



Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 20 September 2011
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 3 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

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

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

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

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 1 June, 2011.

3. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S BUDGET ISSUES 2012/13 (Pages 9 - 32)

4. RESTRUCTURE OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT (Pages 33 - 40)

5. PRESENTATION ON FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2011/12

The First Quarter Performance Report on activities relevant to the 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. THE GOVERNMENT'S GREEN PAPER ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) (Pages 41 - 100)

7. CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY - ACTION PLAN / IMPLEMENTATION

The Chair will give a verbal report on this item.

8. SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION UPDATE (Pages 101 - 122)

9. ADOPTION SERVICE REPORT ON INSPECTION (Pages 123 - 140)

10. SCHOOL ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch (Learning and Achievement) will give a verbal update on schools' performance.

11. APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000 (Pages 141 - 146)

12. CO-OPTED MEMBER REQUEST

To consider a request from the Co-Chair of the Wirral Family Forum, Louise Reece Jones, for a co-opted position on the Children and Young People O&S Committee for a member of their Forum to represent parent / carers of children with disabilities or additional needs.

As with co-optees on the Health and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee, including one for carers, the co-option, if agreed, would be one with non-voting rights and would need to be a recommendation to Council.

13. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 147 - 152)

14. FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the period September to December 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.

15. 0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES (Pages 153 - 156)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 26 July, 2011.

16. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 1 June 2011

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	S Clarke (Chair)	
	Councillors	W Clements J Crabtree D Dodd P Hayes	B Mooney C Povall T Smith W Smith
<u>Deputy:</u>	Councillor	A Brighthouse (in place of Mrs P M Williams)	
<u>Co-opted:</u>		Mr A Scott	Mrs J Kearney
<u>Apologies</u>		Mrs J Owens	

1 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 C Povall declared a personal interest in minute 7 (Secondary School Places – Demographic Update) by virtue of her daughter's employment.

Councillor S Clarke declared a personal interest in minute 7 (Secondary School Places – Demographic Update) by virtue of her daughter's employment.

Councillor A Brighthouse declared a personal interest in minute 7 (Secondary School Places – Demographic Update) by virtue of his wife's employment.

Councillor J Crabtree declared a personal interest in minute 6 (Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection Report) by virtue of him being a foster carer.

2 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 March, 2011.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of 15 March, 2011 be approved as a correct record.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Committee was asked to consider if it wanted to appoint a Vice-Chair.

On a motion by Councillor Povall, seconded by Councillor Clements, it was –

Resolved - That Councillor P Hayes be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee.

4 EQUALITY FRAMEWORK - REFERRAL FROM SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD

Further to minute 56 (Scrutiny Programme Board – 2/3/2011) Jacqui Cross, Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager, gave a presentation on the Equality Duty 2010 to ensure that Members were fully equipped to provide effective scrutiny in the areas identified as being necessary for Excellent accreditation by the summer of 2012.

Jacqui Cross outlined the requirements of the new Equality Duty and highlighted the general and specific duties contained within it together with the timetable for the publication of workforce and service information and specific and measurable equality objectives.

With regard to the Government's Equality Strategy for a Fairer Britain she highlighted some specific areas relevant to the work of this Committee such as:

- Safeguarding / protection
- Poverty / disadvantage
- Education attainment levels
- Special education needs / disabilities
- Hate crime / incidents
- 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training
- Access to alcohol by young people
- Early intervention services
- Health and well-being
- Children in care / care leavers
- Anti-social behaviour

Jacqui Cross then referred in particular to the role of scrutiny to demonstrate that the Council had met its general and specific duties and was able to demonstrate improvements and outcomes as a result of its equality objectives.

Responding to questions from Members she informed the Committee that the Equality and Human Rights Commission were responsible for monitoring and every organisation would be expected to have information available on their websites.

Resolved – That Jacqui Cross be thanked for her presentation on progress made to date with regard to the Equality Framework for Local Government and Equality Duty 2010.

5 PRESENTATION ON FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2010/11

Nancy Clarkson, Head of Planning and Performance, gave a presentation on the fourth quarter performance 2010/11 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 impact of Council budget savings, the early voluntary retirement and severance schemes required careful management to minimise volatile service delivery, maintain reputational issues and to ensure continued focus on critical issues.
- The need to review and re-state the relevant Private Finance Initiative (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 Merseyside Connexions contract did not result in disruptions to continuity in service provision.
- The transition of schools to academies was being managed to ensure that officers, elected members, governors and public bodies understood the implications of schools becoming independent and were aware of the implications for individual schools and for the Local Authority in the provision of some central services.

In respect of the financial position the year end accounts were currently being prepared and would be subject to audit, it was anticipated that departmental variations would result in a budget overspend of £1.4m. Budget pressures previously reported throughout the year included residential and foster care, where the number and cost of placements had not reduced as anticipated. Despite stringent expenditure controls and significant reductions in other parts of the department's budget, it had not been possible to offset these costs in full. The revenue out-turn and variations would be reported in more detail to Cabinet in June.

Responding to comments from Members, Nancy Clarkson commented on the change in performance indicators which had not met their targets, although there were also some which had remained below target from 12 months previously. She also outlined some variations in targets which could make them more challenging year on year.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

6 SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION REPORT

Further to minute 60 (15/3/11) the Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a report which summarised the outcome of the Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection which was undertaken by OFSTED between 24 January and 4 February 2011.

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. The inspection took evidence from a number of sources. These included discussions with children and young people and their families who received 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.

The inspectors undertook a structured review of 20 case files and also evidence from a further 29 randomly selected cases. 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.

The report gave a summary of the OFSTED report and the grades received in each area, 13 being 'good', 6 'outstanding' and 3 'adequate'. The inspection report gave a number of areas for development including three within the Safeguarding part and four within the Looked After Children part of the inspection.

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

Responding to comments from Members, both Julia Hassall, Head of Children's Social Care and Tracey Coffey, Strategic Services Manager, outlined the existing audit framework and the processes involved in auditing cases including themed audits. In respect of the IT requirements, there were a number of providers of Integrated Children's systems with each having their own strengths / weaknesses. It would be dependent on the Government's response to the Munro Review of Child Protection as to what system they would recommend on a national level. The Interim Director commented that the department was somewhat off from bringing forward proposals for a new system.

Members expressed their congratulations to everybody involved for such an excellent inspection report and the Chair expressed her personal thanks particularly in respect of partnership working.

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was –

Resolved –

(1) That this Committee notes the positive and successful outcome of the inspection by OFSTED and the action plan which has been produced to meet the areas for development and thanks all the staff involved.

(2) That the Action Plan be accepted and a further report be brought to the November meeting.

7 **SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES - DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATE**

Further to minute 60 (15/3/11) the Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided updated information on current and projected changes in the roll of Wirral's secondary schools. The report also discussed the potential implications of the falling roll, with particular reference to budgetary and staffing implications in the current year.

The Interim Director referred to the growth of Academies among Wirral's school provision which had a potentially significant impact on the Authority's ability to produce full and accurate demographic projections for Wirral pupils. Academies were independent maintained schools who submitted census and other pupil information directly to the Academies and Specialist Schools division of the DfE, rather than via the Local Authority. Officers were in the process of drawing up a data sharing agreement for use with schools converting to Academy status which would allow the Authority access to pupil data in line with all other school types.

There were now 3 academy schools on Wirral, the University Academy of Birkenhead, Birkenhead High School Academy for Girls and St Anselm's Academy. More secondary schools were likely to convert later this year which could mean that over half of secondary schools could be of Academy status.

Responding to comments from Members, Mark Parkinson, Head of Learning and Achievement, reported that some schools looking to convert to Academy status also wanted to provide sixth forms and it was unclear at the moment how this would happen. He acknowledged that with falling rolls there would still be too many secondary schools in Wirral and that it would be largely down to parental choice and market forces which schools may eventually close.

The Chair remarked that in respect of the financial implications for the authority of redundancies in schools some local authorities had said that with a lack of funds the schools would have to pay these costs themselves.

Resolved – That the new demographic information in relation to Wirral secondary schools be noted and a further update report be brought to the Committee later in the year.

8 **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENTAL PLAN 2011-12**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a copy of the Children and Young People's Department Departmental Plan which underpinned the delivery of the Council's priorities as defined in the Corporate Plan. The Plan included:

- A departmental overview
- Activities to be delivered in 2011-12
- A financial plan
- A workforce plan
- A section on equality and diversity
- Central Government reporting requirements
- A departmental risk register

Resolved – That the Children and Young People’s Department Departmental Plan for 2011-12 be noted.

9 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

Resolved – That the report be noted.

10 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair made a number of suggestions for the Committee’s work programme for the forthcoming municipal year, including:

- A report on Oaklands to the September meeting.
- Following consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on 2 June, 2011 of the report, ‘Early Intervention Grants – Outcome of Commissioning’ a report looking at the lessons learnt, what worked well and what didn’t be brought to the September meeting.

She suggested that the “Narrowing the gap” – Impact of deprivation funding’ scrutiny review had now lapsed so much that this be deleted from the work programme.

The Chair also referred to the need to plan ahead for the Youth Parliament which met each October and suggested that the Executive Youth Board could be asked, through the Youth and Play Service Advisory Committee, to do a report on how they could be involved in planning for the 2012 Youth Parliament, and a report be brought to the November or January meeting.

A Member referred to the Government Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and suggested that a report be brought to the September meeting on the Authority’s response. He also suggested that it would be worthwhile for the Committee to revisit the Literacy Review and a report be brought to a meeting in the Autumn on progress with the recommendations.

Resolved – That the suggestions of the Committee be noted.

11 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.

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

The Chair agreed to consideration of the following item of urgent business, in view of the need for appointments to be made prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee were requested to appoint the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee for 2011/12.

Resolved – That the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee for 2011/12 comprise the following members, Councillors Sheila Clarke (Chair), Tony Smith and Pat Williams, together with the diocesan and parent governor representatives and the remaining Committee members serving as deputies.

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

20 SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S BUDGET ISSUES 2012/13
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN McLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of the 2012/13 Budget Consultation process Cabinet are asking Scrutiny Committees to consider the functions within their portfolio and offer suggestions as to how to close the estimated £25 million budget gap and limit any Council Tax increase in 2012/13.
- 1.2 The responses will be considered along with the responses from the other engagement processes to inform the budget setting process. Further consultation will be undertaken regarding any specific service changes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the views of Scrutiny Committee are requested.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Cabinet has requested the views of Scrutiny Committees to inform the 2012/13 Budget Consultation process.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

Financial projections for the Council

- 4.1 Cabinet is regularly up-dated on the financial position of the Council and the latest Budget Projections report was considered on 21 July 2011. The Director of Finance reported that the shortfall between likely spend and likely resources was £25 million for 2012/13 with shortfalls of £31 million and £30.3 million identified for 2013/14 and 2014/15 respectively.
- 4.2 The Government is presently considering options for the future funding of local authorities and the level of any Government Grant supported is affected by population numbers. Both could result in further reductions in available resources to the Council. The Leader of the Council requested Members and

employees to consider carefully what was included in budgets and let him have any suggestions for making savings.

- 4.3 The key issues and challenges facing the Department are set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of this report.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the priorities of the Department and risks can only be assessed once Members have given their views.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 None as this report is seeking the views of Members.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consideration by the Scrutiny Committee is one of the means which is being used to inform the setting of the 2012/13 Council Budget.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

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

- 9.1 None arising directly from this report.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None arising directly from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None arising directly from this report.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None arising directly from this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 None arising directly from this report.

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APPENDIX 1 – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S BUDGET ISSUES 2012/13
APPENDIX 2 – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BUDGET SIMULATOR
INFORMATION

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None	

APPENDIX 1 : CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S BUDGET ISSUES 2012/13

Corporate Plan theme Your Family
Service Area Children in Need / Looked After Children Looked After Children Care Provision School and Learning Support Early Years Development and Children's Centres Children with Disabilities Support for Vulnerable Children and Special Educational Needs Integrated Youth Services Transport
Budget : £71.9m

Contents

- Section 1: Corporate Objectives
- Section 2: Department Budget
- Section 3: Departmental Overview and Organisation of the Department
- Section 4: Service Details
- Section 5: Breakdown of service delivery

1. **CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

1.1 **Introduction**

The primary focus of the Department is to deliver services that ensure all Wirral children are safe, supported and inspired, contributing to the delivery of several Council-wide aims within the Corporate Plan:

Your Family – Children & Young People

- Protect children and young people from harm.
- Support schools and other settings to improve educational provision and attainment.
- Ensure children and young people can participate and achieve their potential.
- Provide early intervention and support for vulnerable children and families.
- Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Your Neighbourhood

- Reduce anti-social behaviour and improve community safety.

Your Economy

- Rebalance Wirral's economy and improve access to employment and skills opportunities and tackle barriers to work.

Your Council

- Reduce the running costs of the Council by improving the efficiency and value for money of Council services whilst reducing bureaucracy.
- A well led, skilled, committed and flexible workforce working on behalf of Wirral residents and businesses.

2.0 DEPARTMENT BUDGET

2.1 The indicative Departmental budget of £71.9m is detailed in Appendix 2 The Capital Programme allocation for the Children and Young People's Department is shown below:

Expenditure	2011/12	2012/13
	£000	£000
Condition / Modernisation	8,470	
Formula capital	4,370	
Family Support Schemes	50	100
Woodchurch Pathfinder	900	
PFI	115	
Birkenhead High Girls Academy	7,489	5,000
Pensby Primary School	2,500	10,350
Primary Programme	250	396
School Meals Uptake	245	
Cathcart St Refurbishment	1,500	
SEN and Disabilities		1,340
Total	25,889	17,186

2.2 Budget Issues

Budget pressures 2011-12

There are significant financial pressures on the department's budget which are estimated to be £3.5m in the current year. The most significant are:

- Residential Care for Looked After Children £0.8m
The forecast of 47 placements this year exceeds the budget provision for 42.
- Fostering and Adoption £1.6m
There are 733 children who we pay allowances for (and 28 agency placements). The budget provision is for about 615.
- Transport £1.2m
There are underlying transport cost pressures for SEN and vulnerable adults.

Key challenges are as follows:

- To reduce expenditure on Looked After Children by £4m over a 3 year period and to safely reduce the number of Looked After Children from current levels.
- To manage the financial implications arising from the transfer of schools to academies.
- To reduce home to school and other transport costs.
- To support the financial plans of schools managing falling rolls.

3.0 DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

- 3.1 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.

3.2 Organisation of the Department

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 Trust's overall commitment to supporting children and the families it serves. The Interim Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services have clear roles and responsibilities as champions for children and young people and their families. The Interim Director reports directly to the Council Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

4.0 SERVICE DETAILS

4.1 Children in Need / Looked After Children

Keeping children and young people safe and protecting them from harm is a key priority and is led by Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board, which promotes high standards in safeguarding work and has the responsibility to hold the Council and other partners to account. An external evaluation in March 2011 by Ofsted assessed Wirral's safeguarding and looked after children services as 'good' and rated partnership working as 'outstanding'. We aim to ensure this standard is maintained and built upon wherever possible.

4.2 School Learning and Support

Wirral is home to almost 76,000 children and young people. It is a good place to grow up and most children and young people will fulfil the aspirations that we, their parents and their carers have for them. However, some children and young people experience real disadvantage, poverty, hardship and failure to achieve the results they should in school. Our work is targeted at seeking to ensure that all of our young people grow up in safety and have the best possible start in life.

Educational standards for students of all ages in Wirral are excellent and improving year on year as proven by a series of impressive Ofsted inspection results for primary, secondary and special schools.

In Wirral, the majority of 16 year olds stay on in school or college or go into employment. However, increasing the number of young people aged 16-18 in education, employment or training is an important priority and we work to ensure that every young person leaving school has access to training or a job.

4.3 Support for Vulnerable Children and Special Educational Needs

We will continue to focus on improving the achievement of vulnerable groups of children such as those with special educational needs and children in care. We will continue to work in partnership with local Higher Education Institutions to promote the benefits of Higher and Further Education amongst young people and their families, particularly in deprived areas as part of the Aim Higher project.

4.4 Early Years SureStart and Children's Centres

We have protected, promoted and are enhancing SureStart and our Children's Centres, enabling our dedicated staff to offer more opportunities for the children and families they serve.

4.5 Looked After Children Care Provision

We seek to recruit more Foster Carers to ensure our most vulnerable children have the best possible start in life. Wirral Council is the parent to around 680 children who are in our care. We give particular support to them to ensure they achieve their full potential. Many of these children receive valuable support and assistance from their peers on the Children in Care Council, and this activity will be increased.

4.6 Integrated Youth Services

We promote an integrated approach to supporting young people by co-ordinating the work of the Youth Offending Service, the Anti-social Behaviour Team and the Youth and Play Services to provide both cost-effective universal and targeted services for Wirral's children and young people. We work with partners such as the Police and Fire and Rescue Services to develop effective targeted early intervention and prevention programmes, which produce better outcomes for children and young people and so reduce future costs. Following the introduction of youth hubs elsewhere in Wirral there are resources to progress the development of the new youth hub facility in Birkenhead with the 'Onside' organisation, local youth partners and the Fire Service.

4.7 Children with Disabilities

We provide services for children with disabilities up to the age of 18. The aim is to enhance disabled children's quality of life, opportunities for participating in community activities and provide respite for parents to support them to care for their children at home.

APPENDIX 2 - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

BUDGET SIMULATOR INFORMATION

Service Area - Integrated Youth Service

Budget - £6.2m

Brief service description

Youth Services provide universal and targeted support to young people aged 13 to 19. There are 4 youth hubs together with a number of smaller youth centres. Targeted work provides advice and guidance in areas such as drugs and alcohol.

Play services are provided in 6 full time settings for children aged 6 to 14, summer holiday schemes are provided through the Wirral Play Council.

The Youth Offending service aims to prevent offending. With partners the service supervises offenders and works to minimise risks of offending.

The Anti- Social Behaviour Team tackles anti-social behaviour both enforcement and where appropriate support.

The council provides a wide range of services to vulnerable children. Child protection services including social workers and centres for the support of families of vulnerable children. Children who are subject to child protection plans require close monitoring, and there are other vulnerable children whose families need support and assistance to care for their children. Where there are serious concerns about a family's ability to care for their children we apply to the court to ensure they are protected. If the children cannot live with their parents we provide foster care or residential care. Children with disabilities are supported with short breaks and respite services.

Consequences to reduce by 10%

There would be a reduction time spend working with people in Youth Hubs and Youth Centres on the streets and providing diversionary/positive activities. Outreach work on the streets and parks and open spaces would be reduced, with less advice and guidance to help make good decisions. Provision in play settings would also reduce.

Within YOS the ability to provide preventative services would be reduced and within the ASB service there would likely to be an increase in cases waiting to be investigated and limited support for complainants.

Consequences to reduce by 20%

It is likely that some youth centres would be closed and support to some partner organisations and positive activity programmes withdrawn. Outreach would reduce as would the support to the Duke of Edinburgh's programme; some Response would stop. Overall less young people would receive the support they need particularly at times of crisis. Provision of play sessions and schemes would reduce, impacting on those in greatest need.

Within YOS preventative services would cease with a potential impact on youth

crime. The Anti Social Behaviour service would be unlikely to support the multi agency Challenge and Support programme for young people engaged or at risk of engaging in anti social behaviour. Cases dealt with by the team would reduce significantly and anti social behaviour could increase.

Consequences to reduce by 50%

Funding for Youth Centres, hubs, support for partners, positive activities, Outreach and response would all be significantly reduced. The universal services cease and there would be a much greater chance of young people engaged in risk taking behaviour.

The play service would significantly reduce the support and opportunities to marginalised children and families.

Within YOS it is highly likely that the statutory duties under the Crime and Disorder Act would not be met. Within Anti Social behaviour the team would be limited to acting on serious cases and would be unable to coordinate the Challenge and Support Project. There could be serious risks to communities if antisocial behaviour is unchallenged.

Consequences to increase by up to 5%

An increase in funding could broaden the range and type of activities available, providing more intervention and preventative services for young people.

Corporate Plan theme - Your Family Children
Service Area - Transport
Budget - £8.6m
<p>Brief service description</p> <p>Transport of children and young people to schools and colleges including children with special educational needs. Transport of vulnerable adults to day centres and colleges. Maintenance of Council owned vehicles including specialised transport vehicles and the gritting fleet.</p>
<p>Consequences of reducing budget by 10%</p> <p>The LA has a statutory duty in relation to the transport of children with SEN. Therefore it is likely that the consequence of a 10% cut would be that vulnerable adults will not be transported unless they pay the costs.</p> <p>Discretionary transport to take children and young people to schools and colleges would be withdrawn or service users charged (a public consultation would be required).</p>
<p>Consequences of reducing budget by 20%</p> <p>In addition to the reductions from a 10% cut, this is likely to mean that all Council owned vehicles would no longer be maintained e.g. specialised transport vehicles, parks and gardens vehicles. This may mean that roads would not be gritted in winter as the gritting fleet could not be maintained.</p>
<p>Consequences of reducing budget by 50%</p> <p>In addition to the reductions for a 10% and a 20% reduction the Council would fail in its statutory duties to transport children to school.</p>
<p>Consequences of increasing budget by 5%</p> <p>There would be potential to extend eligibility for children and young people for free travel to schools and colleges.</p>

Service Area - Children with Disabilities**Budget - £3.9m****Brief service description**

This budget funds services for children with disabilities up to age 18. The aim is to enhance disabled children's quality of life; opportunities for participating in community activities and provide respite for parents to support them in continuing to care for their children at home.

The budget funds residential short breaks for children with complex disabilities and challenging behaviours; support at home and in the community for disabled children and children with complex health needs; funds the direct payment scheme for families to employ workers and funds commissioned projects which mostly do not require a social work assessment to access.

Consequence to reduce by 10%

An overall reduction of 10% could impact on the choice, range and quality of services available to children with complex disabilities potentially reducing their quality of life and the capacity of families to cope. This would have the most impact on children with the most complex needs and challenging behaviours and whose families are under the greatest stress.

There would be a reduction in residential and home based services to them based on their assessed levels of need and this could lead to more family breakdown. There would be a decrease in the number of commissioned services impacting on the volume and range of short breaks delivered and significantly less delivery per year to disabled children.

This could lead more requests for support for disabled children via social work assessments and place a higher demand on statutory services.

Consequence to reduce by 20%

An overall reduction of 20% would seriously impact on the choice, range and quality of services available to children with complex disabilities reducing their quality of life and the capacity of families to cope.

The greatest impact would be on children with the most complex needs and challenging behaviours and whose families are already under the greatest stress. This would also impact on siblings who would have less quality time with their parents.

The effects of increased stress on families could have safeguarding implications resulting in more children needing child protection plans or having to come into local authority care and this could lead to an increase in demand for high cost out of borough placements.

There would be a significant decrease in the number of commissioned services impacting on the volume and range of short breaks delivered and significantly less

delivery per year to disabled children. This would impact most on those families who would be able to cope with some easily accessible support and would likely lead to an increase in the demand for services received via a social work assessment.

Consequence to reduce by 50%

An overall reduction of 50% would result in families having hardly any choice in the range and quality of services available to them and would very seriously impact on the quality of life of the most vulnerable children and their siblings.

There would be few commissioned services available to families and we would be unable to meet our statutory requirement to provide short breaks under the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children regulations 2010 as detailed in our Short Breaks Statement.

The greatest impact would be on children with the most complex needs and challenging behaviours and whose families are already under the greatest stress. This would definitely have safeguarding implications; more children would need child protection plans and many more would need local authority care leading to a significant increase in the demand for high cost out of borough placements. There would be a reduction in services for all children and a much higher threshold would need to be set for families to receive any service. We would be unable to meet many of our current commitments under section 17 of the 1989 Children Act where disabled children are defined as children in need.

For a high number of children overnight short breaks would no longer be available to them and no new children would be able to access overnight short breaks. We would be unable to meet our current commitment to jointly fund with the NHS services for children with complex health needs.

Consequences to increase by up to 5%

An increase of 5% in the budget would enhance the range of quality and choice in the services provided to disabled children.

Many more hours of short breaks could be commissioned leading to more easily accessible support to families particularly during school holidays without the need for a social work assessment. This would free up social work time and resources to focus support on where it is most needed. This level of increase would support more families to cope for longer without the need for statutory involvement leading to a reduction in the overall demand for more expensive services.

There would be more capacity to provide additional support when there are family emergencies either through overnight respite provision or increased support in the community.

Corporate Plan theme - Your Family
Service Area - Early Years, Sure Start and Children's Centres Children's Services
Budget - £10.1m
<p>Brief service description</p> <p>The Sure Start Support programme, funded by this budget, has the responsibility for developing and sustaining high quality, inclusive early year's provision for 0-5 year olds and their families. This includes early year's education, childcare and Children's Centre Services which are accessible and meets parent's needs. The remit of the Sure Start Team also includes the Family Information Service, Childcare Sufficiency Audit and 2, 3 & 4 year old funding entitlements.</p>
<p>Consequences of reducing budget by 10%</p> <p>There could be a reduction in support and training for childcare settings potentially leading to deterioration in quality of provision; there could be a withdrawal of services to parents with early identified which might lead to an increase in the number of children at risk; there could be a reduction in the information available for parents about services that might benefit them; there could be a reduction in emergency childcare for vulnerable families and it would be likely that there would be no further development of new childcare. It would be very difficult to sustain the well-established toy loan resource service for parents and childcare settings. There could be a reduction in support for children with Special Education Needs.</p>
<p>Consequences of reducing budget by 20%</p> <p>There could be a reduction in support and training for childcare settings potentially leading to deterioration in quality of provision; there could be a withdrawal of services to parents with early identified problems including parenting and mental health which might lead to an increase in the number of children at risk; there could be a reduction in the information available for parents about services that might benefit them; there could be a reduction in emergency childcare for vulnerable families and it would be likely that there would be no further development of new childcare. It would be very difficult to sustain the well-established toy loan resource service for parents and childcare settings. There could be a reduction in support for children with disability. It is unlikely that there would be financial support to Out of School Clubs experiencing financial difficulties leading to possible closures. The Home Safety Scheme would probably cease, leading to potential increase in accidents in the home for children under 2. There could be a reduction in Council-run childcare for the under-5s which might result in less choice of affordable and accessible provision. There could be reduction in support for ethnic minority groups. It is probable that there would be no increase in support for vulnerable 2-year-olds.</p>
<p>Consequences of reducing budget by 50%</p> <p>In addition to the impact outlined for a 20% reduction, a 50% budget reduction would result in the closure of some Children Centre provision potentially leading to an increase in the number of children at risk of harm and a reduction in services with a</p>

potential unemployment increase. Parenting support for families would be significantly reduced, possibly leading to increase anti social behaviour, children at risk of harm, drug and alcohol misuse. LA support for domestic violence would likely cease. There would be a significant reduction in the support available for children under-5 with SEN. There would be very limited LA support for early year's services to schools, pre-schools and day nurseries which might result in a reduction of children meeting age appropriate expectations. The Family Information Service would probably cease. There would be a reduction of Early Communication support to younger children probably leading to an increased number of children entering school with language delay. It would be difficult to plan to meet targets for statutory provision for disadvantaged 2 year olds.

Consequences of increasing budget by 5%

An increase in the budget of 5% could enable increased parental support, more availability of Home Safety equipment, increased availability of emergency childcare and more 2-year-old funded places available. Ethnic Minority services could be expanded to reach across all of Wirral and there could be further support for children with disabilities and their families.

Service Area - Looked After Children Care Provision**Budget - £15.2m****Brief service description**

This service area provides local authority care placements for looked after children; independent sector care placements where the local authority has no suitable provision, and after care support for children for whom we have a continuing statutory responsibility. Services include local authority recruited and supported foster care placements; social work and the provision of adoptive placements for children who require a permanent new family; externally commissioned children's home placements for children who require specialist residential care; independent fostering placements purchased from the private and voluntary sector, and the provision of semi independent care placements for children leaving care.

Consequence to reduce by 10%

The local authority would be at risk of not providing sufficient suitable, safe placements and adequate placement choice for children in the care of the local authority for whom we have a statutory responsibility. In common with most local authorities Wirral has seen an increase in care proceedings (from 50>100) during the last year, the number of looked after children is now stable but has increased by 50 children over the past year. A reduction in this service area would potentially mean reducing the rate of fostering allowances to below the national minimum, which might affect our capacity to recruit foster carers, who provide the most cost effective care. It could mean a reduction in the capacity to provide post adoption support services, leading to greater potential for adoption placement disruptions, particularly placements for older children who have a particularly poor prognosis and usually require costly placements if their adoption disrupts. To reduce spend on independent residential care would require a more diverse range of foster placements being recruited, and the looked after population reducing.

Consequence to reduce by 20%

It is highly likely that there would be a rise in caseloads prohibiting staff from meeting statutory requirements, so that children are not as safe as they should be. Adherence to the tight statutory requirements regarding the recruitment of foster carers and adoptive parents would be placed in jeopardy. In addition there is a potential for placements to be unsafe due to poor matching, due to limited placement choice. Thresholds for children to become looked after may be raised, so that children remain in unsuitable and potentially unsafe home circumstances to avoid placing them in fostering or residential placements. This could result in the Local Authority failing to provide adequate care placements for a number of children and young people; resulting in reduced Ofsted ratings, challenge by the Children in Care Council, increased complaints and reputational costs brought about through Judicial Review/Ombudsman findings and Court Ordered costs against the Council.

Consequence to reduce by 50%

The Council will fail to meet minimum statutory requirements. Foster placements would be overcrowded, foster carers would not be supported and children would not

have their needs adequately met. Fewer children would achieve permanence through adoption, and those adopted would have a greater likelihood of their placements disrupting due to a significant reduction in post adoption support. With the increased responsibility to support care leavers for longer, a reduction in lodging costs would have a significant impact, potentially leading to more homelessness, increased crime and custodial sentences and a reduction in the number of care leavers sustaining employment or training. For young care leavers with children, this could potentially increase the likelihood of more children of young care leavers becoming looked after. The LA service would be judged inadequate by Ofsted

Consequences to increase by up to 5%

An increase by 5% in this service area would support the development of a more diverse range of foster care placements, and post adoption and special guardianship support. It would also allow greater flexibility to develop a more diverse range of leaving care placements and in particular a fully developed "Staying Put Scheme" for young people aged 18 plus to remain in care placements until they were sufficiently mature to move on.

Corporate Plan theme - Children's Services Your Family

Service Area - School and Learning Support

Budget - £6.1m

Brief service description

Support for Children (0-19) in Schools and Educational Settings

This area includes services whose responsibility it is to improve the quality of education, raise the attainment of children and meet the LA statutory duties through the borough's schools and educational settings. We monitor and support underperforming schools and intervene in schools causing concern. We co-ordinate school-to-school support and training at the Professional Excellence Centre. Teams statutorily secure suitable quality education and training opportunities for young people 16-19 and promote participation up to age 18. We support leadership and management including school governance, pupil assessment, behaviour and attendance, health and safety, facilities management, NQTs, outdoor education, SACRE and the apprenticeships.

Consequences of reducing budget by 10%

The Local Authority would be at risk of not fulfilling all of its education duties. We would no longer be able to provide support for literacy and numeracy in schools which might increase the risk of a school failing to deliver an acceptable level of education and risk being judged as a failing school by Ofsted. We would no longer be able to support school-to-school partnerships to develop capacity and sustain improvement. Council support for outdoor education would be reduced. Support for health and safety and facilities management would be diminished. There would be a reduction in the support for apprenticeships. Central coordination of support for children with English as a second language would be withdrawn.

Consequences of reducing budget by 20%

A reduction of 20% could result in the Local Authority not fulfilling its statutory duties in terms of intervention for with underperforming and failing schools, pupil assessment, governor support and securing suitable quality education and training opportunities for all young people 16-19. Support for Narrowing the Gap and the development of apprenticeships would be greatly reduced. This could result in an increase in failing schools and educational settings, poorer outcomes for children and young people where poverty and disadvantage affect their achievement. We would no longer be able to support school-to-school partnerships to develop capacity and sustain improvement. Council support for outdoor education would cease. Support for health and safety and facilities management would be limited. Central coordination of support for children with English as a second language would be withdrawn. Schools could become more isolated from each other and from the Council. The Professional Excellence Centre, which provides support for professionals across the education sector, council and its partners would be at risk.

Consequences of reducing budget by 50%

There is a significant danger that the Local Authority would be in breach of many of its statutory duties in relation to schools and educational settings. There would be no school improvement support. This would result in an increase in failing schools and educational settings, poorer outcomes for children and young people where poverty and disadvantage affect their achievement. The development of apprenticeships would be significantly reduced. Council support for outdoor education would cease. Support for health and safety and facilities management would be significantly limited.

Consequences of increasing budget by 5%

This would enable the service to secure additional literacy, numeracy and curriculum support, and use other early intervention and prevention strategies, for our schools that require this the most. This would also support the sharing of good practice between educational establishments and to develop capacity and sustain improvement. More support for Narrowing the Gap would be possible to improve outcomes for children and young people where poverty and disadvantage affect their achievement. It would enable even further development of the Wirral Apprenticeship programme.

Service Area - Children in Need/Looked After Children**Budget - £17.1m****Brief service description**

The service provides statutory social work to children in need of protection. The service encompasses areas from targeted early intervention through to multi disciplinary area teams providing a statutory social work service meeting the needs of children who are looked after, subject to child protection plans, executing statutory roles within the court process and obtaining legal orders to ensure children's needs are met by becoming a corporate parent. The services supports young people through the pathway team. Staff members are required to be appropriately trained to fulfil their statutory duties and meet GSCC registration where required.

Consequences to reduce by 10%

This would impact on a range of services to support and make sure children are safe. Family support would be reduced and provided to only the most vulnerable children at the expense of Children in Need and early intervention. It would be unlikely that the full range of Social Work services could be delivered effectively, training would be reduced and fewer fieldwork managers would result in inadequate levels of supervision to staff and oversight of cases.

There may be a reduction in the level of early intervention services for vulnerable children and their families. This may result in an increase in children becoming looked after and subject to child protection plans and an increase in the pressure on front line social work teams.

Consequences to reduce by 20%

Social workers caseloads would most likely increase to unsafe levels, which would make children less safe and increase the likelihood of social worker absence through stress related sickness; staff turnover would impact on the quality of outcomes for children. There would be a focus on working statutorily with children, and children in need, for example, on the edge of care would receive a significantly reduced service, which in turn could result in more children receiving statutory interventions, due to their needs not being met earlier. Family support may only be provided to children subject to a child protection plan; children in need would be particularly vulnerable without this intervention. A significant reduction in commissioned early intervention services would most likely result in a net increase in children requiring statutory intervention, where earlier involvement may have supported the child and family more effectively. The activity of Area Teams would be severely reduced resulting in a lack of early joined up intervention to support children and families in their localities. Children leaving care could be affected through statutory responsibilities not being adhered to, and more care leavers may not make a safe transition through to adult life. Training for social workers would be reduced which could compromise social workers professional development. A reduction in management would reduce management grip and capacity to provide safe levels of supervision. A reduction in capacity to deliver safeguarding responsibilities would mean that multiagency plans for the most vulnerable children would not be safely co-ordinated or governed.

Corporate Plan theme - Children's Services**Your Family****Service Area - Support for Vulnerable Children and Special Educational Needs****Budget - £4.7m****Brief service description**

The LA has legal responsibilities to ensure that children attend schools and that child employment regulations are followed. LA teams intervene and support children, families and schools about attendance and child welfare. For children with Special Educational Needs, the LA has legal responsibilities which include assessing and meeting their needs by arranging specialist provision based on specialist advice as well as supporting early intervention work for vulnerable children in all settings. We have a legal responsibility to have a virtual school head teacher to monitor and champion the educational performance of children in care and provide training for designated teachers.

Consequences of reducing budget by 10%

A budget reduction by 10% could mean that the department's statutory responsibilities in relation to school attendance, missing pupils and children employment may not be met. We would be at risk of being unable to fulfil the statutory responsibilities in relation to children with special educational needs. There would be a significant reduction in the careers education, information and guidance offered to young people and could lead to more young people becoming unemployed and less support for them to find education, employment or training. Our ability to deliver a robust monitoring and tracking service for children in care would be seriously diminished and support for designated teachers would be significantly reduced. The result could be fewer children in care achieving their educational targets and suffering further disadvantage in adulthood. The central service that provides an initial assessment for children from minority ethnic backgrounds who have English as an additional language and ongoing support to schools will not be in place.

Consequences of reducing budget by 20%

A budget reduction by 20% is highly likely to mean that the department's statutory responsibilities in relation to school attendance, missing pupils and children employment may not be met. We would be highly unlikely to fulfil the statutory responsibilities in relation to children with special educational needs. Certain services related to careers education, information, advice and guidance would likely cease. The LA will be at serious risk of failing to meet its statutory duties to ensure that all young people are engaged in education, employment or training by age 18. The level of education service provided to children in care would be negligible and there would be no training programme for designated teachers.

Consequences of reducing budget by 50%

A reduction of 50% would mean that the LA's statutory responsibilities in relation to school attendance, missing pupils and children employment would not be met. We would be unable to fulfil the statutory responsibilities in relation to children with special educational needs. The LA would be in breach of its statutory duties to provide a targeted careers education, information, and advice and guidance service to vulnerable young people and will be unable to deliver its duties to ensure that all young people are in education, employment and training at 18. The Looked after Children Education Service would not meet statutory duties and there would be a significant risk of a failed OFSTED inspection.

Consequences of increasing budget by 5%

More targeted support would be possible for children families and schools in relation to improving school attendance and there would be further improved early intervention work for children with special educational needs in all settings. We would be able to retain and enhance services for careers education, information, advice and guidance and develop new services targeted at vulnerable and disadvantaged young people so that they can receive appropriate support to secure better futures.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

20 SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	RESTRUCTURE OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLAGHLAN
KEY DECISION?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to inform Members of the changes within the Department following the Early Voluntary Retirement and Voluntary Severance exercise (EVR/VS), and the restructure of the Department. The changes also take account of the transfer of the Transport Service that was previously provided by the Department for Adult Social Services and the Technical Services Department.
- 1.2 This report is an extract from a report approved by Employment and Appointments Committee on 11th August 2011.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 Members are requested to:
 Note the report and the re-structuring of the department from four Branch Service Areas to three Branch Service areas.

Current Branch Service Areas	Proposed Branch Service Areas
Resources and Planning	Resources and Planning
Learning and Achievement	Learning and Achievement
Social Care	Social Care
Participation and Inclusion	Responsibilities re-allocated across the three remaining branches as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions – Resources and Planning • WASP, ESW, SES – Learning and Achievement • Integrated Youth Service – Social Care

- 2.2 Note the overarching Children's and Young People's Departmental restructure. The current structure is attached at Appendix one, and the revised structure is attached at Appendix two.
- 2.2.1 Note the transfer of the various Transport related services across the Council, including Technical Services and the Department for Adult Social Services into the new Integrated Transport Unit structure within the Children's and Young People's Department.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 Following the completion of the Council's EVR/Severance exercise the Department has reduced costs by nearly £6,000,000 and reduced the total establishment by 327. To facilitate these reductions the Department has reviewed how its services are provided and produced a revised structure (see Appendix 2).
- 3.2 The Cabinet agreed on 23 June 2011 that the Transport function in the Department of Adult Social Services and the Technical Services Department should be transferred to the Children and Young People's Department to create an Integrated Transport Service. To accommodate this change it has also been necessary to restructure this service.
- 3.3 Change in the Department is also necessary in response to the publication of the Coalition Government's White Paper "The Importance of Teaching", the general reduction in grant to the Council, the cessation of the National Strategies and the increased delegation of resources and responsibilities to schools.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

The Department had four branches:

Planning and Resources
Children's Social Care
Learning and Achievement
Participation and Inclusion

- 4.1 It was proposed that the services provided by the Participation and Inclusion Branch be transferred into the remaining three branches as follows:
- 3.5.2 Learning and Achievement - Educational Psychological Service
Education Social Welfare Service
Physical and Medical Needs
WASP and Hospital School
Sensory Needs Service
Social and Communication Needs
Statementing Team and SESS Administration
- 3.5.3 Children's Social Care - Anti-Social Behaviour Team
Youth Service
Youth Offending Service

3.5.4 Planning and Resources - School Admissions Place Planning
PEC Administration and Support
Commissioning

3.5.5 In addition to the above it was proposed that the Transport Service be incorporated into the Planning and Resources Branch.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 Failure to fully implement may result in the Department not having a structure that is suitable for the demands placed upon it.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Not applicable.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation with recognised trade unions has taken place.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

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

9.1 The restructure of the department has required the regrade / redesignation / establishment of a number of posts at a cost of £300,000 (approximately 5% of the department's reduction in costs).

These have been reported to an approved by:

- the Strategic Change Board 1st April and 22nd July 2011
- Employment and Appointments Committee 11th August 2011.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) Is an EIA required? | Yes |
| (b) If 'yes', has one been completed? | Yes (24.5.11) |

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

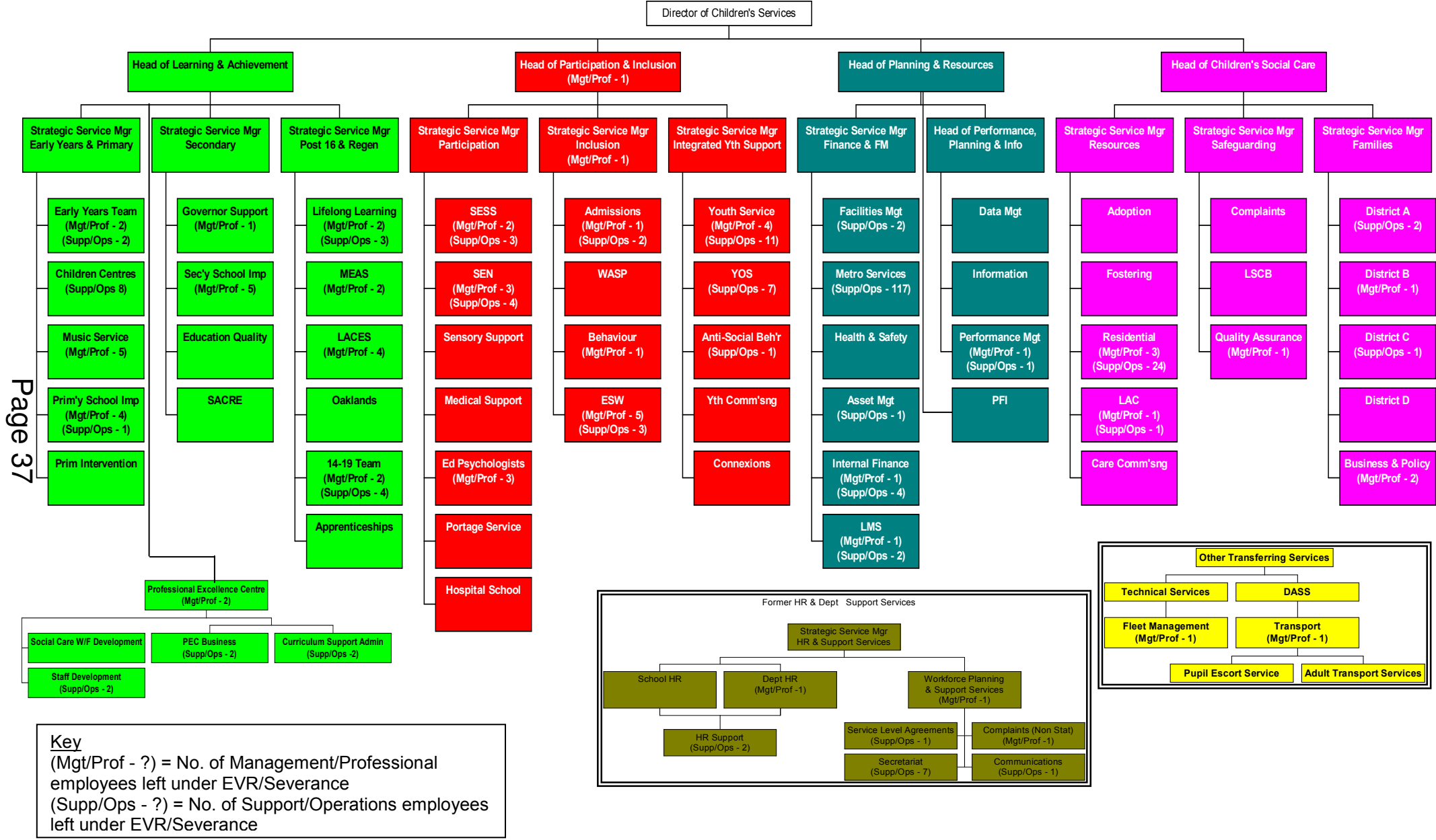
Appendix 1 – Structure of Department and Rationale before restructure

Appendix 2 – Structure of Planning & Resources and Rationale post restructure

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

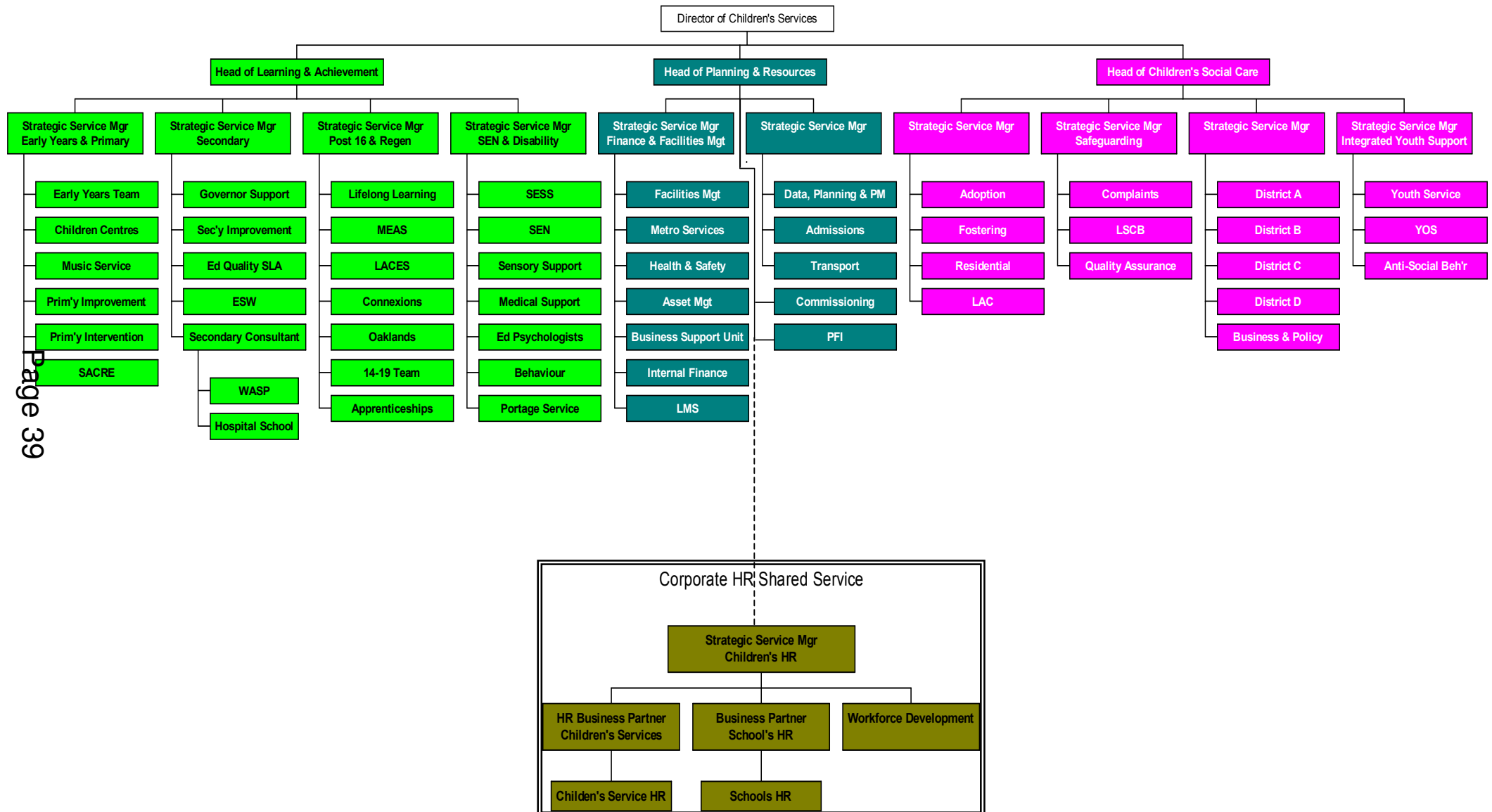
Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	23 June 2011
Employment and Appointments Committee	11 th August 2011

Children & Young People's Departmental Structure as at 31 December 2010



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Children & Young People's Departmental Structure as at 1 July 2011 – Proposed Restructure complete



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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

20TH SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	THE GOVERNMENT'S GREEN PAPER ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report outlines the Government's Green Paper that is about all the children and young people who are disabled, or identified as having a special educational need. It is about their families and ways of supporting them, and about the training and support required by professionals who work with them need in order to improve outcomes. It's title is **'Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability'**.

1.2 The consultation period ended on 30th June 2011. It was an open consultation and views were welcomed from both individuals and organisations. Wirral LA contributed to the consultation through the Merseyside Learn Together Partnership which did a joint response. Following consideration of the consultation responses, the Government intends to publish its response later this year. This may involve proposed legislative changes beginning in the following year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Members are requested to note the Government's intention to radically change the current framework, and the work undertaken by Officers preparing for possible changes.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 Members have a responsibility to assure themselves that the council is taking appropriate action in addressing potential changes to the current legal framework surrounding SEND that imposes statutory duties on local authorities. These statutory duties include responsibilities to arrange a continuum of provision to be made available locally, to meet children and young people's special educational needs and disabilities, to manage the assessment process for children and young people with the greatest needs, and for arranging any individual provision that is identified after assessment.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The current framework stems from a report on Special Educational Needs by Baroness Warnock in 1978, and subsequent law and guidance, most notably the 1996 Education Act and the SEN Code of Practice (2001).
- 4.2 The case for change is longstanding and has widespread support; it is overly bureaucratic, too often experienced by parents as adversarial, with widespread variations between schools and local authorities about identification and provision. There is an over-identification of SEN in schools and too little training for staff in all settings.
- 4.3 The consultation's major proposals include: a new education, health and social care plan to replace statements of special educational needs that could apply to young people until they are 25 years of age, a new approach to identifying special needs, a local offer to be published of all services available, greater independence of the assessment process, parents to have the option of a personal budget by 2014, and parents to have greater choice of schools. The intention is to radically change the system to support better life outcomes, give parents more confidence by giving them control, and transfer power to front line staff and local communities.
- 4.4 The consultation is very wide-ranging and has 59 questions covering early identification, work with health and social care, matters of finance, post 16 opportunities, personal budgets, etc. The breadth of questions is to capture views and ideas that will provide new, long-term arrangements. The Department for Education (DfE) invited respondents to contribute to those parts of the consultation of particular interest, and not to feel obliged to answer all the questions. The Green Paper is consistent with recent changes to the education landscape that envisages greater choice for parents, autonomy for professionals, changes driven by local settings, schools and communities, with less paperwork and devolved funding and sharper accountability.
- 4.5 The Government is working with some local authorities about funding arrangements. Local authorities have also been invited to work as 'pathfinders' to pilot some of the new proposed arrangements or innovative ways of working. The Government is keen to invite pathfinder applications from groups of authorities and especially where support is evident from local Primary Care Trusts. Pathfinder applications were invited in July 2011 with the deadline for applications the middle of August 2011. Successful applicants could receive up to £150,000 over two years to support pilots and must also observe existing legal arrangements. Successful applicants will be notified by the middle of September 2011.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 Currently there are none. But some changes have been very clearly signalled, such as the publishing of a local offer and working with reductions in statutory timescales to complete statutory assessments, and the Authority must begin work to make sure that we can implement them.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Merseyside Learning Together Partnership (LTP) of nine local authorities has put in a bid as a joint pathfinder. Strategic leads for SEN have worked together, in a very short time scale, on this joint bid. Individual authorities identified areas that each proposed working on so that we can learn from each other and extend the SEN 'footprint' across the region. On Wirral we want to work on the new single plan for the youngest children with the most complex needs. This would mean closer collaborative interventionist working with families and with colleagues in health and social care.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 A number of events have taken place to raise awareness and contribute to consultation responses. These include officer presentations to Wirral Governors' Forum, Schools' Forum, and Wirral Family Forum. Officers also worked with the Family Forum on their response to the consultation. A number of Wirral Officers attended a regional event organised by the Department for Education (DfE). Wirral's Association of Special School Headteachers invited a senior DfE advisor to a conference to help inform their response. Officers have also contributed to local consultations about SEN funding, and regional consultations about 16 plus provision and funding. A number of Wirral SEN officers and professionals produced a response that is attached as Appendix 1. SEN leads from the Merseyside LTP collaborated on a joint response that is attached as Appendix 2.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 The Green Paper expresses a strong intention for this sector to become involved in perhaps managing part of the SEN processes, such as assessment, mediation and providing key workers, and looks forward with interest to their responses to the consultation.

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

9.1 The new framework that is to be developed could have major implications in these areas but the nature of these will become clearer when the Government publishes its next steps.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Government has signalled that any legislative changes may start to take effect in 2013. Again, their precise nature is not yet known. It is likely that local authorities will retain statutory duties in regard to arranging and financing provision and transport.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Not yet known.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Not yet known.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no building planning implications.

13.2 The Green Paper considers the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JNSA) the key tool for local authorities to use to help with the strategic planning of provision and services.

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APPENDICES

1. Wirral Officers Consultation response.
2. Merseyside LTP Consultation response.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

APPENDIX 1

DRAFT

Wirral Response to Consultation on the Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disability

The following points contributed to the joint response by the Merseyside LTP.

1. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation. Many of the problems and issues identified within it are from a policy mix with opaque concepts about SEN and funding, with an operational framework this is now perceived as too bureaucratic.

We draw your attention to comments that were collated for Andre Imlich (DfE Advisor) following a regional consultation at Halton on 18th March 2011, and note that the variety of responses reflects the complex mix of substantive concepts, procedural tools and implementation methodologies in the paper.

However, stakeholders will need to be given greater clarity around the strategic planning role it envisages for the LA. It will be difficult for the LA to have a strategic planning role and manage the expectations of all parents and all partners.

2. We welcome the shifts in thinking that the paper signals about a framework that needs to be about greater choice and transparency for children and families, that has a model of networked relationships where participation and consultation are at its heart, and the focus is on outcomes.
3. We particularly like the proposals to:
 - revise the SEN Code of Practice with potential changes
 - to distinguish between additional needs (high incidence and low need/cost), underachievement, and special Needs (low incidence and high need/cost)
 - to simplify the graduated response
 - to provide a clearer steer about inclusion;
 - produce methodologies that align funding with these concepts, rather than to diagnostic types of need, from within a national framework with some local flexibility. These methodologies must be in conjunction with those used by others partners in health and social care;

- streamline the burgeoning assessments protocols (CAF/TAC/SEN/CORE/139a/LFWL, etc) to promote early interventions that build where necessary rather than add on other bits from separate assessments. It will require alignment of concepts behind the assessments i.e. the relationship between concepts of SEN and those in health and social care;

4. As officers of a local authority we focused on:

Question 40 *We have identified three core features of the role of local authorities in supporting children and young people with SEN or who are disabled and their families: strategic planning for services, securing a range of high quality provision, and enabling families to make informed choices and exercise greater control over services. Do you agree that these are the three core features of the role of local authorities in supporting children and young people with SEN or who are disabled and their families, or are there others?*

We acknowledge the core features of the authority role and comment on the challenges each presents.

'Strategic planning for services' Developing closer working relationships with local partners to gather intelligence to plan will depend, in part, on health service re-organisation, and the promised clarity about the concept of SEN and inclusion, and its relationship to other partners funding models to produce unity in methods to commission and fund services. The lexicon of SEN across health, social care and education needs some conformity as at present terms and definitions require translation across professional boundaries.

'Securing a range of high quality provision' This is not just challenging but arguably policy contradictory as strategic oversight of provision and its quality is at odds with provision having autonomy and freedom. The challenge role around commissioning and decommissioning involve wholesale change from the functions and activities traditionally undertaken by local authorities and local politicians to provide services and problem solve for them.

'Enabling families to make informed choices and exercise greater control over services' Developing greater clarity around the local offer is the most straightforward of the roles. At its simplest level clear information is needed; actual enabling could fall to other groups and organisations to provide.

5. Other responses.

Question 58 *How do you think a national banded funding framework for children and young people with SEN or who are disabled could improve the transparency of funding decisions to parents while continuing to allow for local flexibility?*

A simplified banding method of cost/provision is easier to work and understand than to align with diagnostic need types costs. It also fits with post 16 funding. The proposals detailed by Policy Exchange (2010) have merit about two broad bands, one to meet additional needs and given directly to schools/settings by a flat rate per pupils, a pupil premium approach and local adjustment, and one composed of grant elements to meet high cost needs of low incidence SEN.

Question 47 *How do you think SEN support services might be funded so that schools, Academies, Free Schools and other education providers have access to high quality SEN support services?*

Banding that gives money directly to schools/settings for additional needs could be used by them to make minimum provision, for instance, SENCOs, and for them to purchase any additional services. Banded/grant money given to authorities to meet high cost needs must ring fence a cost element for statutory assessment/monitoring work and peripatetic services to be commissioned from within whatever arrangements are decided.

Question 59 *How can different funding arrangements for specialist provision for young people pre-16 and post-16 be aligned more effectively to provide a more consistent approach to support children and young people with SEN or who are disabled from birth to 25?*

We agree that they should be re-modelled to be made continuous and flow from the principles behind the new arrangements to commission and fund the new, single plans and future specialist provision. Until the principles are clear the question of how is secondary.

06/05/2011

PA/GPaper6thMay 2011

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**Support and aspiration: A new approach to special
educational needs and disability**

Consultation response form

Easy read version

Please send us your answers before 30 June 2011

Department for
Education

What is in this form?

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Before you fill in this form

What is this form?

This form is for people who have read the booklet about our plans to help:

- children with special educational needs or a disability
- their families
- the people who work with them.

This form has questions about the plans in the booklet.

About the questions

The questions are in 5 sections. The 5 sections are in the same order as the plans in the booklet.

- **Section 1** has questions about our plans to get help for children as early as possible.
- **Section 2** has questions about our plans to give parents more say in the help their families get.
- **Section 3** has questions about our plans for getting better help in schools.
- **Section 4** has questions about our plans for helping young people when they become adults.
- **Section 5** has questions about our plans to make services better.

You do not have to answer all the questions.

Please send your answers to us before 30 June 2011.

How to fill in this form

You can type your answers into the boxes after each question in this form.

Or you can print the form and write your answers in the boxes.

Explaining difficult words

Sometimes in this form we explain what difficult words mean. If a word is purple, we explain what it means in the **Difficult words** section on page 40.

Who can read your answers?

Anybody can ask to see your answers to the questions in this form. There are 2 laws to help us decide whether to give them the information they ask for:

- **The Freedom of Information Act 2000.** This law gives people the right to ask to see any information that public organisations have
- **The Data Protection Act 1998.** This law tells organisations what they can and what they cannot do with information they have about people. For example, peoples name, address and birth date.

If you want all or any of your answers to be private, please tell us why. If somebody asks to see your answers, we will bear this in mind. But sometimes the law says we have to give people the information they ask for.

The Data Protection Act 1998 protects personal information like your name, address and other information that can help someone identify you. So we usually have to keep this information private.

If you work for an organisation, your organisation's confidentiality disclaimer is not enough protect your details and answers you give. A confidentiality disclaimer is the words your organisation uses to tell people that the information they are reading is private.

Please tick this box if you want us to keep your answers private.

Please tell us why you want us to keep your answers private.

Your name Karen Vanner
Organisation (if you have one) On behalf of the Learn Together Partnership (SEN Strategic Leads from the following local authorities: Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens, Sefton, Warrington and Wirral.
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We can provide other versions of this form

For example, people who are blind or deaf might need a version that makes it easier for them to tell us what they think.

For more information about other versions, please email send.greenpaper@education.gsi.gov.uk

About you

Please tick the box that best describes you.

- You are a parent or carer of a child with **special educational needs** or a **disability**.
- You are a teacher or headteacher at a school.
- You work for the **local authority**.
- You work for an organisation that helps children.
- You work for a Parent Partnership Service – an organisation that helps parents and carers of children with **special educational needs**.
- You are a child or young person.
- You are a **Special Educational Needs Coordinator** in a school.
- You work for a national charity.
- You represent a Trade Union (an organisation that supports workers). Or you represent a Professional Association (an organisation that represents a specific trade or industry).
- You are a consultant or a person working with people who have **special educational needs** or a **disability**.

You work at a school or college.

You are a **Governor**

You work at a local charity.

You are an **educational psychologist**.

You are an academic (somebody at a university who has expert knowledge of **special educational needs** or **disability**).

Other.

If you ticked 'Other', please tell us why you are filling in this form.

The Learn Together Partnership is a collaborative of nine LAs working together since 2004. In its start-up phase, Learn Together was supported by the then DfES Innovation Unit. The Directors of Children's Services of the original partners agreed to continue to work together in this rebranded venture. The partnership is mature and whilst a collective view of this consultation is presented here, the individual response from partner LAs is not precluded. I manage the LTP and therefore submit this on behalf of the group, who are SEN leads across the partnership.

Section 1

Plans to get help as early as possible

The questions in this section are about our plans to get help as early as possible for children with special educational needs or a disability.

1. How can we improve how we check whether a child has special educational needs or a disability? How can we improve support for children who have them?

Your answer:

- Early integrated assessment and intervention at the point of identified need, regardless of the age of the individual. Health Visitors and Early Years practitioners should be employed by the same body as the NHS has a very different agenda from the LA.
- Early support must be based on the needs of the whole family, not just the child.
- Clear pathways for integrated services required.
- Descriptors of need and actions to be carried out by schools and other services which impact on children's learning – national standardisation from Early Years to clarify expectations and actions.
- Maximise use of Children's Centres, health visitor information, Child Development Centres.
- Improve training and support to EY providers.
- Current system places the legal duty on LAs, not schools, to provide for a child's SEND which can lead to confusion as to what element of the support schools can reasonably be expected to provide from their delegated funding and what the LA should provide

2. Do you think it is a good idea to have a single assessment process and an Education, Health and Care Plan?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Do you have any other comments?

- In order for this to work effectively, it would need the joining up of national agendas from the centre between DfE and DoH.
- It is potentially less confusing for parents but the detail will need to be resolved, i.e. who adopts the 'lead professional' role and who co-ordinates and reviews the process? The system needs to recognise that some children may have only educational needs; hence the criteria for combining all three plans will need to be transparent. The system of co-ordinating, collating and updating the information could prove to be even more bureaucratic than the current system.
- Which of the agencies involved in the EHC Plan would have the legal accountability for implementing the Plan, i.e. in case of legal challenge and appeals? The SEND Tribunal would have to be able to make orders across all 3 areas of provision – education, health and social care
- There needs to be clarity as to what qualifies a child or young person for an EHC Plan. Will CYP have to meet criteria in all three areas to access a plan?
- Need to develop mechanisms for pooling budget resources.
- Parent Partnership services currently support parents through the statutory assessment process up to and including the issuing of a statement of SEN. They do not generally have any expertise in the areas of health and social care. How would they be in a position to support parents through the processes involved with the drawing up of the new EHC Plan?
- The Plan could be used by and transferred between all providers

We have removed questions 3 and 4. They were not relevant to this form.

5a. Do you think the [single assessment process](#) and [Education, Health and Care Plan](#) should cover more areas than education, health, social care and employment and if so, please tell us what else should be included?

Your answer:

- The current statutory assessment process requires LAs to request advice from five sources, i.e. parents, school, medical, social services and educational psychologist. These are not necessarily the most appropriate people to provide the information required to identify a child's total needs
- Any services that enable the CYP to fulfil the objectives set out in the Plan and to achieve as much independence as possible, e.g. housing, leisure, family planning support, financial support etc.
- The Plan should set out the aspirations for the CYP and how services work together to meet those aspirations.
- How would the new Plans dovetail with the CAF?
- With the removal of IEPs from the system, more reliance will be placed on the Plan to include the detail, not just an overview of the arrangements for that young person.

5b. What effect would this have?

Your answer:

- Different agencies would need to take the lead for aspects of the plan at different stages of the YP's life [up to 25]. For example, whilst the CYP is at school, education services would be closely involved; when the young person leaves school and enters further education, employment or training, other agencies will need to take the lead on the Plan at that stage (this links back to the earlier point about overall responsibility and accountability for the Plan)

6. How can charities and community organisations help in special educational needs assessments? How could they make parents feel more confident that their child was getting the right help?

Your answer:

- There appear to be both pros and cons to this model: firstly it depends on what is meant by the voluntary and community sector (in the easy read version, it refers to charities and community organisations). Many voluntary organisations are providers of services to LAs and could this lead to a potential conflict of interests? Is it possible to provide both a co-ordinating and advocacy role? A number of independent specialist providers have charitable status.
- Many local community organisations have had their budgets decimated by recent cuts in grants etc. so would they have the capacity to undertake such work?
- It is not the 'who' that is the problem and causes anxiety to parents etc. It is the lack of clarity as to which children should be assessed and the lack of common minimum standards of what parents can expect by way of support for their children. It wouldn't matter who conducted the assessment if this were clear.
- How does the potential new role of the community organisations dovetail with Parent Partnership Services who have a great deal of experience in supporting parents with educational issues?
- PVI settings could contribute to assessments and reports and be involved in formulating the assessment tools and questions

7. How could the single assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan lead to more continuous social care for disabled children?

Your answer:

- Good relationship between children and adult services is vital. Key worker crucial to support families to navigate through the system.
- Should result in a more holistic, integrated plan but there appears to be a lot of focus on assessment and identification but it is at the provision stage that potential conflicts will occur. Social care assessments have statutory timescales – these need to be shortened to bring them in line.
- At what stage will a child meet the threshold for an EHC Plan? Thresholds are different for health, social care and education. We need joined up provision, not just assessment. There are finite resources in each area of provision.
- There would need to be a much greater engagement of social care colleagues than at present.

8. How could we give parents better advice about assessments?

Your answer:

- Face-to-face dialogue with parents/carers at an early stage at key points throughout the assessment.
- Engage with parent/carer forums.
- Establish focus groups.
- Ensure that schools are equipped with all the relevant information on assessments so that they can advise parents as soon as an issue is identified.

9. How can we make it quicker for children to get an assessment?

Your answer:

- To have all the relevant information to hand before an assessment is initiated, i.e. a sound evidence base for conducting an assessment and good quality information from all the professionals involved.
- Electronic systems used more.
- More joint interface between professionals with an early meeting of all those involved.
- Ensure that information on referral forms is of good quality and relevant to avoid having to ask for further information.
- The best assessments are those conducted by practitioners who are involved with the CYP over a length of time so we must avoid using the assessment process as purely a means to obtaining an EHC Plan.
- There should be a fast-track process for those CYP with life limiting conditions
- If a professional is off sick or unable to complete their part, someone from their service should be obliged to let the lead professional know so that the process can continue

Section 2

Plans to give parents more say

The questions in this section are about our plans to give parents more say in the help they and their family get.

10. If **local authorities** give parents information about help that is available, what should they include?

Your answer:

- The LA's SEND policy
- Information about the provision available including criteria used to determine who can access the provision.
- Parent partnership document : info re schools, who can help, website information, graduated approach, third sector information, support menu and funding, personalisation of budgets, health provision information, sufficiency [open transparency re future planning], what is the continuum of provision, how to communicate their views, Aiming High, published information universal to targeted and specialist to show the complete range, pathway possibilities in the area, currency of information, readable and understandable document, outline of school provision, link to personalised budget, criteria referenced, taking into account local context. Review arrangements. Transparency of funding. Multi-agency focus of the local offer. Website access to information. Methods to access local offer [service pathway].
- This could all be provided by way of a summary document with other documents sitting behind.
- Information about schools opening and closing dates

11. What information about special educational needs should schools give to give to parents?

Your answer:

- Provision map : performance data [FFT, Raiseonline] of SEN pupils in the school
- School statutory responsibilities
- Admission policies
- School's approach to SEN
- Name of SENCo
- Identification, assessment and review procedures
- Consultation process and mechanism
- Provision available for pupils with SEN
- Specialist support available
- Transparency of funding and resources
- Qualifications and training of teachers and LSAs
- Information about support groups and Parent Partnership services
- Complaints policy

12. What kind of help should parents be able to buy with a **personal budget**?

Your answer:

- Short breaks, extra-curricular opportunities, home to school transport, transport linked with out of school activities, equipment, and respite care.
- How does it help parents if the services are not there, understaffed, or overstretched?

13. How will a **personal budget** help parents get help from different services that will meet their child's needs?

Your answer:

- Focuses services on what parents want, greater control and flexibility for parents to respond to individual needs, gives choice to parents relevant to their child, family-based, greater accountability of services, mutual accountability, increase competition between services.

Caveat : LA Statutory Duty, mental capacity of some parents to engage in this process, or who want something different. Key worker champion function?

- Who will monitor the effectiveness and impact of the spending?
- Who has the final say if the support is deemed by some to be in appropriate?
- Need to learn from experience of the Budget Holding Lead Professional pilots
- Must be linked to outcomes and to the objectives of the EHC plan
- Needs a lot more investigation and guidance. Potential perverse incentive to label children as SEN to access personal budget
- Is there evidence from adult services that PBs improve outcomes?

14. In the booklet called *Inclusive Schooling*, the Government gives advice to schools on how to include children with **special educational needs** or a **disability**. If you have seen this booklet, do you think it gives enough information about parents' choice of a **special school** or another school?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Do you have any other comments?

- The advice is too 'either or', i.e. it doesn't reflect the continuum of support
- Some schools still don't deliver inclusive services or don't have the staff/resources to do so. Also, some LAs don't fund all children's transport costs to and from school if they are outside the catchment area so choice may be limited.
- The section on reasonable adjustments is too vague
- There does not appear to be any evidence to suggest that there has been a bias toward inclusion in the system as the majority of appeals before the SEND tribunal involving school placement are appeals by parents wanting mainstream education

15. How can we improve the information parents get about choosing a school?

Your answer:

- Meeting with parents at the early stages of statutory assessment, dialogue important to build parental confidence, encourage participation and hold no surprises at the end of the process. Good investment of time.
- In the information about each school, it would be beneficial if existing parents in the school could share their views, experience and information with potential new parents.
- There should be a duty upon LAs to provide clear, easy to understand information to parents about:
 - The different types of schools available (mainstream, special, academy, non-maintained etc.)
 - The schools within the local authority and what their specialisms are
 - Contacts for finding out more about schools in other authorities
 - The process for choosing a school with clear explanations about the difference between choosing and expressing a preference so parents clearly understand their and the LA's role

16. Should parents always try [mediation](#) before they go to a [Tribunal](#)?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Do you have any other comments?

- It should always be offered and encouraged, widely publicised but not as a mandatory step as in some cases, it could lead to further delays in finalising the process where it is clear on both sides that agreement cannot be reached
- Who will oversee the process? Will the outcomes be binding? What will be the benefits to parents?
- The role of independent parental supporters is key to this
- What if parents don't agree to go to mediation? Can this be enforced?
- Implications for timescales – 20 weeks

17a. Is it a good idea to have **mediation** for decisions about schools, health services and **social care** services?

Yes

No

Not Sure

17b. What is the best way for this to work?

Your answer:

- As long as the appropriate accountable body is involved. Depends on who has the legal accountability for the plan?
- Who is in a position to mediate on behalf of all three stakeholders in 'the plan'?
- Will we be able to implement one aspect of the plan if there is disagreement on other parts of it?
- Those attending the mediation meeting would have to be those who can make decisions about funding, provision etc. as it will lead to further delays. How will this work if a parent can choose who is invited to a mediation meeting?
- Whoever was conducting the mediation would have to be knowledgeable about all areas, therefore training would be very important

Section 3

Plans for better help in schools

The questions in this section are about our plans for getting better help in schools for children with **special educational needs** or a **disability**.

18. What is the best way for special schools to share their knowledge with other types of schools?

Your answer:

- Outreach work, teacher and support staff exchanges
- Dual registered pupils, for example in Knowsley, some places in special schools are designated for pupils to spend half time in the special school and half time in mainstream at both primary and secondary phases.
- In Liverpool, there is a Primary Consortia Model where a consortium of eight to ten primary schools and special schools across a neighbourhood area meet to commission support to improve outcomes for children with SEND. This process involves analysing school data and listening to the views of Headteachers and SENCOs to determine priorities for support from the special schools.
- In service training
- Information leaflets

19. Private schools and colleges do not get money from the Government. They work differently from schools and colleges that get money from the Government. How can we make sure that they learn from those schools and colleges that are experts in helping children with special educational needs?

Your answer:

- There should be a network for different settings
- What is the motive for independent schools and colleges to get involved?
- Perhaps involve them in the commissioning process
- One of the recommendations of the Wolf Report was the movement of teaching staff across sectors.
- Colleges need to be clear about what they are expected to provide
- The recruitment of Specialist Leaders in Education should include a fixed quota of posts that are awarded to staff with specialist skills in SEN and Disability.
- Identify best practice nationally and locally. Support the best SENCOs and support staff to contribute to the training of others. Focus on ensuring a greater consistency of assessment and practice.
- Provide case studies that identify best practice and review and evaluate resources.
- Identify what the best teaching for SEN looks like across each strand of SEN.

20. How can we make sure that all teaching staff at schools become better at recognising and helping children with extra needs?

Your answer:

- SEN training or aspects of it either need to be statutory or examined by OFSTED. Currently and in the past, training, e.g. IDP training has been voluntary and therefore by and large does not happen.
- Training must be whole school and not restricted to SENCOs or small groups of staff
- ITT training must contain a strong element of SEND
- Could a quality mark for Inclusion become a national standard for schools, administered through OFSTED?
- Make 'the quality of SEN provision' a limiting judgement in schools

21. What is the best way to train teachers to help children with **special educational needs** or a **disability**?

Your answer:

- Compulsory SEN placement whilst training to be a teacher
- Compulsory secondments (as part of CPD) between mainstream and special schools
- Each mainstream school being twinned with a special school
- A progression path into teaching for skilled Teaching Assistants with a proven track record of supporting pupils with SEND will ensure that staff with true potential will remain in our schools.

22. What do you think will happen if we have only one level of **special educational needs** in schools?

Your answer:

- Any guidance offered to schools to support identification of need will always be open to interpretation. This is an inherent problem of the current system. For example, what constitutes School Action Plus provision in one school can look vastly different in a neighbouring school. The single category described in the Green Paper is 'for children whose needs exceed what is normally available in schools' which equates to the current School Action Plus. So the issue is not just about identification but about establishing an agreed threshold of need for specific provision.
- To identify that a child has a specific learning difficulty and not a behavioural problem requires a level of expertise that is gained through experience and training, not clear guidance. Identification of need, especially in the early years, can be very difficult and requires teachers to have a skill set that is currently not part of initial teacher training. Accurate identification can often require input from specialist professionals. Over identification of need is indicative of lack of experience and training but changing a category will have little or no impact on current practice.
- There is a risk that a significant number of CYP with low level SEN may not be recognised. It all depends on the criteria which underpin this new category. The criteria should be open and transparent across all schools.

23. How will the changes help teachers become better at recognising and supporting children who need extra help?

Your answer:

- Unless there is a statutory element to this, they won't. Schools have many initiatives thrown at them and therefore need some form of carrot/stick around SEN.
- Changing a category will not automatically embed a different approach.
- Changes to the identification system will not ensure that CYP and families are able to access the specialist support required to make a positive impact on their lives.
- Will the CAF be the assessment tool to ensure that pupils' needs are met?

24. Sometimes we say that a child has 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties'. If you know this label, do you think it is helpful in identifying the needs of children who have emotional and social difficulties?

<input type="checkbox"/> Very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Helpful	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not very helpful
<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all helpful	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure	

Do you have any other comments?

- The category covers a wide range of different needs.
- The category has become broader in recent years to include a range of other needs
- The BESD category does not always address the additional underlying needs of BESD pupils. More and more pupils are being educated within BESD settings who have multiple additional needs whether it be ASD, MLD, Mental Health needs etc. and the definition of BESD can vary considerably.
- Often the label of BESD is given as the category of SEN because this predominates. There needs to be more flexibility in registering a child on PLASC.
- There seem to be very few CYP who are identified as having BESD who do not fall within the 'behaviour' category. Emotional and social difficulties in themselves are not always addressed unless they manifest themselves in the form of behaviour.
- Children with ADHD usually categorised under BESD and underlying needs often not identified

25. Do we use the label 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties' too much so that it stops us understanding a child's real needs?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Do you have any other comments?

- Yes, but once assessments of underlying difficulties are carried out, the appropriate curriculum and resources to support children need to be made available.
- Identification of need is crucial to determining the right response. For example, if teachers are unable to identify a learning difficulty and respond appropriately the, in time as needs remain unmet, it becomes more likely that a pupil will be grouped in the BESD category.
- The BESD label has been used as a fast track option to get pupils off a mainstream roll, often with little evidence of strategies employed for intervention
- Diagnosing practitioners may struggle to differentiate between BESD behaviour and those which may be attribute to mental health/medical needs, particularly if the parent/carer is unable to provide detailed medical or family histories

26. How can special schools share their knowledge on helping children with difficult behaviour?

Your answer:

- Outreach support from BESD schools. This can take the form of access to therapies, intervention programmes for individual pupils, staff support and whole school training. When an outreach team is made up of highly skilled multi-disciplinary practitioners, it is valued by schools and parents because it can stop an escalation of poor behaviour and it can change learning outcomes for children.
- However, one of the negative aspects of outreach can be that some schools are reluctant to receive guidance from outreach services and just want problematic pupils to be removed by specialist teachers rather than capacity building and teaching the teachers how to develop their own behaviour management techniques.
- Shadow placements for mainstream teachers to observe the practice of experienced SEN teachers.
- More behaviour management support for student teachers

27. What stops special schools and special Academies being able to offer alternative provision to other schools and colleges?

Your answer:

- In theory, there are no barriers to special schools and academies entering the market for AP although it must be recognised that the needs of CYP who are excluded and in alternative provision are often very different from those attending school and this would have to be addressed.

28. How can special Academies work with other schools and services to improve how they meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs or a disability?

Your answer:

- Although academy status may give current special schools greater freedoms, their role in supporting mainstream schools with an extensive menu of outreach support that impacts on the outcomes for pupils should continue.
- Perhaps special academies have a role in supporting mainstream academies.
- If academies are freed from national curriculum delivery apart from the core subjects, they may find it difficult to support maintained schools

29. How could special Academies become experts that give advice to the local area?

Your answer:

- What would be the funding model for special academies to provide support to other local schools?
- Depending on the reason why schools become academies, it may not be desirable for some academies to share their expertise, especially if they are operating in a competitive market.

30. Is it a good idea to allow children who do not have a **statement of special educational needs** to go to **Free Schools** for children with special educational needs or a disability?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Why?

Your answer:

- This question does not get at the heart of the matter and it would, therefore, be misleading to give a yes or no answer to it.
- Statements of SEN have not necessarily been an indication of level of need but an administrative mechanism for allocating resources. If, therefore, a child was not in receipt of a statement but had a high level of need, it could be appropriate for them to attend a special free school if their parents so wished.
- Many pupils with SEND have been successfully included in mainstream schools, particularly in the areas of SpLD, MLD. Would the admission of such pupils to special free schools marginalise pupils whose needs could be met within their local mainstream school?

31. Is it a good idea to show how well schools are helping children with extra needs in **performance tables**?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Do you have any other comments?

- No, data can be manipulated. Some outstanding schools give pupils with SEND a poor deal. The use of performance tables to provide an accountability trail for parents can hinder the enthusiasm of schools, academies and specialist colleges to work together openly and honestly share good practice. There is a tension in any system that encourages competitiveness between providers.
- There is a disproportionate number of pupils with SEND in some mainstream schools and very few in others. Many parents are still of the view that the inclusion of too many pupils with SEND in a mainstream school will be detrimental to the progress of other pupils and apply for a place at a school with fewer.
- Schools that cater well for the needs of SEND pupils are well known to parents and they can become victims of their own success and struggle to ensure that their school community reflects all abilities.

32. What information would help people understand how well schools help children with **special educational needs** or a **disability**?

Your answer:

- No. of exclusions of pupils with SEND
- Destinations for young people (EET)
- Parental satisfaction
- Children and young people's views
- OFSTED should speak to SEN Governor routinely as part of Section 5 inspection
- Quantitative data for attendance and achievement but qualitative outcomes for pupils also need to be recorded and celebrated
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's SEN policy, Equality Scheme, access arrangements, reasonable adjustments
- SEN training for all OFSTED inspectors
- What the school provides for pupils with SEND but without statements
- What health input is available, e.g. school nurse

Section 4

Plans for help when young people become adults

The questions in this section are about our plans to get better help for young people with **special educational needs** or a **disability** when they become adults.

33. How can schools, colleges and training organisations make it easier for young people with extra needs to learn or train after they are 16?

Your answer:

- More programmes available to enable shadowing and coaching to increase a learner's confidence, including additional work placement opportunities before leaving school.
- The level of pastoral support enjoyed in school should continue for a defined period in the new setting. The plan would reflect this – needs an undertaking from the receiving setting. Accountability if the commitment is not forthcoming.. Funding should follow the young person to give them real choice.
- Improve transition planning post 16. Continue to focus on NEET cohort.
- Bespoke programmes of learning that suit the individual needs of the learner. These programmes should include mentors and specifically peer mentors when it has been identified that this would benefit the learner.
- To enable learning providers to develop provision designed to encourage and meet the learning needs of young people with SEND, there needs to be a funding system developed to support this. At present post 16 funding for Additional Learning Support is weighted heavily towards further education providers. If funding were equitable across all providers, it would support young people with SEND in whichever post-16 education and training route they choose (foundation learning, apprenticeships, further education and school sixth form) and decisions would not be based on funding but more likely based on the most appropriate provision for the young person. In addition, where bespoke programmes have been designed to encourage participation of young people with SEND, the funding could be fully utilised to support the additional costs of the programme in meeting the learner's needs.
- Inequalities in the funding system allow some providers to better accommodate young people with SEND. This is because large providers have greater infrastructure that can better support learners accessing provision.
- One of the key recommendations of the Wolf Review is 'allowing teachers to move across and within the post-16 sector'. The implementation of this recommendation would lead to more attractive courses and encourage greater participation. The number of learning qualifications/options available would increase and this would have a positive impact on the number of young people with SEND participating. This can only be done by vocational tutors working closely with academic teachers in designing lesson plans with relevant and interesting subject matter and, where appropriate, having vocational tutors delivering specific elements of academic subjects to engage interest.
- There needs to be full acceptance by the Post-16 sector that teaching qualifications, although different within different provision, are of equal standards and that both teachers and tutors have something to offer young people with SEND when designing and delivering education and training sessions to meet their needs. Collaboration between providers across the whole of the post-16 sector will be fundamental in ensuring that young people with SEND are able to access learning opportunities.
- Only certain providers have specialist staff in place to work with young people with SEND and again, this is likely to be the larger institutions. Initial assessment is key to participation and should only be undertaken by qualified specialist staff.
- Greater investment in staff training will be required.

34. What is the best way to plan to help a young person move from school to work? Who is the best person to support them as they make this change?

Your answer:

- The individual will have to know the young person very well. Effective use of Learning for Living and Work framework. Three partners, [Knowsley, St. Helens and Cheshire East] were pilots for this person-centred approach, good transfer of information and clear process for transition.
- Transition Review process should be mandatory on at least an annual basis from year seven onwards. This would ensure that reviews are regularly undertaken and plans amended to take account of new information.
- As the plan is person-centred, often by the time the young person is moving from college or school to an employer, the young person themselves will be able to share their transitional plan with their employer. Where this is not the case, a nominated key worker needs to be identified to ensure the young person is able to access the support they would have previously received whilst at school or college.
- Once in the workplace, the young person should be allocated a named workplace mentor/coach. This mentor/coach would become the young person's 'work buddy' responsible for ensuring that all their support needs are being addressed.
- In some instances it may be identified that the young person is only able to maintain employment if it is supported and in these instances, consideration should be given to investing in supported employment type programmes whereby a care workers will work alongside the young person to support them in the workplace. This model enables the young person to retain their job and feel valued, whilst at the same time it gives the employer the confidence to take on the young person knowing that any perceived concerns/barriers will be addressed through the support worker.

35a Are **supported internships** a good idea for young people who cannot do an apprenticeship?

Yes

No

Not Sure

35b. What would be the best way for them to work?

Your answer:

- Convince local employers, through careful marketing and dialogue, of the value of this
- Ensure that the intern is not just “another pair of hands” especially in these austere times. The majority of small employers who have traditionally shied away from apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships have done so because investing in training has not been one of their priorities. Without the obligation to train the young person, it could end up as ‘volunteering’ under another guise. We need to question what is meant by ‘meaningful work opportunity’.
- Need to be carefully managed with strict timeframes of the expected length of stay and programme outcomes from the outset. These should be linked to a staged progression upon completion for the intern and if the employer is unable to offer the intern a permanent paid position at the end of their programme, they should be committed to offering the young person a reference.
- Nominated work mentors or coaches would be required to support the placement and the young person would also need an external named mentor link. All internships should include at least half a day per week C.V./job search/job application so that in instances where an employer has a good intern, they are encouraged to employ them as soon as possible or risk losing them to someone else.
- Internships are an excellent way of engaging with small employers not currently able to offer the commitment of longer term training. It is important that these employers too have external support to enable them to offer a valuable work experience to the young person. That support could be offered through the post-16 sector.

36. How can we encourage companies to offer useful **work experience** and job opportunities to young people with **special educational needs** or a **disability**?

Your answer:

- Incentives such as free staff disability awareness training, free staff equality of opportunity training, access to free equipment to support young people, access to capital grants to enable any reasonable adjustments to take place, support from larger organisations with a good track record of recruiting young people with SEND, work place support, free risk assessments, free recruitment support.
- Introduce a national Inclusion kitemark for employers, similar to the one for schools and colleges and/or include this aspect into Investors in People.
- Any Government employer incentive programme (for example apprenticeship business grants etc) should be targeted at the recruitment of disabled young people and young people with SEN and any Government department that has responsibility for or links with employers (for example NAS, DWP) should be targeted to ensure that young people with SEND are being employed by the organisations they liaise with.

37. How could we improve the way children's health services and adult health services work together for young people aged 16 to 25?

Your answer:

- By simplifying systems and ensuring that key professionals work closely together. The professionals should have clear data sharing protocols in place and these must be communicated across their organisations. Often crucial information about a young person's health is withheld to the detriment of the young person because the data is perceived as too sensitive.
- Having a nominated key worker in place, one who is fully informed about the young person and what their needs are, would support effective transition for people aged 16-25.
- The Learning for Living and Work framework goes some way to address this. Its multi-agency approach to the information gathering process enables the accurate transfer of information. But at present it is far too resource intensive and because there are no data sharing protocols linked to the framework, there is no incentive for health professionals to complete fully their section. In addition, the quality of information relies solely on the person completing that section.
- Currently the Department for Health does not have a statutory duty to provide information in order to facilitate educational places for 16-25 year olds. Consideration should be given to placing such a duty or at least developing data sharing protocols and guidance that enables health to support education in the interests of young people aged 16-25 years.

38. What could a family doctor (GP) do to make it easier for young people to move from children's to adult's health services?

Your answer:

- Be more involved earlier in the child's life. A programme of induction to the GP practice should begin as early as possible to ensure the GP works in conjunction with paediatric services and gets to know the needs of the young disabled child. This should be a national requirement, not one that is left to the good practice GP.
- By providing annual health checks for all disabled young people. The information from the annual health check would form an important part of the transitional information available.

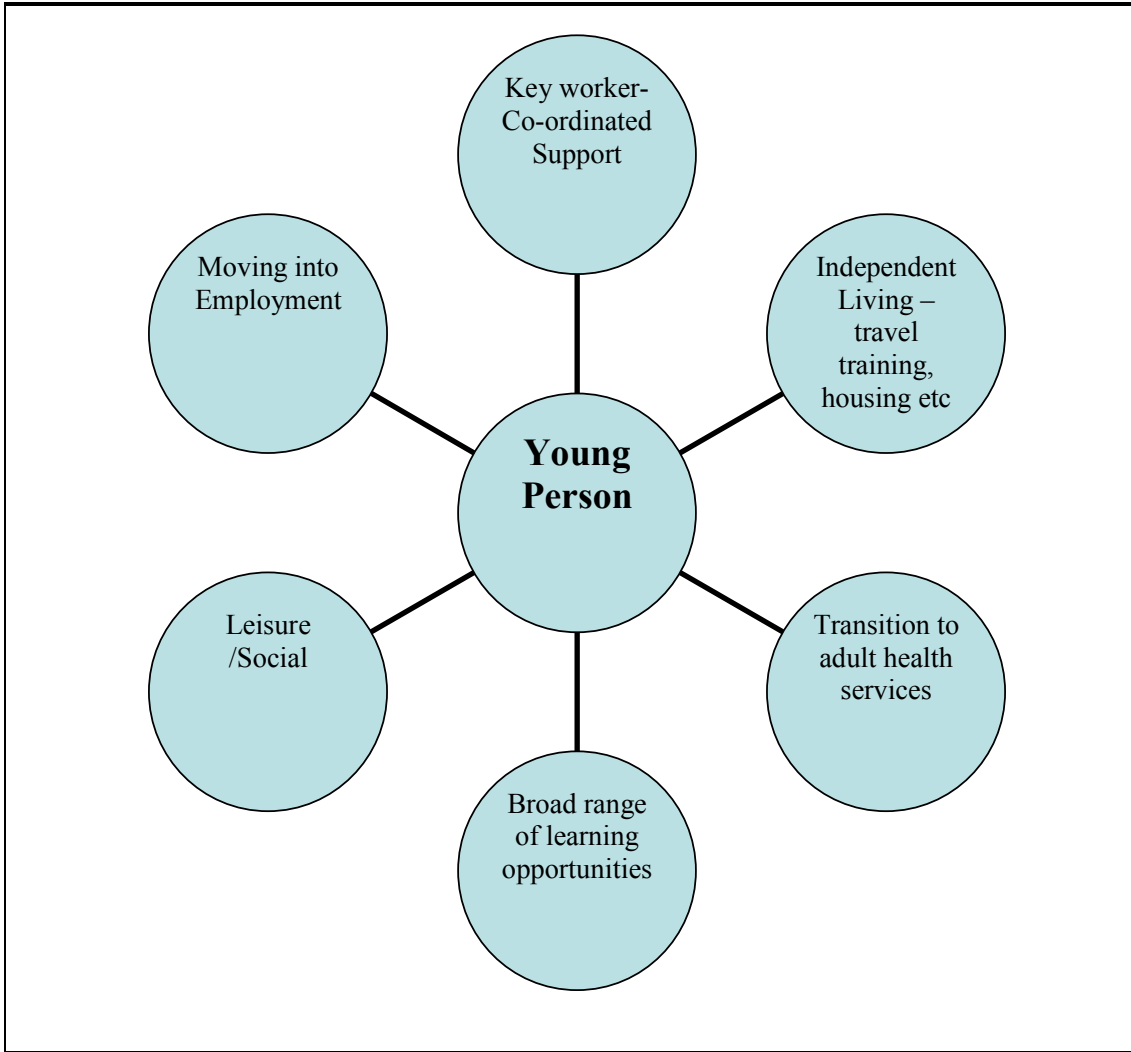
39a. Do you agree that these are the most important things for young people with special educational needs or a disability? (Tick as many boxes as you like.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> providing a wide range of learning opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> finding work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent living
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moving to adult health services	<input type="checkbox"/> none	<input type="checkbox"/> not sure

39b. What else is important?

Your answer:

- Regardless of where the young person is transferring to, he or she needs to be at the centre of any transition process and the four areas listed above would be the main focus in preparing them for adulthood.
- In doing so, organisations cannot work in isolation; a multi-agency approach must be in place. This would include the development of an overall co-ordinated support package.
- It should be made clear from the outset which organisation is responsible for funding each part of the support needs identified in the plan. There should not be any funding ambiguities that delay the decision making process. (see chart below)



Section 5

Plans to make services better

The questions in this section are about our plans to make better services for children with **special educational needs** or a **disability** and their families.

40a. Which do you think are the main roles of local authorities?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Giving parents more say in services	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Making sure we have quality services	<input type="checkbox"/> None	

Do you have any other comments?

40b. Can you think of any other important roles for local authorities?



Yes



No



Not Sure

If yes, please tell us what they are.

Your answer:

- Making efficient provision following full identification of needs, which allows parental choices to be made
- Championing role for young people and families
- Monitoring the effectiveness of services
- LA's role should include the need to develop disability awareness

41. How can the Government help local authorities to carry out their role effectively?

Your answer:

- By having a joint policy agreement (if joint legislation is not possible) between DfE and DoH re SEND
- By having a national offer
- By building sustainability in the system and allowing initiatives to embed
- By monitoring LAs on whether they are meeting their statutory obligations with regard to SEND

42. What would be the best way to give advice to doctors to help them buy services for children and young people with **special educational needs** or a **disability**?

Your answer:

- Doctors do not have the necessary knowledge to commission services unilaterally. All services are not acute e.g. SALT
- GP consortia could be supported with a specialist 0-25 SEND commissioning board which could manage the budget and report back to GP consortia. Specialist commissioning requires specialist knowledge which GPs do not have.
- Merge existing specialist disabilities expertise and child health services into GP consortia

43. We want to measure how well health services are helping children and young people with **special educational needs** or a **disability**. What are the most important things to measure?

Your answer:

- Children's access to services, not waiting lists
- Children's progress after input/support
- Quality of life
- Outcome measures
- Reaching potential
- Integration into the community

44. How can we stop unhelpful rules and processes getting in the way of services that help children and young people with **special educational needs** or a **disability**?

Your answer:

- Having one form of assessment from birth that is regularly reviewed and used to access all targeted services with no separate referral forms
- Having children's services that encompass all aspects of support for SEN under the one umbrella
- Provide more national exemplar templates and resources so that schools and LAs are not reinventing the wheel
- Ask families what they actually want

45. What other things can we do to encourage services to work together to give better help to children?

Your answer:

- Place professionals in teams that are based together in one place
- Provide more children's community matrons to take a lead role with young disabled people with complex health care needs. This would help young disabled people move from children's acute hospitals to adult acute services.
- Transition planning

46. How can we make it easier for **local services** to work together to improve the support for children, young people and families?

Your answer:

- One employer, one management structure, one budget
- Communication
- Compatible IT systems
- Best practice case studies across LAs

47. How do you think we should give money to services so that schools are able to get advice on teaching children **with special educational needs** or a **disability** where they need it?

Your answer:

- Through a traded services model
- Funding needs to be integrated so that all aspects of SEN funding support are pooled

48. How can we let people who are in charge of services make them better for helping children and young people?

Your answer:

- Removal of bureaucracy
- Investment in staffing
- Ability to enable staff to work across NHS and LA

49. Educational psychologists help identify children with extra needs. What else can they do locally to help children with special educational needs or a disability and their families?

Your answer:

- Not just assess pupils but help schools to support and carry out appropriate interventions for the pupils with SEN
- Sharing models of best practice across networks of schools
- Delivering training to school based staff

Examples below refer to work carried out by Child and Educational Psychologists (CEP) in Cheshire West and Chester.

Innovative ways of Increasing Parental Access

Working to increase parental access to Psychology advice and support, the CEPs are providing consultation directly to parents of children who are out of school, in early years settings or home educated. Children Centres have hosted and advertised this service. Recent feedback indicates that parents who have used the service value it and would recommend the service to other parents. This pilot is being evaluated.

Innovative ways of Supporting Children and Young People

In order to offer more therapeutic support and intervention for children, young people and their families, Psychologists have delivered intervention and training around therapeutic approaches such as; Family, Narrative and Cognitive Behavioural Therapies. Two Psychologists are running a 12 week course around Family Therapy and two other Psychologists are running a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) course for two clusters of schools. Together with a Pastoral Manager, one Psychologist has planned and delivered a CBT based group intervention at a high school; evaluation of this intervention demonstrated positive impact on pupils' attitudes towards school. This demonstrates an innovative application of CBT, which is normally an individual based intervention commonly implemented in clinical settings. This piece of work is being submitted by the Psychologist for publication.

The Nurturing Programme is a ten week group based parenting programme aimed at parents of children aged between 2-11 years. The programme is founded on a broad range of psychological approaches and is an evidence based group intervention which has reported positive outcomes in developing attitudinal change in parents. In a pilot, Child and Educational Psychologists will be assessing the impact of the programme on local parents using qualitative and quantitative data. It is hoped this will demonstrate that the Nurturing Programme has a positive impact on parental well being and achieves measurable positive change in children's key behaviours.

Innovative use of Research Skills

Psychologists are trained in research and scientific method. As such, several pieces of research have been completed by Psychologists on behalf of the authority. One Psychologist is currently evaluating the effects of preparing Year 6 children for transition to high school; this is a longitudinal study using both

qualitative and quantitative data to measure impact.

Innovative ways of Working Preventatively

Working with early year's settings and within a multi-agency model, Psychologists have been active in improving early identification of children's SEN and in ensuring that intervention is put in place both appropriately and timely. This has involved setting up a process whereby Early Years Consultants have access to regular consultation with a link CEP. These consultations are attended by Pediatricians, pre-school staff and parents where appropriate in order to ensure a joined up approach to supporting the child.

Innovative Projects

Three Psychologists played a key role in the local Targeted Mental Health in School's project (TAMHS); this involved working closely with CAMHS to devise innovative ways of supporting schools around children and young people's mental health. 16 schools received 3 levels of training co-run by the CEP Service and CAMHS, and each school received joint consultation on a regular basis. The Psychologists also played a key role in a number of sub-projects, including rolling out and evaluating the impact of, the Group SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) intervention. The service was involved at a strategic level of the project, through input at the TAMHS Board and Operational groups. Following very positive evaluations, this project has fed into the local authority's ongoing emotional health and wellbeing strategy.

CEPs have led on promoting Primary SEAL which is an innovative whole school curriculum aimed at promoting emotional literacy skills across whole school communities. In particular, Child and Educational Psychologists took on the 'Lead Professional for Primary SEAL' role in the authority. This involved setting up and supporting 7 networks of schools to implement and deliver joint work around SEAL, offering regular capacity building days around using SEAL and overseeing projects run by schools. The service has been in close liaison with the Regional National Strategies Advisor to ensure that local and national information has fed into the promotion of SEAL.

As part of the Local Authority steering group, one CEP is facilitating the Young Anti-Bullying Alliance (YABA) group. Termly meetings take place where representatives from CWaC secondary schools share their views around bullying and share good practice. Each meeting is attended by two student representatives and a member of school staff. Through regular YABA meetings, schools have identified their short and long term development needs. The Psychologist is supporting the Safeguarding Children in Education team, through working with schools 'causing concern' to evaluate their current anti-bullying practice and to help formulate a development plan.

Innovative ways of Facilitating Organisational Change

Three psychologists worked with two secondary schools that were merging following the closure of one school. The work carried out in the receiving school

was around training and capacity building in the special needs department and transition work with Year 6 pupils in the feeder primary schools. The psychologist working in the closing school was involved in a programme supporting the emotional wellbeing of staff and pupils. Feedback indicates that pupils settled into the new school generally well. This piece of work has been submitted for publication by the psychologist.

CEPs have supported high schools to find innovative ways of supporting young people with additional needs through the planning and setting up of 'Inclusion Resource Provisions'. For example, one CEP facilitated a team of teachers to develop a shared vision and action plan around setting up their provision.

Non-Statutory Work

In addition to work around Statutory Assessment, CEPs: contribute to the 'Common Assessment Framework' and 'Child Protection' process through case work involvement, support Adoption Panels, have a role in the 'Critical Incident Team' and deliver training to settings, parents and practitioners around a wide area of SEN and interventions. Training delivered has been around topics such as: Attachment, Autism, 'ADHD', Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Precision Teaching, Behaviour, Mental Health, Emotional Literacy, mentor skills and therapeutic techniques.

50. How will the way educational psychologists work change to meet local need?

Your answer:

- Supporting schools in the identification of SEND at an early stage and contributing to the intervention response in a Team Around the School model
- Working more with parents/carers in advising on appropriate strategies, e.g. with CYP with BESD
- Training for schools
- Joint assessments with other professionals

- Local needs should be clearly identified (e.g. through audit) and CEPs skills should be clearly identified. There is a need to establish what interventions require the specific expertise of a psychologist and how that role relates to other practitioners to inform the design of provision locally. CEPs can then be assigned to meet local needs that their skills can be applied to. Decisions around this need to be made between CEPs, LAs and commissioners.

- There needs to be a shift in emphasis of CEP work towards intervention approaches with children and families and a move away from the demand of one-off assessment or requests for reports to simply secure additional funding for schools. The role of the EP as a 'gatekeeper to resources' continues to operate and is unhelpful.

- Parents should have more direct access to CEPs and not only via other stakeholders i.e. schools. Their role should be developed to work more closely with families; currently there is too much focus on working with educational settings on statutory processes. The parent needs to be seen as a 'client' as much as the school.
- The role should be developed so that there is increased emphasis/ access to more evidence based programmes of intervention for parents and pupils as well as therapeutic approaches carried out or supervised by CEPs.
- CEPs should have a key role to play in devising, monitoring and reviewing 'Education, Health and Care Plans' (EHCPs); they have the skills to assess and identify the main areas of need and areas of strength for a child and family, to identify appropriate intervention to address this, support settings and families to implement these interventions and then review the effectiveness of these interventions. CEPs have the skills to do this across a wide area of SEN and disability across ages. EPs should have a key role in planning a successful transition from childhood to adulthood and in facilitating stakeholder contributions, including the child's, in order to devise a coherent and coordinated plan.
- CEPs have the specialist skills to support children with the most complex needs and this needs be reflected in service planning and delivery. For example, CEPs should have a key focus on supporting children and families with SEN and disability, and those who are at more risk e.g. those from economically deprived areas and children who are 'Looked After' by the authority. A focus of their work should also be around supporting schools and families to prevent school exclusions.
- The Green Paper suggests approaching behaviour difficulties by identifying its underlying causes – this is an area of specialism for psychologists.
- CEPs should be involved in delivering targeted support in a way that promotes sustainability. For example, CEPs should be involved in co-planning and delivering interventions for targeted groups with other practitioners, with the implication that over time Schools and EY staff will be able to manage these interventions themselves. CEPs should play a key role in providing ongoing supervision to other practitioners implementing such interventions.
- CEPs research skills should be utilised to inform decision making around what is needed and what works locally, and ensure that programmes used are most up date and evidence based.

51. How will we need to change training for educational psychologists to help them take on their new role?

Your answer:

There is a need to develop sustainable arrangements for the initial training of Child and Educational Psychologists (CEPS). The design of future training will need to be shaped to match the development of a wider role for CEPs. Universities need to ensure that training for CEPS prepare and equip CEPs for their evolving role. We welcome the DfE review on future training arrangements.

Points for consideration:

Training arrangements

- The current doctorate training arrangements need to be more sustainable, both in terms of secure placements within Local Authority Psychology services for years 2 and 3, tuition fees, and salary arrangements. The current instability creates additional stress and pressures for trainee psychologists and therefore it would be helpful to have confirmation that Year 2 and 3 placements are either arranged or can be guaranteed prior to commencing the first year of doctoral training.
- There is ongoing uncertainty around the funding arrangements and whether some University courses will be able to continue offering their courses on a yearly basis. It is worth questioning whether we can learn anything from the clinical doctorate and the NHS. Secondly, there are also concerns around matching the yearly intake with the demand for qualified CEPs within local authorities.
- Given the proposed bursary system in operation in years 2 and 3, consideration should be given to ensuring conditions and continuity of service and the impact this may have, i.e., on annual leave arrangements, pension rights etc.
- It is also acknowledged that given the transition from a Masters to a Doctorate level course, some professionals are reluctant to pursue training in Educational Psychology due to the uncertainty and how this impacts upon financial and family arrangements. In order to capitalise on the broad range of skills and expertise it is important that the course is appealing to those professionals interested in training as a CEP.
- As the CEP role is recognised as needing to be much wider than their engagement with statutory assessments in order to deliver effective local services, this reinforces the argument that employers should assume greater responsibility for the funding of training. (Currently LAs can opt out of contributing and still recruit trainees without any penalty). The government, LAs and CEP services need to work together to secure funding for long term training of CEPs. It does not follow that this contribution must always come from LAs. Other models of organizing services such as social enterprise models are emerging and need to be explored.

Preparedness for the changing role of the CEP

- It would be highly desirable to have increased opportunities within the 3 year course to obtain recognised qualifications in a broader range of assessments and interventions, for example, parenting courses, therapeutic interventions

(i.e. CBT, therapeutic play), restorative justice training, etc.

- The work of clinical psychologists and child and educational psychologists overlaps considerably and there is need to revisit the option of having a common training route which allow psychologist to work across Health and Education settings. Our own work in the Targeted Mental health in Schools (TaMHS) project has highlighted the effectiveness of working in collaboration with Health professionals to help children and young people deal with psychological wellbeing and mental health concerns.
- It is also important to recognise that many trainee and newly qualified educational psychologists have expressed interests to work in a more therapeutic capacity with children and young people. It would be valuable to consider this within the changing role of the CEP and how this can be utilised, especially if the profession moves towards a greater community based role.
- It would be beneficial for trainee's to have opportunities to work within the extended age range of young people up to the age of 25, i.e. opportunities to have college / FE placements.
- Within the training it may be beneficial to develop greater links between practitioner psychologists i.e. those working in clinical and forensic settings, and with organisations such as CAMHS, the NSPCC and Barnardo's.
- Greater preparedness for the possibility of becoming an independent practitioner if there is not a Local Authority.
- In light of the changing context some consideration should be paid to considering what would school's commission from CEPs? If we are to become commissioned, especially in terms of responding to the needs of independent schools and academies, we need to have the skills and resources to meet these needs. How do school perceptions of the role of the CEP fit with our own values and perceptions?

52. How can we make it easier for local authorities to work together to improve services for children, young people and families?

Your answer:

- Re-establish regional networks
- Pooled budgets between LAs may enable a greater choice of services, e.g. short breaks
- Promote shared learning so that advice and guidance and resources are pooled

53. Where could joint working have greatest impact on services for children, young people and families?

Your answer:

- Sharing innovative ideas about process, e.g. assessment, transition etc. and provision, e.g. different models of providing services
- Jointly commissioning placements in independent and non-maintained provision to ensure best value
- Collaborating on developing joint provision in areas of very low incidence, e.g. sensory services
- Joint management of services, e.g. Parent Partnership
- Collaboration re commissioning of services for low incidence disability and cross border arrangements
- Resolve funding issues where a pupil lives in one LA but wants provision in a neighbouring LA

54. How can we encourage health, social care and education services to put their money together to make better services?

Your answer:

- The single assessment process may help to encourage and identify areas where services can be brought together and contributions to meeting a child's needs clearly identified
- Is it enough to rely on 'encouraging' services to pool budgets? If children's services were combined, both nationally and locally, there would be no need to pool budgets as this would be done at the beginning and all services would form part on one single management structure, thereby achieving economies of scale

55. How would a [Community Budget](#) approach help to improve services for children and young people with [special educational needs](#) or a [disability](#)?

Your answer:

- This would depend on how the priorities were decided
- More evidence of the efficacy of the Community Budget approach is needed to inform local areas of what is involved
- Would this approach have the flexibility to address not just the broader needs of a local community, for example CAMHS, to the individual specific needs of children and their families
- Given the number of people who would have to be involved, would it not lead to greater bureaucracy, not less?

56. How can we give local services more freedom in the way we pay for services for children and young people with **special educational needs** or a **disability**?

Your answer:

- Establish multi-agency boards which would determine how the joint resources should be allocated and prioritised

57. How could charities and **community organisations** make the biggest difference to improving services for children and their families? How can we make this happen?

Your answer:

- Advocacy services
- Providing respite, short breaks, after school and holiday activities, information about the assessment process, training
- Involvement in the strategic planning process of services for CYP with SEND

58. How could a **national banded framework** help local services to be made available more flexibly and help parents to understand the way money is given to services?

Your answer:

- Funding and eligibility criteria continue to cause parents distress so any funding framework would need to evidence an equitable allocation.
- It would appear that the idea of having a national banded framework would only apply to those children with severe or complex SEND. These may be in the minority of pupils within an LA who have a statement so how would this help all the other parents of pupils with less complex needs?

59. What is the best way to bring together money for services for people aged under 16 and services for people aged over 16?

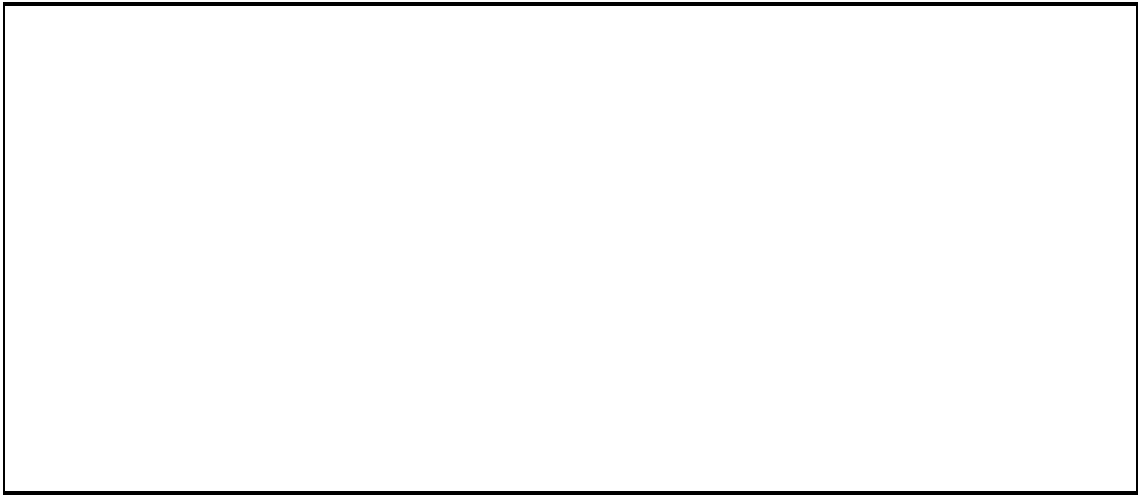
Your answer:

- Combine all relevant budgets into one to cover 0-25. This would stop any transition problems associated with, for example, young people moving to adult social services

60. Please use this space for any other comments you would like to make.

Please find attached a diagram showing all the various partners and agencies who have been consulted across the 9 local authorities which make up the Learn Together Partnership.

61. Please tell us what you think about this consultation. For example, was there the right amount of questions, were they the right type of questions, did you find it easy to understand and fill in?



Difficult words

Academies

Academies are schools that get money from the government but make their own decisions. Making their own decisions means it is easier for Academies to tackle local problems.

Alternative provision

When a child is excluded from school, they need to find other ways to learn. These different ways of learning are called alternative provision.

Apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a paid job. It involves learning new skills while you work.

Community budgets

This is a pot of money that is given to a whole community rather than individual services. The community spends the money on services that are most helpful to local people.

Consultation

This is when the government asks what people think about its plans. They also ask people for their ideas about the best way of doing things.

Community organisations

Like charities, these organisations help people in the local community. They do not make a profit for their work. For example, some community organisations help look after children with a disability while the parents take a short break.

Disability

A person with a disability has a problem with their body or mind. The problem usually lasts longer than a year. It stops the person getting on with day-to-day things like eating, walking or washing.

Education, Health and Care Plan

This is a plan for a child's education services, health services, **social care** services and employment. It will give services more responsibility for making sure that they are helping the child.

Educational psychologists

Educational psychologists are experts in how people's mind works when they are learning. They provide a wide range of help to children with **special educational needs** or a **disability**.

Free Schools

Free schools are set up by the local community and not by the Government. But they do get money from the Government. Because they are set up by local people it is easier for them to know what local children need.

Governors

A governor is a person who is part of a team that makes important decisions about how a school works.

Local authority

This is your local council. They are responsible for services like parking badges for disabled people and providing day centres for people who need extra help.

Mediation

This is when an independent person helps parents and local authorities solve their problems rather than go to court.

National Banded Framework

This splits services into different levels, depending on the type and quality of service they offer. Different levels get different amounts of money.

Performance tables

These provide information about how well children at each school are doing.

Personal budget

This is when we give parents a certain amount of money to spend on help for their child. Parents will get advice from specialist workers on what services they can spend it on.

Single assessment

In the new assessment, teachers, health workers and social workers will share responsibility for deciding if a child needs help. They will work together to decide how they can meet the child's needs.

Social care

Services that help people with day-to-day living. For example help in the home for parents of a disabled child or activities that allow children with **special educational needs** to spend time with children with similar needs.

Special educational needs

A person with special educational needs finds it harder to learn than other people the same age.

Special educational needs assessment

This is a set of tests to find out whether a child needs extra help. The **local authority** gets advice from teachers, health workers and **social care** workers.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators

These are teachers who advise their schools on the best ways to identify and help children with extra needs.

Special educational needs statement

This document says what needs a child has. It also says what help the child should get if they stay at school until they are 19.

Special school

This is a school for children with special educational needs or a disability.

Supported internship

This is when a young person gets work experience that involves some kind of help for their special educational needs or disability.

Tribunal

When parents and a **local authority** disagree, they can ask the court to decide what is right for a child. This is called a Tribunal. It is better to try **mediation** before going to a Tribunal.

Work experience

This is when young people spend time at work with adults so that they can see what it is like to do a particular job.

What to do next

Thank you for taking time to answer our questions.

Please send your answers to us **before 30 June 2011**.

You can send your response by email to:

send.greenpaper@education.gsi.gov.uk

Or you can send your answers by post to: Consultation Unit, Department for Education, Area 1C, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn WA7 2GJ.

If you would like us to tell you that we have received your answers, please tick this box.

Getting involved in future work

The Department for Education carries out lots of research and [consultations](#). Would you like to take part in future research or [consultations](#)?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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About our [consultations](#)

The Government has set rules that we have to follow when we have a [consultation](#).

- A [consultation](#) has to take place when people can really influence what the Government is going to do.
- It should last at least 12 weeks. But it should be longer when needed.
- We should be clear with people about the [consultation](#) process, what we are planning, how people can influence our plans and the expected costs and the benefits of our plans.
- People who are going to be affected by the plans should find it easy to take part in the [consultation](#).
- [Consultations](#) should be as easy as possible for people who are taking part.
- We should read all answers carefully and give feedback when a [consultation](#) is finished.
- Government workers who carry out [consultations](#) should get training in how to carry out a good [consultation](#). And they should share their experiences with other workers, so that they can learn lessons.

If you would like to tell us what you think about how we carry out our consultations, please contact:

Donna Harrison, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator

Telephone: 01928 738212

Email: donna.harrison@education.gsi.gov.uk

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

20 SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION UPDATE REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report outlines the progress made up to the 31st August 2011 in relation to implementing the areas for development identified in the Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection which was undertaken by OFSTED between 24 January and 4 February 2011.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Members are requested to note the progress made up to the 31st August 2011 in addressing the area for development identified in the Safeguarding and Looked after Children inspection

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

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

3.2 Members received a report on 1st June 2011 outlining the positive and successful outcome of the inspection by OFSTED and requested that an update report be produced outlining the progress made in addressing the areas for development outlined in the attached action plan.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 OFSTED inspected two areas of service delivery in the January/ February 2011 Inspection; Safeguarding Services and Services for Looked after Children. The inspection report provided grades and areas for development for both service areas, there were no priority actions identified. There were seven Areas for Development. An action plan was established in order to track progress against

these areas for development and also additional actions extracted from the body of the OFSTED report, which support the continuous improvement journey in order to make the transition to outstanding, in all areas. The updated action plan is provided for information as an appendix to this report.

- 4.2 Safeguarding Services overall effectiveness was rated as good, and capacity for improvement was rated as good. Four safeguarding outcomes were rated as outstanding; the contribution of health agencies to keeping children and young people safe, partnership working, leadership and management and ambition and prioritisation. All other areas were graded as good. In the Safeguarding part of the Inspection, there were three areas for development.

Within 3 months:-

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

Within 6 months:-

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

- 4.3 The first area for development “ensure the records of assessments include the risk and protective factors” had one action identified in order to ensure this occurred. This was to revise initial and core assessment practice guidance to confirm what should be included in the analysis section (action 13 in the action plan). Staff have been instructed to comply with this and further training and support is being provided to ensure this becomes embedded in practice.
- 4.4 The second area for development “keep under review the capacity of the current electronic recording arrangement to ensure it is fit for purpose” comprised four actions (actions 14 to 17). Three of these actions have been achieved within the dates provided. One, establish the post of ICS/ESCR Training / Project Manager (action 16) has been delayed and is expected to be achieved by the 15th September.
- 4.5 The third area for development “ensure all records of assessments, plans and reviews reflect a focus on the child's views and wishes and the cultural and identity needs of children and their families” has six actions associated with it (actions 18 to 23). Of these actions one action to ensure that Teams have issues around equality and diversity (identity) as a standing item on their Team Meeting agendas is complete (action 19). The other actions have been revised from the 1st September to the 30th September for completion.
- 4.6 Services for Looked after Children the inspectors rated the overall effectiveness as good and the capacity for improvement as good. The inspectors graded the ambition and prioritisation and leadership and management for looked after children as outstanding. The inspectors graded each of the outcomes for looked after children; being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving and making a positive contribution as good. Economic well-being was graded as

adequate. Four areas for development to be completed within three months were identified, these were to:-

- promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council
- ensure children's files give a clear picture of their life story and the reasons that decisions are made as well as reflecting their individual identity
- Improve further the effectiveness of strategies used to ensure that more young people complete their chosen course of study or training successfully post 16
- Improve the consistency of the quality of the personal education plans for the youngest children in care and pathway plans for care leavers

4.7 The first area for development "promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council" had one action associated with it which has been achieved (action 24), this involved devising and implementing the Children in Care Councils Communication Plan.

4.8 The second area for development "ensure children's files give a clear picture of their life story and the reasons that decisions are made as well as reflecting their individual identity" had four actions associated with it (actions 25 to 28). Of these one has been completed and provides an up to date 'Pen Picture' of the child that is to be regularly updated. The other three actions are not yet fully completed and involved the embedding of processes to ensure that case recording and decision making in relation to cases is clear. These will be completed by the 30th September.

4.9 The third area for development "Improve further the effectiveness of strategies used to ensure that more young people complete their chosen course of study or training successfully post 16", six actions were associated with this area (actions 29 to 34). Of these two (actions 29 & 30) have been completed within timescales and involved developing the skills of our foster carers in order to support the children placed with them in their studies more effectively. The other four actions (actions 31 to 34) which are due for completion by the 1st November are on track for completion by that date.

4.10 The fourth area for development "Improve the consistency of the quality of the personal education plans for the youngest children in care and pathway plans for care leavers" has four associated actions (actions 35 to 38). Of these one has been completed (action 37) which established a development plan within the Pathway Team to improve the way in which pathways plans develop the economic well being of care leavers. Action 35, re-launching the guidance for Personal Education Plans (PEP), and action 38, develop an understanding amongst Social Care staff of the framework for attainment, have had their dates revised to the 22nd September so that this coincides with a PEP workshop (action 36) that will be delivered to Social Care Staff and partners.

4.11 From the review of the text of the OFSTED letter a further 18 actions were identified (action 39 to 56). Of these, 12 actions have been complete with 5 remaining on course for completion within the initial timescales provided. One

action (action 53) which seeks to appoint an Employability Officer using ESF funding has been delayed.

- 4.12 Overall all the areas identified by OFSTED as a result of the inspection of Safeguarding Service and Services to Looked after Children have been addressed. While it is acknowledge that in some areas timescales have been revised from those provided in the 1st June report all areas will be completed.

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 the subject of legal action by the children and their parents for failing to protect them. Failing to meet the standards set by OFSTED as the regulator can lead to intervention by the Department for Education to monitor improvements or in extreme cases to direct the takeover of services by another local authority or contractor.

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

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)

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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email: matthewhumble@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION ACTION PLAN

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	1ST JUNE 2011

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

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

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

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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
12	<i>The process for transfer of cases from district assessment teams to care management teams is not yet consistently established and this impacts on the capacity of district assessment teams to carry out timely assessments. (Inspection of Contact, Referral & Assessment Processes).</i>	<i>Reinforce compliance with the Contact, Referral, Allocation and Transfer Procedure and monitor via monthly District Manager Meetings.</i>	<i>Completed 31/12/10</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager – Children & Families</i>	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
13	Ensure the records of assessments include the risk and protective factors. <i>(Inspection of Safeguarding Services AFI)</i>	Revise Initial and Core assessment practice guidance to confirm what should be included in the analysis section.	Complete 01/06/11	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	G
14	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>	<i>ICS board met and confirmed amendments to exemplar outputs for IA and CA.</i>	<i>Complete</i> <i>20/04/11</i>	<i>Head of Branch</i>	G
15		<i>ICS board set deadline of 30 June 2011 for all ICS Exemplar amendments to be made</i>	<i>Complete</i> <i>30/06/11</i>	<i>Head of Branch</i>	G
16		Establish post for ICS/ESCR Trainer / Project Manager (Fixed Term)	30/06/11 Revised to 15/09/11	Business & Performance Manager	A
17		<i>ESCR project plan to be confirmed</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Head of Branch</i>	G

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

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
24	<i>Promote awareness among all looked after children of the opportunities presented by the Children in Care Council to get their views across.(Inspection of Looked after Children Services AFI)</i>	<i>Devise and implement the Children in Care Councils Communication Plan.</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
25	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	30/06/11 Revised to 30/09/11	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	A
26		<i>Include a 'Pen Picture' at the front of the child's file (including photograph) to be reviewed and updated every 12 months.</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children and Families</i>	G
27		'Pen Pictures' to be checked and verified by the updated Audit Procedure.	30/06/11 Revised to 30/09/11	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	A
28		Provide two workshops on the recording of significant events and decision making/	30/06/11 Revised to 30/09/11	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	A

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
29	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>	<i>Develop a training programme for foster carers, providers and practitioners to equip them effectively to support more young people to complete their course of study or employment post 16.</i>	<i>Complete 01/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
30		<i>Detailed actions to improve Foster Carer Training in relation to young people's employability to be implemented.</i>	<i>Complete 30/07/11</i>	<i>Kathy Kinear</i>	G
31		Implement robust tracking and monitoring arrangements for post 16 learners.	01/11/11	Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration	A
32		Ensure that pathway plans incorporate EET actions.	01/11/11	Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration	A
33		Increase the range of employability opportunities offered by the Local Authority	01/11/11	Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration	A
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	A

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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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	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.	30/06/11 Revised to 22/09/11	Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources	A
36		PEP workshop to be delivered to Social Care Staff and partners	30/09/11	Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration	A
37		<i>Establish a development plan with the Pathway Team for improving how pathway plans develop economic wellbeing.</i>	30/06/11	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
38		Develop understanding amongst Social Care staff of the framework for attainment of children in education (e.g.: average attainment expected at KS1/KS2)	30/06/11 Revised to 22/09/11	Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration	A

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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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	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
39	<i>The scrutiny of completed common assessment records shows that children's views are at times missing or too cursory. (Safeguarding Text)</i>	<i>Review the Common Assessment training package and delivery revised training</i>	<i>Complete 30/09/11</i>	<i>CAF Quality Assurance Officer and Area Team Leaders</i>	G
40	<i>The equality and diversity needs of families were given consideration in most of the case files seen. However there were some instances in which issues of ethnic background and culture were not considered sufficiently. (Safeguarding Text)</i>	<i>Deliver the Social Care Diversity event and develop a subsequent action plan to address areas identified.</i>	<i>Complete 30/06/11</i>	<i>Strategic Service Manager Children's Resources</i>	G
41	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 August 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
42	<i>The quality of planning for children is variable. Inspectors saw examples of very good practice in planning. However in some cases seen by inspectors of chronic neglect insufficient regard had been taken of significant historical factors, leading to a delay before appropriate planning and intervention. (Safeguarding Text)</i>	<i>Include provision within the revised training plan for care planning with new regulations</i>	30/07/11	Strategic Service Manager Children and Families	G

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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.

	Areas for Development	Action	Date to be completed	Person Responsible	Progress RAG
43	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
44		<i>Improve further procedures for monitoring the performance of LAC placed out of borough and challenging where there is underperformance.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/2011</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
45		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	A
46		<i>Rigorously track and monitor the progress of LAC placed out of borough and challenge where there is underachievement.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/2011 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
47		<i>Ensuring that the educational needs of Looked after Children are identified at an early stage and that appropriate support put in place which increases levels of attainment. Support the effective co-ordination of response to pupils in difficulties.</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/2011 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G
48		<i>Monitor on a monthly basis the attendance of LAC placed out of borough</i>	<i>Complete 31/07/2011 ongoing</i>	<i>Virtual School Head and Strategic Service Manager Post 16 and Regeneration</i>	G

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

SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S ACTION PLAN August 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
55	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
56	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 August 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

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

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

20TH SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	ADOPTION SERVICE REPORT ON INSPECTION (INCLUDING 6 MONTH REPORT)
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN MCLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report provides Elected Members with information about the outcome of the announced inspection of the Wirral Adoption Service by Ofsted and an update on the work of the Adoption Service since the last report in January 2011. This is the first report and inspection since the publication of new Adoption National Minimum Standards and updated Adoption Statutory Guidance which came into force on 1st April 2011. In addition the Adoption Service is governed by the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005, the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) regulations 2003, the Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005, the Care Planning, Placement and Case review (England) Regulations 2010 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- 1.2 The overall quality rating by Ofsted for the adoption service was 'good'; with 'outstanding' for protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 That

- (1) Elected members consider the information in the report and satisfy themselves that the service is being managed effectively and that there are good outcomes for the children and young people being adopted and the adopters.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 The Adoption National Minimum Standard 25.6 requires the executive side of the local authority to :
- receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the service every 6 months,
 - monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

Ofsted Inspection

- 4.1 This report includes the outcome of the Inspection by Ofsted of the Adoption Service in June 2011. (Ofsted Inspection report in Appendix 1).
- 4.2 The inspection framework enables a judgement to be made about the quality of care provided to children, young people and where appropriate their families. The framework focuses on outcomes according to the national minimum standards. All the standards were assessed under the four outcome areas of staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and organisation.
- 4.3 Individual judgements were made as follows:

Overall quality:	Good
Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe	Outstanding
Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do	Good
Helping children make a positive contribution	Good
Organisation	Good

- 4.4 The inspector's comments in her report is that the outcomes for children are good and that safeguarding practice is outstanding, with adoption being considered at a very early stage of proceedings and that children are protected throughout their journey to adoption. Also that adopters and birth families receive good support from the service. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection in 2008 where the service was judged to be satisfactory with some good aspects. In this inspection the inspector made 3 recommendations to make improvements which compares with the last inspection where there were 2 statutory requirements that were judged as not being met that required immediate action and 9 recommendations for improvements.
- 4.5 There were good comments about the views and opinions of children being sought and listened to throughout the journey of adoption, including respecting the children's links with their family of origin. Some of the comments from young people were:

"I asked for a nice mum and they got me a nice Mummy. They listened to me when I said can I change my name". "

“Yes I will sort it out for you and they did” about re-establishing contact with siblings.

- 4.6 Children’s needs were also identified as being at the centre of the process for approving potential adopters. Adopters also commented about how well they were supported through the process saying:

“we felt that the picture painted by social workers of the adoption process was well-balanced and they clearly laid out the benefits and challenges of the process”

“we enjoyed the assessment process because it helped us to dig deeper and really think about things”.

- 4.7 The management of the service received good comments and in particular recognised that senior management work to ensure that children do not experience undue delay in being placed for adoption. Also that the service works well with partners, especially the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). The report provides a quote from a stakeholder who noted that

“there is no greater champion for adopted children” about the Adoption Service Manager.

- 4.8 The inspection did identify some areas where improvements could be made and made the following recommendations to improve the quality and standards of care further:

- Actively seek and ensure that in every case children’s wishes and feelings are taken fully into account at all stages of the adoption process (NMS1)
- Ensure adoption panel makes a considered recommendation in each and every case (NMS17.6 – 17.7)
- Address promptly any issues raised by monitoring (NMS 25.2)

Further information about the reasons for this recommendation and the proposed actions to be taken are detailed below.

Child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account

- 4.9 Adoptive parents are given the child’s permanence report which contains important information which will be of benefit to the child in later life. Whilst the inspector recognised that children’s interests were served well with a general overview of child’s experiences in the child permanence reports she did find inconsistency in the way that children’s views are incorporated into the reports. However the evidence from the inspection demonstrated that actions and recommendations from the previous inspection for ensuring that child permanence reports and children’s case records complied with regulations had been met.

4.10 The Adoption Service is addressing the need for children's wishes and feelings being taken into account by practitioner training. A one day training course 'Adoption from the beginning' for social work practitioners is to be included as part of the annual training programme and a lunchtime briefing open to all social care staff is being organised on how to complete a child permanence report. Both are scheduled to take place this autumn.

Adoption Panels

4.11 The Adoption Panel is a group of people who are independent of the adoption process and the composition is stipulated by regulation. The Panel makes recommendations to the Adoption Agency Decision Maker (for Wirral this is the Head of Branch for Children's Social Care) on whether a child is placed for adoption, the suitability of individuals to be adopters, and whether a child should be placed with a specific adopter (called 'matching'). The inspector found that adoption panel protected children by ensuring that only those who are suitable to adopt are recommended for approval and that matching is carefully considered. However there appeared to be some inconsistency in the way the adoption panel made considered recommendations in each case which would have an impact on children later in life being able to fully understand how decisions were made.

4.12 The Adoption Service has ensured that in future all minutes of adoption panels will record all required information and actions for each case considered at the meeting. This will also be further discussed at the next Adoption Panel development day to ensure that each case receives a full discussion at panel.

Monitoring

4.13 The Adoption Service has good processes in place to monitor the journey of individual children through to adoption and to minimise any delay. There are also effective quality assurance systems in place to ensure consistency in the quality of child permanence reports and that the voice of the child is captured. However the identified changes in practice required to make improvements are not always implemented in a timely fashion.

4.14 Further improvements in practice are to be addressed through ensuring that managers within the district social work teams will take responsibility for monitoring the quality of child permanence reports. Currently the Looked After Children Service Manager quality assures all reports to the adoption panel in their role as agency advisor. Whilst feedback is provided a more formal feedback form is being established to support this process.

Performance Information 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 and from 1st April 2011 to 31st July 2011)

4.15 In addition this report provides the 6 monthly performance information about the numbers of prospective families approved by the adoption panel, the number of children placed for adoption and the number of adoption orders granted, the time taken to approve prospective adoptive families and the timeliness of placing children with an adoptive family once they have had a 'should be placed

for adoption' recommendation from the Adoption Panel. Whilst the time period for the report is 1st January 2011 to 30th June 2011, information is collated for the year 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 and from 1st April 2011 to date. Therefore the information is presented in this report for the two time periods.

Approval of Prospective Adoptive Families

4.16 Last year (1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011) 18 prospective adopters were recommended for approval as suitable to adopt by the Adoption Panel.

4.17 For this year (1st April 2011 to 31st July 2011) 7 prospective adopters were recommended for approval as suitable to adopt by the Adoption Panel.

Matching children with adopters

4.18 The Wirral Adoption Service continues to ensure that children with a plan for adoption are matched with adoptive families approved by Wirral Adoption Service. Between 1st April 2010 and 31st March 2011 19 children were matched with prospective adopters, and 15 were matched with adopters approved by Wirral Adoption Service. From 1st April 2011 to 31st July 2011 2 children were matched with prospective adopters, and 1 child was matched with adopters approved by Wirral Adoption Service.

4.19 Those children who were not placed with adopters from Wirral Adoption Service were mainly placed through Adoption 22, which is consortium of adoption agencies in the Northwest.

The reasons for placing children outside Wirral are always based on the needs of the individual children. For one sibling group there was a need to place the children outside Wirral for safeguarding reasons and for another sibling group the adopters chosen were best suited to actively promote the children's non white British heritage.

Children who were adopted

4.20 Last year (1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011) 24 children were adopted. For the early part of this year (1st April 2011 to 31st July 2011) 7 children have been adopted so far (one further adopted in August). There were a further 13 children lodged with the courts for adoption as of 31st July 2011, and 7 children are placed with prospective adopters but not lodged, and a further 27 children where the adoption panel have recommended that they should be placed for adoption.

4.21 As a local authority we are measured on the timeliness for adoptions NI 61¹ which measures the percentage of looked after children who have been adopted where they have been placed for adoption within twelve months of having a 'should be placed for adoption' decision and our target is 80%. In the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011 the percentage was 70.6% which is a

¹ NI 61 National Indicator: Percentage of looked after children adopted during the year who were placed for adoption within 12 months of the agency deciding that the child should be placed for adoption

poorer performance than the previous year 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010 when it was 87.5%. This is accounted for by a small number of children (5 out of 21) where there have been particular issues that delayed the placement for adoption progressing. For the period 1st April 11 to 31st July 2011 of the 7 that have been adopted, 3 have been placed for adoption within twelve months of having a 'should be placed for adoption' decision.

- 4.22 The delays in placing children are for a variety of reasons which include a breakdown in introductions, securing a suitable match for sibling group where there is a significant age gap, ethnicity of a sibling group, developmental uncertainty of one sibling, and an appeal by a birth parent.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 It is important that Wirral Council has an adoption service that is able to recruit, prepare, assess and approve prospective adopters that meet the needs of children that are in the care of the local authority where there is a plan for adoption. The inspection demonstrates that the service meets the requirements of the regulations and national minimum standards and in particular ensures the safety of children during the adoption process. The areas for improvement have been detailed above and the progress on the identified actions will be monitored through an Adoption Task Force. In addition the service recognises that there are further improvements needed in the recruitment of prospective adopters from diverse backgrounds. This is being addressed as an important element of the Looked After Children Change Programme which seeks to reduce, where safe, the number of children in care.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 There are no proposals for consideration in this report, therefore there are no other options to consider.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 During the inspection, questionnaires were sent to children and young people, social workers in adoption and district teams, birth parents and adopters for direct return to Ofsted. The inspector held focus groups with adoption workers, placing social workers and interviewed a district practice manager and an Independent Reviewing Officer. In addition the views of adopters and birth parents were sought directly by telephone conversation. The inspector also met with managers and senior managers of the service as part of the inspection. All of this consultation informed the final outcome of the inspection.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 None required in relation to this report, other than to note that a Voluntary Agency provides support to birth families and adults seeking information about their birth family.

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

- 9.1 The Adoption and Permanence Team has a total budget of £1,586,700 for 2011-12.

Within this total it is likely that the budget for Adoption Allowances of £599,600 will overspend in the current year by £400,000. This reflects both increases in the number of children who are adopted and increases in the number of allowances paid. In addition there are increased financial pressures arising from the payment of legal fees.

The budget for the Adoption Service should become more sustainable in the medium term as plans to safely reduce Looked After Children costs are achieved through the LAC Strategic Change Project.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The inspection judged that the promotion of equality and diversity is good. The inspector commented that 'children benefit from intervention which helps them to make sense of their identity and experience' and that 'staff are well informed about the diverse range of the children and adopters they serve'.

11.2 An Equality Impact Assessment for Wirral's Permanency Policy was completed in February 2008. As this report has no recommendation for policy change there is no requirement for a new EIA.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications in relation to this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Adoption offers children the opportunity for permanence and to grow up within a family, thus reducing the risk of anti-social behaviour.

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APPENDICES

Adoption Service Ofsted Inspection report 8/6/2011

REFERENCE MATERIAL

[Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011](#)
[Adoption Statutory Guidance](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	26 th January 2011
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2 nd June 2010
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	17 September 2009
Children's Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	16 March 2009
Children's Services and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11 November 2008

Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Adoption Service

Inspection report for LA Adoption Agency

Unique reference number	SC059886
Inspection date	08/06/2011
Inspector	Stella Henderson
Type of inspection	Key

Setting address	Conway Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH42 4DD
Telephone number	0151 666 4696
Email	
Registered person	Wirral Borough Council
Registered manager	Sue Leedham
Responsible individual	David Armstrong
Date of last inspection	01/09/2008

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Wirral's adoption service undertakes all statutory responsibilities associated with current legislation and regulations. These duties include the recruitment, preparation, assessment and approval of domestic adopters, placement support and some post adoption support. Contractual arrangements are in place for the assessment of inter-country adopters and for support for people affected by adoption.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

The purpose of this visit was to follow up on requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection and to undertake a full announced inspection. All the standards were assessed under the four outcome areas of staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and organisation.

Outcomes for children are good and safeguarding practice is outstanding. Adoption is considered at a very early stage of proceedings and children are protected throughout their journey to adoption. Management of the agency is good and senior management are concerned to ensure that children do not experience undue delay in being placed for adoption. There is good support for adopters and birth families and the agency works well with partner agencies, particularly the children and adolescent mental health service.

The agency fulfils its Statement of Purpose and commitments made to children in the children's guide. Some areas of practice are inconsistent however. For example, the agency ensures that children are given opportunities to express their views throughout the adoption process, but these views are not always captured in their child permanence reports.

Adoption panel is well established and its individual members bring a range of expertise and experience to approval and matching processes. Improvement is needed to ensure a considered recommendation is made in each and every case presented, even if these appear straightforward.

Quality assurance systems are in place to monitor and improve the service that children, adopters and their birth parents receive, but plans to address shortfalls are not implemented in a timely fashion.

Improvements since the last inspection

Two actions were set at the last inspection. These related to ensuring that the content of Child Permanence Reports and children's case records complied with these regulations. Recommendations were also raised to improve practice on procedural and recording issues.

Evidence from this inspection demonstrates that these actions and recommendations have been met.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children's safety and well-being is given priority and is consistently promoted throughout their journey to adoption. This is achieved by the implementation of range of highly effective safeguarding measures and sustained good practice. Well-established systems are in place which means children are protected in the case of any allegation against their carers. Oversight from social worker visits and statutory reviews ensure that any safeguarding needs, in the widest sense, are identified and addressed. Children know what to do if they have concerns. One young person commented that they knew what to do if they were unhappy with the service 'because I ask if I can have a private word with them when I am not happy and they say 'yes of course you can'.

Children benefit enormously from the importance the agency attaches to their emotional health and well-being. Children and adolescent mental health service(CAMHS) are contracted to provide services specifically to the adoption agency. A Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist is personally involved at all stages of the adoption process which adds a valuable therapeutic dimension to the assessment, intervention and support for children. This has a significant impact on outcomes for children and constitutes a life-long protective factor in itself. It enables children's specific psychological and emotional needs to be assessed and helps to provide individually tailored plans. This helps children to develop secure attachments to their adoptive parents.

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services also offer dedicated and highly effective support to adoptive parents. This helps them understand matters of attachment and the psychological needs of their children, enabling them to better manage their children's behaviour. One adopter noted 'we had support from the CAMHS team which was extremely helpful'. An important contribution is also made by the Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist to adoption assessments,

support to staff, panel meetings and post-adoption services.

Children are successfully matched with their adoptive parents, and the movement to their adoptive placements is managed well. This is a real strength of the agency and the very low disruption rate indicates that children are appropriately matched with their adoptive parents. Foster carers play an important role in this process. One adopter confirmed that the child's transition from the foster home had been managed 'really well' and that the foster carer had given 'really excellent support and advice'. Another adopter noted 'we really felt the child's needs were paramount and that they understood what makes for a smooth transition'.

The majority of children are matched with adopters within the area of the local authority, but use is made of other sources to find the right adoptive parents for the child. One adopter said that they were 'made aware of the national register and other databases to increase our potential for a match'.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children make a positive start to their adoptive placements because good quality information about their health, behaviour and family background is provided. A second time adopter noted that 'in both cases we were able to see the child permanence report and had full family background on both our children. We were also able to access all medical information'. This helps children to be cared for safely by their adoptive parents.

Children experience effective personal support which enables them to fulfil their learning potential. Adoptive parents are helped to understand how early experiences can impact on children's emotional resilience and ability to learn. Children benefit from specialist support for language and development, and the Looked after children education service ensures that there is effective liaison with education providers across all the key learning stages.

Children enjoy access to a good range of activities which enhances their social wellbeing and helps to increase their confidence, self esteem and social skills. Engagement in the local and wider community is well established to reflect personal preferences and broaden experiences. These range from mainstream sports and leisure activities such as football, dancing and swimming, to specialist resources for adopted children and young people such as a dedicated youth club. One young person noted 'I went to a youth club which was for anyone who was adopted. We never talked about being adopted but we knew if we wanted to there was always someone to talk to. It was great fun'.

Children are given every chance to bond and settle into their 'forever family' because of effective adoption support. This is a strength of the service and is apparent at every stage of the child's journey to adoption. This process begins with excellent and selfless work from foster carers who prepare children for adoption. They and

staff provide parents with valuable encouragement and advice. One adopter noted that 'the foster carer was there every day on the phone advising us to try different things which was very helpful'.

Children continue to benefit from the post-adoption support of CAMHS. One young person noted in their survey that 'Mum has been supported by the CAMHS team and has received further excellent advice from post-adoption support. This continues to be very helpful.'

Children and their adoptive parents are also assisted through adoption support groups, a well-regarded tots group and drop in surgery. There are on-going events throughout the year and a regular adoption newsletter. One young person noted 'I enjoy reading the newsletter and have even entered some of the competitions'. One adopter noted that 'we are delighted with the support we have been given. They understand our needs as a family and genuinely care about how we are getting on'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are regularly consulted for their views and opinions at various points throughout their journey to adoption, and things change as a result of this. Children confirm that their wishes and feelings are listened to and acted upon. One young person noted that 'I asked for a nice mum and they got me a nice Mummy. They listened to me when I said can they change my name'. Another young person commented that the service listened to what they had to say about re-establishing contact with siblings. 'They said, 'yes I will try to sort it out for you' and they did.'

Children are also able to make their opinions known through the statutory review process and at a corporate level. For example, adopted children wanted the age range of their youth club to be lowered and this was arranged. Adopted children are also able to make their views known through the Children in Care Council. This helps children to feel valued.

Children's interests are served well because in general their child permanence reports contain important information which provides their adoptive parents with a good overview of their child's experiences and which will be of benefit to children in later lives. There is inconsistency however in incorporating children's views into their child permanence reports and a recommendation is set to improve practice in this area.

Children's links with their family of origin is respected. Birth parents and birth relatives are given every opportunity to be included in plans for their children and birth parent's wishes are acted upon where it is appropriate to do so. Adoptive parents are supported to maintain contact arrangements. One adopter noted 'We've been supported by the social worker in writing our first letter to the birth family. She gave us a framework which made the task easier'.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's needs are at the centre of a process which is designed to move them quickly to their adoptive placements. The use of a future basing tool ensures that the adoption manager is alert to children who will need adoptive placements. This enables the agency to recruit an appropriate number and type of adopter to meet the needs of children.

The preparation and assessment of adopters is thorough and well organised. Prospective adopter reports are clear and evaluative in nature and the input of the Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist plays an important role in this process. For example staff have been trained to undertake attachment style interviews, and additional therapeutic interviews can be undertaken if required to assess the suitability of adopters.

Children's needs form the basis of preparation training. One adopter commented that 'we felt that the picture painted by social workers of the adoption process was well-balanced and they clearly laid out the benefits and challenges of the process.' Another adopter said 'we enjoyed the assessment process because it helped us to dig deeper and really think about things.'

Children experience successful outcomes because they and their adoptive parents are supported by staff who have a wide repertoire of skills and knowledge. Adopters and children confirm that they receive a good service from staff who are courteous, respectful and who communicate well. One young person noted that the adoption service 'was very friendly. I was always happy to see them and I felt very comfortable with them'. An adopter commented 'we experienced an excellent service from committed professionals'.

The adoption team manager provides clear leadership and support to the team. One stakeholder noted that 'there is no greater champion for adopted children'. Children benefit because of the manager makes it her business to keep in touch with them either by telephone or through the adopted children's youth club, as well as through more formal means. One young person noted that 'I know I could get help from Sue Leedham if I needed to'.

Children's journey to adoption is well-monitored. Early decisions on permanence and effective systems to track children through the system ensures they do not experience undue delay. Quality assurance at all stages of the adoption process is effective in helping to identify shortfalls as consistency in the quality of child

permanence plans and capturing the voice of the child. Plans to change practice in these areas are not implemented in a timely fashion however and a recommendation is raised to drive forward further improvement in this area.

Children are protected because the adoption panel ensures that only those who are suitable to adopt are recommended for approval. Matching is carefully considered and the panel provides useful feedback on the quality of reports and other matters. There is some inconsistency in the extent to which adoption panel makes a considered recommendation in each and every case however. This limits children's ability in later life to fully understand the decisions made about their lives.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Children benefit from intervention which helps them to make sense of their identity and experience. Staff are well-informed about the diverse range of the children and adopters they serve. The agency's recruitment strategy is targeted at a wide range of community groups in order to better meet the unique and individual needs of children.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- actively seek and ensure that in every case children's wishes and feelings are taken fully into account at all stages of the adoption process (NMS 1)
- ensure adoption panel makes a considered recommendation in each and every case (NMS 17.6 - 17.7)
- address promptly any issues raised by monitoring. (NMS 25.2)

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

20TH SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION – CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANN McLACHLAN
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members, in accordance with the Constitution of the Council, of those instances where delegated authority has been used by the 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.

Capital Contracts

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

Date	Scheme Details	Contractor	Amount
22/2/11	Pensby Park Co-location office	North West Construction	£278,849 (£47,404 fees)
10/3/11	Cathcart Street Primary	Mac Roofing	£160,000 (£18,400 fees)
10/3/11	Cathcart Street Primary	JPF Systems	£57,700
6/5/11	Rosclare Children's Home	Globe Manage Services	£472,510
6/5/11	Rosclare Children's Home	Studio 3 Architects	£79,618
1/6/11	Woodchurch High Engineering Block	Whitfield & Brown	£258,606.18 (£38,000 fees)
31/7/11	Well Lane, co-location office	Whitfield & Brown	£94,574.19 (£16,077 fees)

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.

2011/12 Out of Authority Placements				
Start Date	School	Ref		Cost
23/05/11	Olsen House School	AW		£57201
24/05/11	Olsen House School	LO		£57201
07/07/11	Whinfell School	GE		£195000
01/09/11	St Mary's School	AW		£59400

Children's Residential Care Placements

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

Start Date	Provider	Swift Reference	Annual Projected Cost
28/04/11	Good Foundations	47475	£118560
12/05/11	Keys Child Care	183241	£130000
23/06/11	SCS Kinder	70142	£166400
07/07/11	Inspire Children's Services	170045	£130000
22/07/11	Crystal Care Solutions	68353	£202540
25/07/11	Good Foundations	134795	£118560
03/08/11	New Pathways	431918	£144351

10/08/11	Milestones	31294	£106030
12/08/11	Inspire Children's Services	416333	£143000
16/08/11	Keys Care	178615	£166400

Contracts for Provision of Services for Children's Centres

Parental Mental Health Project – Contract with Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Trust - £110000

Wirral Children's Centres have an ongoing agreement with Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Trust known as CHICC which provides additional support for parents with mental health issues through specialist parenting programmes with childcare support. This contract has been in place for approximately 9 years in different formats and has been recently reduced in size by 50% as a first step towards it being commissioned under the Joint Commissioning Framework in 2012. The Contract is from 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012. The funding has been allocated from the Early Intervention Grant as part of the Children's Centre's service delivery for parents for children under the age of 5 years.

Home Safety Equipment Scheme –Contract with Mersey Fire Network - £50000

During 2010, Wirral Children's Centres established a Home Safety Equipment Scheme which includes a home safety assessment and safety equipment both supplied and fitted in the home for families in receipt of income related benefits. This was funded through central government funding and administered by RoSPA. Due to success of the scheme (accident figures have dropped and Children's Centre registration figures have risen) a contract has been agreed to continue the work for a further year until 31st March 2012. The funding has been allocated from the Early Intervention Grant as part of the Children's Centre's service delivery plan. A full evaluation of the scheme will be completed as part of the future planning for this service.

Transport to Wirral Swimming Pools – Contract with Al's Coaches Ltd - £149820

Through the Council procurement process the Department procures transport to six Wirral swimming pools for schools. The contract has been let for one year September 2011 - July 2012 with an optional extension of one year. The cost of the contract is charged directly to schools at a charge per trip by the contractor.

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

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

Council Meeting	Date
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	1 st June 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	15 th March 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	26 th JANUARY 2011
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	14 th SEPTEMBER 2010
CYPD OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	2 nd JUNE 2010

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UPDATE ON WORK PROGRAMME : CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20/09/11

Reports to assist in monitoring the Committee's work programme

It was agreed by the Scrutiny Chairs Group in September 2008 to use the following reports to monitor the work programme for each Scrutiny Committee. The last item on each Scrutiny Committee agenda should be 'Review of the Committee Work Programme'.

Report 1 - Monitoring Report for Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

This report will list all items that have been selected by the Committee for inclusion on the work programme for the current year.

It will also include items, such as previous Panel Reviews, where recommendations have been made to Cabinet. It is important that the implementation of these recommendations is monitored. Otherwise there is no measure of the success of scrutiny.

For each item on the work programme, the report will give a description, an indication of how the item will be dealt with, a relative timescale for the work and brief comments on progress.

Report 2 - Suggestions for Additions to Work Programme

The Work Programme for the Committee should be reviewed at each meeting. This will enable members to ask for new Items to be added to the programme. This report will list any newly suggested items. Committee will then have the opportunity to agree (or not) for them to be added to the programme.

Report 3 - Proposed Outline Meeting Schedule for the Municipal Year

The report will, for each scheduled Committee meeting, list those items which are likely to be on the meeting agenda. This will give the opportunity for Committee members to take a greater lead in organising their work programme.

Report 4 - Progress Report on In-Depth Panel Reviews

This report will give a very brief update on progress / timescales for in-depth panel reviews which are in the 'ownership' of the Committee.

REPORT 1
MONITORING REPORT FOR SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE: 2011 / 2012

Date of New item	Topic Description	How the topic will be dealt with	Estimated Complete Date	Comments on Progress	Complete?
1/06/11	Progress on Oaklands Residential	Report to Committee	Nov 11	This item was proposed by members for inclusion on the work programme at the committee meeting on 01/06/11	
1/06/11	Early Intervention Grants – ‘Outcome of Commissioning’ – lessons learnt	Report to Committee	Nov 11	This item was proposed by members for inclusion on the work programme at the committee meeting on 01/06/11	
1/06/11	Planning for 2012 Youth Parliament	Report to Committee	Nov 11	This item was proposed by members for inclusion on the work programme at the committee meeting on 01/06/11	
01/06/11	Green Paper on SEN – Authority’s response	Report to Committee	Sept 11	This item was proposed by members for inclusion on the work programme at the committee meeting on 01/06/11.	
01/06/11	Literacy Scrutiny Review – recommendations and progress review	Report to Committee	Nov 11	This item was proposed by members for inclusion on the work programme at the committee meeting on 01/06/11.	

REPORT 2
SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONS TO WORK PROGRAMME
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20/09/11

Topic Description	Topic suggested by	How the topic will be dealt with	Estimated Completion Date

REPORT 3
PROPOSED OUTLINE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE: 2011 / 2012

Meeting Date	Topic Description
20/09/11	Budget – Key Issues Department Restructure Performance & Financial Monitoring Q1 SEN Green Paper Safeguarding & LAC Insp Report Action Plan update Child Poverty Strategy – Action Plan Adoption Inspection School Annual Performance
16/11/11	Performance & Financial Monitoring Q2 Literacy Review – recommendations and progress report YSAC 2012 Youth Parliament planning report Child Poverty Strategy – Action Plan Oaklands Planning Secondary School Places EIG & Commissioning – lessons learnt Secondary Schools Places - Demographic update
26/01/11	Scheme of Delegation Child Poverty Strategy – Action plan
21/03/12	Performance & Financial Monitoring Q3 Approved Scheme of Delegation Child Poverty Strategy – Action Plan

REPORT 4
PROGRESS REPORT ON IN-DEPTH PANEL REVIEWS
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20/09/11

Title of Review	Members of Panel	Progress to Date	Date Due to report to Committee

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0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 26 July 2011

Present: Councillor S Clarke (Chair)

Councillors T Smith
P Williams
Mrs J Kearney

In attendance:

Apologies Mr A Scott

35 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Members of the Sub Committee 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 the interest.

No such declarations were made.

36 SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

Stuart Bellerby, Strategic Service Manager, Secondary & Lifelong Learning, reported that there were no secondary schools reported in OFSTED categories.

37 SECONDARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS APRIL 2011 - JUNE 2011

Stuart Bellerby, Strategic Service Manager, Secondary & Lifelong Learning, reported upon Prenton High School for Girls which had been inspected in May 2011. He noted the main findings of the inspection and reported that the overall effectiveness of the school was outstanding.

Recommended – That the report be noted and the Sub-Committee offers its congratulations to the school for this result.

38 PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES

Sue Talbot, Strategic Service Manager, Early Years & Primary Education, Learning & Achievement, reported on the three Primary Schools that had been in special measures, Manor Primary, Heygarth and, Well Lane. It was noted that Manor Primary had been set targets for improvement, Heygarth had received a good with good capacity to improve inspection including 2 outstanding judgements and Well Lane had received good with 10 outstanding judgements.

Recommended – That the reports be noted and the Sub-Committee record its thanks to the Learning and Achievement Branch – Primary Team for the hard work and support to the schools concerned.

39 **PRIMARY SCHOOLS OFSTED INSPECTIONS APRIL 2011 - JUNE 2011.**

Members of the Sub Committee received a summary of the outcomes of recent OFSTED inspections of primary schools. The various schools had been graded as follows:

Satisfactory Schools

Bedford Drive Primary School

Good Schools

Lingham Primary School
Rock Ferry Primary School
Leasowe Primary School
New Brighton Primary School
Well Lane Primary School
Mendell Primary School
Barnston Primary School
Heygarth Primary School
Thingwall Primary School

Outstanding Schools

Liscard Primary School
St Georges

Members commented upon each school in turn and Sue Talbot commented upon recent progress at the schools.

Recommended – That the reports be noted and the sub-committee record its thanks to the Learning and Achievement Branch – Primary Team for their hard work and support.

40 **SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES**

Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch Learning and Achievement, reported that there were no special schools in OFSTED categories.

41 **SPECIAL SCHOOLS OFSTED INSPECTIONS APR 2011- JUN 2011**

Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch Learning and Achievement, reported that no special schools had received OFSTED inspections in this period.

42 **EARLY YEARS CENTRES & CHILDRENS CENTRES OFSTED INSPECTIONS APR - JUN 2011**

The members received a summary of the outcome of recent OFSTED inspections of Brentwood Early Years Centre and Liscard Children's Centre. The outcomes in the case of both schools had been graded as good in overall effectiveness.

Recommended – That the reports be noted.

43 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Recommended – That the next meeting of the 0 - 19 School Standards Sub-Committee be held on Wednesday, 7 December, 2011.

44 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair noted to members of the Sub-Committee that she had been contacted by Pam Lee, Administrative Officer - Governor Support, who reported that Rock Ferry Primary School had now reconstituted its Governing Body and wanted 4 Local Authority Governors (previously had 3 Lab Governors). Mount Primary also required another Lab Governor.

Recommended – That nominations for the above Governing Body members be sought.

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