

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 12 November 2012

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	W Clements (Chair)	
	Councillors	J Crabtree D Dodd P Hayes B Mooney C Povall	W Smith P Williams
<u>Co-opted:</u>		Mrs J Owens Mrs N Smith Mr A Scott	
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillor	P Doughty	

37 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

Members of the Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non pecuniary interests, in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and state the nature of the 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 any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor Jim Crabtree declared a non pecuniary interest in Minute 40 post by virtue of his employment with the Vocational College and Minute 43 post by virtue of being a foster carer.

38 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 September, 2012.

Resolved – Subject to the following amendment of Minute 20;

“Mrs Jane Owens declared a non pecuniary interest in Minute 26 post by virtue of her work for Social Enterprise.”

That the minutes of the meeting of 11 September, 2012 be approved as a correct record.

39 2012/13 QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Acting Director of Children's Services reported upon the performance of the Council's Corporate Plan 2012-13 and Departmental Plan 2012-13 for July 2012 - September 2012, in relation to children and young people. She provided members with an overview of performance, resources and risk monitoring.

For Quarter two 2012/13 there were 37 performance indicators that could be reported upon, of these 70% were achieving or exceeding their target. The report gave details of the corrective action being taken for those indicators missing their target.

The Acting Director of Children's Services further reported that pressures of £4.4 million had been identified by the Children and Young People's Department. The main areas of pressure related to looked after children including residential placements and foster care allowances and home to school transport. Numbers of children in care continued to remain high compared to similar Councils. Budgetary control measures were in place and expenditure was closely monitored.

Nancy Clarkson, Strategic Service Manager Infrastructure, commented on the report and responded to Members questions.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

40 **2012 POST 16 ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESSION**

The Acting Director of Children's Services reported upon an analysis of how well Wirral resident young people aged between 16 and 18 achieved post 16. The report detailed how well young people performed post 16 across all education sectors including:-

- i. school / academy sixth form provision (2011/12 academic year data),
- ii. Wirral further education provision (2010/11 academic year data) and
- iii. Wirral young people accessing Apprenticeship opportunities (2010/11 academic year data).

Analysis in the report specifically focused on those young people engaged in and achieving full level qualifications or programmes leading to a full level 3. Full level 3 programmes included young people undertaking two or more A-Levels, three or more AS levels, a BTEC National Certificate or Diploma or an advanced/higher level Apprenticeship. The report reviewed level 3 attainment because it was widely recognised that level 3 programmes of study are a key driver of business competitiveness and growth. If businesses were to meet the increasing forces of globalisation and retain a market share young people needed have level 3 qualifications and skills.

The report had a specific focus on the achievements and progress made by more vulnerable young people, including children in care (CiC), teenage parents, learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD) and young offenders.

It was reported that outcomes and success rates for young people in the further education and Apprenticeship sectors were based on 2010/11 academic year data. Young people's data for such sectors was submitted to and analysed by the National Data Service not the LA.

Overall, satisfactory levels of attainment and progress were made by Wirral young people post 16 on level 3 programmes. It was also recognised that overall improvements in level 3 outcomes across all sectors was contributing to the Local Authority's (LA) improved performance in relation to National Indicator (NI) 80. NI 80 relates to the achievement of a level 3 outcome by age 19. Between 2009 and 2011 NI 80 had improved by 7 percentage points (ppts) to 53% achievement at age 19. However, narrowing the attainment gap at level 3 (NI 82) still remained a challenge. Key findings in the report by education sector included:-

1. Post 16 outcomes for young people in Wirral schools and academies undertaking vocational and / or academic programmes had improved over the last three academic years.
2. Advanced apprenticeship success rates for Wirral young people (aged 16 to 18) had been improving year on year; however, success rate levels still lagged behind both regional and national benchmarks.
3. Further Education (FE) full level 3 success rates for young people (aged 16 to 18) had improved year on year with 86 percent (2010/11) of learners achieving a full level 3 qualification.

Resolved – That the report content be noted.

41 **WIRRAL LIFELONG AND FAMILY LEARNING SERVICE UPDATE**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report that provided an update for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service (WL&FLS). The Lifelong and Family Learning Service supported the Council's Corporate priorities by providing opportunities for adults and families to learn and develop their skills and confidence. The service was fully funded by Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Community Learning (CL) Grant.

The Wirral Adult Community Learning Strategic Plan for 2012-13 was attached as Appendix to the report. This showed the overall aims and approaches of WACL partnership. It also broke down achievements for 2011-12 and the targets for 2012-13 for Wirral Lifelong and Family Learning Service.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

42 **CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Chief Executive submitted a progress report on the work that had been undertaken to develop a Wirral child poverty strategy and action plan in partnership with local organisations and agencies, including the voluntary, community and faith sector.

It was reported that the local authority had a statutory duty to work with partners to develop a Wirral Child Poverty Strategy as set out in the Child Poverty Act 2010. The Council had made progress in delivering this duty through the development of a draft strategy and action plan, taking into account the contribution of an independent advisory group established for this purpose, the Wirral Child and Family Poverty Working Group.

The report set out the governance arrangements for the Working Group and Wirral's child poverty strategy and action plan agreed with Wirral's Children's Trust to facilitate future activity.

Committee members were reminded that the Council had allocated £400,000 as part of its budget for 2012-13 to tackle intergenerational poverty further to the development of the draft strategy and action plan. This had been further considered by the Cabinet on the 27 September 2012.

Resolved – That the progress made to date on the work undertaken to develop a Wirral child poverty strategy be noted.

43 **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN REVIEW PROJECT - UPDATE**

The Acting Director of Children's Services submitted a report that provided an update to members on the progress of the Looked After Children Review Project. The objective of the project, which was created as a part of the Strategic Change Programme, was to:-

- Review the provision of care to looked after children in order to ensure that the cost of care and other associated costs were reduced.
- That the numbers of children in care were safely reduced.
- Raise the standard of care that children and young people receive.

The report sought to outline to members the future activities of the project. The intention moving forward with the second phase of the project was to identify further interventions, clearly targeted and based upon a cost / benefit analysis, which would move the objectives of the project forward.

It was further reported that the project was a key part of the departments' plans to reduce the number and costs of looked after children. The current costs of looked after children exceed resources by £4,500,000.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

44 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered suggested additions to its work programme. The Chair reported that a list of matters to be considered had been shared with the Interim Director of Children's Services.

Resolved – That the Committee notes the following on the list of topics on the suggested work programme:

**Tackling Sexual Exploitation /Children missing from care
Raising the participation age
Standards KS3 and KS4, including 100 club
The EQ programme
Support to Primary Schools around SEN
IFIP
Behaviour Support Strategy
Wirral Youth Zone**

Youth Parliament planning
Sickness and absence
Annual complaints report
Case studies from Wirral Life-long and family learning
Report back on commissioning process

45 FORWARD PLAN

There were no matters for consideration relating to the Forward Plan.