (nationally 72%), 55% achieving at least five GCSE at grades A\* to G (nationally 51%) and 29% achieving at least five GCSE A\* to C (nationally 26%). However, 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.

90. No looked after child was permanently excluded between 2008 and 2010. A recent permanent exclusion took place of a young person who entered care in December 2010. Alternative educational arrangements are now in place. The number of looked after children who are excluded on a fixed-term basis is reducing and is close to the national average. The local authority and schools work very well together to avoid exclusion. Robust challenge and support to schools is helping them find effective solutions, for example the outstanding outreach work and provision at one of the primary special school offers tailored behaviour support packages.
91. School attendance is closely monitored and a range of well-planned strategies is in place to reduce persistent absenteeism. The gap between the attendance of looked after children and of all children in Wirral is closing. Latest data show that authorised absence rate for looked after children was 4.3%, similar to the national figure of 4.5%. Unauthorised absence was only 1%, better than the national figure of 1.7%. Overall absence was 5.3%, which is well below the national figure of 6.2%. The proportion of persistent absentees was only 3% against a national figure of 4.9%. The local authority conducts a thorough analysis of attendance by year group and phase. Looked after young people in Year 11 have improved their overall attendance from 86% in June 2009 to 90.6% in June 2010. There is a wide range of actions to promote good attendance including rewards, certificates, and monthly meetings of key personnel including the head of the education welfare service, clear guidance to children's homes staff and ensuring that the issue of attendance is highlighted in the training of foster carers.

92. Looked after children and care leavers have free access to a wide range of facilities through sport, leisure, drama programmes and other cultural activities. They have good access to the Duke of Edinburgh and Playing for Success programmes. The personal education allowance of £500 per person is used effectively to ensure that young people take part in exciting activities. Tranmere Rovers football club provided activities for ninety looked after young people between February 2010 and October 2010. Foster carers are very positive about the programme. A good range of after school activities is provided through extended schools and the virtual school. The "Step into Leisure" programme for eight to sixteen year olds is successful in ensuring that young people develop key skills. Officers are aware of some shortages of activities for children with a disability. They continue to improve access to activities through the Aiming High funding, such as better facilities in Barnstondale activity centre. Officers are currently developing ways of receiving feedback from foster carers and from looked after children who have a disability to maximise access to free leisure.

### **Making a positive contribution, including user engagement**

#### **Grade 2 (good)**

93. Arrangements to support children in making a positive contribution are good. The Children in Care Council and young people and care leavers who met with inspectors were very able to express their views confidently. Their views and experiences are being used to inform training for social workers and carers. Looked after young people are involved in leading training sessions for social workers at local universities to raise awareness of the lives of children in care.
94. The Children in Care Council influences the recruitment of staff through membership of selection panels. They have produced DVDs which are used in training for staff and carers and feel that this has had a positive impact in reducing the number of changes in social worker. Young people seen by inspectors said that they felt well supported by their social workers and carers and were able to express their views.
95. Looked after children are involved very well in influencing council policy and practice through membership of the Wirral Corporate Parenting Group, the WSCB and the fostering panel. Members of the Children in Care Council have been involved in the 'Be a pushy corporate parent' conference, raising awareness of what makes a difference for them. This has had a positive impact on practice such as how learning mentors for looked after children are deployed in schools.
96. The Children in Care Council has been effective through its consultation with young people over developing the pledge and achieving a change in the name to the Wirral promise, which is more meaningful to the young people. The Children in Care Council recently received over 200 responses

to a questionnaire and has used this information to identify key areas for future work. In an Ofsted survey as part of this inspection, 60% of looked after children and young people reported that they had not heard of the Children in Care Council.

97. Good engagement of the Youth Offending Service with looked after children, supported by greater integration, has led to improving outcomes. This is demonstrated in the use of the Restorative Justice Protocol framework to reduce the incidence of arrests, cautions and convictions. This has been reinforced by the training for all local children's home staff. There is good joint working between social care, housing, Connexions and the Youth Offending Service through the integrated resettlement team for children looked after returning from custody. As a result there has been a reduction in the number of recalls to custody and remands and an improvement in successful resettlements into the community.

### **Economic well-being**

### **Grade 3 (adequate)**

98. The contribution of local services to supporting looked after young people in achieving economic well-being and in preparation for adulthood is adequate. The Wirral Leaving Care Team, renamed the Pathways Team by the young people, is moving to new premises. Staff intend to use this opportunity to integrate their approach even more closely and develop a seamless provision of services for young people. Senior managers and front-line staff know the young people leaving care very well. A number of strategies and procedures are now in place to improve performance, but are yet to have a positive impact on outcomes. There are plans to improve the robustness of the virtual school in driving up the post-16 outcomes.
99. The care leavers who met with inspectors were very satisfied with the support they receive. They value having a personal advisor they know well and appreciate the help and advice available, for example to help them find a place to live or apply for a course to study. All said that they were optimistic about the future and had clear plans they were pursuing, for example completing their study in a sixth form or going on work experience. They knew where to go to get advice about matters such as health and financial support.
100. Local data show that fewer care leavers are in education, training or employment compared with other Merseyside authorities and nationally. At age 19, there are currently only nineteen out of sixty two care leavers who are in employment, education or training. Too many young people drop out of their chosen courses and there is more to do to pick up early signs of disengagement. Young people contribute to their pathway plans but overall plans are inconsistent in quality. Work is also hard to find and the low wages are often not sufficient for young people to live on. These issues are recognised and are being addressed. Action has been taken to broaden the range of opportunities through projects such as "Stay Wise"

and "Work Wise", specially targeted at 16 to 18 year old care leavers. The Wirral Apprentice scheme aims to stimulate additional apprenticeship opportunities by offering employers a wage subsidy. Connexions Personal Advisers provide good links with learning providers and support young people effectively. However 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.

101. The numbers of care leavers whose education and training circumstances are unknown is small. Care leavers do well in the schools' sixth forms. In 2010, eight care leavers started in Year 12 and all completed the study year and achieved their qualification. Six started in Year 13 and four completed the study year and achieved their qualification. There is good support for care leavers returning from custodial placements, with reduced numbers of recalls and remands back to custody. Support for those who have learning difficulties or disabilities starts early and is also good, although transition to adult services is a worry for some young people. The Aim Higher programme and work with local universities have had a positive impact over a number of years in encouraging care leavers to apply for university places. At the time of this inspection, four care leavers were successfully pursuing degree courses. A "Superstars Aim High Residential" at the Liverpool Hope University was held in August 2010. The project targets GCSE students in care who have the potential to achieve highly. This programme is in its seventh year and has been successful in removing emotional and study skills barriers to encourage young people to continue to further education.
102. The local authority has worked effectively with partners to extend the range and number of housing options for care leavers. In 2010, over 90% of care leavers had a suitable place to live. There are between 180 and 200 units in Wirral meeting the good quality standards. A strategic review of all provision is currently being started. Bed and breakfast accommodation is not used. The "Stop Gap" project has been very successful in providing emergency accommodation. There is no reported shortage of specialist small units for children with a disability. Transition arrangements into independent living are good and the young people who met inspectors were positive about the quality of support they receive. The placement of unaccompanied asylum-seekers with families as they arrive is sensitive and enables them to adjust to their new lives.

## Quality of provision

**Grade 2 (good)**

103. The quality of provision is good. The council has a thorough understanding and awareness of the needs of Wirral's looked after

children. They have undertaken a thorough analysis as the basis of their detailed plan to ensure that a good range of placements is available. There is a good level of robust scrutiny by the independent placement panel and senior managers, which has resulted in a reduction in unplanned and emergency placements.

104. There is a clear and well researched strategy to develop services for looked after children. A clear focus on reducing agency and out of borough placements has resulted in positive outcomes, with 49 children and young people now in these placements, down from 85. The number of looked after children was 660 as at 2 February 2011. Of these, 478 are placed with foster carers, of which 303 are foster carers with the council's own service. There are 45 young people placed in residential schools, 17 in the borough and 28 outside. There is very good support available to looked after children based on the recognition of individual needs, and contributing to the improvement in stability in placements.
105. The jointly funded therapeutic fostering scheme together with direct access to a child psychotherapist and to a clinical psychologist provides a good service for young people with more complex needs. The commissioning strategy takes account of quality and all the independent children's homes in Wirral used by the council are judged good or outstanding in Ofsted inspection reports. Good commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements are in place, which increase choice in placement using established regional resources and contracting arrangements.
106. The fostering service was judged as good overall in July 2008. An ambitious recruitment strategy is in place to support the plans to increase numbers and choice of in-house foster carers and reduce the use of independent fostering agencies. Two of Wirral's three in-house children's homes were judged good and the third was adequate overall at the most recent Ofsted inspections. The council has acted promptly after consultation with users and there are radical plans to close the adequate respite home and invest in the remaining facility to develop a higher quality more user friendly short break environment.
107. The local authority has responded well to the inspection report on the adoption service which was judged satisfactory by Ofsted in 2008. The action plan has addressed the recommendations, and additional resourcing of the team ensures there is post adoption and special guardianship order support. Good preparation by social workers and carers of children for adoption and changes to their care plans is contributing to improving placement stability.
108. Case files inspected were at least of a satisfactory quality with some good examples of direct work in preparation for adoption or permanence, changes in placement and transition to adult services. Further good

practice included clear recording of when a child was seen alone. Good examples were seen of direct work with parents of looked after children placed at home. In some case files seen by inspectors the identity needs of children and young people were not consistently identified or met, and did not sufficiently tell the child's story. All children and young people's care plans are reassessed when a decision is made to consider permanency, placement with parents or discharge care orders which is good practice.

109. Good inter-agency working ensures there is good support in place if a looked after young person becomes pregnant. Health support includes the teenage pregnancy midwife, the domestic abuse advisor, the substance misuse midwife and the perinatal mental health midwife.
110. Reviews for looked after children are attended well by relevant partner agencies. Independent reviewing officers were able to demonstrate strategies to organise attendance in a way that supports young people to engage and participate fully in the process. Reviews are effective in monitoring and evaluating plans, although the views and wishes of young people are not always sufficiently recorded. The timeliness of reviews is satisfactory, with 94% being completed within timescales. This has fallen from 96% but still compares favourably with the national average. The council is aware of the delays in producing review minutes although recommendations are circulated promptly. The council has acted to increase the capacity in the reviewing team.
111. Parents and carers are actively involved in case planning and their views are taken into account. Care plans are satisfactory and some are good, detailed and comprehensive. However the format and templates on the computer system do not support ease of recording or accessibility to the reader. Case recording is generally up to date and all statutory visits are recorded with sufficient details and meet required time scales. However the case recording using ICS templates is difficult to follow and does not provide an easily accessible record for young people viewing their records.
112. Foster carers and parents seen by inspectors were aware of who their independent reviewing officer was. They valued the consistency they had experienced and the role of the independent reviewing officer in overseeing and maintaining the plan, especially around difficult contact issues. 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.

## **Ambition and prioritisation**

## **Grade 1 (outstanding)**

113. There is exceptionally strong commitment politically to improving outcomes for looked after children as is reflected in services to safeguard children. The clear ambitions set out in the Children and Young People's Plan are implemented and monitored by the Children's Trust Board and

the Corporate Parenting Group. The Lead Member is particularly active in challenging services for instance the educational attainment of looked after children. Although this is better than the national average, she is still disappointed at the gap with other children. The Lead Member is a committed advocate for young people, familiarising herself with the range of services and challenging outcomes and practice. There is outstanding engagement of the looked after young people who are involved in the Children in Care Council. Strong partnership working with all agencies is improving all outcomes for looked after children. Weaknesses such as outcomes for those leaving care are recognised and responded to although this has yet to have sufficient impact. All looked after children are placed in the highest performing schools with good support which contributes to improving outcomes.

## **Leadership and management** **Grade 1 (outstanding)**

114. Leadership and management of services for looked after children are outstanding. Services are well led by very capable senior managers. The managers are described by staff to be accessible and willing to hear views and ideas to improve practice and services. The strategic workforce plan supports improvements to quality, for example through requiring senior managers to undertake an MBA. This has resulted in robust reviews of services and imaginative and cost effective plans. The investment in staff development and very good access to training for all workers is developing a competent workforce committed to improving outcomes for young people. This is aiding improvement in the retention of staff, thereby providing greater continuity for young people and their families.
115. Partnerships with stakeholders, including the voluntary, community and faith sectors and providers of commissioned services, have led to significant improvements in service design and delivery outcomes. Multi-agency planning at the Children's Trust Board and the Corporate Parenting Group are delivering very well integrated services. Commissioning including joint commissioning is continually improving the quality of services for looked after children, such as the development of the therapeutic fostering scheme. Managers seen were very positive about in-house training opportunities for newer managers. There is a very good focus on value for money for example in the review and redesign of short break services for young people with a disability. There is good cooperation on a regional basis through Placements North West where participating local authorities share information about the quality of independent residential and foster care placements.
116. There is an excellent focus on user engagement and the council has demonstrated a strong commitment to facilitate and develop the Children in Care Council. The active involvement in Wirral Children's Trust particularly through the Positive Contribution Strategy Group and at a strategic level through the Corporate Parenting Group ensures that looked

after children and young people influence service design. The membership of children and young people on the fostering panel raises the profile of the user in approvals. Participation in interviews for social workers and other staff ensures workers are sensitive to the needs of vulnerable young people. Young people spoken to are positive that their views are listened to and acted upon, for example in relation to school trips and activities where their carers can now give their permission avoiding the previous bureaucratic delay.

## **Performance management and quality assurance**

### **Grade 2 (good)**

117. Performance management and evaluation arrangements are good and are leading to improved outcomes. Performance management and tracking of educational outcomes are very good and are having a demonstrable impact on outcomes. The independent reviewing officers provide a good level of challenge to plans for looked after children and provide feedback to the WSCB on the quality of reports. The improved planning has contributed to the reduction in disruption to placements.
118. There is effective management oversight of areas where risks are identified. There is senior management oversight of all proposed placements with parents. Detailed reports are presented to the strategic service manager and there is good evidence of close scrutiny. Management information is used to identify young people whose future plan should consider discharge from care through special guardianship orders, adoption or return to parents. Good legal gate keeping meetings inform decision making and the quality of legal reports is overseen by a legal adviser who reports on their quality.
119. An effective joint commissioning strategy with robust monitoring arrangements is in place. There are clear procedures for accessing out of borough placements and an effective independent placement panel which thoroughly scrutinises all requests for out of borough placements. Regular contract monitoring visits take place to measure compliance and quality of provision, including appropriate measures around safeguarding.
120. Good and robust management oversight ensures that plans for young people are appropriate and are progressed in a timely manner. All staff seen were aware of the council's priorities for looked after children and young people and were contributing through reviewing placements and updating assessments and care plans.



## Record of main findings:

| <b>Safeguarding services</b>  |             |
|---|-------------|
| Overall effectiveness   | Good        |
| Capacity for improvement  | Good        |
| <b>Safeguarding outcomes for children and young people</b>                    |             |
| Children and young people are safe and feel safe                              | Good        |
| Quality of provision  | Good        |
| The contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe | Outstanding |
| <b>Services for looked after children</b>                                     |             |
| Ambition and prioritisation   | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management   | Outstanding |
| Performance management and quality assurance                                  | Good        |
| Partnership working   | Outstanding |
| Equality and diversity  | Adequate    |
| <b>How good are outcomes for looked after children and care leavers?</b>      |             |
| Overall effectiveness   | Good        |
| Capacity for improvement  | Good        |
| Being healthy   | Good        |
| Staying safe  | Good        |
| Enjoying and achieving  | Good        |
| Making a positive contribution, including user engagement                     | Good        |
| Economic well-being   | Adequate    |
| Quality of provision  | Good        |
| <b>Services for looked after children</b>                                     |             |
| Ambition and prioritisation   | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management   | Outstanding |
| Performance management and quality assurance                                  | Good        |
| Equality and diversity  | Adequate    |

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**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|   | <b>Areas for Development</b>   | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                                  | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 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 &amp; Assessment Processes)</i> . | Strengthen supervision model to include reflective practice.             | 31/05/11                    | Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families            | <b>A</b>            |
| 2 |  | <i>Revise and implement new Supervision framework</i>                    | <i>Complete 31/01/11</i>    | <i>Strategic Service Manager – Children &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 3 |  | <i>Managers to audit supervision at all levels as per the procedure.</i> | <i>Complete 31/01/11</i>    | <i>Strategic Service Manager – Children &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 4 |  | <i>Key Issues briefing to be delivered to all Managers.</i>              | <i>Completed 22/09/10</i>   | <i>Strategic Service Manager – Children &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 5 |  | <i>Key Issues Exchange to be completed by 100% of all staff.</i>         | <i>Completed 31/12/10</i>   | <i>Strategic Service Manager – Children &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 6 |  | Key Issues training delivered to all managers.                           | 31/03/11                    | CYPD Training Manager                                      | <b>R</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|   | <b>Areas for Development</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                                  | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 7 | 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 &amp; Assessment Processes).</i> | <i>Complete audit of all staff training</i>                                      | <i>Completed 01/09/10</i>   | <i>Strategic Service Manager – Children &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 8 |   | Annual Training plan to be devised from aggregate Key Issues Exchange feedback.  | 31/05/11                    | CYPD Training Manager                                      | <b>A</b>            |
| 9 |   | Managers to target individual staff training based on requirements of job roles. | 17/05/11                    | Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families            | <b>A</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of**  
**Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).**

|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>  | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                                  | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 10 | 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 &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 11 | 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>Consultation procedures updated.</i>   | <i>Completed 31/12/10</i>   | <i>Strategic Service Manager – Children &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |
| 12 | 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>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 &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of**  
**Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).**

|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                                  | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|---|--|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 13 | <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 &amp; 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 &amp; Families</i> | <b>G</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                       | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|--|---|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 14 | 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 be included in the analysis section | 01/06/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families | <b>A</b>            |
| 15 |  | <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>                           | <b>G</b>            |
| 16 | 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. ( <i>Inspection of Safeguarding Services AFI</i> ) | ICS board set deadline of 30 June 2011 for all ICS Exemplar amendments to be made           | 30/06/11                    | Head of Branch                                  | <b>A</b>            |
| 17 |  | Establish post for ICS/ESCR Trainer / Project Manager (Fixed Term)                          | 30/06/11                    | Business & Performance Manager                  | <b>A</b>            |
| 18 |  | ESCR project plan to be confirmed   | 01/09/11                    | Head of Branch                                  | <b>A</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>   | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                               | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|--|--|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 19 | 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   | 01/09/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families         | A                   |
| 20 |  | Teams to have issues around equality and diversity (identity) as standing item on team agendas | 01/09/11                    | Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers | A                   |
| 21 |  | Devise Workshops sessions to explore practice in-depth with social workers                     | 01/09/11                    | Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers | A                   |
| 22 |  | Deliver Workshops sessions to explore practice in-depth with social workers                    | 01/09/11                    | Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers | A                   |
| 23 |  | Review the outcome of the Workshops sessions to explore practice in-depth with social workers  | 01/09/11                    | Principal Team Managers and District / Service Managers | A                   |
| 24 |  | Review Audit tools/process in order to evidence changing practice                              | 01/09/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families         | A                   |



**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>  | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                       | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 25 | Promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council to get their views across. ( <i>Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI</i> )                     | Devise and implement the Children in Care Councils Communication Plan.  | 01/06/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources  | A                   |
| 26 | 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. ( <i>Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI</i> ) | Revise the Case Recording Policy  | 01/05/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families | A                   |
| 27 |   | Include a 'Pen Picture' at the front of the child's file (including photograph) to be reviewed and updated every 12 months. | 01/05/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources  | A                   |
| 28 |   | 'Pen Pictures' to be checked and verified by the updated Audit Procedure.   | 01/06/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families | A                   |
| 29 |   | Provide two workshops on the recording of significant events and decision making/   | 01/06/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families | A                   |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                          | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|--|---|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 30 | Improve further the effectiveness of strategies used to ensure that more young people complete their chosen course of study or training successfully post-16. <i>(Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI )</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. | 01/06/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources     | <b>A</b>            |
| 31 |  | Implement robust tracking and monitoring arrangements for post 16 learners.   | 01/11/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 32 |  | Ensure that pathway plans incorporate EET actions.  | 01/11/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 33 |  | Increase the range of employability opportunities offered by the Local Authority  | 01/11/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 34 |  | Seek to provide support to LAC through the role of a participation mentor (ESF Funded)  | 01/11/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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 |
|----|--|---|----------------------|---|--------------|
| 35 | Improve the consistency of the quality of personal education plans for the youngest children in care and the pathway plans for care leavers. ( <i>Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI</i> ) | Re-launch the guide for PEP writing and development for young children, including the involvement of the Early Years Team.                              | 01/06/11             | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources  | A            |
| 36 |  | Establish a development plan with the Pathway Team for improving how pathway plans develop economic wellbeing.  | 01/06/11             | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources  | A            |
| 37 |  | Develop understanding amongst Social Care staff of the framework for attainment of children in education (e.g.: average attainment expected at KS1/KS2) | 01/06/11             | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | A            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
 (Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).

**Safeguarding Inspection comments from the text.**

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|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>  | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                           | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 38 | The scrutiny of completed common assessment records shows that children's views are at times missing or too cursory. <i>(Safeguarding Text)</i>   | Review the Common Assessment training package and delivery revised training                               | 30/09/11                    | CAF Quality Assurance Officer and Area Team Leaders | A                   |
| 39 | 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. <i>(Safeguarding Text)</i> | Deliver the Social Care Diversity event and develop a subsequent action plan to address areas identified. | 01/05/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources      | A                   |
| 40 | Staff files are adequate overall although information is not always easily accessible in one place to provide a clear audit trail. <i>(Safeguarding Text)</i>   | Fully implement the Safer Recruitment Action Plan   | 20/11/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Human Resources           | A                   |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).**

|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                       | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|--|---|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 41 | 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. <i>(Safeguarding Text)</i> | Include provision within the revised training plan for care planning with new regulations | 01/06/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Children and Families | <b>A</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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.**

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|    | Areas for Development   | Action   | Date to be completed | Person Responsible   | Progress RAG |
|----|---|--|----------------------|--|--------------|
| 42 | 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 ( <i>Looked after Children Text</i> ) | Review and restructure the Looked After Children Education Service so that it focuses on championing improving outcomes for LAC.   | 01/09/2011           | Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | A            |
| 43 |   | Improve further procedures for monitoring the performance of LAC placed out of borough and challenging where there is underperformance.  | 31/07/2011           | Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | A            |
| 44 |   | Provide high quality advice and training for schools and Designated Teachers.  | 31/03/2012           | Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | Ar           |
| 45 |   | Rigorously track and monitor the progress of LAC placed out of borough and challenge where there is underachievement.  | 31/07/2011 ongoing   | Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | A            |
| 46 |   | 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. | 31/07/2011 ongoing   | Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | A            |
| 47 |   | Monitor on a monthly basis the attendance of LAC placed out of borough   | 31/07/2011 ongoing   | Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | A            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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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|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>                          | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|---|--|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 48 | 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. <i>(Looked after Children Text)</i> | Review and evaluate current career planning arrangements 13-25.  | 01/07/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 49 |   | Strategic Analysis to be completed to ensure breadth and sufficiency of provision.   | 31/07/11                    | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 50 |   | Facilitate the delivery of a range of opportunities to develop employability skills through ESF funding (profit from Wirral Wise)                | 31/07/11 ongoing            | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 51 |   | Ensure that clear information, referral and monitoring systems are in place to manage employability opportunities for young people.              | 31/07/11 ongoing            | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 52 |   | Seek to appoint employability officer using ESF funding.   | 31/07/11 ongoing            | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |
| 53 |   | Ensure that close collaboration between the LACES, Pathways Team, Connexions and education providers improves the employability of care leavers. | 31/07/11 ongoing            | Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration | <b>A</b>            |

**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(Addressing outcomes from the inspection of contact, referral and assessment and the inspection of Safeguarding and looked after children's Services).**

|    | <b>Areas for Development</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Date to be completed</b> | <b>Person Responsible</b>          | <b>Progress RAG</b> |
|----|--|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 54 | Reviews are effective in monitoring and evaluating plans, although the views and wishes of young people are not always sufficiently recorded. <i>(Looked after Children Text)</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. | 30/09/11                    | Service Manager, Quality Assurance | A                   |
| 55 | 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 <i>(Looked after Children Text)</i> | The Quality Assurance Unit to consider a wider range of venues to undertake LAC reviews.  | 31/12/11                    | Service Manage Quality Assurance   | A                   |



**SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN MAY 2011**  
**(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**

| <b>Number</b> | <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Action Required</b>  | <b>Lead Officer</b>                     | <b>Completion Date</b>   | <b>Monitoring Committee</b>                 |
|---------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| 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 <sup>st</sup> July 2011.<br><br>Revised service specification to be fully in place by March 2012. | 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"> <li>• Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust</li> <li>• Wirral Community NHS Trust</li> <li>• Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Foundation NHS Trust</li> </ul> | Designated Nurse                        | Audit to be completed by 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2011   | Quality assurance monitored by quality team |

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2011

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                          | <b>SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES –<br/>DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE</b> |
| <b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>                  | <b>ALL</b>  |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>                        | <b>INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S<br/>SERVICES</b>      |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO<br/>HOLDER:</b> | <b>CLLR SHEILA CLARKE</b>                               |
| <b>KEY DECISION?</b>                     | <b>NO</b>   |

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 At it's meeting of 15th March 2011 Committee asked the interim Director for a update report on current and projected changes in the roll of Wirral's secondary schools. This report also discusses the potential implications of the falling roll, with particular reference to budgetary and staffing implications in the current year.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 That Committee note the new demographic information in relation to Wirral secondary schools.

#### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 Information requested by Committee.

#### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 There are four elements in looking to plan future secondary school requirements across the Borough. These are, firstly, the numbers of children expected to enter school over the next seven years; secondly the capacity of the current stock of secondary schools, individually and in areas, thirdly the impact of school size on standards, and finally a series of factors with implications for place provision. These include developments within the Education System: for example, those arising from the Children Act and Extended Schools, availability of capital funding and the need for diversity in school provision, the duty to respond to parental preference, and external factors which impact on secondary school numbers; for example, Housing Market Renewal and new housing developments.

4.2 A report on the demographic projections for secondary schools in Wirral was taken to Cabinet on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007. At this point in time the falling roll in primary age pupils had already begun to impact on secondary schools, with 1,300 fewer pupils in 2007 than there had been in 2003. Projections indicated a reduction of approximately 3,000 pupils aged 11 to 16 over the next seven years (to 2014). The impact of rising numbers of surplus places, and on the financial and educational implications of the falling roll and school size were discussed. Cabinet instructed officers to begin a

review of secondary school provision, beginning with Phase 1 comprising schools in Birkenhead and Wirral South.

- 4.3 A demographic update on secondary schools in the Phase 1 Review area was provided to Cabinet on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2008.
- 4.4 Following an extensive period of consultation, reporting and scrutiny, the culmination of Phase 1 of the Secondary Places Review was that on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2010 Cabinet gave conditional approval to proposals for the closure of Park High School and Rock Ferry High School in order that an Academy should be established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011. Following Secretary of State approval, the University Academy of Birkenhead has now been established, initially located on both existing sites, moving to occupy solely the former Park High site by September 2011. The University Academy is sponsored by the University of Chester (lead), University of Liverpool, Birkenhead Sixth Form College, Wirral Metropolitan College and Wirral Council.
- 4.5 An amendment to the previously indicated 2007 and 2008 projections is the introduction of state funded/maintained secondary (and primary) school places from September 2009 at Birkenhead High School Academy for Girls, formerly a fee-paying independent selective school for girls.
- 4.6 On 27<sup>th</sup> July 2010, the Academies Bill was passed announced changes to the previous administration's Academy programme, removing the requirement for a sponsor. All schools with an Ofsted outcome of "outstanding" were initially invited to apply to become what is generally known as a "new-style" Academy, an offer which has now been extended to all schools. Any primary, secondary or special school can apply to become an Academy. A number of Wirral primary and secondary schools expressed an interest initially, and so far eight secondary schools have continued with the process with a view to becoming academies within the next 6 to 12 months.
- 4.7 Projections indicate a falling secondary school roll across the Borough until at least 2016, followed by a projected partial recovery. However, there are still expected to be 3,845 fewer 11 to 16 pupils in 2018 than in 2004. The levels of reduction are not evenly distributed between areas, or between individual schools within areas. Post 16 numbers in mainstream schools peaked in 2010. This has, to an extent, provided some protection to the overall roll in those schools with sixth forms, but as rolls falls this protection will reduce.
- 4.8 The reduction in pupil numbers and funding will lead to a reduction in teachers and support staff in schools and a consequent increase in redundancy and severance costs. The financial implications in the current year are described in the report to the Schools Forum on 12th April 2011 and are attached as Appendix A. In addition there are an increasing number of secondary schools that are discussing deficit recovery plans.

## 5.0 PROJECTIONS

- 5.1 The projection method for Years 7 to 11 in secondary schools is as follows. In order to calculate the Year 7 intake for each future year, the actual number of pupils in Wirral primary schools in the Spring Census is rolled forward to their equivalent Year 7 intake year, then multiplied by 101.7 to reflect a historical increase at this transition point which is related to movement to the maintained sector from independent schools. Individual school Year 7 intakes are then based on the previous three years Year 7 intake figures. Years 8 to 11 at each individual school are simply rolled forward.

5.2 For post-16 projections, Year 12 pupil numbers are calculated from Year 11 actual numbers at individual schools (excluding schools without sixth forms), to which the individual school's historical staying on rate is applied. In a similar manner, Years 13 and 14 are calculated from the actual number on roll for the previous year, using the historical staying on rate. It should be noted that the Young People's Learning Agency use standard learner numbers obtained annually from the Autumn Census for funding purposes.

|                  | Year | 11 to 16 | Change | Post-16 | Change | Overall Change |
|------------------|------|----------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|
| <b>ACTUAL</b>    | 2004 | 21717    |        | 3510    |        |                |
|                  | 2005 | 21313    | -404   | 3479    | -31    | -435           |
|                  | 2006 | 20926    | -387   | 3410    | -69    | -456           |
|                  | 2007 | 20384    | -542   | 3633    | +223   | -319           |
|                  | 2008 | 19757    | -627   | 3718    | +85    | -542           |
|                  | 2009 | 19055    | -702   | 4053    | +335   | -367           |
|                  | 2010 | 18573    | -482   | 4283    | +230   | -252           |
|                  | 2011 | 18412    | -161   | 4006    | -277   | -438           |
| <b>PROJECTED</b> | 2012 | 18072    | -340   | 3871    | -135   | -475           |
|                  | 2013 | 17725    | -347   | 3854    | -17    | -364           |
|                  | 2014 | 17346    | -379   | 3837    | -17    | -396           |
|                  | 2015 | 17265    | -81    | 3762    | -75    | -156           |
|                  | 2016 | 17284    | +19    | 3718    | -44    | -25            |
|                  | 2017 | 17609    | +325   | 3661    | -57    | +268           |
|                  | 2018 | 17872    | +263   | 3604    | -57    | +206           |

The numbers set out above are for secondary age and post-16 pupils in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools or non-school based post-16 provision. Actuals are as at the January 2011 Census. Academies are included in all years (including backdated data for Birkenhead High School Academy (BHSA)), however there are unresolved data sharing issues in relation to Academies, consequently May 2010 Census has been used as a proxy for January 2011 Census for BHSA only.

5.3 The above figures illustrate a falling secondary school roll across the Borough until at least 2016, followed by a projected partial recovery. However, there are still expected to be 3,845 fewer 11 to 16 pupils in 2018 than in 2004. The levels of reduction are not evenly distributed between areas, or between individual schools within areas. The table below shows 11 to 16 numbers on roll at January 2011, and projected to 2018, by area.

|              | 2011 | 2018 | % Projected Fall |
|--------------|------|------|------------------|
| Birkenhead   | 3439 | 2793 | 19%              |
| Wallasey     | 4828 | 4539 | 6%               |
| South Wirral | 4424 | 4402 | <1%              |
| West Wirral  | 5727 | 5532 | 3%               |

The numbers set out above are for secondary age pupils (11 – 16 only) in mainstream schools, e.g. not including pupils in special schools or maintained sixth form provision. Actuals and Wirral areas are as at the January 2011 Census. May 2010 Census has been used as a proxy for January 2011 Census for BHSA only.

5.4 Pupils attending Wirral secondary schools over the next seven years already exist in Wirral primary schools. Migration is minimal, and while individual school rolls may vary, it seems reasonable to conclude that by 2018 at least 3,800 fewer pupils will require 11 to 16 mainstream school provision than in 2004.

5.5 Post 16 numbers in mainstream schools peaked in 2010. This has, to an extent, provided some protection to the overall roll in those schools with sixth forms, but as rolls fall and smaller cohorts move through the school system this protection will reduce.

## 6.0 South Wirral Area

6.1 There are five 11 to 18 secondary schools located in this area – two are single sex selective Foundation grammar schools, one is a Voluntary Aided Catholic school, and two are Foundation secondary schools, one of which is a Trust school (Bebington High School). The Governing body of Wirral Grammar School for Girls are intending to convert to new-style Academy status by September 2011. Wirral Grammar School for Boys has also applied to become a new-style Academy.

6.2 The following table shows the current position in terms of capacity, number on roll and surplus places, as well as the pupil projections to 2018. Schools with 25% surplus places are shaded.

|   | <b>Bebington</b> | <b>St John Plessington</b> | <b>South Wirral</b> | <b>Wirral Boys</b>            | <b>Wirral Girls</b>           |
|---|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>School type</b>                      | Trust            | Aided                      | Foundation          | Foundation/<br><i>Academy</i> | Foundation/<br><i>Academy</i> |
| <b>2010 Net Capacity</b>                | 1256             | 1442                       | 1189                | 1194                          | 1159                          |
| <b>2011 NOR</b>                         | 869              | 1400                       | 1131                | 1031                          | 1093                          |
| <b>2011 Surplus place %</b>             | 30.8             | 2.9                        | 4.9                 | 13.7                          | 5.7                           |
| <b>2018 NOR (projected)</b>             | 862              | 1427                       | 983                 | 1031                          | 1108                          |
| <b>2018 Surplus place % (projected)</b> | 31.4             | 1.0                        | 17.3                | 13.7                          | 4.4                           |

Number on roll (NOR) includes all pupils (11 to 18). 2011 actuals are as at the January 2011 Census.

6.3 Bebington High School is already demonstrating high levels of surplus places, and this is not projected to improve over the next few years. The sixth form at Bebington High is relatively small.

6.4 Surplus places at South Wirral High School are expected to treble. South Wirral also has a relatively small sixth form department, with the post-16 pupils comprising 13% of the total school, compared with the Wirral non-grammar school average of 20% (22% with grammar schools).

6.5 As reported in Section 4 of the November 2007 Cabinet report, the Wirral working group agreed that a definite size beyond which a school was no longer viable was impossible to determine in Wirral. However, the discussion group did agree that compromises became increasingly difficult for cohorts approaching 100 pupils. National research on secondary school size has been scarce, but a study carried out in 2002 suggests that the optimum cohort size for a comprehensive school is between 175 and 200 pupils. For an 11 to 16 secondary school, this would result in

between 875 and 1000 total pupils. The current and projected average cohort size at each school is shown in the table below.

| Average Cohort size       | Bebingt on | St John Plessington | South Wirral | Wirral Boys | Wirral Girls |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 2011 11 to 16             | 147        | 228                 | 198          | 152         | 160          |
| 2018 11 to 16 (projected) | 155        | 237                 | 175          | 152         | 161          |
| Difference                | +8         | +9                  | -23          | 0           | +1           |

6.6 In terms of size, South Wirral High School is projected to experience the greatest fall in average cohort size over the next seven years in this area. Bebington High School, despite a small rise in the average cohort size, is projected to remain below the optimum cohort size for a comprehensive school.

## 7.0 Birkenhead Area

7.1 Within this area there are three 11 to 16 secondary schools (one girls Foundation, one mixed Foundation, one mixed Academy), and two 11 to 18 secondary schools (one girls and one boys). The boys school is a Voluntary Aided selective grammar school, St Anselm's, which is intending to convert to Academy status by September 2011. The girls 11-18 school is an all-through Academy, formerly a fee-paying independent school. Prenton High School for Girls and Ridgeway High School have both applied to become new-style Academies.

7.2 The following table shows the current position in terms of capacity, number on roll and surplus places, as well as the pupil projections to 2018. Schools with 25% or more surplus places are shaded.

|                                  | Birkenhead High Academy | Prenton                | Ridgeway               | St Anselms        | University Academy Birkenhead |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                  | Academy                 | Foundation/<br>Academy | Foundation/<br>Academy | Aided/<br>Academy | Academy                       |
| 2010 Net Capacity                | 866 *                   | 790                    | 885                    | 981               | 1250***                       |
| 2011 NOR                         | 450 **                  | 661                    | 686                    | 845               | 1097                          |
| 2011 Surplus place %             | 48.0                    | 16.3                   | 22.5                   | 13.9              | 12.2                          |
| 2018 NOR (projected)             | 500                     | 747                    | 622                    | 803               | 750                           |
| 2018 Surplus place % (projected) | 42.3                    | 5.4                    | 29.7                   | 18.2              | 40.0                          |

Number on roll (NOR) includes all pupils (11 to 18). 2011 actuals are as at the January 2011 Census. \* BHSA is subject to a £10.5 million refurbishment of the primary and secondary school provision which is expected to significantly increase the capacity for future years once completed. \*\* January 2011 Census data not available for BHSA – May 2010 Census is used as a proxy. \*\*\* Currently operating on two sites with combined capacity 2,482 places – capacity given here only for former Park site.

7.3 Several schools are expected to demonstrate high levels of surplus places. All four non-selective schools are below the optimum cohort size (see para 6.5).

| Average Cohort size       | Birkenhead High Academy | Prenton | Ridgeway | St Anselms | UAB  |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------|----------|------------|------|
| 2011 11 to 16             | 68                      | 132     | 137      | 131        | 219  |
| 2018 11 to 16 (projected) | 100                     | 149     | 125      | 123        | 150* |
| Difference                | +32                     | +17     | -12      | -8         |      |

\* University Academy of Birkenhead (UAB) was formed by the amalgamation of two schools. The projected decline in the cohort size is related to the admission number for the combined school (see below).

7.4 Over the next seven years, average cohorts at Prenton High and Birkenhead High School Academy are projected to grow in size, while average cohorts at the remaining schools are likely to experience a significant fall. The expected average cohort size of 150 at University Academy of Birkenhead is based on the Academy's admission number, which was set in line with expectations for the falling roll. Proposals to absorb the surplus places at the former Park site with co-located services are currently under discussion with the Academy Trust.

7.5 It should be noted that the admission number of 100 at Birkenhead High School Academy has been set by the Academy Trust and does not attempt to match the Net Capacity of the building (now or following the upcoming redevelopment).

7.6 The projected increase in take-up of places at all-girls schools, without a matched boys school (St Anselms being a selective grammar), is expected to further increase existing gender disparities in the remaining mixed sex secondary schools in this area.

7.7 Two schools in this area are "old-style" academies with sponsors. The three remaining schools have all indicated that they wish to pursue Academy status. If followed to conclusion, all secondary schools in the Birkenhead area will be academies within the next two years.

## 8.0 Wallasey Area

8.1 Five 11 to 18 secondary schools are located in this area. Two are mixed sex community schools, one is a mixed sex Catholic Aided school, and the remaining two are a boys Community school and a girls Foundation school. Oldershaw School has applied to become a new-style Academy.

8.2 The following table shows the current position in terms of capacity, number on roll and surplus places, as well as the pupil projections to 2018. Schools with more than 25% surplus places are shaded.

|                                     | Mosslands<br>Community | Oldershaw<br>Community/<br>Academy | St Marys<br>Aided | Wallasey<br>Community | Weatherhead<br>Foundation |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 2010 Net Capacity                   | 1573                   | 1182                               | 1850              | 1455                  | 1656                      |
| 2011 NOR                            | 1107                   | 747                                | 1679              | 1047                  | 1531                      |
| 2011 Surplus place %                | 29.6                   | 36.8                               | 9.2               | 28.0                  | 7.6                       |
| 2018 NOR<br>(projected)             | 874                    | 640                                | 1673              | 807                   | 1561                      |
| 2018 Surplus place<br>% (projected) | 44.4                   | 45.9                               | 9.6               | 44.5                  | 5.7                       |

Number on roll (NOR) includes all pupils (11 to 18). 2011 actuals are as at the January 2011 Census.



8.3 Both community mixed schools and the community boys school are expected to demonstrate high levels of surplus places. These three schools are also expected to experience a significant drop in the average cohort size, to below the optimum cohort size for a comprehensive school (see para 6.5).

| Average Cohort size          | Mosslands | Oldershaw | St Marys | Wallasey | Weatherhead |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 2011 11 to 16                | 177       | 121       | 267      | 172      | 228         |
| 2018 11 to 16<br>(projected) | 148       | 109       | 267      | 141      | 243         |
| Difference)                  | -29       | -12       | 0        | -31      | +15         |

8.4 In terms of post 16 provision, Oldershaw has the smallest sixth form in terms of number of pupils, but as a proportion of the total roll (19%) this is close to the average for non-selective schools.

## 9.0 West Wirral Area

9.1 Six 11 to 18 secondary schools and one 11 to 16 secondary school (Woodchurch High) are located in this area. The Governing body at Woodchurch High School are intending to convert to Academy status later in 2011, and are also intending to expand the school's age range to 18. West Kirby Grammar School has also applied for Academy status.

Three are single sex selective grammar schools (one boys, one girls, one Catholic Aided girls). Two are single sex federated community schools, and one is a mixed sex Trust school.

9.2 The following table shows the current position in terms of capacity, number on roll and surplus places, as well as the pupil projections to 2018.

|                                  | Calday Grange | Hilbre | Pensby Boys* | Pensby Girls* | Upton Hall | West Kirby             | Woodchurch        |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------|--------------|---------------|------------|------------------------|-------------------|
|                                  | Trust         | Trust  | Community    | Community     | Aided      | Foundation/<br>Academy | Trust/<br>Academy |
| 2010 Net Capacity                | 1568          | 1048   | 870          | 890           | 965        | 1249                   | 1547**            |
| 2011 NOR                         | 1456          | 1044   | 536          | 732           | 954        | 1150                   | 1334              |
| 2011 Surplus place %             | 7.1           | 0.4    | 38.4         | 17.8          | 1.1        | 7.9                    | 13.7              |
| 2018 NOR (projected)             | 1256          | 1025   | 391          | 645           | 949        | 1142                   | 1390              |
| 2018 Surplus place % (projected) | 19.9          | 2.2    | 55.1         | 27.5          | 1.7        | 8.6                    | 10.2              |

Number on roll (NOR) includes all pupils (11 to 18). 2011 actuals are as at the January 2011 Census. \* Pensby Boys and Pensby Girls are in a "hard federation" under a single governing body. \*\* Net capacity based on new building, opened in September 2010.

9.3 The greatest impact in this area is on the two Pensby schools. Both are also individually below the optimum cohort size for a comprehensive school. These two schools entered into a hard federation under a single governing body in May 2010. Whilst having no impact on surplus places, federation should enable the two schools

to maximise budgetary and staffing efficiencies to reduce the impact of the falling roll on teaching and learning.

| Average Cohort size       | Calday | Hilbre | Pensby Boys | Pensby Girls | Upton Hall | West Kirby | Woodchurch |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|-------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 2011 11 to 16             | 181    | 178    | 89          | 122          | 143        | 166        | 266        |
| 2018 11 to 16 (projected) | 163    | 177    | 66          | 111          | 142        | 168        | 278        |
| Difference                | -18    | -1     | -23         | -11          | -1         | +2         | +12        |

- 9.4 In post-16 terms, the largest is 38% of the total roll at Calday Grange Grammar School, partly because this boys school accepts substantial numbers of girls at post-16. In 2011, a quarter of sixth form pupils were girls, comprising 10% of the total school population. Surplus places at Calday are expected to more than double over this period. Pensby Boys, Pensby Girls and Hilbre operate collaborative arrangements for sixth form provision which enhance course viability and therefore choice as well as value for money and other benefits of co-operation.
- 9.5 Woodchurch High School has indicated that as part of the application to become an Academy, the governors would wish to extend the age range to include a sixth form. If approved, this is likely to have implications for other schools with sixth form provision, and also for Birkenhead Sixth Form College.

## 10.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 10.1 The growth of Academies among Wirral's school provision has a potentially significant impact on the Authority's ability to produce full and accurate demographic projections for Wirral pupils. Academies are independent maintained schools who submit census and other pupil information directly to the Academies and Specialist Schools division of the DfE, rather than via the Local Authority. Officers are in the process of drawing up a data sharing agreement for use with schools converting to Academy status which will allow the Authority access to pupil data in line with all other school types.
- 10.2 So far, there have been no formal applications to the DfE for "free schools" in Wirral. Officers have recently received an informal enquiry from a private provider who wishes to establish a 14 to 19 free school offering a reduced academic curriculum with vocational subject choices located in the Birkenhead area. If approved, the implications of this additional provision could increase pressure on secondary school rolls.
- 10.3 As rolls fall, there is likely to be increased competition between neighbouring schools for their share of the smaller cohort with implications for existing collaborative arrangements between Wirral schools which will need to be monitored. There are financial pressures (see Appendix A) which are already resulting in reductions in staffing at some Wirral schools. Some schools will need to consider how their curriculum will be maintained and improved with a smaller budget as rolls fall.
- 10.4 As well as reductions in funding for 11 to 16 pupils, school sixth form funding is expected to reduce by 20% over the next three years to bring it in line with sixth form college and further education college funding levels. This coincides with a projected fall in the number of pupils attending school sixth forms.

## **11.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

11.1 None required.

## **12.0 CONSULTATION**

12.1 None required.

## **13.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

13.1 None arising from this report.

## **14.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

14.1 School funding is pupil led. The falling roll will continue to impact on secondary schools over the medium term until 2016. Over the 6 year period from 2010 the total pupil numbers may decline by 1,870 (about 8%). Each pupil attracts Dedicated School Grant (or 6<sup>th</sup> Form funding) of about £5,000. This change therefore may result in a grant reduction in excess of £9 million. A typical secondary budget is £5 million.

14.2 In addition to the above, the indications are that funding for school sixth forms will reduce by a further £3 million over the next three years.

14.3 The reduction in pupil numbers and funding will lead to a reduction in teachers and support staff in schools and a consequent increase in redundancy and severance costs. The financial implications in the current year are described in the report to the Schools Forum on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and are attached as Appendix A. In addition there are an increasing number of secondary schools that are discussing deficit recovery plans.

14.4 Land and asset implications in general terms of schools changing status are included in the Cabinet report of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

## **15.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 None arising directly from this report.

## **16.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

16.1 None arising from this report.

16.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

## **17.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 None arising from this report.

## **18.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

18.1 None arising from this report.

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### **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Staffing implications in Wirral secondary schools (Andrew Roberts)

Appendix B – Post 16 and status information on Wirral secondary schools

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Annual School Census January 2011

Demographic projections (CYPD)

NHS birth data

[www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies)

[readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/School\\_Sixth\\_Form\\_Guidance\\_2009\\_10.pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/School_Sixth_Form_Guidance_2009_10.pdf)

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

| <b>Council Meeting</b>  | <b>Date</b>                    |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Cabinet - OUTCOME OF PROPOSALS FOR THE CLOSURE OF TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2010 |
| Cabinet - REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES: REPORT ON OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ROCK FERRY HIGH SCHOOL AND PARK HIGH SCHOOL IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AN ACADEMY             | 27 <sup>th</sup> May 2010      |
| Cabinet - REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES: PROVISIONAL REPORT ON OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS ON PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ROCK FERRY HIGH SCHOOL AND PARK HIGH SCHOOL IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AN ACADEMY | 15 <sup>th</sup> April 2010    |
| Cabinet - REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1 – MIXED ACADEMY   | 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2010  |
| Cabinet - REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1 – SITE FOR A POSSIBLE ACADEMY   | 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2009  |
| Cabinet – CALL IN OF CABINET MINUTE 143 (01/10/2009) REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1  | 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2009 |
| Cabinet – REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1   | 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2009   |
| Cabinet - SECONDARY SCHOOL REVIEW: AMENDED CONSULTATION OPTION FOR PHASE 1 SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL STATUS UPDATE   | 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2009    |
| Cabinet - REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1 - UPDATE  | 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2008  |
| Cabinet - REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES PHASE 1: AREA REVIEWS OF BIRKENHEAD AND BEBINGTON   | 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2008     |
| Cabinet – SCHOOL CATEGORIES AND CHARACTERISTICS   | 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2008    |
| Cabinet - PROVISION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES – FUTURE STRATEGY  | 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2007 |

## **WIRRAL SCHOOLS FORUM**

**12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2011**

### **REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

#### **SCHOOLS REDUNDANCIES - UPDATE**

##### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report updates members on the anticipated number and cost of redundancies in schools over the coming financial year. There are four potential funding sources to meet these costs
- The existing budget provision for redundancy and premature retirement in Children's Services.
  - School closure budget.
  - Capitalisation, which is subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, and the Council's Director of Finance.
  - A contribution from individual schools.

##### **2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 2.1 The previous report to the Forum in January 2011 is attached. This outlines some of the reasons schools may seek to reduce their workforce and DFE regulations describing the guidance for the treatment of costs.

The view from the last meeting was further time was needed to discuss these issues and therefore a decision was deferred to the next Schools Forum. The issue has since been raised at Primary and Secondary heads meetings.

##### **3.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Education Act 2002 sets out the legal framework for the treatment of redundancies and associated costs in schools. The Act states that costs incurred in respect of the dismissal of staff shall not be met from the schools budget share unless the Authority has good reason for doing so.

School Finance Regulations have given further guidance. The costs of school redundancies may be charged to the school budget where savings to the school budget are greater than expenditure proposed (resulting in efficiencies). It is this regulation that has been used to create the school closure budget.

##### **3.1 CURRENT POSITION 2011 – 12**

Redundancy costs for staff in schools are based on statutory weeks multiplied by average salary. Generally the average salary is significantly greater than the statutory entitlement.

The final position and costs will not be known until all schools have set a budget. At this time there are 16 secondary schools seeking to make redundancies and 5 primary schools. In total this may impact on 50 – 60 teachers and 15 – 20 support staff. This is summarised below:

|           | Number of schools | Deficit in 2011/12 £000s | Deficit in 2012/13 £000s | Number of Teachers | Number Support Staff | Cost in 2011/12 £000s |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Secondary | 15                | 2,300                    | 6,615                    | 53.6               | 13.5                 | 1,590                 |
| Primary   | 5                 | 90                       | 269                      | 10.7               | 5.6                  | 245                   |
|           |                   |                          |                          | <b>64.3</b>        | <b>19.1</b>          | <b>1,835</b>          |

The table clearly illustrates the scale of the problem and the urgent need to address it. With specific resources of £380,000 in Children’s Services there is a potential budget shortfall of £1,455,000 to meet 2011/12 costs of redundancy.

The statutory redundancy element of these costs may be in the region of £700,000.

The specific factors contributing to the difficulties in schools are:

- i) A falling secondary pupil roll
 

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| January 2010 census | 22,856   |
| January 2011 census | 22,418   |
| Reduction           | 438 (2%) |
- ii) A reduction in school 6<sup>th</sup> Form funding of 3%.
- iii) A 25% reduction in Teachers Pay Grant - £225,000

### 3.2 FUTURE OUTLOOK

The falling roll will continue to impact secondary schools over the medium term (until 2016). Over the 6 year period from 2010 the total pupil numbers may decline by 1,873 (about 8%). Each pupil attracts Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) of about £5,000. The change may result in a reduction of grant in excess of £9m (a typical secondary budget is £5m).

In addition to the above the indications are that funding for School 6th Forms will reduce by £3m over the next 3 years.

### 3.4 PROPOSALS

It is essential that robust plans are put in place by the Council, Forum and Schools to deal with these changes. These should include:

- The use of the school closure budget to fund non-closure redundancies.
- The capitalisation of statutory redundancy costs. Redundancy costs are revenue spending but the Secretary of State may permit the statutory

redundancy element to be treated as capital spending subject to meeting strict criteria. This is based upon a bidding process with no guarantee that such a bid will be approved and the costs would have to be met from non-capital funds.

- A contribution from schools of up to 25% of the costs of redundancy with agreement to extend the deficit recovery period. This would cover some costs that are in excess of the statutory requirement
- An agreement by schools to re-introduce the principles of the former Wirral school redeployment policy.

### **3.5 REDEPLOYMENT**

In order to minimise the potential numbers of redundancies in schools a redeployment scheme is recommended. Vacancies should be advertised in schools subject to downsizing prior to an external advert, giving opportunities for all staff in schools affected to be considered. This is a means to minimise costs in schools. The views of schools will be requested.

### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Schools Budget is used to match fund the redundancy costs associated with an approved school deficit recovery plan.
2. That schools contribute up to 25% of redundancy / severance costs.
3. That schools are consulted on the proposals for redundancies and the introduction of a redeployment scheme.

**David Armstrong**  
**Interim Director of Children's Services**

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## Appendix B

### Post 16 and Status information on Wirral secondary schools

|  | Post-16  | Number in post-16 | Post-16 as proportion of total roll | Status   |
|--|----------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Bebington High   | Yes      | 134               | 15%                                 | Foundation Trust PFI                             |
| St John Plessington Catholic High  | Yes      | 262               | 19%                                 | Voluntary Aided                                  |
| South Wirral High  | Yes      | 143               | 13%                                 | Foundation PFI                                   |
| Wirral Grammar School for Boys   | Yes      | 270               | 26%                                 | Foundation (Academy)                             |
| Wirral Grammar School for Girls  | Yes      | 291               | 27%                                 | Foundation (Academy) PFI                         |
|  |          |                   |                                     |  |
| Birkenhead High School Academy (Girls)   | Yes      | 110*              | 32%                                 | Academy  |
| University Academy of Birkenhead   | No       |                   |                                     | Academy PFI                                      |
| Prenton High   | No       |                   |                                     | Foundation (Academy) PFI                         |
| Ridgeway High  | No       |                   |                                     | Foundation (Academy)                             |
| St Anselm's College  | Yes      | 204               | 24%                                 | Voluntary Aided (Academy)                        |
|  |          |                   |                                     |  |
| Mosslands School (Boys)  | Yes      | 222               | 20%                                 | Community  |
| Oldershaw School   | Yes      | 142               | 19%                                 | Community (Academy)                              |
| Wallasey School  | Yes      | 186               | 18%                                 | Community PFI                                    |
| Weatherhead High School for Girls  | Yes      | 389               | 25%                                 | Foundation PFI                                   |
|  |          |                   |                                     |  |
| Calday Grange Grammar School for Boys  | Yes      | 552               | 38%                                 | Foundation Trust                                 |
| Hilbre High  | Yes      | 152               | 15%                                 | Foundation Trust PFI                             |
| Pensby High School for Boys  | Yes      | 93**              | 17%                                 | Community  |
| Pensby High School for Girls   | Yes      | 123**             | 17%                                 | Community  |
| West Kirby Grammar School for Girls  | Yes      | 318               | 28%                                 | Foundation (Academy) PFI                         |
| Upton Hall School  | Yes      | 213               | 24%                                 | Voluntary Aided                                  |
| Woodchurch High  | No (Yes) |                   |                                     | Foundation Trust (Academy) One School Pathfinder |
| <p>* January 2011 Census data not available for BHS Academy; May 2010 used as a proxy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Page 87</b></p> <p>** Pensby Schools are hard federated and operate a joint sixth form.</p> |          |                   |                                     |  |

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2011

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                          | <b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S<br/>DEPARTMENT DEPARTMENTAL PLAN<br/>2011-12</b> |
| <b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>                  | <b>ALL</b>  |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>                        | <b>INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S<br/>SERVICES</b>                              |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO<br/>HOLDER:</b> | <b>COUNCILLOR SHEILA CLARKE</b>   |
| <b>KEY DECISION?</b>                     | <b>NO</b>   |

#### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report presents the 2011-12 Children and Young People's Department Departmental Plan and outlines the cycle of reporting to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny committee.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee note the Children and Young People's Department Departmental Plan 2011-12.

#### **3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

3.1 To register the production of the Children and Young People's Department Departmental Plan 2011-12.

#### **4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

4.1 Department plans are produced annually to underpin the delivery of the Council's priorities as defined in the Corporate Plan. The structure of Department Plans is managed corporately. Overview and Scrutiny Committees will receive a quarterly performance report on the delivery of the Department plan.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL MONITORING**

5.1 The Department Plan includes a finance section.

#### **6.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

6.1 The Department Plan includes a risk section.

## **7.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 Not relevant.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 No consultation was undertaken for the production of this report.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

9.1 Through Wirral Children's Trust voluntary, community and faith groups are involved in a variety of roles in Wirral Children's Services.

## **10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

10.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

## **11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

## **12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

12.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

The Department Plan includes an equalities section.

## **13.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

## **14.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 There are none directly arising from this report.

### **REPORT AUTHOR: Nancy Clarkson**

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1 – Children and Young People's Departmental Plan 2011-12**

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

None.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

None.



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
DEPARTMENT**

**DEPARTMENTAL PLAN**

**2011-2012**

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## 1. Departmental Overview

We value every child equally and strive for positive outcomes for all of them. This means that we pay attention to the quality of services and to those barriers that prevent some children from thriving.

The Department is a member of Wirral Children's Trust, a partnership of all agencies working with children and young people in the borough. Through the Children and Young People's Plan the partnership focuses on improving the five Every Child Matters outcomes for every Wirral child in all its work. It does this directly with children and young people and also indirectly by supporting families and by supporting adults as learners in their own right. High quality provision is provided via Children's Centres, schools, colleges and other providers. We recognise the key role of parents, carers and of extended families in nurturing children and young people; we work to support them in this task.

We organise our work around children and young people: what they say, where they are and what they need. Wherever possible, we link services to districts and areas, increase cohesion and reduce central management. We value all colleagues from the statutory and voluntary sectors equally as contributors to improved outcomes for children, regardless of their professional background. Children, young people and their families are supported by multi-disciplinary teams of colleagues, drawn from different partners but sharing a common base.

### Organisation of the Department

In 2011-12 a restructure of the Department will be undertaken with the reduction of three branches into four:

| Branch                   | Head of Branch |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Planning and Resources   | Andrew Roberts |
| Social Care              | Julia Hassall  |
| Learning and Achievement | Mark Parkinson |

#### Planning and Resources Branch

To ensure that resources required for delivery of services whether human, physical or financial are identified, allocated, managed and monitored, with appropriate planning processes in place to facilitate effective performance management.

#### Social Care Branch

To identify and respond to the needs of vulnerable children and families, including children who need protection, and children who need to be looked after by the Authority. This will be done through integrated assessment and service delivery, in partnership with families and other agencies.

#### Learning and Achievement Branch

To ensure that the children and young people of Wirral have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, raise their aspirations and improve their life chances, through providing

high quality support and challenge to Children's Centres, Early Years settings, schools, colleges and other providers.

To provide and commission high quality professional development for the Children's Services workforce and to deliver a range of opportunities for lifelong learning within the community.

To support all children and young people within the context of school, home and the wider community in accessing regular and appropriate educational opportunities.

### **Local Safeguarding Children Board**

Protecting our children and young people from harm is a key priority for Council and is led by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The LSCB has a clear vision that places safeguarding at the centre of the Council and Wirral Children's Trust's overall commitment to supporting children and the families it serves. The Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services have clear roles and responsibilities as champions for children, young people and their families. The Director reports directly to the Council Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

### **Contribution to the Corporate Plan**

The department contributes to the delivery of the Corporate Plan with particular focus on the goals identified in Your Family: Children and Young People and Your Council.



## 2. What are we going to deliver in 2011-12?

### Corporate Plan - Your Family: Children and Young People

| We will...                                   | 2011-12 Activities   | Relevant performance measures / indicators   | Financial and Staffing Implications                      | Borough wide or area | Is it being delivered in partnership?           | How will we engage local people?             | Dept Lead |
|--|--|--|--|----------------------|---|--|-----------|
| Protect children and young people from harm. | Vulnerable children, young people and families receive targeted, early intervention and support which meets their needs and improves their life chances. | Co-located area teams will deliver multi-agency support to children involved in the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team Around the Child (TAC) processes to support early identification of children's needs. (NI 60, NI 68 and Local 1405) | Council Budget; Funding in other agencies. Partnerships. | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust                         | Council consultation; Service user feedback. | J Hassall |
|  |  | Commissioned Family Support to support families resulting in fewer looked after children. (Local 1403)   | Council Budget; Early Intervention Grant                 | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback. | J Hassall |
|  |  | Increased accessibility and capacity of short breaks for disabled children. 300 short breaks will be provided in 2011/12 based on the provision being in place from the expected date.   | Early Intervention Grant commissioned service            | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback. | J Hassall |

| We will... | 2011-12 Activities  | Relevant performance measures / indicators  | Financial and Staffing Implications                    | Borough wide or area | Is it being delivered in partnership?           | How will we engage local people?                           | Dept Lead |
|------------|---|---|--|----------------------|---|--|-----------|
|            | Improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers.               | Safely reduce the numbers of looked after children to 645. (Local Indicator 1400, NI 61 and NI 66)  | Council Budget; Early Intervention Grant               | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback.               | J Hassall |
|            |   | Improve the stability of placements of looked after children by reducing the percentage of looked after children with three or more placements during the year to 9% (NI 62) and by improving the percentage of children to 70% (NI 63) who have had continuity of care in terms of where they are placed for at least two years. | Council Budget   | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback.               | J Hassall |
|            |   | Recruit additional 20-25 foster carers. (Local Indicator 1406)  | Council Budget   | Borough Wide         |   | Foster carer and service user feedback; marketing campaign | J Hassall |
|            | Improving outcomes for children and young people in need of protection. | Ensure that all Child Protection cases are reviewed within timescales. (NI 64, NI 65 and NI 67)   | Council Budget. Rolling recruitment of social workers. | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust                         | Council consultation; Service user feedback.               | J Hassall |
|            |   | Implement the action plan from the Safeguarding and LAC Inspection.   | Council Budget   | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust                         | Council consultation; Service user feedback.               | J Hassall |

| We will...   | 2011-12 Activities  | Relevant performance measures / indicators  | Financial and Staffing Implications   | Borough wide or area    | Is it being delivered in partnership?           | How will we engage local people?                        | Dept Lead   |
|--|---|---|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|
|  | Working to ensure children live in communities where they feel safe, and where harmful behaviour is actively addressed and reduced.   | Reduce the number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System.                                 | Youth Justice Board funding. Partnerships.  | Borough Wide            | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback.            | J Hassall   |
|  |   | Reduce incidents of antisocial behaviour. (Local 1701)  | Council Budget in year review   | Borough Wide            |   | Council consultation;                                   | J Hassall   |
| <b>Support schools and settings to improve educational provision and attainment.</b> | Developing a new school improvement service focused on providing services to schools which demonstrably improve attainment in class rooms, supporting schools that wish to, to transfer smoothly to academy status. | Provide 80% of Wirral schools with school improvement services. (Local Indicator 1505)                  | Academy transfers; Service Level Agreement  | Borough Wide            | Schools   | Council consultation; school feedback                   | M Parkinson   |
|  |   | Improve outcomes for children and young people where poverty and disadvantage affect their achievement. | Improve achievement at Level 4 and above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 to 79% of pupils. (NI 73) | Service Level Agreement | Borough Wide                                    | Schools   | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. |
|  |   | Improve attainment of 5+ GCSE A*-C (including English and Maths) to 60.7% of pupils. (NI75)             | Academy transfers; Service Level Agreement  | Borough Wide            | Schools   | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson   |
|  |   |   |   |                         |   |   |   |

| We will... | 2011-12 Activities   | Relevant performance measures / indicators  | Financial and Staffing Implications                               | Borough wide or area | Is it being delivered in partnership? | How will we engage local people?   | Dept Lead   |
|------------|--|---|---|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|
|            |  | Increase the numbers of looked after children achieving Level 4 at Key Stage 2 (by 18% in English and by 15% in Maths) and those achieving 5+ GCSE A*-C (including English and Maths) by 5%. (NI 99, NI 100 and NI 101) | LACES Review  | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback.  | M Parkinson |
|            |  | Reduce the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers at by 17.9% at Key Stage 2 and by 30.2% at Key Stage 4. (NI102a and NI 102b)   | Academy transfers;, School pupil premium. Service Level Agreement | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback.  | M Parkinson |
|            | Improving provision, choice and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities. | Reduce the achievement gap between pupils with Special Educational Needs and their peers by 46% at Key Stage 2 and by 47% at Key Stage 4. (NI 104 and NI 105)   | Academy transfers; Service Level Agreement                        | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback.  | M Parkinson |
|            |  | Implementation of the review of SEN provision. (NI 103a, NI 103b, NI 105 and NI 105)  | Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)                                     | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; Schools Forum; Schools; School Involvement Council; Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |

| We will...  | 2011-12 Activities  | Relevant performance measures / indicators  | Financial and Staffing Implications | Borough wide or area | Is it being delivered in partnership? | How will we engage local people?                        | Dept Lead   |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------|
|   | The outcomes of Wirral Council's consultation are implemented to ensure cost effective and high quality services. | Review and restructure the Looked After Children Education Service so that it focuses on championing improving outcomes for LAC. (NI 99, NI 100 and NI 101)   | Council Budget, DSG. Restructure    | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |
|   |   | Review of Music Services, review and restructure the Music Service so that it operates within the budget whilst maintaining and further improving the quality and range of Music Service provision. | Council Budget, Restructure         | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |
|   |   | The Oakland's Outdoor Education Centre review completed.  | Council Budget                      | Borough Wide         | Schools                               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |
| <b>Ensure Wirral's children and young people can participate and achieve their potential.</b> | Increasing the numbers of 16-18 young people in education, employment and training including vulnerable groups.   | Increase the numbers of young people in education, employment and training of those aged 16-18. (NI 117 and NI 91)  | Council Budget, Apprenticeship, EIG | Borough Wide         | 14-19 Partnership                     | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |
|   |   | Implement the OFSTED action plan to reduce numbers of care leavers who are not in education, employment or training by September 2011.  | Council Budget, Apprenticeship      | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust               | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |

| We will...   | 2011-12 Activities  | Relevant performance measures / indicators   | Financial and Staffing Implications                        | Borough wide or area | Is it being delivered in partnership?           | How will we engage local people?                        | Dept Lead   |
|--|---|--|--|----------------------|---|---|-------------|
|  |   | Increase the numbers of care leavers in education, employment and training to 58%. (NI 148)  | Council Budget, Apprenticeship                             | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust                         | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |
|  | Providing children and young people with access to a range of appropriate play and developmental opportunities which meet their needs.  | Increase numbers participating in youth activities to 23% of children and young people. (Local Indicator 1700a, 1700b and 1700c)   | Council Budget, Early Intervention Grant. IYSS restructure | Borough Wide         | Partner & VCF Sector Youth Provision            | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | J Hassall   |
|  |   | Early Intervention Grant commissioned activities provide vulnerable young people with developmental opportunities.   | Early Intervention Grant commissioning process;            | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback.            | J Hassall   |
|  | Providing opportunities for children and young people to be actively engaged in community and democratic decision-making processes.   | Increase the number of Children in Care Council representatives by 4.  | Council Budget   | Borough Wide         | CiCC  | CiCC; Looked after Children                             | J Hassall   |
|  |   | Establish a dedicated website for children in care in by August 2011.  | Council Budget   | Borough Wide         | CiCC  | CiCC; Looked after Children; Young People               | J Hassall   |
| <b>Provide early years intervention and support for vulnerable children and families</b> | Improving outcomes for young children and families, especially the most vulnerable, through commissioning effective early years support and intervention and enhancing Sure Start provision | Improve Early Years foundation stage profile achievement to 57% and reduce the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest by 27.6%. (NI 72 and NI 92) | Council Budget, DSG, Early Intervention Grant              | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust, Schools                | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |

| We will...   | 2011-12 Activities  | Relevant performance measures / indicators  | Financial and Staffing Implications                  | Borough wide or area | Is it being delivered in partnership?           | How will we engage local people?                        | Dept Lead   |
|--|---|---|--|----------------------|---|---|-------------|
|  |   | Build on the early progress made through the E-start data base to produce regular monitoring reports and ensure targeted provision for the most vulnerable with 70% registration. (Local Indicator 1505)  | Council Budget, Early Intervention Grant             | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; Service user feedback.            | M Parkinson |
|  |   | Improve the number of Early Years settings and Schools delivering flexibility in relation to the 15 hour free entitlement. (Local 1504)   | DSG, Early Intervention Grant                        | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust; Commissioned services. | Council consultation; School and Service user feedback. | M Parkinson |
| <b>Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people.</b><br><br>DELIVERED BY HEALTH | Effectively implementing the Child Health Strategy and so reducing inequalities in the physical and mental health of children and young people. | Reduce the under 18 conception rate to 24.7 per 1,000 15-17 year olds by 2010-11 (nationally defined target not reported until 2011-12) (NI 112)<br><br>Decrease the number of hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries (1-5 years). (NI 70) | NHS Wirral; Council Budget; Early Intervention Grant | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust, NHS Wirral             | Council consultation; Service user feedback.            | Health lead |
|  | Encouraging and supporting all children and families to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle                                     | Reduce the obesity rate to 9.5% for 4-5 year olds and 19.8% of 10 – 11 year olds (NI 55, 56)  | NHS Wirral; Council Budget; Early Intervention Grant | Borough Wide         | Wirral Children's Trust, NHS Wirral             | Council consultation; Service user feedback.            | Health lead |

| <b>Performance Measure / Indicators</b>  | <b>Latest Baseline (2009/10)</b> | <b>Target (if appropriate) (2011/12)</b> |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| NI 55 - Obesity in Reception aged Children   | 9.3%                             |  |
| NI 56 - Obesity in Year 6 aged Children  | 20.6%                            |  |
| NI 57 - Participation in Sporting Activities   | 82%                              | 90%                                      |
| Local 1405 - Percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 10 working days of referral             | New indicator                    |  |
| NI 60 - Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement | 75.9%                            | 80.0%                                    |
| NI 61 - Timeliness of adoption   | 87.5%                            | 80.0%                                    |
| NI 62 - Stability of placements: number of placements  | 6.5%                             | 9.0%                                     |
| NI 63 - Stability of placements: length of placement   | 64.5%                            | 70.0%                                    |
| NI 64 - Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more   | 1.7%                             | 4.0%                                     |
| NI 65 - Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.   | 17.1%                            | 15%                                      |
| NI 66 - LAC cases which were reviewed within required timescales.  | 94.0%                            | 100.0%                                   |
| NI 67 - Child Protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales  | 99.3%                            | 100.0%                                   |
| NI 68 - Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment   | 74.7%                            | 90.0%                                    |
| NI 70 - Reduce emergency admissions to hospital relating to unintentional and deliberate injuries to children                        | 122.6                            | 0  |
| NI 71 – Children missing from home or care   | 14                               | 15                                       |
| NI 72 - Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage  | 58%<br>(2010/11)                 | 57%                                      |
| NI 73 - Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and maths at Key Stage 2   | 75%<br>(2010/11)                 | 79%                                      |
| NI 75 - 5+ GCSE A*-C (Inc English and maths)   | 58.7%<br>(2010/11)               | 60.7%                                    |
| NI 87 - Secondary Schools Persistent Absence   | 4.5%                             | 4.0%                                     |
| NI 91 - Participation of 17 year olds in Education or Training   | 83%                              | 85%                                      |
| NI 92 - Narrowing the Gap at FSP   | 27.6%                            | 27.6%                                    |
| NI 99 - LAC reaching L4 English at KS2   | 51.9%<br>(2010/11)               | 18%                                      |
| NI 100 - LAC reaching L4 maths at KS2  | 55.6%<br>(2010/11)               | 15%                                      |
| NI 101 - LAC achieving 5+ A*-C ( Including English & maths)  | 9.3%<br>(2010/11)                | 5.0%                                     |
| NI 102a - FSM/Non FSM gap at KS2 English and maths   | 21.6%<br>(2010/11)               | 17.9%                                    |
| NI 102b - FSM/Non FSM gap at KS4 English and maths   | 34.9%<br>(2010/11)               | 30.2%                                    |
| NI 103a - SEN statements within 26 weeks (Excluding exceptions)  | 95.6%<br>(2010/11)               | 100.0%                                   |
| NI 103b - SEN statements within 26 weeks (Including exceptions)  | 94.8%<br>(2010/11)               | 96.0%                                    |
| NI 104 - SEN/Non SEN gap at KS2 English and Maths  | 47.7%<br>(2010/11)               | 46.0%                                    |



| Performance Measure / Indicators  | Latest Baseline (2009/10) | Target (if appropriate) (2011/12) |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| NI 105 - SEN/Non SEN gap at KS4 English and Maths                                   | 52.3% (2010/11)           | 47.0%                             |
| First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System                                   | 0                         | 0                                 |
| NI 112 - Reduction in the Under 18 Conception since 1999 baseline year.             | -21%                      | -50%                              |
| NI 114 - Permanent exclusions from School   | 0.07                      | 0.07                              |
| NI 117 - 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) | 8.2% (2010/11)            | 7.9%                              |
| NI 147 - Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation                                     | 89.6%                     | 95.0%                             |
| NI 148 - Care Leavers in EET  | 54.2%                     | 58.0%                             |
| Local 1400 - Number of looked after children  | 668 (2010/11)             | 645                               |
| Local 1403 – Family Group Meetings  | New Indicator             |                                   |
| Local 1405 – Initial Assessments completed within 10 days                           | New Indicator             |                                   |
| Local 1406 – Number of Foster Carers  | 288 (March 2011)          | 310                               |
| Local 1504 - Early Years settings offering 15 hours provision                       | New indicator             |                                   |
| Local 1505 – Percentage of Registrations with Children's Centres                    | -                         | 70%                               |
| Local 1506 – Percentage of Registrations with Children's Centres ( 3% SOA)          | -                         | 70%                               |
| Local 1507- Percentage of Schools taking up Support Services                        | -                         | 80%                               |
| Local 1700a - Participation in and outcomes from youth work: Participation          | 18%                       | 23%                               |
| Local 1700b - Participation in and outcomes from youth work: Recorded Outcomes      | 73%                       | 65%                               |
| Local 1700c - Participation in and outcomes from youth work: Accredited Outcomes    | 21%                       | 30%                               |
| Local 1701 - Number of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour                  | 14125                     | 13601                             |

**Note:** The National Indicator set has been abolished by Government. New national performance indicators will be introduced by the Department for Education in 2011-12. In light of the changes a review of Children's Services performance indicators has taken place to ensure effective performance monitoring will be maintained. The performance measures above may be subject to change in 2011-12 when further information is made available.

### 3. Financial Planning

#### REVENUE BUDGET 2011/12

| Division                                | Services                             | Gross Budget (£) | Net Budget (£) |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Children's Services</b>              | Adoption Services                    | 1,312,100        | 1,586,700      |
|   | Aiming Higher for Disabled Children  | 1,540,700        | -              |
|   | Assessment and Care Management       | 20,077,200       | 24,831,200     |
|   | Carers Grant                         | 224,700          | 224,700        |
|   | Children's Homes                     | 1,440,700        | 1,715,400      |
|   | Commissioning                        | 1,647,600        | 1,350,100      |
|   | Family Centres                       | 2,510,700        | 2,876,400      |
|   | Foster/Family Placements             | 983,700          | 1,466,600      |
|   | Home Care                            | 530,400          | 562,500        |
|   | Leaving Care                         | 921,200          | 1,126,100      |
|   | Looked After Child Education Service | 304,800          | 119,300        |
|   | Multi Disciplinary Area Teams        | 541,900          | 546,000        |
|   | Social Care Management & Training    | 4,262,300        | -              |
| <b>Youth Offending Service</b>          | Youth Offending Service              | 2,576,000        | 937,200        |
| <b>Youth and Community Services</b>     | Adult & Community Learn              | 3,387,200        | 72,000         |
|   | Community Services                   | 800,900          | 583,300        |
|   | Instrumental Music Service           | 1,105,500        | -              |
|   | Integrated Youth Support             | 803,900          | 497,400        |
|   | LEA Initiatives                      | 48,500           | 48,600         |
|   | LSCB Safeguarding                    | 234,100          | -              |
|   | Merseyside Connexions                | 2,781,200        | 492,300        |
|   | PAYP                                 | 589,800          | 625,800        |
|   | Youth Service                        | 2,914,900        | 2,210,800      |
| <b>Children's Centres and Surestart</b> | Children's Centres                   | 7,055,400        | -              |
|   | General Sure Start Grant             | 3,889,200        | -              |
| <b>Management and Support Services</b>  | Building Cleaning DSO                | 634,800          | -              |
|   | Debt Management                      | 16,907,300       | 14,808,500     |
|   | Inspect & Advisory Service           | 6,506,100        | -              |
|   | Professional Develop Centre          | 845,500          | -              |
| <b>Support for schools:</b>             | Asset Management                     | 8,438,000        | 3,148,600      |
|   | Home to School Transport             | 520,900          | 5,140,400      |
|   | Oaklands Centre                      | 417,000          | 78,400         |
|   | Prem Retire Costs                    | 3,376,900        | 3,562,600      |
|   | Psychology Service                   | 759,700          | 1,070,400      |
|   | School Improvement                   | 1,880,700        | 2,210,900      |
|   | Social Welfare Service               | 708,500          | 687,000        |
|   | Regulation                           | -                | 2,067,300      |
|   | Other SEN Costs                      | -                | 106,800        |

| <b>Division</b>                              | <b>Services</b>                   | <b>Gross Budget (£)</b> | <b>Net Budget (£)</b> |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Non Delegated School Costs</b>            | Admissions                        | 40,000                  | -                     |
|  | Advanced Skills Teachers          | 317,100                 | -                     |
|  | City Learning Centres             | 814,700                 | -                     |
|  | Contributions to Combined Budgets | 1,193,100               | -                     |
|  | Early Years                       | 273,700                 | -                     |
|  | Education Out Of School           | 246,200                 | -                     |
|  | Indep Special School Fees         | 3,204,800               | -                     |
|  | Insurances                        | 65,400                  | -                     |
|  | Library Service                   | 191,600                 | -                     |
|  | Licences & Subs                   | 72,000                  | -                     |
|  | M E A S                           | 292,800                 | -                     |
|  | Milk & Meals                      | 4,537,700               | -                     |
|  | Miscellaneous                     | 78,200                  | -                     |
|  | OLEA                              | 458,500                 | -                     |
|  | School Intervention               | 674,500                 | -                     |
|  | School Specific Contingencies     | 1,028,300               | -                     |
|  | Schools Forum                     | 10,600                  | -                     |
|  | Special Staff Costs               | 935,000                 | -                     |
|  | Statements                        | 5,689,800               | -                     |
|  | Support For SEN                   | 2,131,700               | -                     |
| Wirral Alternative Schools Programme         | 1,110,000                         | -                       |                       |
| Other Specific Grants                        | 258,400                           | -                       |                       |
| <b>Individual Schools Budgets</b>            | Nursery Schools                   | 9,921,500               | -                     |
|  | Primary Schools                   | 89,033,200              | -                     |
|  | Secondary Schools                 | 115,632,400             | -                     |
|  | Special Schools                   | 16,010,000              | -                     |
| <b>Children and Young Peoples Department</b> |                                   | <b>357,701,200</b>      | <b>74,753,300</b>     |

## POLICY OPTIONS 2011/12

| Area                       | Funding for   | Net Budget £ |
|----------------------------|---|--------------|
| Anti Social Behaviour Team | One off to allow a full review of the Council's and partner organisations approach to Anti Social Behaviour | 290,300      |
| Onside Youth Hub           | One off to progress the development of the brand new youth hub facility in Birkenhead                       | 50,000       |
| Sure Start                 | One off equipment for each Centre   | 32,000       |
| Communication Conference   | One off to increase involvement in Children in Care Council   | 20,000       |

## SAVINGS 2011/12

| SAVINGS 2011/12                          | To be achieved by   | £         |
|--|---|-----------|
| Employees (EVR/VS Scheme)                | Staff released under EVR/VS                                     | 5,100,500 |
| Every Pound Matters                      | Removal of in year ABG savings                                  | 2,390,200 |
| Consultation Exercise                    | Healthy And Extended Schools                                    | 181,000   |
| Efficiency                               | Family Group Conferencing                                       | 70,000    |
| Consultants                              | Reduced use of consultants                                      | 45,200    |
| Overtime, consumables and Car allowances | Reduced spend in these areas through reduction in staff numbers | 167,300   |

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME

| Scheme                        | Details  | 2011/12 (£) | 2012/13 (£) |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| Modernisation & Basic Need    | To improve School facilities                       | 7,919,808   |             |
| Birkenhead High Girls Academy | New Secondary School build                         | 4,600,000   | 5,000,000   |
| Devolved Formula Capital      | Allocated to individual schools                    | 4,362,613   |             |
| Pensby & Stanley Schools      | New Primary/Special School build                   | 2,400,000   | 8,850,993   |
| Cathcart Street Primary       | New Primary School build                           | 1,896,097   |             |
| One School Pathfinder         | Completion of Woodchurch High School BSF           | 1,283,443   |             |
| Primary Surplus Places        | School alterations due to changes in pupil numbers | 580,063     | 250,000     |
| School Meals Uptake           | Completion of school kitchens                      | 245,000     |             |
| 14-19 Special                 | Funding available for special schools              |             | 1,340,000   |

## 4. Workforce Planning

### 4.1 Workforce Profile

There have been significant changes in the workforce profile within the Children and Young People's Department over a twelve month period, reflected below in a summary up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. A review of Transport services across the Council resulted in a transfer of responsibility for School Transport, Special Educational Needs to the Department for Adult Social Services. 4 Officers and approximately 250 contracted school escort staff with 30+ casual escort staff transferred across.

In July 2010 a Council decision to centralise all Human Resource and Organisational Development functions moved budgets and line management responsibility to Corporate Human Resources. There is a phased delivery plan and currently staff employed within those functions remain within the Departmental profile. The new operating model will be in place by October 2011.

| Employee Information   | Female |        |      | Male |        |      | Total |        |      |
|------------------------|--------|--------|------|------|--------|------|-------|--------|------|
|                        | No     | FTE    | %    | No   | FTE    | %    | No    | FTE    | %    |
| Permanent Full Time    | 677    | 674.01 | 44.7 | 218  | 217.78 | 61.8 | 895   | 891.79 | 47.9 |
| Permanent Part Time    | 774    | 360.07 | 51.0 | 121  | 38.40  | 34.3 | 895   | 398.47 | 47.9 |
| Permanent Job Shares   | 30     | 15.24  | 2.0  | 1    | 0.50   | 0.3  | 31    | 15.74  | 1.6  |
| Temporary Employees    | 33     | 21.32  | 2.2  | 13   | 7.63   | 3.6  | 46    | 28.95  | 2.5  |
| Modern Apprentices     | 2      | 2.00   | 0.1  | 0    | 0      | 0    | 2     | 2.00   | 0.1  |
| <b>Total (rounded)</b> | 1516   | 1073   |      | 353  | 264    |      | 1869  | 1337   |      |

The above represents a gender split of 81.11% female to 18.89% male employees reflecting the high proportion of part time female workers employed in traditionally female occupied roles in services such as catering and cleaning.

The decision by the Council to offer EVR/Severance to all employees, to terminate employment over the period December 2010 to June 2011, significantly impacts on the profile. In total it has been agreed that 325 people will cease employment in CYPD by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 with the potential for further numbers to be agreed where they are deemed to be 'at risk' as a consequence of Council decisions to alter services. The above data reflects the number of employees who left employment on December 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 but does not include those who will finish by 30<sup>th</sup> June. By then a further 66 posts will have been removed from the establishment, plus over 100 school based catering staff and cleaning staff who deliver a contracted public buildings cleaning services to the council.

As the majority of these staff are part time female workers there will be an impact on the gender profile of the Department. The staffing levels required to provide a catering service in Primary schools is determined by a staffing ratio linked to the number of

meals provided and whilst there is currently a labour review in place it may be that increasing numbers require localised increases in staff numbers. The Public Buildings Cleaning Contract has been extended beyond the original contract date and a decision on whether or not to re tender or reduce the specification to accommodate the reduced staffing levels has yet to be made. Should the contract be outsourced those staff will be TUPE transferred to the private sector.

The impact of the above on the Department's profile will be masked by a further Council decision to transfer responsibility for the Transport function back to Children and Young People's Department to include the School Escort service and the fleet of vehicles engaged in the Council to deliver a variety of functions. Whilst the budget transfers from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2011 the workforce profile is yet to be confirmed.

As a consequence of the EVR/Severance offer there will be a restructure of the Department's organisational hierarchy with a reduction from four Branches to three. This will involve a transfer of responsibilities for the services previously sited in Participation & Inclusion Branch:

- i) Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) will move to the Social Care Branch;
- ii) Education Psychologists, Education Social Welfare and Special Education Needs will move to Learning & Achievement Branch;
- iii) School Admissions and Transport will move to Planning & Resources Branch.

In addition there will be a phased restructure of administrative and secretarial support within the Department commencing with generic support provided across the offices based in Hamilton Building and the Professional Excellence Centre. It is intended to deliver such support through a Business Support Service.

Other implications for the workforce include Phase 3 of Job Evaluation to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011; Business Transformation to include self service, absence management, expenses and desk top reporting; revised Absence Management Policy with changes to the trigger points. These together with the need to analyse skills and competencies in the restructured workforce will impact on middle and senior management.

## 4.2 Branch Detail

The data shown profiles the current Branches as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. By June 2011 a further 66 employees will have left, excluding cleaning and catering staff. Of the 66 there are 49 who are aged over 55 and represent a loss of skills and experience that will require a focus on professional development for supervisory and middle management in some areas.

| Employee Information      | Female |        | Male |       | Total |        |       |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
|                           | No     | FTE    | No   | FTE   | No    | FTE    | %     |
| Children's Social Care    | 398    | 353.82 | 97   | 91.68 | 495   | 445.51 | 26.48 |
| Learning & Achievement    | 391    | 306.66 | 81   | 54.77 | 472   | 361.43 | 25.25 |
| Participation & Inclusion | 272    | 183.98 | 125  | 77.67 | 397   | 261.65 | 21.24 |
| Planning & Resources      | 455    | 228.18 | 50   | 40.19 | 505   | 268.36 | 27.03 |

|              |             |                |            |               |             |                |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1516</b> | <b>1072.64</b> | <b>353</b> | <b>264.31</b> | <b>1869</b> | <b>1336.95</b> |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|

### 4.3 Current Workforce Issues

A summary of the key workforce issues are detailed below:

| <b>Theme</b>       | <b>Workforce Issue</b>  | <b>Planned Actions</b>   | <b>Financial Implications</b>   |
|--------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Profile</b>     | Limited number of young people joining Department   | Engage with Apprenticeship scheme.<br>Consider 'converting' existing posts to apprentice posts   | Funding to support training costs   |
| <b>Capacity</b>    | Succession Planning: Management workforce profile in the Department.<br><br>Recruitment difficulties in Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher posts in schools | Target potential leaders to attain Master of Business Administration (MBA) through corporate programme; promote Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Level 5 to identify potential middle managers.<br><br>Review, evaluate and develop the Succession Planning Strategy for school leaders at the end of the Targeted Support programme. Wirral Leadership and Management Programme to be offered in all Wirral schools.  | Cost of MBA contribution to full charge; cost of ILM.<br><br>Cost of external provision through National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services delivery. Service Level Agreement on Continuing Professional Development bought by Wirral schools. |
| <b>Capacity</b>    | Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers.  | Remodelling Social Work pilot, year three, to end 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2011. Positive outcomes rolled out to the other ten Area Teams within the Borough. New practices to be introduced.<br><br>Participate in Newly Qualified Social Worker Pilot, supporting newly qualified social workers during their first year of practice.<br><br>Pilot 'Step up to Social Work'. An employment based pathway providing a more flexible route for high achieving graduates to complete Masters and gain a Social Worker qualification.<br><br>Ensure community access to social care services, with timely interventions. | Pilot funded for three years through government grant. Costs associated with co-location of Area Teams and Assessment Teams.  |
| <b>Performance</b> | Ensuring that all people working with children and young people have the best possible personal and   | Implement Wirral Children's Workforce Strategy. A common induction programme in partnership with the Third Sector designed to improve  | Funding to employ project lead and capacity to deliver training.  |

| Theme         | Workforce Issue  | Planned Actions  | Financial Implications   |
|---------------|--|--|--|
|               | professional development, knowledge, skills, behaviours and aptitudes.             | understanding of the needs of children and young people.   |  |
| <b>Change</b> | Transfer of Transport function to include school escort service and vehicle fleet. | Review of Transport in 2011-12.  | Cost of Strategic Service Manager post to cover integration of Transport function. |
| <b>Change</b> | Restructure of Department in to three Branches.                                    | Transfer IYSS to Children's Social Care; Education Psychology, Education Social Welfare and SEN to Learning & Achievement; Admissions and Transport to Planning & Resources. | Bid to Strategic Change Board for funding to support restructure.                  |



## 5. Equality and Diversity

Wirral Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and promoting diversity are at the core of everything it does as an employer, service provider, commissioner and in its community leadership role. The Council is committed to achieving 'excellent' status of the Equality Framework for Local Government and has statutory duties relating to equalities.

The CYPD Department Equalities Group has strong links with the Corporate Equalities Group. This group monitors progress with the identified objectives for the period 2011-12 these include:

- Ensuring that schools and others are aware of the requirements of the duties arising from the Equalities Act 2010 by promoting the requirements Equalities Act 2010 by delivering training for school Governors on the Equalities Act and by providing a briefing note to schools on the Equalities Act.
- Developing an equality and diversity strategy that will address the diverse needs of children and young people in Wirral that need safeguarding and are looked after.
- Developing clear guidance on the issue of identification, assessment and planning for children's cultural and identity needs.
- Identifying and delivering bespoke training on identification, assessment and planning in relation to cultural and identity needs to all social care staff.
- To ensure the involvement by young people in participation activities is representative of the diversity of young people on Wirral.

These will be achieved via the actions and milestones set out below.

| Milestone  | Lead      | Timescale     |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| <b>Action</b> - To develop an equality and diversity strategy that will address the diverse needs of children and young people in Wirral that need safeguarding and are looked after.          |           |               |
| Event held for exchange of information and ideas between social work managers and staff, young people, carers and representatives from the different communities of interest/protected groups. | S. Garner | 31 April 2011 |
| Objectives and action plan agreed.   | S. Garner | 31 May 2011   |
| Equality monitoring group in place to meet quarterly.  | S. Garner | 31 May 2011   |
| <b>Action</b> - To ensure that all children's social care records reflect a focus on the child's cultural and identity needs.  |           |               |
| Identify bespoke training on identification, assessment and planning in relation to cultural and identity needs to all social care staff.  | S. Garner | 31 May 2011   |
| Deliver bespoke training on identification, assessment and planning in relation to cultural and identity needs to all social care staff.   | S. Garner | 31 March 2012 |
| Develop clear guidance on the issue of identification, assessment and planning for children's cultural and identity needs.   | S. Garner | 30 June 2011  |

| <b>Milestone</b>   | <b>Lead</b>           | <b>Timescale</b> |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|
| Brief staff on the issue of identification, assessment and planning for children's cultural and identity needs.  | S. Garner             | 30 Sept 2011     |
| <b>Action</b> - Ensure that schools and others are aware of the requirements of the duties arising from the Equalities Act 2010.   |                       |                  |
| Promote the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 by delivering Training for school Governors.   | S Howarth<br>J Hudson | 30 May 2011      |
| Provide briefing note to schools on the Equalities Act 2010.   | S Howarth<br>J Hudson | 31 July 2011     |
| <b>Action</b> - To ensure the involvement by young people in participation activities is representative of the diversity of young people on Wirral.  |                       |                  |
| Promote the participation agenda including the Youth Parliament, to key groups e.g. Wirral Multicultural Organization, Link Forum, Wired, Schools and other lead groups as appropriate.  | M McDaid              | 30 May 2011      |
| Promote Teen Wirral as a tool for young people to be involved in the participation agenda and to encourage take up by young people to represent the cultural diversity and needs of young people from Wirral. This will be achieved through promotion by young people and officers at School Assemblies, Link Forum, Wirral Multicultural Organisation and other organisations as appropriate. | M McDaid              | 30 May 2011      |

## 6. Central Government Reporting Requirements

The Department are required to supply the following statutory returns to central government. Central government collects data for many reasons including managing its own performance, maintaining parliamentary and public accountability, fulfilling EU and international obligations and to protect the interests of the vulnerable.

The following list of data returns will be submitted throughout 2011-12.

- Key Stage assessment data
- Special Educational Needs Statement Completion
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Child Death Review Panels
- Private Fostering (PF1)
- Safeguarding – new information needs arising from Professor Munro’s review
- Secure Children’s Homes (SA1)
- Children’s Centres
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)
- Parental Responsibility (Attendance and Behaviour) [PRAB]
- Family Intervention Project (FIP) monitoring
- Special Educational Needs – new information needs arising from the Green Paper
- NEET 16-18 Year-Olds
- School Admissions Appeals
- School Exclusion Appeals
- Children Looked After (CLA) (SSDA903)
- Missing from Care and Home - UNDER REVIEW
- Admissions: Parental Preferences met following secondary school applications
- Admissions: report to the School Adjudicator
- Young people within the Youth Justice System receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody - UNDER REVIEW
- Children in Need Census
- Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey
- Children’s Centres – new collection to support a Payment by Results regime
- Early Years Census
- Extension of nursery funding to 2 year-olds
- School Census
- Alternative Provision Census
- Music Grant - use of
- Pupil Referral Unit Census
- School Capacity
- School Workforce Census - LA level
- School Workforce Census

## 7. Departmental Risk Register

| Project / Activity        | Risk Description                                | Officer Resp.            | Consequences   | Category               | Existing Control Measures  | Net Likelihood Score | Net Impact Score | Net Total risk score | Risk Review Frequency | Additional Control Measures Planned   | Target Date   |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| Corporate Plan Named Risk |   |                          |  |                        |  |                      |                  |                      |                       |   |   |
| Safeguarding              | Failure in safeguarding arrangements (children) | D Armstrong<br>J Hassall | Harm to the child or young person<br><br>Damage to corporate reputation<br><br>Reduced number of Social Workers. | Reg / Legal/ Statutory | Work of Local Safeguarding Children Board<br>LSCB monitors serious case review action plans.<br><br>Weekly performance monitoring of changes to contact and referral taking in CADT.<br><br>Monthly VCI reporting to the Chief Exec.<br><br>Lead Member Briefing following each LSCB.<br><br>National Notification of Serious Child Care Incidents to OFSTED.<br><br>Continuing programme for disseminating learning from serious child care incidents.<br><br>Child Death | 2                    | 5                | 10                   | Monthly               | Use of escalation procedure reviewed at every LSCB.<br><br>Implement revised Working Together to Safeguard Children.<br><br>Comprehensive review of changes and full multi-agency agreement on new processes from the Munro review will be initiated.<br><br>Recruit to outstanding vacant social work posts<br><br>Agency cover agreed by Director where cover cannot be allocated safely. | On going<br><br>As required<br><br>Sept 2011<br><br>On going<br><br>As required |

| Project / Activity   | Risk Description  | Officer Resp.   | Consequences  | Category               | Existing Control Measures  | Net Likelihood Score | Net Impact Score | Net Total risk score | Risk Review Frequency | Additional Control Measures Planned                            | Target Date |
|--|---|-----------------|---|------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--|-------------|
|  |   |                 |   |                        | Overview Panels.<br><br>Continuing review of S118 IRO applications.  |                      |                  |                      |                       |  |             |
| Additional Department Risks  |   |                 |   |                        |  |                      |                  |                      |                       |  |             |
| <b>Implement multi agency plans to safely support vulnerable children on the edge of care and in care, incorporating measures to be implemented through the Children in Care Act</b> | Possible serious incident with a child or young person. Including young people where information about them is known to a number of different agencies. | Julia Hassall   | Harm to the child or young person.<br><br>Damage to Corporate reputation. | Reg / Legal/ Statutory | Reviews carried out by District Managers of known children / young people likely to fall into this category.<br><br>High-level multi-agency review of individuals leading to improved, and consistently applied multi-agency risk management process.<br><br>Targeted support to be put in place to pre-empt, where possible, escalation of identified areas of concern. | 3                    | 5                | 15                   | Monthly               | Monthly meetings of all senior staff with Director             | On going    |
| <b>Changed Status of Schools</b>   | Risk to Council school admissions arrangements and asset management   | David Armstrong | Impact on Council of failure to properly transfer assets.                 | Reg / Legal/ Statutory | Asset Management team act immediately they are alerted to potential change.  | 3                    | 4                | 12                   | Monthly               | Schools visited and level of asset transfer assessed. Expected | As required |

| Project / Activity | Risk Description   | Officer Resp.  | Consequences   | Category               | Existing Control Measures  | Net Likelihood Score | Net Impact Score | Net Total risk score | Risk Review Frequency | Additional Control Measures Planned  | Target Date |
|--------------------|--|----------------|--|------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--|-------------|
|                    |  |                | Impact on admission arrangements and pupil allocations   |                        | School admission documents reviewed and individual admission arrangements checked against permitted criteria.  | 2                    | 1                | 2                    |                       | arrangements agreed immediately<br><br>Admissions Officer visits school and clarifies contact of parental information. | As required |
| <b>Post 16</b>     | Risk to raising performance and outcomes for children and young people at post-16 as a consequence of changes to the curriculum and funding arrangements | Mark Parkinson | Impact on the local "skills gap"<br><br>Impact on the ability of the LA to promote and encourage more appropriate curriculum pathways for young people | Strategic              | Carry out effective local Strategic Analysis<br><br>Continue to develop effective links between C&YP Dept and Economic Regeneration<br><br>Raise awareness of providers over issues of standards post-16 | 3                    | 3                | 9                    | Monthly               | Implement the impact of the Schools White Paper  | On going    |
| <b>Academies</b>   | Risk to the future provision of school improvement and other functions/ services as a consequence of schools becoming "new style" academies              | Mark Parkinson | Impact on the ability of the LA to monitor, intervene and report on standards for children and young people across Wirral<br><br>Impact on the         | Reg / Legal/ Statutory | Ensure that senior and other officers, elected members, governors and public bodies understand the implications of schools becoming independent<br><br>Ensure that                                       | 3                    | 3                | 9                    | Monthly to DMT        | Development of traded services and other service level agreements  | On going    |

| Project / Activity   | Risk Description  | Officer Resp.   | Consequences  | Category  | Existing Control Measures   | Net Likelihood Score | Net Impact Score | Net Total risk score | Risk Review Frequency    | Additional Control Measures Planned  | Target Date |
|--|---|-----------------|---|-----------|---|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------|
|  |   |                 | ability of the LA to deliver a range of services as a consequence of academies taking their budget share  |           | governors, head teachers, officers and elected members are aware of the implications for individual schools and for the LA for the provision of some central services |                      |                  |                      |                          |  |             |
| <b>Departmental Budget</b>   | Risk of spend not being contained within resources allocated to department                    | David Armstrong | Overspend calling upon Council balances. Overall worsening of council's forward position.   | Strategic | Monthly monitoring and quarterly reporting to members.<br><br>Vacancy freeze, restrictions on travel, courses and other discretionary budgets                         | 4                    | 4                | 16                   | Monthly to Director/ DMT | Individual meetings with budget managers. Specific focus on overheating budgets.   | On going    |
| <b>ASB Funding</b>   | Risk of not identifying future funding for the team   | Peter Edmondson | Restricted ability to provide a service   | Strategic | Cabinet report to set out the options   | 4                    | 4                | 16                   | Bi-Monthly               | Reports to DMT   | On going    |
| <b>Implementation of Council Budget Savings and Changes in HR procedures</b> | Impact on the ability to deliver an effective service across the Departments responsibilities | David Armstrong | Volatile service delivery. Reduced SLA take up and income from schools. Reputational issues on service provision. Critical issue potentially missed | Strategic | Medium Term Financial Strategy developed. Regular scrutiny and monitoring   | 3                    | 3                | 9                    | Monthly                  | Regular reviews at monthly intervals to DMT, plus more specific monitoring of aspects of budget and services on a more frequent basis. | On going    |

| Project / Activity             | Risk Description  | Officer Resp.   | Consequences                            | Category  | Existing Control Measures  | Net Likelihood Score | Net Impact Score | Net Total risk score | Risk Review Frequency | Additional Control Measures Planned     | Target Date |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------|--|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---|-------------|
| <b>Connexions Contract</b>     | Extension of Connexions Contract and interface with the new Government Initiative to have an All Age Careers Service impacts on service for YP. | Peter Edmondson | Lack of Continuity in Service Provision | Statutory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On-going reporting to Cabinet.</li> <li>▪ Joint meeting with Partner Local Authorities</li> </ul> | 2                    | 3                | 6                    | Every three months    | Reports to Departmental Management Team | August 2011 |
| <b>Secondary Pupil Numbers</b> | Decline in secondary numbers means there is a risk that some smaller intake secondary schools will become unviable.                             | Mark Parkinson  | Schools become unviable.                | Financial | School staffing redundancies.  | 4                    | 3                | 12                   | Three Months          | Report to cabinet.                      | June 2011   |



## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2011

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                      | <b>APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION – CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000</b> |
| <b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>              | <b>All</b>   |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>                    | <b>INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>                     |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b> | <b>COUNCILLOR SHEILA CLARKE</b>                                    |
| <b>KEY DECISION</b>                  | <b>NO</b>  |

#### 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 Interim Director of Children's Services with respect to the acceptance of tenders and to the appointment of Contractors.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

#### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 To comply with the Council's constitution.

#### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

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

#### 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.

| <b>2010/11 Out of Authority Placements</b> |                    |            |  |             |
|--|--------------------|------------|--|-------------|
| <b>Start Date</b>                          | <b>School</b>      | <b>Ref</b> |  | <b>Cost</b> |
| 28.03.11                                   | Olsen House School | KA         |  | £ 57210     |

## 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.

| <b>Start Date</b> | <b>Provider</b>       | <b>Swift Reference</b> | <b>Annual Projected Cost</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 17.02.2011        | Milestones            | 137948                 | £ 106049                     |
| 18.04.2011        | Good Foundations      | 41621                  | £ 118524                     |
| 22.03.2011        | Aycliffe Secure       | 118672                 | £ 64848                      |
| 28.03.2011        | Wilderness Experience | 108765                 | £ 241800                     |

### 5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

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

### 6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

### 7.0 CONSULTATION

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

### 8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

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

### 9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 See 5.1 Relevant Risks.

### 10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Contractual agreements.

### 11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Decisions about independent residential care placements will have been made in accordance with the authority's equality and diversity policy.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

**12.1** 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.

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

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

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## **APPENDICIES**

There are no appendices for this report.

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Reference material not required for this report.

## **SUBJECT MATERIAL**

| <b>Council Meeting</b>               | <b>Date</b>                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2011     |
| CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 26 <sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2011   |
| CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 14 <sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010 |
| CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 2 <sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2010       |
| CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 17 <sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009 |

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