



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Thursday, 22 March 2018
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 any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Members are reminded that they should also declare 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 - 10)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2018.

3. 2017/18 QUARTER 3 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE (Pages 11 - 28)

4. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3 2017/18 (Pages 29 - 36)

5. IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY - UPDATE

Presentation from the Director of Children's Services

6. LEARNING FROM AUDIT (Pages 37 - 40)

- 7. REALITY CHECK VISIT - FEEDBACK REPORT - PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (Pages 41 - 46)**
- 8. IMPROVING LIFE CHANCES STRATEGY - PLEDGE UPDATE (Pages 47 - 88)**
- 9. PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS IN WIRRAL SCHOOLS (Pages 89 - 102)**
- 10. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT (Pages 103 - 108)**

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 25 January 2018

Present:

Councillor T Usher (Chair)

Councillors	M McLaughlin	C Meaden
	T Anderson	C Povall
	A Brighthouse	J Stapleton
	W Clements	A Sykes
	P Hayes	W Ward
	T Jones	KJ Williams
	B Kenny	G Wood

Co-opted Member Julie Johnson

37 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Co-opted Member Chris Penn and Cabinet Member Bernie Mooney.

38 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare 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. The following declaration was made:

Councillor Chris Meaden	Personal – by virtue of her daughter's employment within the CYPD.
Councillor Wendy Clements	Personal – by virtue of her employment as an early years educator and administrator.

39 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 14 November 2017, be confirmed as a correct record.

40 IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY - UPDATE

Mr Paul Boyce, the Director for Children introduced his presentation that provided Members with an update on the Council's Improvement Plan and a number of actions that had been taken since the last report to the Committee in November. These included a summary of progress to date and work underway to create the right conditions for improvement, and an update on the Ofsted Monitoring Visit that had taken place on 11/12 December 2017.

The Director for Children further informed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the clarity of vision required and the focus on improving practice within the Children's Service i.e. what the Council is trying to do, and why. He added that by ensuring that the right number and quality of practitioners were in place to deliver good and outstanding practice, the Council would eventually become an 'employer of choice'.

The key messages contained within Mr Boyce's presentation focused on clarity about lines of accountability and 'who was doing what' to support improvement and the child. The presentation also informed of the requirement for a stable and effective access path (front door) that could evidence a consistent application of multi-agency thresholds and decision making which was timely, child focused and of high quality.

The Director for Children expressed his personal view that quality remained the key challenge of the improvement journey and that this would be the primary criteria by which individual casework practices would be measured. He explained that work was underway to ensure staff and managers had the right tools, systems and support available to enable them to produce consistently good practice. This work would also include:

- Proactive communication and engagement with front line practitioners with a step by step approach to the management of change; and
- Robust and reliable quality assurance and performance management that reflected reality, leading to the embedding of a 'learning culture'.

The Director for Children informed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the Ofsted Monitoring Visit had taken place on 11/12 December 2017 and that the findings had been mixed. The focus of the visit was quality of practice in relation to children over the age of 11 who have been looked after for a long time, care planning, PEPs, SDQ, advocacy and independent visiting and the challenge remained on accelerating improvement and doing the basics well, in addition to keeping continued focus on the improvement of quality of practice. Members were further informed that there currently existed a range of service delivery quality and practice, and work continued with staff

engagement to assist them with the improvement of standards and maintain a pace of change within a target 8 month timeframe.

Members questioned the Director for Children on some issue detail that included engagement with trade unions and how to tackle those staff that felt uncomfortable with change. Mr Boyce pointed out that a professional level of dialogue was being maintained, a meeting was scheduled with the trade union for the following day and that staff engagement issues were 95% complete. He added that as part of the improvement process the need to provide evidence, detail of reasonable caseloads, and regular supervision all contributed to the aim of creating a learning culture.

A Member commented that 8 months appeared somewhat slow and asked what was being done to accelerate the process, and how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could be satisfied that the required level of improvement had / would occur. Mr Boyce explained that the timescale was feasible, given the changes required but every effort was being made to ensure the service was 'connected' and pushing forward. He further advised that professional development pathways, reality visits and evidence provided in line with LGA guidance would help in this regard. Mr Boyce also explained that statistical evidence e.g. average caseloads could be misleading, when asking the question 'how many social workers deal with more than 20 cases?' would be more indicative of the current issues faced.

Members suggested that an Overview and Scrutiny Workshop to better evaluate progress / performance against the improvement plan in the new Municipal Year would be beneficial.

The Director for Children closed his presentation informing that instability in the staffing of key roles had resulted in a stop / start approach to the delivery of change, and that the Service was not in dispute with Ofsted about the pace of change, however he believed that Ofsted were satisfied with the actions being taken by the Council and that those actions will have a positive impact on children under the Council's care.

The Chair thanked Mr Boyce for his detailed presentation.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

41 **PREVENTING FAMILY BREAKDOWN - CHILDREN ON THE EDGE OF CARE**

Ms Lindsay Davidson, the Senior Manager Targeted Services – Integrated Youth Support introduced her presentation that provided Members with an update on 'Edge of Care' – Preventing Family Breakdown i.e. keeping children safe in their communities and living with their families.

Ms Davidson informed that her presentation would also focus on adolescent youths and the work of the Targeted Youth Support Service for 13-19 year olds, an area that hadn't received detailed service review since 2012.

The presentation informed that the review offer for young people, that now included 11 and 12 year olds, would be:

- Modern and fit for purpose;
- Would have synergy with edge of care service – providing a seamless range of services; and
- Resources would be targeted where most needed.

The Senior Manager Targeted Services – Integrated Youth Support explained that the current offer included:

- 4 Youth Outreach Teams;
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award support and validation;
- Creative Youth Development (also lead on engagement and participation/GIRLS Project);
- Civic Award Scheme; and
- Public Health funded projects – Health Services in Schools, GIRLS Project.

Ms Davidson's presentation detailed how proposals for the future services centred around:

- Outreach – 3 geographical teams
- Key Worker
- Participation and Engagement
- Youth Arts
- GIRLS Project
- Life Skills
- Health Services in Schools
- Civic Award Scheme

The presentation further detailed that direct support be withdrawn from the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and how this programme would be managed by the NW regional office, continuing support to schools for the scheme.

The Senior Manager Targeted Services – Integrated Youth Support informed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the approach consisted of distinct but interlinked components of an overarching strategy to prevent family breakdown, utilising an adolescent support team, respite, family mediation, parenting programmes, and family intervention and support for pre-birth to 5 years.

Members questioned the Senior Manager Targeted Services – Integrated Youth Support on details of her presentation seeking assurance of effective monitoring, recognising the need for review, and the need to rebalance the system to target those most vulnerable. A Member questioned the Senior Manager on how the revised system would provide early identification of issues and how the programme would aid elder siblings, often impacted by factors affecting the family as a whole. Ms Davidson informed that dedicated workers would handle all members of the family, and programmes would be planned and monitored prior to final sign-offs, thus preventing possible escalation of problems.

Members also questioned Ms Davidson on key points within her presentation regarding the establishment of an Adolescent Support Hub (ASH) to provide a range of support services for young people 11-19 years in respect of an Edge of Care Service and Targeted Youth Support projects/activities, in addition to group work / programmes, regular drop in sessions involving youth workers and partners, with key staff co-located in a central office.

The Senior Manager Targeted Services – Integrated Youth Support informed that consultation with staff on the revisions to the service had commenced in early December 2017 and would run until mid-February 2018.

The Chair questioned the Senior Manager seeking clarification on the housing / homeless gateway and obstacles presented to 16-17 year olds. The Senior Manager explained that a Homeless Protocol was under review and work was being undertaken across departments in this respect. She informed that the best solution was often mediation to help young people stay at home, but emergency accommodation could be provided if this was not possible.

The Chair thanked Ms Davidson for her detailed presentation, and indicated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider a review of progress as part of its future work programme, if time permitted.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

42 **DELIVERY OF 'CHILDREN READY FOR SCHOOL' PLEDGE - UPDATE**

Ms Elizabeth Hartley, the Senior Manager Children's Services introduced her report that detailed information on the 'Children Are Ready for School' pledge co-ordinated and delivered through the multi-agency Early Childhood Reference Group. The report informed that within the group there were four Priority Action Leads who work in partnership with various professionals to deliver the outcomes of their specific action plans. On a quarterly basis, the Early Childhood Reference Group met to receive updates from the Priority Action Leads, provide advice and support, offer challenge and agree progress updates for corporate pledge reporting.

The report provided the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on the four Priority Areas for the Children Are Ready for School pledge, namely:

- To improve multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and protect our youngest children;
- Children in Wirral will start life well;
- Children receive sensitive and responsive care from their main caregivers in the first years of life; and
- Increase the % of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

A Member questioned why the 6-8 week development checks for infants continued to be missed by G.P.s, and what actions were being taken to address this failing. The Senior Manager Children's Services informed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the current figure stood at 84% with a year-end target of 90%. She added that a written response / update on this matter would be provided to Members.

Another Member asked if the multi-agency Early Childhood Reference Group had made any significant progress against its planned outcomes. The Senior Manager informed that significant progress had been made against the named priorities and provided some key examples relating to arrangements to safeguard and protect the boroughs youngest children. These included:

- Year to date (YTD) figures showed 104 unborns had been discussed at the pre-birth liaison meeting, with 82 receiving additional support;
- an increase in the number of unborns supported through a co-ordinated Team Around the Family approach. YTD figure was 56 against the 2016-17 figure of 12; and
- an increase in the number of under 5s being supported through a Team Around the Family approach. YTD figure was 532 against a figure of 234 for 2016-17.

The Senior Manager Children's Services also provided a summary of the challenges as identified by the Early Childhood Reference Group to ensure school readiness. These included improving outcomes for disadvantaged children, avoiding a plateau for good levels of development, increasing service integrations and improving information sharing across the partnership.

The Chair commented on the benefits of the reality check visit to the Early Childhood Service on 7 December 2017, the subject of a report later on the meeting agenda. Ms Hartley agreed that the joint approach and well established relationships between the local authority and health services

should be replicated wherever possible. She added that the reality check visits had helped in this regard.

A Member questioned the Senior Manager on the subject of the current consultation with parents (identified under Priority 3 (ix) of the report) regarding 'parenting programmes' that sought to provide further insight into 'what works'. Ms Hartley informed that the consultation was due to be completed by mid-February 2018

Resolved – that the report be noted.

43 **REALITY CHECK VISIT - EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE - FEEDBACK REPORT**

The Chair of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee introduced his report that updated members on the principle of undertaking a series of Reality Check visits by small groups of councillors to enable those elected members to engage directly with frontline staff. His report provided feedback from the visit to the Early Childhood Service that had taken place on Wednesday 7 December 2017.

The Chair informed that the visit had been very useful and had enabled to see first-hand evidence of the amount of partnership and co-operation work in evidence, and the enthusiasm for staff from all teams working together to provide improved outcomes for children and families.

A Member commented that visits should provide more opportunity for Councillors to speak to frontline staff. The Chair informed that, in general this had been a key feature of recent visits, and although time hadn't permitted it on this occasion, Members had still gained substantial benefit from this particular visit as demonstrated by Member's conclusions detailed in para 3.4.1 of his report.

Resolved – that the report be noted.

44 **SUMMARY OF STANDARDS, PROVISIONAL OUTCOMES FOR KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5**

Mrs Sue Talbot, Lead School Commissioner introduced a report of the Director for Children's Services report that provided an in depth analysis and overall summary for the pupil outcomes at the age of 16 (GCSEs) and the age of 18 (GCEs) in relation to GCSE and GCE Standards 2017.

This report provided the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a detailed analysis of outcomes for all pupil groups at Key Stages 4 and 5 in the secondary phase of their education, and supplemented earlier reports considered by the Committee.

The Lead School Commissioner informed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that there had been significant changes to the content and grading system of GCSEs. The changes had been designed to make subject content and exams more challenging with most exams taken at the end of the two-year course rather than on completion of modules. Grading for English and Mathematics also moved to a 9-1 scale, with grade nine being roughly equivalent to a top A* grade and a grade four equivalent to a low to mid-grade C. Mrs Talbot also informed that GCE A levels had been reformed and that assessments would now be mainly by exam.

The report provided detailed analysis of pupil outcomes used in the measurement of the Council's 2020 pledges – Children are ready for school, Young People are ready for work and adulthood, and Vulnerable children reach their full potential.

Members questioned the Lead School Commissioner if comparable data with statistical neighbours (not available at the time of writing the report) could be provided, together with information regarding the GCSE performance of Academies. Mrs Talbot advised that this information would be sent out to Members following the meeting. She added that more detail could be provided in future reports and that the current numbers showed improved performance and she hoped to see this trend continue.

In addition to a detailed breakdown summary of A Level outcomes (August 2017) and Key Stage 4, in response to a question from a Member, Mrs Talbot provided a brief update on the proactive targeted approaches being taken in respect of school exclusions, absenteeism and home schooling.

The Lead School Commissioner informed that the statistics with regard to Wallasey schools had been skewed as a result of some unexpected figures from one school. It was noted that the geographical statistical splits were also affected by the location of Wirral's Grammar Schools. Members noted that many 6th Form Colleges were performing well as a result of the 'pairing' of schools that had helped greatly with pupil transitions.

Members thanked Mrs Talbot for her comprehensive report and her detailed responses to their questions.

Resolved – that the GCSE & GCE Standards 2017 report be noted.

45 **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OSC - FEEDBACK FROM BUDGET SCRUTINY (2018/19)**

A report from the Chair presented the work of the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to scrutinising the 2018/19 budget proposals. A workshop had been held on 11 January for Members to explore in more detail

the various budget proposals being put forward that fell under the remit of this committee. A report on the workshop had been circulated as a supplement to the agenda. The Committee was requested to acknowledge this report as its response to the 2018/19 budget proposals to be referred on to Cabinet as part of its considerations in developing any budget recommendation to Council.

Resolved –

- (1) That this Committee acknowledges this report as its response to the 2018/19 budget proposals; and**
- (2) That this report be referred to Cabinet as part of its considerations in developing any budget recommendation to Council.**

46 **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OSC - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**

The Chair introduced his report that informed that the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny work programme. The report further informed that the work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which were within the remit of the Committee.

The Chair's report provided an update regarding progress made since the last Committee meeting held on 14 November 2017. The current work programme was made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, workshops, standing items and requested officer reports. The update report provided the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The current work programme for the Committee was attached as an appendix to the report.

The Chair highlighted the forthcoming Member Workshops and Training Sessions, and that at a meeting of the Chairs of the four Overview & Scrutiny Committees, it was agreed to undertake further scrutiny of Universal Credit in February 2018 when the implications of implementing Universal Credit may be better known and the relevant data could be made available to Members. Although not formally part of this Committee's work programme, it was anticipated that members of all four scrutiny committees will be invited to participate in the workshops. The Chair asked if Members could agree in principal, and that if possible Member please indicate their availability to take part in this work.

The following Members indicated that they would be keen to be involved in the next reality check visit which would focus on the Performance Dashboard:

- Councillor Alan Brighthouse (LD)
- Councillor Moira McLaughlin (L)
- Councillor Chris Meaden (L)
- Councillor Cherry Povall (C)
- Councillor Jean Stapleton (L)
- Councillor Adam Sykes (C)

A Member requested that future dates for the Reality Check Visits be factored into the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme diary for the forthcoming Municipal Year (2018/19).

Resolved – that the updated Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2017/18 be approved.



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 22 March 2018

REPORT TITLE:	2017/18 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance
REPORT OF:	Director: Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the 2017/18 Quarter 3 (October - December 2017) performance report for the Wirral Plan pledges under the remit of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report, which is included as Appendix 1, provides a description of the progress in Quarter 3 as well as providing available data in relation to a range of outcome indicators and supporting measures.

Quarter Three Wirral Plan Performance Summary

- Engaging disadvantaged groups in early education has continued to improve, with the take up of the 2 year old funding increasing to 95%.
- The percentage of infants who received a 6-8 week Development Check by the time they were 8 weeks shows an improvement in performance from Quarter 1 following meetings with GP colleagues to discuss new approaches.
- Wirral continues to support a large population of children looked after; the rate has increased each quarter in 2017/18. Wirral's Planning for Children and Edge of Care Panels are now operational with an aim to provide additional scrutiny in relation to children looked after.
- The children in need rate has decreased at quarter three. District teams are reviewing plans where the child has been CIN for more than 12 months to ensure that robust arrangements are in place to avoid unnecessary delays.
- There has been a continued decline in the Child Protection Plan rate over the last 12 months and work is underway to ensure effective review of these cases and that only children who require a plan are part of one.
- Children's Centre sustained contact with priority groups in the early years has improved by 6.03% from the previous reporting period.
- The number of disabled people in receipt of personal budgets has increased, now at 203 children and 1,102 for both adults and children.
- Reporting at quarter 3 continues to illustrate the complex picture of Domestic Abuse in Wirral. The planned approach to increase awareness of domestic

abuse has led to an increase in the number of high risk cases compared to the previous year. We are also supporting a higher number of children experiencing domestic abuse and are seeing a significant increase in the rate of referrals to social care for domestic abuse (age 18+ years). The intention is that in future years, once reporting levels have improved, the rate will reduce.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report and highlights any areas requiring further clarification or action.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to scrutinise the performance of the Council and partners in relation to delivering the Wirral Plan.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This report has been developed in line with the approved performance management framework for the Wirral Plan. As such, no other options were considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Wirral Plan is an outcome-focussed, partnership plan which has 18 supporting strategies that set out how each of the 20 pledges will be delivered. For each pledge, a partnership group has been established to drive forward delivery of the action plans set out in each of the supporting strategies.
- 3.2 A Wirral Plan Performance Management Framework has been developed to ensure robust monitoring arrangements are in place. The Wirral Partnership has a robust approach to performance management to ensure all activity is regularly monitored and reviewed.
- 3.3 Data for the identified indicators is released at different times during the year. As a result of this, not all Pledges will have results each quarterly reporting period. Some indicators can be reported quarterly and some only on an annual basis. Annual figures are reported in the quarter they become available against the 2017/18 year end column.
- 3.4 For each of the indicators, a trend is shown (better, same or worse). In most cases, this is determined by comparing the latest data with the previous reporting period i.e. 2016/17 year end. In some cases, i.e. where data accumulates during the year or is subject to seasonal fluctuations, the trend is shown against the same time the previous year. This is indicated in the key at the end of the report.
- 3.5 For some indicators, targets have been set. Where this is the case, a RAGB (red, amber, green, blue) rating is provided against the target and tolerance levels set at the start of the reporting period, with blue indicating performance targets being exceeded.
- 3.6 All Wirral Plan performance reports are published on the performance page of the Council's website. This includes the high level Wirral Plan overview report and the detailed pledge reports which include updates on progress on all activities set out in the supporting strategy action plans. The link to this web page is set out below:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/council-performance>

3.7 Each of the Wirral Plan Pledges has a Lead Commissioner responsible for overseeing effective delivery. The Lead Commissioners for the Pledges in the report at Appendix 1 are as follows:

- Children are Ready for School – Paul Boyce
- Children are Ready for Work and Adulthood – Paul Boyce
- Vulnerable Children Reach their Full Potential – Paul Boyce
- Reducing Child and Family Poverty (Improving Life Chances) – Fiona Johnstone
- People with Disabilities live Independent Lives – Graham Hodgkinson
- Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence – Mark Smith

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The performance management framework is aligned to the Council's risk management strategy and both are regularly reviewed as part of corporate management processes.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The priorities in the Wirral Plan pledges were informed by a range of consultations carried out in 2015 and 2016 including the Wirral resident survey.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Wirral Plan equality impact assessment can be found at:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-15/chief>

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Wirral Plan – 2017/18 Quarter 3 Pledge Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	8 September 2016
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	28 November 2016
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	23 March 2017
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	20 June 2017
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	26 September 2017
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14 November 2017

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Appendix 1

Wirral Plan Children and Families Committee

2017-18 Quarter 3 Reports

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Children are ready for school

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Throughout Quarter 3 and leading into Quarter 4, the Early Childhood Reference Group has renewed its focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged children. Research into Closing the Development Gap in the Early Years, undertaken by the Social Mobility Commission, indicates that the key factors to improving outcomes for disadvantaged children are: parent-child interactions (home learning, parenting style, family interactions, health and well-being); parental education and childcare.

In relation to parent-child interactions the Early Childhood Service has reviewed the role of the Early Childhood Family Workers to increase their ability to work with parents and children in the home. This will complement the principles and learning related to parenting style delivered through the parenting programmes. Working in partnership with Birkenhead Foundation Years Trust, there are 17 settings engaged in the Learning Together pilot, which focuses on the home learning environment. BFYT have been successful in recruiting 9 Parent Champions to promote peer-to-peer engagement. Targeted work with Black and Minority Ethnic groups (BME), asylum seeking families and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), has increased participation in early education.

Engaging disadvantaged groups in early education has once again improved, with the take up of the 2 year old funding increasing to 95%. The progress of these children is being supported through the roll out of the cohort tracker tool. The percentage of providers engaged in using the cohort tracker has increased from 6 to 60% over the previous 2 quarters. The Local Authority has provided a digital portal to ensure that submission of progress data is secure and simple for providers. Initial analysis of the data identifies making relationships, self-confidence & self-awareness, and moving and handling as top performing areas for under 5s and numbers, the world and shape, space & measure as lower performing. This information will allow a more targeted approach to be taken to enable providers to improve outcomes. Spring workshops will focus on sharing best practice and learning across providers. Ganney's Meadow, who are working towards Teaching School Status, will host a workshop on Evidence and Assessment at the end of January 2018, supporting providers to consider moderation. Improving quality standards of early education is vital. Performance sits at 89% of providers being judged good or outstanding.

Learning from what works is a key priority to improving performance around take up of the 2 ½ year old integrated review. The Wallasey locality is currently our highest performing area and therefore work is being undertaken to understand why this is the case and what conditions are required in the other localities to boost their performance. The Early Childhood Reference Group is also looking to other high performing local authorities for learning opportunities and will link up with Action for Children in February 2018 to plan opportunities for developing Early Years Networks (between nurseries, childminders and primary schools) as have been established successfully in Telford and Hull.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Foundation Stage - % achieving a good level of development	Annual Higher is better	62.8% (2013-14 Acad Year)	England: 70.7% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 67.9% (2016-17 Acad Year)	69.6% (2015-16 Acad Year)				69.4% (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	Provisional data for the 2016-17 Academic Year is 69.4%. This is a slight drop in performance from the previous year (69.6%).

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Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
The percentage of women booked to access professional maternity services on or before 12+6 weeks gestation	Quarterly Higher is better	80.8% (Q3 2014-15)		83.3% (2016-17)	Amber Actual: 81.2% Target: 90.0% (Q1 2017-18)	Amber Actual: 81.6% Target: 90.0% (Q2 2017-18)	Amber Actual: 81.2% Target: 90.0% (Q3 2017-18)		Worse	Compliance for two months exceeded 84% however in October compliance reduced to 75% - this was due to an increase in demand for scans and therefore the lack of scanning capacity directly affected in month the compliance of women being booked before 12+6 weeks pregnant.
Take up of 2 year old offer by eligible families as identified by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)	Quarterly Higher is better	70.0% (Q1 2015-16)		88.1% (2016-17)	92.6% (Apr-Jul 2017)		95.0% (Sept-Dec 2017)		Better	Funding data is collected on a termly basis. The current figure of 95% is from the Autumn headcount and is currently provisional.
The achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	Annual Lower is better	20.0% (2013-14 Acad Year)	England: 20.0% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 18.0% (2016-17 Acad Year)	18.0% (2015-16 Acad Year)				21.4% (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	Provisional data for the 2016-17 Academic Year is 21.4%. This shows an increase in the gap of 3.4% from the previous year (18%).
Percentage of children aged 4-5 classified as overweight or obese	Annual Lower is better	22.40% (2014-15)	England: 22.60% (2016-17) North West: 23.90% (2016-17)	22.90% (2015-16)				25.60% (2016-17)	Worse	This figure represents the latest annual data for 2016-17 that was released in October 2017. These figures show an increase from 2015/16 of 2.7%. This upward trend has also been observed nationally. A working group has been set up to develop a more co-ordinated/comprehensive approach to healthy eating for early years in Wirral.
Percentage of infants who received a 6-8 week Development Check by the time they were 8 weeks	Quarterly Higher is better	84.6% (Q1 2015-16)	England: 83.6% (Q4 2016-17) North West: 89.6% (Q4 2016-17)	84.9% (2016-17)	Amber Actual: 82.0% Target: 90.0% (Q1 2017-18)	Amber Actual: 84.0% Target: 90.0% (Q2 2017-18)			Better	Quarter 2 2017/18 latest performance available. The latest quarter shows an improvement in performance from Quarter 1 2017/18.
Percentage of children who received a 12 month Health Visitor review by the time they turned 12 months	Quarterly Higher is better	66.4% (Q1 2015-16)	England: 75.9% (Q4 2016-17) North West: 84.0% (Q4 2016-17)	75.9% (2016-17)	Green Actual: 86.0% Target: 85.0% (Q1 2017-18)	Green Actual: 83.0% Target: 85.0% (Q2 2017-18)			Worse	Quarter 2 2017/18 latest performance available. The latest quarter shows a slight decrease in performance from Quarter 1 2017/18. Work is currently underway to identify the reasons for this reduction as uptake has previously seen a steady increase.
Percentage of children who received a 2-2½ year Health Visitor review	Quarterly Higher is better	73.0% (Q1 2015-16)	England: 77.4% (Q4 2016-17) North West: 85.4% (Q4 2016-17)	76.7% (2016-17)	Green Actual: 82.0% Target: 85.0% (Q1 2017-18)	Green Actual: 81.0% Target: 85.0% (Q2 2017-18)			Worse	Quarter 2 2017/18 latest performance available. The latest quarter shows a slight decrease in performance from Quarter 1 2017/18. Benchmarking of settings where uptake of the integrated reviews is high to enable good practice to be identified and shared across all settings.
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (aged 0-4 years), rate per 10,000	Annual Lower is better	133.5 (2014-15)	England: 129.6 (2015-16) North West: 182.0 (2015-16)	158.6 (2015-16)					n/a	
Percentage of early years childcare providers rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	Quarterly Higher is better	78.0% (Aug 2015)	England: 94.0% (Aug 2017) North West: 93.0% (Aug 2017)	90.0% (Dec 2016)		89.0% (Aug 2017)			n/a	The latest data available from Ofsted DataView is as at 31 Aug 2017 (89.0%). This shows an 11% improvement since the start of the Wirral Plan however it is lower than both the regional and national performance.
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development	Annual Higher is better	20.0% (2013-14 Acad Year)		52.6% (2015-16 Acad Year)				47.8% (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	Provisional data for the 2016-17 Academic Year is 47.8%. This is reduction of 4.8% from the previous year (52.6%), however with a larger cohort more Children Looked After attained a good level of development (12) than in the previous year.

Young people are ready for work and adulthood

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Quarter three has been an extremely busy time. By the end of December 2017 eighteen schools/education settings had been inspected. This consisted of three secondary schools, eleven primary schools, three special schools, one nursery school and the pupil referral unit. Three schools were upgraded resulting in two schools coming out of special measures and now requiring improvement. One primary school moved from requires improvement to good. The percentage of schools judged good or better remains at 90%.

The focused work of secondary schools regarding supporting pupils with careers information and guidance, combined with the work of the Local Authority 14-19 team have contributed to the NEET (young people not in employment, education or training) figure is low at 2.7%. Further work continues with schools to identify students vulnerable to NEET earlier so that training and subsequent employment pathways are discussed and planned for, so giving young people the best possible chance to succeed. The national Careers Guidance Strategy will significantly impact on all secondary schools. Careers guidance provision has been included in the Ofsted inspection framework for schools and further education providers. The Mosslands School have been showcased for their engagement and piloting of the Windmills Careers Guidance programme for year 9 pupils funded by the Liverpool City Region ESF Skills programme.

The Progress- School Birkenhead is now successfully established at The Hive. Eleven Key Stage 3 students were permanently excluded from mainstream secondary schools. Most have attended the Progress- School and are now in a process of reintegration back into a mainstream school.

Absence for boys, girls, FSM and SEN primary school pupils continues to be above the national average. Absence for boys, girls, FSM and non SEN secondary school pupils continues to be above the national average also. However authorised absence for both primary and secondary is higher than the national average. Work has been undertaken to improve this.

A desk top independent review of the current SEND population has been done to determine the education needs of the SEND population. This report has been distributed to all headteachers for consultation. The proposals are to establish in September 2018:

- 2/3 bases for young children F2-Y1 who will benefit from inclusive mainstream schooling delivered in a small nurturing environment (up to 24 places)
- Primary ASC (autistic spectrum condition) Resource Base Provision (8 places)
- Primary MLD (moderate learning difficulties) Resource Base Provision (16 places)
- Primary SEMH (social emotional and mental health) Resource Base Provision (20 places)
- Year 5-year 8 SEMH Resource Base Provision (8 places)

And to establish in September 2019:

- Secondary ASC Resource Base Provision (20 places)
- Secondary MLD Resource Base Provision (16 places)

Currently only 6.9% of children looked after (58) do not have some form of Personal Education Plan (PEP) documentation in place. Of the 58, 30 are under the age 3, 25 have been recently admitted to care in the last 8 weeks

And 3 are 17yr old asylum seekers who have recently transferred to Wirral. This is a significant improvement. Since September 2017 significant efforts have been made to ensure that PEPs are in place and of good quality.

As reported by the Virtual head 55% of Wirral's looked after children now have an up to date PEP of good quality in place.

There has been a sharp increase in referrals in Q3 2017 compared to Q3 in 2016, with an overall balance over the year compared to 2016. Young people presenting to Accident and Emergency following self-harm or attempted suicide has reduced by 40% since the introduction of the advice line.

The number of young people on waiting list for CAMHS choice appointments continues to reduce and waiting times are currently 12-16 weeks from the referral to initial appointment. Links are currently being made with social care, early help and the under 5's services to extend training provision. The early help / CAMHS directory will be combined and training to Local Authority staff is planned to be rolled out in April 2018

Fifty-two Wirral Apprenticeship Programme grants have been issued to local employers following their successful recruitment of a recognised apprentice. All council grant funding is now committed to year end.

An analysis of local data illustrates that Wirral apprenticeship recruitment (young people aged 16-18) was 31% lower in the months May to September 2017 compared to the same period in 2016. This trend is across the Liverpool City Region and may be attributable to the Apprenticeship levy. As a member of the Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Hub board the Wirral 14-19 Strategy Manager has contributed to inform the Liverpool City Region apprenticeship growth strategy. This strategy is available for wider consultation in January 2018 pending publication in March 2018.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	Quarterly Higher is better	84.0% (Aug 2015)	England: 89.0% (Mar 2017) North West: 90.0% (Mar 2017)	90.0% (Mar 2017)		Amber Actual: 90.0% Target: 100.0% (Aug 2017)			n/a	The latest data available from Ofsted DataView is as at 31 August 2017. This shows a 6% improvement since the start of the Wirral Plan and compares favourably to national performance of 89%.
The % of young people aged 16 and 17 who are not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or categorised as 'not known' - Post Sept 2016	Monthly Lower is better	n/a		5.3% (2016-17)	7.0% (Jun 2017)		4.7% (Dec 2017)		n/a	The NEET rate (without those not known) in December 2017 is 3.0%. With those categorised as 'not know' this rate is 4.7%.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Progress 8 Score for Wirral	Annual Higher is better	n/a	North West: -0.15 (2015-16 Acad Year) Statistical Neighbours: -0.22 (2015-16 Acad Year)	-0.04 (2015-16 Acad Year)				0.00 (2016-17 Acad Year)	Better	The provisional Progress 8 score for all Wirral Schools for the 2016-17 academic year is zero, it is therefore the same as the national average.
The achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the 'expected standard' in English, reading, English writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.	Annual Lower is better	n/a	England: 21.0% (2015-16 Acad Year) North West: 23.0% (2015-16 Acad Year)	27.0% (2015-16 Acad Year)				23.3% (2016-17 Acad Year)	Better	Provisional data for the 2016-17 Academic Year is 23.3%. This is reduction of 3.7% from the previous year (27%).
The percentage of children in good or better schools as rated by Ofsted	Quarterly Higher is better	81.0% (Aug 2015)	England: 87.0% (Mar 2017) North West: 85.0% (Mar 2017)	90.0% (Mar 2017)		89.0% (Aug 2017)			Worse	The latest data available from Ofsted DataView is as at 31 Aug 2017. This shows a 8% improvement since the start of the Wirral Plan and compares favourably to national performance of 88%.
Reduction in use of medication for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) - Number of items prescribed, rate per 10,000	Quarterly Lower is better	1.55 (Q4 2014-15)							n/a	Latest update received is for quarter 3 2016-17 (1.80). The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is currently unable to provide updated data.
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at Key Stage 4	Annual Lower is better	n/a	England: 0.48 (2015-16 Acad Year) North West: 0.56 (2015-16 Acad Year)	0.75 (2015-16 Acad Year)				0.61 (2016-17 Acad Year)	Better	The latest 2016-17 figures is provisional. Provisionally, the gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at KS4 was 0.61. This figure was -0.39 for disadvantaged pupils and 0.22 for their peers.
The gap in progress between pupils with a SEN statement/EHCP and their peers at Key Stage 4	Annual Lower is better	n/a	England: 1.09 (2015-16 Acad Year) North West: 1.00 (2015-16 Acad Year)	0.86 (2015-16 Acad Year)				1.22 (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	The latest 2016-17 figure is provisional. Provisionally, the gap in progress between pupils with a SEN Statement/EHCP and their peers at KS4 was 1.22. This figure was -1.09 for pupils with SEN Statement/EHCP and 0.13 for their peers.
The percentage of persistent absence in Wirral Schools (post 2016)	Annual Higher is better	n/a	England: 10.50 (2015-16 Acad Year) North West: 10.80 (2015-16 Acad Year)	12.50 (2015-16 Acad Year)					n/a	Latest published performance is for 2015 to 2016. Next published release is schedule for March 2018.
The percentage of Children Looked After who attained a grade 4 or above in English and Maths at the end of Key Stage 4	Annual Higher is better	n/a						13.5% (2016-17 Acad Year)	n/a	Latest data is for the 2016-17 academic year and is currently provisional.
Progress 8 Score for Children Looked After in Wirral	Annual Higher is better	n/a	England: -1.14 (2015-16 Acad Year) North West: -1.27 (2015-16 Acad Year)	-1.52 (2015-16 Acad Year)				-0.96 (2016-17 Acad Year)	Better	This measure monitors the progress for all children who are looked after from Primary School to the end of Key Stage 4. This is a new measure which will calculate the average Wirral figure for the co-hort. The figures for 2016-17 are currently provisional.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Reduce the percentage of permanent exclusions in Wirral - primary schools	Annual Lower is better	2012-13	England: 0.02% (2015-16) North West: 0.03% (2015-16)	- (2014-15)				- (2015-16)	n/a	Latest published performance data is for 2015-16 and became available in September 2017. In accordance with the Department for Education policy on confidentiality, percentages based on 5 pupils or fewer have been suppressed to reduce the risk of disclosing the identities of individuals. This is shown as a dash (-).
Reduce the percentage of permanent exclusions in Wirral - secondary schools	Annual Lower is better	0.11% (2012-13)	England: 0.17% (2015-16) North West: 0.24% (2015-16)	0.12% (2014-15)				0.25% (2015-16)	Worse	Latest published performance data of 0.25% is for 2015-16 and became available in July 2017. This is a increase of 0.13% from previously reported figures. Discussions have taken place with the Regional Schools commissioner regarding the increasing number of permanent exclusions in academies. All exclusions are being closely monitored by the Local Authority (LA) and schools challenged appropriately.
Rate of hospital admissions due to substance misuse in young people (15-24 years) - per 100,000	Annual Lower is better	166.5 (2011/12 - 2013/14)	England: 95.4 (2013/14-15/16) North West: 139.6 (2013/14-15/16)	171.9 (2013/14-15/16)					n/a	Latest published performance is for period 2013-14 to 2015-16
Under 18 conceptions - rate per 1,000	Annual Lower is better	33.7 (2013)	England: 20.8 (2015) North West: 24.7 (2015)	25.7 (2015)					n/a	Latest published performance is for 2015 and became available in March 2017.

Vulnerable children reach their full potential

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

There has been an extensive range of activity ongoing this quarter to support the Vulnerable Children pledge. This includes since 30th October 2017 the Supporting Families Enhanced Futures model has been in operation. This has been rolled out for children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan, and for Children in Need. This model will help to measure sustained change and should lead to a reduction in the number of children coming through the revolving door. This model will ensure that the sustained change will be as a result of the lived experience of the child. The multi-agency safeguarding hub is now operational. This is a fully functioning single front door for children to access support and services. The hub is based within the Council Safeguarding Hub at the Solar Campus. The first workshop has taken place with partners to consider a 'vulnerability team'. This group will review Wirral Council's response to children that are vulnerable to things such as child sexual exploitation, criminal expectation, and trafficking. The group will consider how to improve the current arrangements, to ensure a robust response, consideration will be given to the development of a multi agency team.

The Edge of Care Service is under consultation. Also, the Youth Support Service is currently being reviewed, the consultation for this is expected to run in to February 2018. A 'threshold quality assurance' meeting will take place with partners on 22nd January 2018. This will quality assure the referrals that did not get past the front door and ensure that this was appropriate. Likewise it will quality assure those that did. The meeting will ensure that the point of contact with the local authority is correct and appropriate. The meeting will ensure that the threshold is appropriate for the correct levels of support. This will be ongoing and built in to the functions of the service. There was a spike in the percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care in October 2017, a dip in November 2017, and then a spike in December 2017. The annualised percentage up to December 2017 was 18.4% which remains within the target range, however the percentage just for the month of December was 24.2%

Although currently provisional, figures suggest that with a larger cohort, more children looked after achieved a good level of development than in the previous year. A Pre-Birth liaison meeting has been established. this will identify the most vulnerable, pregnant women and will provide support to them in a range of ways, for example by implementation of a CAF, TAF or by Children's Social Care. The take-up of 2 year old offer by eligible families as identified by Department of Work and Pensions has increased since the last headcount, the figure is now 95% take up. This figure places Wirral within the top performing local authorities in the North West.

Progress has been made across the current action plan with many actions now complete. In the final quarter of the year a refresh of the plan will be undertaken and an evaluation of overall progress will ensure that new actions focus on how we can create the greatest impact for vulnerable children and young people.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000	Monthly Lower is better	99.3 (2014-15)	England: 62.0 (2016-17) North West: 86.0 (2016-17) Statistical Neighbours: 92.3 (2016-17)	114.5 (2016-17)	115.0 (Jun 2017)	120.9 (Sep 2017)	124.4 (Dec 2017)		Worse	Wirral's Planning for Children Panel and Edge of Care Panel are now operational. The Head of Service is the Chair of the Edge of Care Board. These two Boards provide additional scrutiny in regards to processes for children that are looked after. The Public Law Outline (PLO) and Pre-Proceedings work are being reviewed and refreshed to ensure that there is a more robust approach to ensuring that children who need looking after are, preventing children becoming looked after when this is not necessary, and supporting those who are looked after to return home sooner.
Children in Need rate per 10,000 0-17 population	Monthly Lower is better	426.3 (2014-15)	England: 330.4 (2016-17) North West: 372.3 (2016-17) Statistical Neighbours: 419.0 (2016-17)	392.6 (2016-17)	400.9 (Jun 2017)	393.5 (Sep 2017)	371.3 (Dec 2017)		Better	The District Teams are currently reviewing Child in Need plans where the child has been CIN for more than 12 months. This review will ensure that there are robust arrangements in place to avoid unnecessary delays on CIN plans. The definition of a Child in Need currently incorporates all children with an open referral. This will include children on Child Protection or Looked After children. Whilst this performance indicator is showing improved performance this figure needs to be considered in line with the Looked After and the Child Protection indicators. The number of referrals for Children in Need is decreasing. In Q1 the figure was 464 children, in Q2 it was 437 and in Q3 it is 428. Wirral completes on average 300 assessments per month.
Rate of children who became the subject of a child protection plan per 10,000 children 0-17 population	Monthly Lower is better	34.5 (2014-15)	England: 43.3 (2016-17) North West: 54.1 (2016-17) Statistical Neighbours: 53.8 (2016-17)	57.3 (2016-17)	57.6 (Jun 2017)	50.2 (Sep 2017)	43.4 (Dec 2017)		Better	There is a consistent reduction in the rate of children becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan. Wirral Safeguarding Unit are currently being consulted with to ensure that only children who require a CP Plan are part of one. This directly correlates with the reduction in the number of children who ceased to be subject of a CP Plan after less than 3 months. It is anticipated that the number (and rate) of children subject to a CP Plan will increase as the rate of Looked After Children decreases, following the ongoing reviews of the PLO and the Pre-Proceedings work. This anticipation will show an achievement of the goal that all children will receive the right level of appropriate intervention.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Take up of 2 year old offer by eligible families as identified by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)	Quarterly Higher is better	70.0% (Q1 2015-16)		88.1% (2016-17)	92.6% (Apr-Jul 2017)		95.0% (Sept-Dec 2017)		Better	Funding data is collected on a termly basis. The current figure of 95% is from the Autumn headcount and is currently provisional.
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development	Annual Higher is better	20.0% (2013-14 Acad Year)		52.6% (2015-16 Acad Year)				47.8% (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	Provisional data for the 2016-17 Academic Year is 47.8%. This is reduction of 4.8% from the previous year (52.6%), however with a larger cohort more Children Looked After attained a good level of development (12) than in the previous year.
The percentage of referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals.	Monthly Lower is better	22.80% (2014-15)	England: 21.90% (2016-17) North West: 21.70% (2016-17) Statistical Neighbours: 19.20% (2016-17)	21.10% (2016-17)	17.80% (Apr-Jun 2017)	16.00% (Apr-Sept 2017)	18.40% (Apr-Dec 2017)		Worse	The most recent figure is the April - December 2017 annualised percentage. This shows a slight increase compared to the previous quarter (2.4%).
Number of Team Around Family episodes closed with needs met	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a			83 (Apr-Jun 2017)	226 (Jul-Sept 2017)	324 (Oct-Dec 2017)		n/a	This is a new measure, the end of year figure will be used as a baseline for 2018-19 trend. Performance is reported for the number of individual cases by children and not by family. This is consistent with other reporting measures within the Local Authority.
Children's Centre's sustained contact with priority groups in early years	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a			54.91% (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017)	57.80% (Oct 2016 - Sept 2017)	63.83% (Jan-Dec 2017)		Better	The performance in quarter 3 is 63.83% based on sustained contact between January 2017 and December 2017. This shows a 6.03% increase from the previous reporting period.

Reduce child and family poverty

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

The Improving Life Chances (ILC) Steering Group has continued to work to tackle child poverty collectively in Wirral and build on the positive initiatives established in the community pilot areas.

The annual Improving Life Chances Event was held in October, the event was well attended and provided the opportunity for the community pilot areas to share good practice and network following the session. One of the key messages highlighted during the session was the huge amount of support that volunteers are providing within their communities. Following the event, we have learnt of one of the attending organisations putting the learning into practice and establishing a social supermarket within their community.

A further session was held for a wide range of community agencies on Universal Credit and the support that is available locally for families, including key messages that they need to share with families that they are working with, such as ensuring that they apply for free school meals that are entitled to them, applying for council tax rebate and take up of budgeting advice and advance loan when required.

The Community Connectors continue to provide support in the community. Anecdotal feedback is that they are seeing a lot of families in crisis with little food or in financial hardship due to benefits being delayed or stopped. They supported a number of families over the Christmas period and referred over 100 people into the Christmas hamper scheme as well as supporting the delivery of hampers. They also referred and signposted a number of individuals into different Christmas meals and activities. As a consequence of this activity they are going to be working more closely with the foodbanks. They have also made strong links with schools, particularly Bidston Village Primary which has resulted in referrals being made from the school, and a playground drop in to promote the service was held in November.

The Improving Life Chances community pilots are currently being evaluated to inform developments going forward. Interviews have been taking place with key organisations, volunteers and the members of the community and will be presented in February for discussion at the next steering group.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
The Proportion of children in low income families	Annual Lower is better	21.5% (Aug 2013)	England: 19.9% (Aug 2014) North West: 22.6% (Aug 2014)	23.3% (Aug 2014)					n/a	The latest update available is a snapshot as at 31st August 2014. This was published in September 2016 due to a two year time lag. Further updates will be reported when they become available.
Increase the employment rate in Wirral	Quarterly Higher is better	66.7 (2014-15)	England: 74.7 (Oct 2016 - Sept 2017) North West: 72.6 (Oct 2016 - Sept 2017)	69.7 (Apr 2015 - Mar 2016)	70.8 (Apr 2016 - Mar 2017)	71.3 (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017)	71.2 (Oct 2016 - Sept 2017)		Better	Performance, as reported via National Survey Data, has decreased by 0.1% since the last quarter. However, North West and national figures show a trend of improvement.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Percentage of smokefree pledges that are still active with those people who have been smokefree for 6 months in Community Pilot areas	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a							n/a	This will start to be reported in Q4 for the first time.
Take up of the 2-2½ year Health Visitor child development reviews in the Community Pilot areas	Quarterly Higher is better	65.6% (Q1 2015-16)	Wirral: 76.7% (2016-17)	70.5% (2016-17)	84.0% (Q1 2017-18)	83.1% (Q2 2017-18)			Worse	Quarter 2 2017/18 latest figure available. Performance has been improving steadily over the last 12 months although the latest quarter has shown a slight decrease in performance (Q1 84%), but this is higher than the performance overall in Wirral for this review.
Increase number of organisations signed up to Wirral Credit Union	Annual Higher is better	n/a		21 (2016-17)				1 (Dec 2017)	Worse	We have had 1 new organisation sign up for our payroll deduction scheme, Age UK Wirral. We have 2 more in the pipeline for the beginning of the year, Homestart and Autism Together.

People with disabilities live independent lives

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

It's pleasing to see that the health related quality of life for people with long term conditions is has improved for our residents since March 2016. Wirral is closing the gap on the average across the country.□

There's no employment rate figure to report this quarter. The Office for National Statistics will resume providing this once they've reinforced the quality of the estimates they use. Wirral Metropolitan College's supported intern scheme continues to go from strength to strength. The college reported some challenges around people who are looked after or in supported living being able to sustain employment after the programme. To date, over 30 organisations have signed up to receive emails targeting protected groups to promote recruitment opportunities.

Wirral currently has 22 employers who are Disability Confident at Level 1, 12 at Level 2 and one at Level 3. A tele-conference was held in October to Wirral Council, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and other Wirral employers seeking to become a Leader (Level 3) and DWP have organised a meeting in January to encourage Level 2 employers to achieve Level 3 status.

The introduction of pre-payment cards has had a really positive effect in quarter 3 which saw the number of adults reported to be in receipt of personal budgets increasing from 651 to 899.

Adults with a learning disability who live in stable and appropriate accommodation has decreased slightly this quarter from 84.1% to 83.9% however Wirral remains ahead of the latest North West and National averages. A number of sites are being considered for Extra Care housing which if progressed would see 360 units developed and a draft Extra Care & Supported Living Strategy is currently out for consultation.

The All Age Disability Service was approval at Cabinet in November. A report setting out the final details of how social care assessment and support planning functions will be joined up with a health provider to give us greater flexibility while allowing us to develop a single service for health and social care professionals will be provided to Cabinet in spring. The All Age Disability Service will lead to improved quality and consistency of service provision and reduce service barriers related to age and eligibility.

Data is currently being collected from GP surgeries to establish improve our understanding of the prevalence and types of disability across Wirral. This will enable us to make more insightful decisions around service provision.

The Local Offer website is in the process of being improved to offer better knowledge and awareness of services across Wirral. Lessons have been learned from the case study of Liverpool City Region's Live Well platform.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Page 26	Health related quality of life for people with long term conditions	0.698 (Jul 2014 - Mar 2015)	England: 0.737 (Jan-Mar 2017)	0.695 (July 2015 - Mar 2016)				0.700 (Jan-Mar 2017)	Better	Health-related quality of life for people with long-term conditions improved to 0.700 from 0.695 the previous year but falls short of the average for the rest of England (0.737). For the 2016/17 reporting period, the timing of the GP Patient Survey (GPPS) fieldwork has changed. Historically two waves have been run, one wave between July and September one year, and the next wave between January and March the following year. The 2016/17 GPPS survey condensed these two fieldwork periods into a single period between January and March. They have maintained the overall sample size of the survey.
	Employment rate aged 16-64 - Equality Act core or Work Limiting Disabled	37.5% (Jul 2014 - Jun 2015)	England: 52.9% (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017) North West: 47.9% (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017)	44.0% (Jan-Dec 2016)	43.1% (Apr 2016 - Mar 2017)	42.2% (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017)			n/a	Publication of health and disability variables from the Annual Population Survey have been suspended from the October 2016 to September 2017 period onwards, whilst further quality assurance of the estimates takes place by the Office for National Statistics.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
The gap in progress between pupils with a SEN statement/EHCP and their peers at Key Stage 4	Annual Lower is better	n/a	England: 1.09 (2015-16 Acad Year) North West: 1.00 (2015-16 Acad Year)	0.86 (2015-16 Acad Year)				1.22 (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	The latest 2016-17 figure is provisional. Provisionally, the gap in progress between pupils with a SEN Statement/EHCP and their peers at KS4 was 1.22. This figure was -1.09 for pupils with SEN Statement/EHCP and 0.13 for their peers.
Proportion of people with long term conditions who feel supported to manage their condition	Annual Higher is better	66.7% (Jul 2014 - Mar 2015)	England: 64.0% (Jan-Mar 2017)	68.0% (Jul 2015 - Mar 2016)				67.2% (Jan-Mar 2017)	Worse	Proportion of people who are feeling supported to manage their condition is 67.2% for the period January 2017 - March 2017. Whilst this has reduced from 68% the previous year it's still higher than 66.7% at the start of the plan and also higher than the National average of 64%. For the 2016/17 reporting period, the timing of the GP Patient Survey (GPPS) fieldwork has changed. Historically two waves have been run, one wave between July and September one year, and the next wave between January and March the following year. The 2016/17 GPPS survey condensed these two fieldwork periods into a single period between January and March. They have maintained the overall sample size of the survey.
The number of disabled people in receipt of personal budgets (including Direct Payments and Personal Health Budgets)	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a		669 (2016-17)	863 (Q1 2017-18)	852 (Q2 2017-18)	1,102 (Q3 2017-18)		Better	899 adults were reported by the Department of Adult Social Services to be in receipt of personal budgets (compared to 651 last quarter). 203 young people were in receipt of personal budgets which includes 192 direct payments, 3 Education, Health and Care Plan and 8 personal budgets. (201 last quarter)
Adults with a learning disability who live in stable and appropriate accommodation	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a	England: 75.4% (2015-16) North West: 82.6% (Q2 2017-18)	84.0% (2016-17)	83.7% (Q1 2017-18)	84.1% (Q2 2017-18)	83.9% (Q3 2017-18)		Worse	Ensuring people with disabilities have stable and appropriate accommodation improves their safety, increases their independence and reduces their risk of social exclusion. The quarter 3 figure, 83.93%, is slightly down from the start of the year but is ahead of the latest North West and National averages. Q3 benchmarks aren't available at the time of reporting.

Zero tolerance to domestic violence

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

I am pleased to report that the progress of this pledge has continued to deliver impressive outcomes across the whole of Wirral. The intention in the first years of the pledge was to increase awareness of domestic abuse, and a number of campaigns have been carried out to make this happen. In this reporting period the number of high risk cases are higher than the previous year. We are also supporting a higher number of children experiencing domestic abuse and are seeing a significant increase in the rate of referrals to social care for domestic abuse (age 18+ years). However the percentage of repeat domestic abuse cases (MARAC) has consistently reduced over last 3 quarters, the MARAC team are carrying out further analysis to ensure we have a clear understanding of the situation and can ensure the right support for victims.

We are moving closer to having an Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor (IDVA) in A&E at Wirral University Teaching Hospital (WUTH). The business case has been completed and is awaiting WUTH approval in February 2018.

There are a number of risk and challenges which the board are proactively addressing, these include:

- Young Person Domestic Abuse related offenders are beginning to raise some concern. The head of Safer Wirral Hub is convening a special workshop to seek solutions for these repeat cases. There will be also be a requirement to commission a young persons perpetrator programme.
- Referrals to the Family Safety Unit are down by 25% compared to same period last year; initial enquires indicate explanation for this is changes to police process. This is being looked into to ensure that we are clear why this is the case.
- There has been limited progress delivering programme of interventions across domestic abuse services through joint commissioning approach. We will be look to address this during 2018-19
- Mapping of domestic abuse service provision in Wirral to ensure that effective services are commissioned will be carried out in 2018-19.
- Evaluating effectiveness of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) domestic abuse cohort was originally due to be completed in September 2017. A joint agency group meets monthly to review cohort and feedback from safeguarding agencies regard IOM as a valuable option to enhance safeguarding of victims and potential victims

It is good to see that a workshop has been arranged in February for the Domestic Abuse Alliance to agree next years priorities and work programme.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Number of domestic abuse Wirral MARAC cases per 10,000 adult females	Quarterly Higher is better	54.0 (2014-15)	Most Similar Force Group: 44.0 (2016-17) National: 35.0 (2016-17)	51.7 (2016-17)	Green Actual: 13.3 Target: 13.0 (Apr-Jun 2017)	Green Actual: 27.3 Target: 27.0 (Apr-Sept 2017)	Green Actual: 37.7 Target: 36.0 (Apr-Dec 2017)		Better	The number of domestic abuse Wirral MARAC cases between April 2017-December 2017 was 517 which was higher than the same period in the previous year (497). The intention of the strategy is to increase awareness and improve reporting levels.
Children and young people experience domestic abuse (Wirral MARAC cases)	Quarterly Higher is better	1,289 (2014-15)		1,211 (2016-17)	355 (Apr-Jun 2017)	727 (Apr-Sept 2017)	936 (Apr-Dec 2017)		Better	New processes have been agreed around collecting this data which should capture a higher number of children supported in the future. This is a 16% increase on the same period last year (807).
Percentage of incidents of repeat domestic abuse (Wirral MARAC cases)	Quarterly Lower is better	16.0% (2014-2015)	Most Similar Force Group: 31.0% (2016-17) National: 26.0% (2016-17)	28.0% (2016-17)	Green Actual: 31.1% Target: 25.0% (Jul 2016 - Jun 2017)	Green Actual: 29.3% Target: 25.0% (Oct 2016 - Sept 2017)	Green Actual: 28.5% Target: 25.0% (Jan-Dec 2017)		Better	There were 729 MARAC cases from January 2017 to December 2017 of which 208 were repeat incidents (28.5%). This is lower than the previous period when there were 29.3% of incidents of repeat domestic abuse.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Number of Domestic Abuse cases referred to the Family Safety Unit (FSU)	Quarterly Higher is better	949 (2014-15)		1,092 (2016-17)	221 (Apr-Jun 2017)	462 (Apr-Sept 2017)	682 (Apr-Dec 2017)		Worse	Between April 2017 to December 17, the number of domestic abuse referrals made to the FSU was 682 which is a reduction of 25% when compared to the same period last year (852). The majority of referrals received by the unit are from the Police. Initial enquiries with Merseyside Police indicate that the explanation for this is a change in police processes and the implementation of a new Functional Policing Model.
% of children and Young People single assessments authorised with Domestic Violence (DV) related factors	Quarterly Lower is better	n/a		36.7% (2016-17)	35.5% (Apr-Jun 2017)	33.8% (Apr-Sept 2017)	34.3% (Apr-Dec 2017)		Better	Performance relates to assessments between April 2017-December 17. There has been a decrease (1.5%) when compared to the same period in the previous year (35.8%). Comparison with regional and national averages (Characteristics of children in need: 2016 to 2017 - SFR 61/2017) shows that the proportion of episodes with assessment factor information that identify domestic violence as a factor is higher in Wirral, however it is notable that some regional and statistical neighbour authorities have proportions that are similar to Wirral. Audits relating to thresholds will be undertaken at the Integrated Front Door, where domestic violence is a presenting issue along with reviews of the outcomes and interventions at Level 2,3 and 4 to determine appropriate services are in place to meet the family's needs.
Rate of referrals to social care presenting Domestic Violence issues (adults aged 18+ years) per 100,000	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a		12.62 (2016-17)	3.15 (Apr-Jun 2017)	7.49 (Apr-Sept 2017)	16.56 (Apr-Dec 2017)		Better	Data is currently provisional and for the period April-December 2017. This shows a significant increase from the same period last year (8.28) which is in line with the objective to raise awareness of domestic abuse in the first years to address under reporting.

Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for: Number of domestic abuse Wirral MARAC cases per 10,000 adult females, Children and young people experience domestic abuse (Wirral MARAC Cases), Number of domestic abuse cases referred to the FSU, % of children and Young People single assessments authorised with Domestic Violence (DV) related factors, Rate of referrals to social care presenting Domestic Violence issues (adults aged 18+ years) per 100,000 which are compared with same period the previous year.

Target - Where targets apply, these are shown as either Blue, Green, Amber, Red based on the agreed tolerance range for individual measures.



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 22 March 2018

REPORT TITLE:	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2017/18
REPORT OF:	Director of Finance and Investment

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for Children and Families in a format consistent across the Overview & Scrutiny Committees. The report provides Members with detail to scrutinise budget performance for this area of activity. The financial information is at close of quarter 3, 2017/18.

Information has been drawn from the relevant sections of the most recent Cabinet revenue and capital monitoring reports and combined with additional relevant service information to produce a bespoke report for this Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report includes the following:

- Performance against the revenue budget (including savings, income and debt)
- Performance against the capital budget

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1 The quarter 3 revenue forecast overspend of £3.9 million be noted.
- 2 The performance of the capital projects be noted.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 To provide members with details of the financial performance of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's area.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Not applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 PERFORMANCE AGAINST REVENUE BUDGETS QUARTER 3 (APRIL 2017- DECEMBER 2017)

3.1.0 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

3.1.1 The 2017/18 Budget was agreed by Council on 6 March 2017. Any increase to the overall Council Budget (but not use of the existing budget contingency) requires agreement by full Council. Changes to the Budget since it was set are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: 2017/18 Original & Revised Net Budget by Wirral Plan Themes

	Original Net Budget	Budget Change Quarter 1 Use of Contingen cy	Budget Change Quarter 1 Use of Balances	Approved Budget Changes Qtr 3	Revised Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People - Children & Families	80,616	5,000	-	- 7,323	78,293
Net Cost of Services	80,616	5,000	-	- 7,323	78,293

3.1.2 A number of changes have been made to the overall budget figure. Integrated transport has transferred from Children and Families to Environment. This has a budget of £5.6 million. There have also been adjustments to recharge bases resulting in budget changes.

3.2.0 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

3.2.1 The projected outturn position as at the end of December 2017 and Wirral Plan: 2020 Vision Themes updates are detailed in the following sections.

Table 2: 2017/18 Projected Budget variations by Wirral Plan Themes

Directorates	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overspend	RAGBY Class	Change from prev
			Quarter 3		
People - Children & Families	78,293	82,198	3,905	R	36
TOTAL	78,293	82,198	3,905		36

The report classifies the forecast under/overspends for the above areas using a colour RAGBY rating. The ratings are defined as follows:

- Overspends Red (over +£301k), Underspend Yellow (over -£301k).
- Amber (+£141k to +£300k), Green (range from +£140k to -£140k); Blue (-£141k to -£300k).

3.2.2 People - Children & Families

- The predicted overspend is £3.9 million which is after the allocation of £5 million from the Contingency as highlighted in Section 3.1.
- Agency social worker costs are impacting due to a number of vacant posts within the existing establishment together with a number of posts requiring sickness / maternity cover. Whilst there is an ongoing strategy to recruit Social Work posts the shortages are a regional / national issue. At this stage there is a £0.5 million overspend forecast for this element.
- The numbers of Looked After Children (LAC) are continuing to rise. The current number is 839 (819 were reported in September). The projected overspend is £3.4 million after the Contingency. Care placements are carefully managed through the weekly Planning for Children Panel. Monthly meetings are taking place to review placement spend. However overall numbers are increasing.
- Services for children with disabilities are forecast to overspend by £0.5 million as a consequence of the rising costs of domiciliary care and the impact of direct payments together with the savings in this area proving difficult to deliver through increased numbers.
- There are a number of other areas with underspends to bring the total to the £3.9 million figure.

3.3.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAVINGS

- 3.3.1 A summary of the position of 2017/18 Children and Families savings at 31 December 2017 is below.

Table 3: Savings Implementation 2017/18 (£000's)

Theme	Number of Options	Approved Budget Reduction	Amount Delivered at Q3	Amount covered by contingency budget	To be Delivered
People - Children & Families	2	1,400	0	1,400	0
Total at Quarter 3 2017-18	2	1,400	0	1,400	0

At quarter 3 both of the savings options in this theme are rated as red. The options relate to demand suppression within year. Due to the increased demand within Children and Families those savings are rated as failing. However they have been covered by £1.4 million of contingency budget in 2017/18.

3.4.0 INCOME AND DEBT

3.4.1 The table shows the outstanding debt for the whole of the council, value of debtors raised in year and the value that has been paid in 2017/18. This is different from previous quarter in an effort to show the amount of debt that is recovered each year. This year has seen £62 million of net invoices raised but has seen £68 million of payments. This will be across 2017/18 but also invoices raised in previous years.

Table 4: Accounts Receivable Debtor Cycle Analysis

	2017/18 £000
Arrears Brought Forward	£26,465
Net Invoices Value Raised in Year	£62,498
Invoices Value Paid in Year	-£68,219
Total Remaining Debt	£20,744

3.4.2 The above debt reflects the Council's significant responsibilities in respect of social care activity. Elements of the debt will only be recoverable once clients are no longer in need of care.

3.4.3 In accordance with proper accounting practice, income is credited to the relevant financial year's accounts of the service area at the point invoices are raised. A provision for bad debt is maintained and is assessed each year. Should non-payment occur after proceeding through all necessary recovery procedures, any properly authorised write off will be charged against the bad debt provision.

3.5.0 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS QUARTER 3 (April-December 2017)

3.5.1 Capital Programme 2017/18 at end of Quarter 3 (31 December)

	Revised Programme	Spend to Date Dec 2017	Funded by: Council Resources	Funded by: Grants
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Children & Families	15,273	4,935	11,682	3,926
Total expenditure	15,273	4,935	11,682	3,926

3.5.2 The majority of expenditure charged so far relates to schools related capital (£3.3 million). As with previous years the works to schools are largely programmed to be undertaken during the school holiday periods. Some of the more recent developments are:

Meadowside Special School: Construction of new hydrotherapy pool and changing facilities. The design is fully accessible for all pupils and includes a new boiler plant room, showers, medical rooms, improved heating and lighting and new external and internal windows. The project is due for completion in April 2018 and has been designed in-house.

Stanley / Foxfield Special Schools: Two new sensory gardens now completed and designed by external landscape architects. The design included pupil friendly plantations, sensory play equipment, accessible pathways in varied textures and finishes and covered teaching areas.

Mosslands High School: New flat roof installation to the school main block. Refurbishment of top floor classrooms including heating, lighting, floors, ceilings and full re-decoration.

Town Lane Infants: This project is part of our pupil place planning [sufficiency] and includes the expansion of the building and internal modernisation including new classrooms, new toilets, resource areas, improved heating and lighting, external access and play. The project is due for completion end of February 2018 and has been designed in-house.

3.5.3 The Transformation Programme includes significant funding (£10 million) in respect of the Improvement Plan for Children's Services which is being implemented with investment in staff across a number of critical areas. These will help address the needs of those leaving care with more PA's, strengthen the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Safeguarding teams, address high caseloads, improve information within the department and enhance Early Help and Prevention services. The costs will be transferred to the Capital Programme during the year.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial implications of this report are discussed throughout the report. This is essentially a financial monitoring performance update report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The entire report concerns the duty of the Council to avoid a budget shortfall. The Chief Finance Officer has a personal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 Section 114A to make a report to the executive if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources available to it to meet that expenditure.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The possible failure to deliver the Revenue Budget is being mitigated by:

- Senior Leadership Team / Management Teams reviewing the financial position.
- Tracking system of savings options to monitor progress.
- Use of temporary additional support to assist with revenues collection.
- Use of earmarked reserves and General Fund Balance savings risk contingency.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This report is essentially a monitoring report which reports on financial performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Capital Programme and Funding 2017/18

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Budget Council	6 March 2017
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 1	17 July 2017
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 1	17 July 2017
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 2	6 November 2017
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 2	6 November 2017
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 3	19 February 2018
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Quarter 3	19 February 2018

			Funding				
People Theme	Revised Programme £000	Spend to Date £000	Council Resources £000	Reserves £000	Business Rates £000	Grants £000	Total Funding £000
Family support schemes	191	34	191	-	-	-	191
Stanley Special additional classrooms etc.	4	12	4	-	-	-	4
School condition allocation	3,000	2,019	-	-	-	3,000	3,000
Basic needs	676	635	-	-	-	676	676
Transformation Programme Children's Services	9,550	6,163	9,550	-	-	-	9,550
School remodelling (Primary places)	1,402	640	1,152	-	-	250	1,402
	14,823	9,503	10,897	-	-	3,926	14,823



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22ND MARCH 2018

REPORT TITLE	Effectiveness of audit
REPORT OF	Kerry Mehta

REPORT SUMMARY

The report will update on current activity regarding the use of audits and how this is used to improve practice. The report will give an overview of why audits are crucial as part of practice improvement and how they are used to give a baseline of current practice. It will explain how audits are used to identify which areas of practice training will need to target. Finally the report will give an overview of the recent learning and which areas of strength and areas for development have been identified.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Notes the report.
- 2) Considers how frequently updates on the findings from audits are presented.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To enable the committee to be updated on the progress being made in children's services.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Audits are key tools for looking at the quality of practice. They allow us to understand the impact of services provided on an individual child and their family. Case auditing is used by Ofsted as a key part of the inspection and monitoring process. Information gathered from audits, data, case sampling and feedback ensures services are regularly evaluated enabling us to

- Embed quality in service delivery through reinforcing and embedding practice standards.
- Ensure that risk is managed and decision making is effective.
- Engender an organisational culture that is committed to learning and development.
- Support the continuous improvement and development of the children's workforce.
- To ensure that the views of children and families are now captured within the quality assurance process.
- To enable senior managers to use the data to measure performance of the service against the Local Authority's Improvement Plan.

How we audit and use audits

- Auditing is an integral part of the organisational culture. The quality assurance unit is independent of case work line management responsibility and provides an objective overview.
- Performance information is analysed by the auditing team, which helps to identify good practice and vulnerabilities within the service.
- Auditing provides an overview of current social work and line management practice
- The collation of information and data from audits measures the performance of the service as well as quality of practice.
- The outcome of audit is used by senior strategy managers as a strategy to identify trends and learning needs within Service areas.
- Reports of findings are shared across the service for shared learning and key drivers for workforce development
- Findings drive practice improvement forward by identifying gaps in training and changes required to policy and practice.
- Actions from audits are tracked to ensure compliance and learning

Learning from Audits

- Learning from audits can be on many different levels, from an individual social work or team manager level to identifying collective departmental performance and trends.
- Social workers are involved with the audit process which is used for reflective practice
- Practice learning has been delivered to the service on audit themes
- Managers can use the completed audit to undertake reflective sessions with the social worker.
- Any immediate identification of risk to children is acted upon by managers
- Trends can be addressed operationally and strategically.
- Identified training needs are shared with the workforce development department
- The QA team holds meetings with Team Managers to provide feedback on the learning from audit. This is then shared with social workers
- Examples of both good and poor practice are used for learning within the practitioners group
- Good practice is identified and shared across the service

Recent audits and what we have learnt

From recent audit work undertaken we have learnt that there are areas of strengths and areas for further development:

Strengths

Social work visits are improving in being completed in timescales

Case recording is improving

There is evidence of good challenge to parents and investigative practice by social workers

Voice of the child is demonstrated from audit

Areas for Development

There is still improvement to be made in the areas of children's care plans. Care plans need to be kept up to date and include all known concerns and information regarding children

The recording on files reflect the Social Work activity

The quality of children's chronologies needs to improve and contain full information pertinent to children

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

None

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

None

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

None

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Auditing ensures that the council is meeting its requirements in individual cases to consider equality issues.

REPORT AUTHOR: Kerry Mehta
Head of Improvement
6.3.18

APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 22 March 2018

REPORT TITLE:	Reality Check Visit - Feedback report - Performance Dashboard
REPORT OF:	Chair of the Committee – Cllr Tom Usher

REPORT SUMMARY

Committee members have previously agreed the principle of undertaking a series of Reality Check visits by small groups of members to enable those members to engage directly with frontline staff and better understand the services delivered for children. This report provides feedback from a visit to a demonstration of the Performance Dashboard on Monday 19th February 2018.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Notes the report.
- 2) Considers any points to be learned prior to the next of the Reality Check visits.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The Reality Check visit and subsequent recommendations will enable Committee members to complete part of the Committee's work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Principles of Reality Check visits

Key to the success of scrutiny is the ability of members to check evidence from a variety of sources. While members routinely receive reports from senior management and have access to performance monitoring reports, it is suggested that greater access to frontline staff and service users would enable scrutiny members to triangulate evidence with other sources and would give members greater confidence in the outcomes of their scrutiny work. It was, therefore, agreed at the meeting of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee held in June 2017 to establish a programme of Reality Check Visits through which scrutiny members could engage independently and directly with frontline staff.

Key operating principles for the visits include:

- A programme of visits will be scheduled and will form part of the Committee's work programme. A visit will normally take place approximately every eight weeks. Visits will be set or amended taking into account the programme of externally set scrutiny by Ofsted and the Department of Education.
- There will be no direct relationship between each visit. Therefore, Members may volunteer to participate in any particular visit.
- Prior to each visit, a short briefing note will be prepared to inform members of the function of the service area, background information and any issues directly relevant to the Ofsted report.
- Each visit will comprise a maximum of six members supported by a scrutiny officer. A visit will usually take a maximum of 2 hours.
- The visits will give Members the opportunity to talk directly to staff so they can understand their perspective of the service. Members will be able to ask questions directly, for example, on caseloads, support offered to staff, auditing of cases and the outcomes for children and families.
- The findings from each visit will be reported to the next meeting of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3.2 Visit to a demonstration of the Performance Dashboard – 19th February 2018

The visit to review the Performance Dashboard took place on Monday 19th February 2018 at Hamilton Building. Cllrs Tom Usher (Chair), Alan Brighthouse, Chris Meaden and Jean Stapleton took part in the visit, which was hosted by Simone White (Deputy Director: Children's Care Services). She was accompanied by a number of managers / staff who either support the development of the dashboard or interrogate the data held within it.

Members were provided with a demonstration of the on-line dashboard which is used as a management tool to monitor performance within children's social care. The dashboard, which provides a strategic overview, is updated daily with data from the primary system used by social workers, Liquid Logic. The dashboard has been operational for only five months and is undergoing further development in the future. However, an assessment of alternative systems is also due to take place. Prior to the introduction of the dashboard, managers relied on Launchpad, a system based on Microsoft Excel, which provided access to data but was not interactive and some data was difficult to access quickly.

Members were also given an opportunity to review a hardcopy of the Data Tracker, which provides a snapshot of data on a monthly basis. This document is used to provide a regular update to the Improvement Board, focussing on key performance indicators.

3.3 Key findings from the visit

Key messages provided to the members included:

- Data is vital to the service, although not a single piece of data provides the whole picture of the service. It is, therefore, important to check data against other sources of information in order to form a judgement regarding the strength of the service provision.
- Historically, there has been a culture in Wirral of not having tools to check that procedures are always being followed. The introduction of the dashboard is now helping to drive a performance culture. It was suggested that the dashboard is starting to change practice as the up-to-date data enables senior managers to identify key issues and ask the appropriate questions. The dashboard provides information which enables effective challenge to be given by managers asking the right questions.
- Members were informed that the roll out of new IT equipment, enabling agile working by social workers, will commence on 2nd March and will continue for two months. Agile working will give social workers more flexibility regarding the input of data when it best suits them. This should result in the more timely input of data into Liquid Logic.
- The use of mobile kit will enable social workers to input data during a visit. This will allow, for example, the views of a child to be recorded or they can draw a picture. The voice of the child will be more inclusive.
- The information provided by the dashboard will also give more ability to better forecast the future and predict future demands on the service.

- Although the dashboard provides quantitative data, no qualitative information is directly available. However, the dashboard is a tool which enables key questions to be asked.
- Members were reassured that there has been an improvement in the documenting of case summaries, which tells the story of the child. It is important that children have a history as they grow up, understand where they are and where they are going.
- Members were informed that there is now much more confidence that the Integrated Front Door is more effective. This view is based on assessing the data supported by dip sampling and auditing of individual cases.

3.4 Member's conclusions following the visit to review the Performance Dashboard

Key conclusions reached by the Members were:

3.4.1 Positives

- Members were impressed by the extent of the up-to-date information which is available to enable the on-line interrogation of data. It is anticipated that this will help in the drive towards developing a performance culture in children's social care.
- The audit trail provided by the dashboard will be advantageous in measuring performance over time.
- There is a significant contrast between the accessibility of data from the dashboard and the previous tool, based on Microsoft Excel.
- The accessibility of data will enable management to quickly identify statistics which are not within normal or expected standards. This will facilitate more detailed questioning by managers and the identification of areas of poor practice. The dashboard informs the lines of enquiry which need to be followed by managers.
- The dashboard provides managers with the ability to dive into increasing levels of detail, enabling team managers to become more fully conversant with individual cases; a weakness identified in the original Ofsted inspection report (September 2016).
- Members welcome the forthcoming report to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will provide an audit summary of case files.

3.4.2 Challenges

- It is recognised that further developments are required for the dashboard. Additional feedback from the workforce is being gathered in order to inform any planned improvements.
- Members were informed that some functionality was not yet available in the current version of the dashboard, although a further update should be available in approximately six months. This will include additional data to support the work of the safeguarding unit. Members raised concerns regarding the length of time before the upgraded version of the dashboard was due to be available.

- Members were informed that there are more sophisticated dashboards available in the market. It is not clear to the Members why a software package was not selected which would provide all of the required functionality.
- In particular, the need for some detailed data to be accessed from Liquid Logic (rather than directly via the dashboard) causes operational issues.
- Members were advised that there are a number of reporting packages, with the capability of providing both high level reporting and detailed deep analysis of the Council's databases, were currently being considered. Members would welcome a further report on the outcome of this work.
- It was noted that the timely input of data into Liquid Logic by social workers determines the accuracy of reported data in the dashboard. Members note that the planned roll-out of IT equipment to support agile working is due to commence on 2nd March. Members seek reassurance that the roll-out takes place as planned.
- Members agreed that regular reporting of information from the data tracker to meetings of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee would strengthen member's ability to scrutinise the ongoing improvement of the service. This will be of particular importance as the time approaches in the future when the Improvement Board is no longer in place. In those circumstances, the Overview and Scrutiny committee will need to feel confident that the framework is in place to enable members to provide appropriate scrutiny and oversight.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not Applicable

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information to members and there are no direct equality implications.

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APPENDICES: None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday 22nd March 2018

REPORT TITLE:	Improving Life Chances pledge
REPORT OF:	Chair of the Improving Life Chances Steering Group, Bev Morgan (CEO of Home Start Wirral)

REPORT SUMMARY

The Improving Life Chances pledge is co-ordinated by the multi-agency Improving Life Chances Steering Group. Within the group there are specific leads for each of the priority action areas. These leads work in partnership with appropriate agencies to deliver the identified actions. The group meets on a quarterly basis to provide updates, share any challenges and agree progress updates.

The report provides the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee with progress on the priority areas for the Improving Life Chances pledge.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that the Committee notes the report and the proposed actions for taking the priority areas in the Improving Life Chances pledge forward.

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Improving Life Chances pledge is co-ordinated by the multi-agency Improving Life Chances Steering Group. Within the group there are specific leads for each of the priority action areas. These leads work in partnership with appropriate agencies to deliver the identified actions. The group meets on a quarterly basis to provide updates, share any challenges and agree progress updates.

The initial ambition set out in the strategy was to work with partners to look at opportunities to tackle child and family poverty in Wirral communities and break the cycle of disadvantage. Many of these areas are delivered through strategies that underpin the Wirral Plan and pledges. These include, growth, children being ready for work and adulthood, housing and skills. The priorities for action were informed through evaluation of national research and best practice, together with insight from local residents and key stakeholders.

The strategy was developed in partnership with local families and a range of public, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and informed through a review of national good practice. The group is chaired by Bev Morgan, Chief Executive of Home Start (Wirral). The focus has been on establishing community pilots in Seacombe, Bidston and St James and Beechwood to target action and evaluate the impact of this effort. The community pilots are a local partnership of residents, councillors, community groups and agencies who meet every six weeks. Each pilot area has developed and monitor progress against a joint action plan.

1.1 Priority areas in the Improving Life Chances strategy:

Priority 1: Overarching actions

Priority 2: Supporting parents into sustainable employment

Priority 3: Improve life chances for children and young people

Priority 4: Supporting families to become financially resilient

Priority 5: Tackling the immediate effects of poverty.

1.2 Overview of progress

The body of this report seeks to provide members with an overview of activity and outcomes delivered during 2017-18, it does not include activity from earlier stages of the Wirral Plan period (Quarter 3 performance report for 2017-18 is attached as Appendix 1).

The most recent data released in the last month on children living in low income families shows a drop for Wirral to 19.9% from the 23.3% reported in the Quarter 3 performance report. It should be noted that the data relates to 2015.

1.3 Priority 1: Overarching actions:

What we said we would do:

- organise an annual Improving Life Chances/Child Poverty conference to raise awareness of issues affecting local families, highlight local services and celebrate achievements and to further develop opportunities for joint action
- target specified agencies to complete child poverty awareness training
- monitor the impact of community pilots
- co-ordination and support volunteering groups in each of the community pilot areas
- reduce smoking in community pilot areas

What we have done so far:

The second annual Life Chances/Child Poverty conference was held in October and attended by a range of organisations. Each pilot area presented on their activities, achievements and challenges. These included:

- Cookery clubs/Education and wellbeing courses/foodbanks
- Increased partnership working
- Improved community engagement

It provided the opportunity for sharing good practice and learning from the more developed community pilot areas. The presentations were followed by a networking session.

Uptake of the e-learning training has been limited, feedback from some agencies has suggested that condensed training at team meetings would be more appropriate, this is currently being explored. Face to face child poverty awareness training continues to be delivered, although this is limited at present it has evaluated well. Workshops were provided around the rollout of Universal Credit (UC), both for the Steering Group and community organisations, the sessions were well attended and gave participants key messages to share/signposting for their clients. The popularity of the additional session provided in q3 on Universal Credit and available local support further demonstrated the preference for face to face sessions. Following this session a resource pack was developed for councillors and other key stakeholders.

Citizens Advice Bureau held a course in September to training frontline volunteers in community pilot areas around navigating their website to enable them to support the people that they are working with. The community pilots are heavily supported through volunteering activity, examples include the following:

- A series of community clean ups have taken place by community members and local organisations
- Forty sites entered across the community pilot areas entered the In Bloom competition

Volunteer sessions have been planned with Community Action Wirral for quarter 4 to recruit more volunteers in each of the pilot areas.

A drop in smoking cessation clinic commenced at Seacombe Children's Centre in January with staff being trained to deliver brief advice and intervention training around second-hand smoke. A Better Life's (ABL-smoking cessation provider) specialist pregnancy adviser will be available one day a week at the centre. A similar offer is currently being negotiated with St James' Children's Centre.

An evaluation to date of the community pilots has been completed and the final report will be available in April 2018.

Evidence of impact

Just one example following the annual event has been a local voluntary sector organisation trialling a social supermarket similar to one of the community pilots.

Following the UC session a resource pack was developed for councillors and other key stakeholders. Feedback on the session was positive, and illustrated the strong local partnership working to mitigate the impact of the implementation of digital Universal Credit.

Both the 'In Bloom' and 'Clean Up' activities not only presented volunteering opportunities, they also resulted in improvements in the physical environment and improvement in the mental wellbeing of those taking part and the people living in the area.

The evaluation of the community pilots demonstrates a range of outcomes, including: engagement of local communities, increased opportunities for volunteering, reduction in anti-social behaviour, improved wellbeing through debt advice.

Next steps

The Improving Life Chances Steering Group will continue to provide opportunities for good practice to be shared and celebrated. We will provide regular key updates/practical tips/signposting for agencies to support families experiencing poverty to mitigate the lack of uptake of the child poverty awareness training.

We will be considering the findings of the evaluation in relation to the aim of reducing the number of children and young people living in poverty (this is discussed more fully in the main body of the report).

Ensure that the learning and good practice from the pilots is shared and further areas developed and the work taken forward strategically as part of the Wirral Together approach.

1.4 Priority 2: Supporting parents into sustainable employment

What we said we would do:

- Provide employment training courses at children's centres and appropriate settings in the community
- Promote affordable childcare opportunities in community pilot areas to enable parents to return to work

What we have done so far:

DWP have been providing a range of group information sessions, which included two of the children's centres – Ganney's Meadow and Bromborough.

Catering courses have been delivered in partnership with Crosby Training and Tranmere Rovers FC. In addition, a job fair was delivered at the ground by DWP and a range of key stakeholders.

Wirral Early Childhood Services delivered a campaign during the summer school break promoting the 30 hours free childcare offer for working parents.

The Lifelong Learning Service has provided Education and Skills courses and session in each of the pilot areas, with one of the areas running a job club.

Evidence of Impact

The job fair was well attended by 260 people, over 300 job applications were made and 60 training opportunities discussed on the day.

As an example of the Life Long Learning opportunities offered, during 2017/18 in Bidston and St James, 94 people accessed education and learning courses. Just under a third had no previous qualifications, whilst 40% had achieved Level 2 or below qualifications prior to the course. Following the course, 97% indicated that they intended to complete further learning.

At the start of the summer prior to the awareness campaign around free childcare uptake of the offer was 60%, by 1st September this had risen to 75%.

Next steps

To develop a more strategic approach to increasing employment for parents in the community pilot areas through linking up with other pledges areas, such as the Growth Strategy.

1.5 Priority 3: Improve life chances for children and young people

What we said we would do:

- Work with Health Visitors to maximise the impact of the Healthy Child Programme in community pilot areas
- To increase take up of breakfast clubs/holiday provision in community pilot areas

What we have done so far:

Health visitors working in the pilot areas are striving to increase the uptake of the 2-2½ year developmental review to enable any additional support that a child may need in order to be ready for school to be identified early.

Healthy weaning sessions have been piloted and evaluated positively so have continued. Opportunities for joint working are currently being explored with children's centres and foodbanks, including the distribution of Healthy Start vitamins.

There is a range of food provision in the community pilot areas, which includes:

- hot meals as part of its Youth Club provision 3 times per week, plus 'fit and fed' sessions
- take away lunchboxes during school holidays
- breakfast bags during school holidays
- activity sessions which include meal shares

Evidence of impact

Uptake in the community pilot areas of the 2-2½ year old developmental reviews was 70.5% of those eligible at the start of the pledges, at the end of q2 this was now 83.1% (data is a quarter behind due to this being collected nationally).

As an example of holiday food provision, during the summer (quarter 2), in Bidston and St James alone 3896 meals were given out through youth clubs, family sessions and lunch box distribution.

Next steps

We are recommending that the need to tackle overweight and obesity in childhood is tackled through the steering group for children being ready for school. In particular, we will ask that the steering group targets action against levels of high need.

1.6 Priority 4: Supporting families to become financially resilient

What we said we would do

- Target frontline staff to raise awareness of debt and financial advice in community pilot areas
- Increase uptake of Wirral Credit Union among partners organisations and the wider community

What we have done so far

A number of events have been held through the year including the following:

Ask Us Wirral frontline staff learning event took place in June 2017, attendees included frontline staff working in community pilot areas. The event showcased routes to debt and financial advice including through the Ask Us Wirral service and the Building Better Opportunities Better Off Finance projects.

A workshop was delivered in September for staff working directly with families or supporting community groups in the pilot areas.

Wirral Credit Union roadshow was held in June 2017. The aim was to increase take up amongst staff and volunteers and raise awareness of benefits for clients.

Evidence of impact

As a result of the workshop staff reported increased access to debt and finance information and a greater understanding of pathways to get advice through the Ask Us Wirral service. The Ask Us Wirral Service is currently exceeding all targets set for the service. Feedback once clients get through to the service is positive, however, issues around capacity are still being addressed.

Between July and December, Wirral Credit Union signed up 130 new members, a third sector organisation signed up as a partner to enable staff members to have monthly payroll deductions and 2 other local organisations are currently in discussion to sign up.

Next steps

We will seek to strengthen the links with the Community Connectors/organisations that are able to provide initial signposting information and advice. Ask Us Wirral have committed to address any issues that clients have in getting through to their service.

1.7 Priority 5: Tackling the immediate effects of poverty

What we said we would do

- Implement a neighbourhood approach to tackle food poverty in community pilot areas
- Ensure the selective licensing scheme connects to the work of the ILC community pilots

What we have done so far:

Food hubs have been established in each of the community pilot areas, food is provided through subscription to Fareshare and his Church and they offer weekly non means tested discounted supermarkets to residents. Sources of food have also expanded to include Costco, Tesco, M&S and Nandos.

The food hubs also provide food within their sessional activities. Christmas hampers were distributed across the community pilot areas again this year.

Approval for expanding the selective licensing scheme was granted in December and consultation on the rollout to the additional areas is currently underway.

Evidence of impact

In each of the community pilot areas a range of support has been established around food provision from holiday/breakfast clubs, youth sessions providing a hot meal to social supermarkets/foodbanks/fuel vouchers. The following is an example of support provided:

“One evening we had a mum crying in the Centre. She regularly comes in for support via the social supermarket but she was crying because she had -£4 in her energy fuel account and had no money to top up her gas and electricity for that night. Usually we signpost to the St James Centre but it was closed. We didn’t have any spare funds at Gautby Road either; on occasion we do and are able to help but unfortunately not this time. Luckily, because of the Community Pilot’s we have been working in partnership with the Beechwood Little Centre, so I rang them and they were able to provide emergency assistance for the mum”.

The community pilots have now had time to become established within their areas and evaluation has recently been undertaken to inform their future development. Findings of the evaluation were presented to the Improving Life Chances Steering Group in February to inform identifying actions going forward.

2.0 Improving Life Chances Community Pilot Evaluation Feedback session

The evaluation of the community pilots was presented to the Improving Life Chances Steering Group meeting in February to discuss options/key actions for 2018/19. The presentation slides highlighting the findings are provided in Appendix 2. It was agreed that the success in engaging local communities and all that the community pilots have achieved should be celebrated and the good practice identified shared. However, in order to sustain the efforts that have gone in to establishing the pilots, it was agreed that they should be transitioned into the Wirral Together community engagement and volunteering strategy.

When the initial Improving Life Chances strategy was developed, it was acknowledged that child and family poverty is a multi-dimensional problem. There is increasing recognition that many of the actions required to tackle child poverty and improve life chances cannot be addressed in isolation and will be delivered through a number of other strategies including Children’s Families and Young Peoples, Domestic Abuse, Housing and All Age Disability.

One strategy that has the potential to have the biggest effect on reducing the number of children and young people living in poverty is the Wirral Growth Plan. There is clear evidence that reducing worklessness and improving the skills and opportunities for parents and young people is critical in linking economic growth and poverty reduction. It was proposed and agreed at the Steering Group Meeting to discuss the evaluation that it would be more effective to have child poverty as a strand running through appropriate pledge areas and for a ‘champion’ to be identified within those pledges to ensure that actions within other pledges seeks to address child poverty.

3.0 Challenges

The ILC Steering Group has identified the following challenges to reducing child poverty:

- It is acknowledged that the community pilot areas are achieving a whole range of positive outcomes as demonstrated through the evaluation which include community engagement and volunteering, however, there is limited evidence that they are reducing child poverty beyond tackling the immediate effects of poverty
- It is difficult to mitigate fully against the impact of national policy through local action, Universal Credit is an example of this, although tackling the immediate effect of poverty has been addressed
- Priorities of the communities will not always mirror those identified through review of good practice, and in order to fully engage communities they need to take ownership and drive projects/developments.

4.0 Next steps

The evidence from the evaluation demonstrates that there is real value in bringing communities together to look at how we can collectively make a difference in challenged communities. It must be acknowledged that, while this has value in its own right, it has not to date had a significant impact on child and family poverty. As discussed and agreed at the Improving Life Chances Steering Group, we will take the community pilot work forward as part of our approach to volunteering and community engagement and look to take priority actions forward through other key pledge strategies.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not applicable.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

Not applicable.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information only and there are no direct equality implications.

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APPENDICES: Two

Appendix 1

Quarter 3 performance report for 2017-18

Appendix 2

Improving Life Chances community pilot evaluation

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	

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Wirral Plan 2017-18 Q3 - Pledge Overview Report

Improving Life Chances Strategy

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

The Improving Life Chances (ILC) Steering Group has continued to work to tackle child poverty collectively in Wirral and build on the positive initiatives established in the community pilot areas.

The annual Improving Life Chances Event was held in October, the event was well attended and provided the opportunity for the community pilot areas to share good practice and network following the session. One of the key messages highlighted during the session was the huge amount of support that volunteers are providing within their communities. Following the event, we have learnt of one of the attending organisations putting the learning into practice and establishing a social supermarket within their community.

A further session was held for a wide range of community agencies on Universal Credit and the support that is available locally for families, including key messages that they need to share with families that they are working with, such as ensuring that they apply for free school meals that are entitled to them, applying for council tax rebate and take up of budgeting advice and advance loan when required.

The Community Connectors continue to provide support in the community. Anecdotal feedback is that they are seeing a lot of families in crisis with little food or in financial hardship due to benefits being delayed or stopped. They supported a number of families over the Christmas period and referred over 100 people into the Christmas hamper scheme as well as supporting the delivery of hampers. They also referred and signposted a number of individuals into different Christmas meals and activities. As a consequence of this activity they are going to be working more closely with the foodbanks. They have also made strong links with schools, particularly Bidston Village Primary which has resulted in referrals being made from the school, and a playground drop in to promote the service was held in November.

The Improving Life Chances community pilots are currently being evaluated to inform developments going forward. Interviews have been taking place with key organisations, volunteers and the members of the community and will be presented in February for discussion at the next steering group.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend (See Key)	Comment
The Proportion of children in low income families	Annual Lower is better	21.5% Aug 2013	England: 19.9% (Aug 2014) North West: 22.6% (Aug 2014)	23.3%					n/a	The latest update available is a snapshot as at 31st August 2014. This was published in September 2016 due to a two year time lag. Further updates will be reported when they become available.
Increase the employment rate in Wirral	Quarterly Higher is better	66.7 2014- 15	England: 74.7 (Oct 16 - Sept 17) North West: 72.6 (Oct 16 - Sept 17)	69.7	70.8	71.3	71.2		Better	Performance, as reported via National Survey Data, has decreased by 1% since the last quarter. However, North West and national figures show a trend of improvement.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2016-17	2017-18 Q1	2017-18 Q2	2017-18 Q3	Year End 2017-18	Trend	Comment
Percentage of smoke free pledges that are still active with those people who have been smoke free for 6 months in Community Pilot areas	Quarterly Higher is better	n/a							n/a	This will start to be reported in Q4 for the first time.
Take up of the 2-2½ year Health Visitor child development reviews in the Community Pilot areas	Quarterly Higher is better	65.6% Q1 2015-16	Wirral: 76.7% (2016-17)	70.5%	84.0%	83.1%			n/a	Quarter 2 2017/18 latest figure available. Performance has been improving steadily over the last 12 months although the latest quarter has shown a slight decrease in performance (Q1 84%), but this is higher than the performance overall in Wirral for this review.
Increase number of organisations signed up to Wirral Credit Union	Annual Higher is better			21				1	Worse	We have had 1 new organisation sign up for our payroll deduction scheme, Age UK Wirral. We have 2 more in the pipeline for the beginning of the year, Homestart and Autism Together.

Priority 01: Overarching actions:

Action	Lead Agency	Status Current Period	Timescale	Status	Progress (Outcome / Impact)

To organise an annual Improving Life Chances/Child Poverty conference to raise awareness of issues affecting local families, highlight local services and celebrate achievements and to further develop opportunities for joint actions	Wirral Council	Green	Jun 2016 - Oct 2017	Completed	The second annual Life Chances/Child Poverty conference was held in October and attended by a range of organisations. Each pilot area presented on their activities, achievements and challenges. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookery clubs/Education and wellbeing courses/foodbanks • Increased partnership working • Improved community engagement It provided the opportunity for the sharing good practice and each area learning from the more developed areas. The presentations were followed by a networking session. Just one example following the event has been a local voluntary sector organisation trialling a social supermarket similar to one of the community pilots.
To target specified agencies to complete the child poverty awareness training	Wirral Council	Amber	Apr 2017 - Mar 2020	In Progress	Uptake of the e-learning training continues to be limited, feedback from some agencies have suggested that condensed training at team meetings would be more appropriate, this is currently being explored. Face to face child poverty awareness training continues to be delivered, although this is limited at present it has evaluated well. The popularity of the additional session provided in q3 on Universal Credit and available local support further demonstrates the preference for face to face sessions. Following this session a resource pack was developed for councillors and other key stakeholders.
To monitor the impact of Community Pilots	Wirral Council	Green	Apr 2017 - Mar 2018	In Progress	160 Christmas KIND luxury hampers were delivered to families in crisis in the Seacombe community area before Christmas 2017. 200 hampers were delivered to families in crisis in Beechwood. The hampers included information about local services and initiatives. The North end community pilot delivered Christmas community bingo and a Christmas grotto at Gautby Road Play and Community Centre for local residents including food provision. In December 2017, Lifelong Learning delivered Christmas table decoration sessions in Seacombe, Beechwood (14 people) and Bidston Rise delivering to a minimum of 12 residents at each session and exploring if they wanted further training in different areas like maths and English etc. North end ILC community pilot has developed youth sessions to be delivered outdoors in Bidston Rise once a week to prevent ASB. The Gautby Road team are working with Beechwood to develop outreach services for young people in Beechwood. Bidston Rise team also distributed holiday food from 'Our House' to local community. They have also started up a new community bingo. The Sal's Shoes project continues and shoes from all the pilot areas will be collected and taken to Sal's Shoes HQ in January 2018. The ILC annual event took place in October 2017 at the Beechwood Little centre and celebrated the work of the individual ILC pilot projects. Beechwood ILC had their own awards celebration of the great work going on in their areas.
Co-ordinate and support volunteering groups in each Community Pilot area	Community Action Wirral	Green	Apr 2015 - Mar 2018	In Progress	The ILC community pilots are planning and working with CAW to develop volunteer session in community pilot areas to encourage volunteering in the local projects. The sessions will take place in Q4.
Reduce smoking in Community Pilot areas	ABL	Green	Apr 2017 - Mar 2018	In Progress	A drop in smoking cessation clinic (for anyone) will commence at Seacombe Children's Centre week commencing 8th January 2018 and staff will be trained to deliver brief advice and intervention training around second hand smoke during this month. ABL's specialist pregnancy adviser will be available one day a week at the Children's Centre. A similar offer is currently being negotiated with St James' Children's Centre. This needs to take into consideration the current, and very busy, smoking cessation clinic delivered at Birkenhead Medical Centre to avoid duplication. Beechwood: there are a number of smoking cessation clinics that are in close proximity to the estate and that are used by Beechwood residents. An offer has been made to work with local residents to identify the demand for a smoking cessation clinic on the estate.

Priority 02: Supporting parents into sustainable employment

Action	Lead Agency	Status Current Period	Timescale	Status	Progress (Outcome / Impact)
Provide employment and training courses at children's centres and appropriate settings in the Community Pilot areas	Department for Work and Pensions	Green	Apr 2016 - Mar 2018	In Progress	We are unable to utilise children's centres for training courses due to availability of rooms at children's centres. DWP community outreach workers are however delivering services from children's centres including Ganneys Meadow, Pensby and Bromborough sites where we deliver group information session and drop ins. We are also delivering from Women's Refugee, Magenta Living, Wirral Ways to Recovery, and Phoenix Futures. We plan to expand services to New Beginnings, New Ferry social enterprise, and are in discussions for outreach services and the delivery of "Get Smart" and basic IT Training courses from site.
Promote affordable childcare opportunities in Community Pilots to enable parents to return to work	Wirral Council	Amber	Apr 2015 - Mar 2018	In Progress	Discussions took place with Job Centre Plus to support courses with crèche by Early Childhood Service, it wasn't required this term. Work is ongoing to increase the uptake of the 2 year old offer.

Priority 03: Improve life chances for children and young people

Action	Lead Agency	Status Current Period	Timescale	Status	Progress (Outcome / Impact)
Work with Health Visitors to maximise the impact of Healthy Child Programme in Community Pilot areas	Wirral Community Trust	Amber	Apr 2015 - Mar 2018	In Progress	A targeted piece of work is underway in the Community Pilot areas around the 2 year review, the data from the 2 year old registrations in these areas is being used to target specific nurseries and offer a wider range of opportunities for the review. Increased visibility of the 0-19 service staff within settings and children's centre is also generating an increase in the uptake of the two year review and shared outcomes around Welcom screening to be more joined up to remove duplication of work.
To increase take up of breakfast clubs/holiday provision in Community Pilot areas	Wirral Council	Green	Apr 2017 - Mar 2018	In Progress	Beechwood Little Centre has set up its food hub and is offering a discounted super market and community café. The Beechwood Little Centre is working with the play scheme to deliver holiday food from the Centre. Gautby Road Play and Community Centre continues to offer a food hub with discounted supermarket in Q3, and has worked with the play scheme to deliver holiday food. The Seacombe Project has got together the main agencies delivering ILC services across Seacombe in Q3 and delivered breakfast bags to the community from the children's centre and will discuss how they can secure funds for holiday food across the next year. Beechwood and Seacombe volunteers worked together to raise funding to buy 2 pallets of food from His Church to be delivered to Seacombe in December for their social supermarket along with Fareshare food, to enable large bags of food to be given to the elderly and single people in need at Christmas. Surplus supermarket goods were delivered on Christmas eve including fresh turkeys from M&S to Seacombe families by volunteer from the Council, Community Spirit and local residents.

Priority 04: Supporting families to become financially resilient

Action	Lead Agency	Status Current Period	Timescale	Status	Progress (Outcome / Impact)
To target staff who have direct contact with the public to raise awareness of debt and financial advice in Community Pilot areas	Citizen Advice Bureau	Amber	Jul 2016 - Mar 2018	In Progress	First training session complete, second training session planned for February 2018
Increase uptake of Wirral Credit Union among partner organisations and the wider community	Citizen Advice Bureau	Amber	Jul 2016 - Mar 2018	In Progress	Age UK Wirral are now signed up as partners and 3 other partners are considering signing up. Wirral Credit Union have signed up 130 new members in the last 6 months. A Citizens Advice client Credit Union awareness day planned for February 2018

Priority 05: Tackling the immediate effects of poverty

Action	Lead Agency	Status Current Period	Timescale	Status	Progress (Outcome / Impact)
Implement a neighbourhood approach to tackle food poverty in Community Pilot areas	Wirral Council	Green	Apr 2016 - Mar 2018	In Progress	Each of the three pilot areas continues to run a social super market from their community centres throughout Q3. They offer discounted food secured from surplus food providers FareShare, His Church and shops. Beechwood and Seacombe ILC pilot areas have also provided 200 and 160 Christmas hampers respectively to families in crisis. St James Centre provided a range of Christmas activities and offered food as part of the activities including youth sessions. The Beechwood Little Centre has opened its community café and expanded food supermarket.
Ensure the selective licensing scheme connects to the work of the Improving Life Chances pilots	Wirral Council	Amber	Sep 2017 - Mar 2020	In Progress	Approval for the existing scheme was granted in December and consultation on the rollout to the additional areas is currently underway.

Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period

Target - Where targets apply, these are shown as either Blue, Green, Amber, Red based on the agreed tolerance range for individual measures.

Action - These are shown as either:

- Green (on track to deliver on time)
- Amber (off track but action being taken to deliver on time)
- Red (off track and won't deliver on time)

Review of the Improving Life Chances Community Pilots

Background

- The Improving Life Chances Strategy aims to provide support to move families out of poverty.
- Bidston St James, Beechwood and Seacombe were identified as key areas experiencing high levels of child poverty alongside other aspects of deprivation.

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Community Pilots (CPs) were developed in these areas - operating from the St James Centre, Gautby Road Play & Community Centre, Beechwood Little Centre and a range of venues in Seacombe (including the Social Club, Children's Centre and Library).

- The CPs aimed to identify local families in need and refer to existing agencies for support including food and fuel poverty, debt advice, employment and learning. In addition, each of the areas identified local priorities for improvement, including environment (litter, dog-fouling, appearance) and anti-social behaviour.
- Data collection and case study forms were developed to monitor referrals and capture impact.

CP's – St James Centre

- Centre well-established with excellent engagement and reach into local community
- Activities well supported by regular team of committed volunteers
- Funding frequently sourced to contribute both towards sustainability of the Centre and towards interest groups requested by local residents

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CP Priority – St James Centre	Support available
Support parents into sustainable employment	Job club, lifelong learning courses, volunteering opportunities, library service
Support families to become financially resilient	Welfare advice, Ask Us Wirral, Warm Homes event, referrals to Birkenhead Relief in Sickness fund
Tackle the immediate effects of poverty	Food hub, fuel poverty fund, hot food hub Christmas hamper scheme, crisis food bags, community meals
Environment	'In bloom'

Impact - St James Centre

Support available	Impact
Food hub	699 people supported (Feb '16 - Dec '17) - 458 adults & 241 children. 349 vouchers presented.
Fuel (gas/electricity) poverty	316 adults also provided with fuel vouchers (Feb '16 - Dec '17) .
Lifelong learning	296 adults accessed courses (2015/2016 – Dec 2017). Majority female; around half considered themselves to have a learning disability; around half currently unemployed.
Ask us Wirral (across all CP areas)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Benefits & Tax credits (2,509 enquiries) – Personal independence payment, employment support allowance 2) Debt (1,183 enquiries) – Council tax arrears, other (gambling debts, business rate debts), debt relief order 3) Housing (436 enquiries) – private sector rented property, housing association property, environmental & neighbour issues

Case Study - St James Centre

Presenting Issue(s)

Client visited the Centre for a supervised contact (mum of 6 children). Whilst on a contact visit client had a chat with a member of the team and disclosed challenges with her housing conditions, benefit claim and general mental wellbeing.

Support Provided

Client was supported with toys for the family via a donation from Birkenhead Lions, plus crisis fuel via Wirral Foodbank and Christmas hamper from NBDT. Client was also referred for welfare advice support.

Impact/Outcomes

The client said that our support had reduced her anxiety just before Christmas because she was struggling heating her home as well as preparing for Christmas. The family continue to use the Centre's resources regularly.

"Couldn't have got through the last few months without you guys"

"When there's too much month before pay day and no money I rely on the cheap activities that include a meal for my kids...It would be a tremendous loss if these activities and the library weren't available"

"Fantastic place...fab events, loads of great courses (for me and for my sister who has special needs)...Brilliant community resource, couldn't do without it"

Review of CP's - St James Centre

- The St James Centre is well-established and community engagement is strong. Funding is often sourced; although salary costs are becoming increasingly difficult to cover.
- Community Pilot has:
 - Helped raise the profile of other local organisations working to support children and families,
 - Increased partnership working, towards shared priorities, and resulted in wider opportunities for the Centre.
- Impact on families is evident via feedback and long-term attendance at Centre by families in need.
- Future priorities include developing the offer in relation to 0 to 5's, healthy weight, physical activity and mental health support.
- Stronger communications from the Local Authority and CCG in relation to wider work and opportunities for further partnerships to be developed.

CP's – Gautby Road Community Centre

- Gautby Road operates as a smaller hub within a specific locality of Bidston & St James. Specific priority around reducing youth anti-social behaviour.
- Led by a strong team who have worked hard to engage and build trust amongst young people and families in local community. However funding is limited and the continuation of two key roles is at risk – significant impact on provision for families.
- Strong partnerships with Police and Sports Development Team.
- Volunteers include mums of young people accessing youth provision.

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CP Priority – Gautby Road	Support available
Reduce anti-social behaviour by increasing youth provision	Youth clubs, playscheme, fit and fed activities, Birkenhead North Youth Project, Pathfinder Project
Support parents into sustainable employment	Computer hub, lifelong learning courses, volunteering opportunities
Support families to become financially resilient	Signposting to support via St James Centre
Tackle the immediate effects of poverty	Food hub, emergency fuel poverty assistance (ad-hoc)

Impact - Gautby Road

Support available	Impact
Food hub	Different families each week, approx. 19 families regularly visiting
Youth Clubs	More than 100 young people regularly attending youth club and receiving free hot meal
Birkenhead North Youth Project	Calls to Merseyside Police relating to ASB reduced from 155 to 15 calls per month
Pathfinder Project	Workshops around employability, diversionary activities including sport and physical activity, develop skills around nutrition, healthy eating and cookery.
Lifelong learning	82 adults accessed courses (2016/17). Majority female; 39% considered themselves to have a learning disability, two-thirds currently unemployed.

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- Strong focus on food provision, nutrition and healthy eating
- ‘Niche’ - supporting older young people, reducing anti social behaviour
- Commitment to building trust and engaging local families

Case Study - Gautby Road

Presenting Issue(s)

“One evening we had a mum crying in the Centre. She regularly comes in for support via the social supermarket but she was crying because she had -£4 in her energy fuel account and had no money to top up her gas and electricity for that night”.

Support Provided

“Usually we signpost to the St James Centre but it was closed. We didn’t have any spare funds at Gautby Road either; on occasion we do and are able to help but unfortunately not this time. Luckily, because of the Community Pilot’s we have been working in partnership with the Beechwood Little Centre, so I rang them and they were able to provide emergency assistance for the mum”.

Impact/Outcomes

“Mum received emergency assistance with fuel. She was signposted to the St James Centre where she presented for fuel poverty support from the Trussell Trust. She was also able to access the food hub there, and attend the welfare advice drop in. Her children now also attend the playscheme”.

“My children used the playscheme...they were safe and not hanging round the streets”

“Gautby Road has helped me have peace of mind...it’s kept kids off the streets”

“The cheap shop has helped a lot of people”

“My children love every minute of the playscheme and attend while I’m at work which helps me”

“My children were taught to cook...and be responsible”

Review of CP's – Gautby Road

- Gautby Road is a small local Community Centre. Team well-respected and trusted in local community. Work hard to identify need and drive available support.
- Strong focus on:
 - Activities for children and young people, including diversionary activities for older young people to reduce anti-social behaviour
 - Food and nutrition, including via social supermarket, provision of hot meal at all activities, development of outdoor classroom and vegetable patch
 - Engaging local community and supporting families, reducing social isolation, providing advice and support (e.g., job searches)
- Strong partnership with Sports Development Team and Police
- Community Pilot has:
 - Helped identify wider opportunities e.g., Police and Crime Commissioner Pathfinder Project
 - Strengthened relationships with other Community Centres (St James Centre and Beechwood Little Centre)
- Immediate priority to source funding to continue two key posts
- Upskilling of staff would also be beneficial (e.g., bid writing, evaluating impact)

CP's – Beechwood Little Centre

- CP model supported by investment from Big Local scheme - £1 million over 10 years (until 2024). Funded significant refurbishment of the Little Centre to ensure future sustainability.
- Strong team, including volunteers, deeply committed to supporting local families, children and young people. Ongoing development of partnerships with clear vision and action plans from Big Local.

Range of activities and support continues to be developed; opportunities available to residents (e.g., via Bright Ideas fund; strong partnerships with local organisations).

CP Priority – Beechwood	Support available
Support parents into sustainable employment	Training academy, volunteering opportunities, apprenticeships, business start ups, Gingerbread Project, lifelong learning
Support families to become financially resilient	Welfare advice, Ask Us Wirral, Energy Projects Plus (via referral)
Tackle the immediate effects of poverty	Food hub, breakfast club, Christmas hamper scheme, emergency assistance fund (fuel poverty)
Environment	'In bloom'

Impact - Beechwood

“I want to be very clear from the outset. Without the Neighbourhood Manager in Beechwood, the activities, the engagement with the community, the work Big Local are doing, would not be successful”.

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Support available	Impact
Big Local apprenticeships, business start ups, Gingerbread Project	1 single mum awarded apprenticeship in Hairdressing. x4 business start-ups awarded. 8 parents now in regular employment following support.
Ask us Wirral (across all CP areas)	1) Benefits & Tax credits (2,509 enquiries) – Personal independence payment, employment support allowance 2) Debt (1,183 enquiries) – Council tax arrears, other (gambling debts, business rate debts), debt relief order 3) Housing (436 enquiries) – private sector rented property, housing association property, environmental & neighbour issues
Lifelong Learning	39 adults accessed courses (2015/2016 – Dec 2017). Majority female; around a third considered themselves to have a learning disability; more than half currently unemployed.
Food hub, Christmas hamper scheme	No data is yet available for the food larder . 629 local residents including children and young people benefited from hamper scheme.

Case Study - Beechwood

Presenting Issue(s)

Client A needed help with supporting her family after having children. She was unemployed and also struggling to cope with being a new parent. She attended workshops at the Centre on topics such as healthy eating where she met likeminded young mothers like herself. This encouraged her to create the 'Beechwood Babies' forum which were a group of mothers who met regularly to discuss ways of improving the lives of children on the estate. This involved creating dance groups and different leisure opportunities for children and families nearby.

Support Provided

Whilst using the community centre as a base for the forum, client A was given the opportunity to volunteer in the office there. She gained a wealth of experience in office administration and finance. She was also given the opportunity to gain NVQ's and other qualifications in accounting and auditing.

Impact/Outcomes

Client A is now the lead auditor at a local organisation and works in the office there full time. She is able to fully support her family and has been given access to the right education to be a role model. In her spare time she continues to advocate community activity and regularly helps plan events. She also supports new projects within the Centre to help people who are in a similar position to what she used to be.

Review of CP's – Beechwood

- The CP in Beechwood is supported by £1 million investment from the Big Local programme.
- This funded a refurbishment of The Little Centre, providing a new food larder, café with soft play area, large activity rooms and small meeting rooms available for hire.

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Other activities delivered by a strong partnership including: Beechwood Social Club, Nursery and Beechwood Chapel (led by Beechwood Community Trust and Beechwood Community Association).

- *“Community Pilots are absolutely ideal for bringing people together... usually everyone works in isolation”*
- Future priorities including building volunteering opportunities, increasing activities for healthy lifestyles and self-care, and mental health and wellbeing.
- Continue to develop links with Public Health, CCG and Primary Care in relation to wider opportunities for partnership working.

CP's – Seacombe

- CP led by Seacombe Community Association, with delivery from Seacombe Social Club, Seacombe Children's Centre and Seacombe Library.
- Strong partnership support from local organisations including Community Spirit Wirral, Allandale Centre and Boxing Club, 4 local Rotary Club's, Wirral Environmental Network, St Paul's Church and St Luke's Church.
- However there is a sense that *“Without a central venue it is difficult to bring local groups together to develop a comprehensive strategy and hence the area lacks leadership and the ability to work in partnership to access funding”*.

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CP Priority – Seacombe	Support available
Support parents into sustainable employment	Lifelong learning, free computer and wifi access
Support families to become financially resilient	Energy Projects Plus, Ask Us Wirral, welfare advice (Involve North West)
Tackle the immediate effects of poverty	Food hub, breakfast bags, holiday food provision, Christmas hamper scheme
Environment	'In bloom', clean-up days

Impact - Seacombe

Support available	Impact
Food hub	32 boxes of food are distributed weekly to families in need. (Funded for 1 year)
Food bags (via Community Spirit Wirral)	Currently feeding over 170 families a week with food bags to take away. They also do breakfast & lunch for anyone needing a meal and unlimited tea, coffee, biscuits and cake.
Lifelong learning	42 adults accessed courses (2015/2016 – Dec 2017). Majority female; around a fifth considered themselves to have a learning disability; just under half currently unemployed.
Ask us Wirral (across all CP areas)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Benefits & Tax credits (2,509 enquiries) – Personal independence payment, employment support allowance 2) Debt (1,183 enquiries) – Council tax arrears, other (gambling debts, business rate debts), debt relief order 3) Housing (436 enquiries) – private sector rented property, housing association property, environmental & neighbour issues
Christmas hamper scheme	206 hampers were distributed to families.

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“There was massive relief. People cried and hugged us when receiving the hampers. They felt that they are part of a community, that people care. People wrote cards of thanks, many phone calls were received. A great example of partnership working”

Case Study - Seacombe

Presenting Issue(s)

Client needed help to fix his broken 20 year old boiler. He was using portable electric heaters and the electric immersion heater for hot water, which were costing him a lot to run. The client is a single parent to an 8 year old, works full time and struggles to pay his bills after a lengthy custody case left him with a lot of debt problems and loans to repay. He built up a gas debt of £875 and electricity debt of £1,030 as he stopped paying some bills in order to pay the mortgage and bank loans.

Support Provided

The fuel debt advisor met with client and established that he was in financial hardship and needed to provide his daughter with basic hot water and heat in the home, and was in fuel debt. The advisor applied to the British Gas Energy Trust for a boiler and help towards the fuel debt.

Impact/Outcomes

The client was successfully awarded £2,730 for a replacement boiler and two additional radiators, and his £1,905 fuel debt was cleared. This has removed a huge burden from client and has relieved some of the stress he has experienced. With a new more efficient boiler, his gas bills will also be lower and help him to manage paying them in the future. The client was over the moon and said it has changed his life, being able to provide hot water and heating for his daughter after such a turbulent year.

Review of CP's – Beechwood

- The CP in Beechwood is supported by £1 million investment from the Big Local programme.
- This funded a refurbishment of The Little Centre, providing a new food larder, café with soft play area, large activity rooms and small meeting rooms available for hire.

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Other activities delivered by a strong partnership including: Beechwood Social Club, Nursery and Beechwood Chapel (led by Beechwood Community Trust and Beechwood Community Association).

- *“Community Pilots are absolutely ideal for bringing people together... usually everyone works in isolation”*
- Future priorities including building volunteering opportunities, increasing activities for healthy lifestyles and self-care, and mental health and wellbeing.
- Continue to develop links with Public Health, CCG and Primary Care in relation to wider opportunities for partnership working.

Review of CP's – Seacombe

- The CP in Seacombe is supported by *“A dedicated and passionate team working to establish further partnerships and drive improvements for local families, children and young people”*.
- *“The Community Pilot has catalysed lots of ideas and discussions, there are more initiatives and people are working together like they haven't before”*.

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However it is felt that the development of the CP in Seacombe is slower than other areas and *“There is a strong sense of disconnect. Of being left behind”*.

- Immediate priorities include:
 - fundraising and identifying funding sources to continue the food hub
 - developing a volunteering agenda to support sustainability of activities
- It is felt that Seacombe would benefit from an investment similar to the Big Local programme.

“Seacombe gets forgotten. Because we lie between Birkenhead and New Brighton we fall down the middle and everyone forgets about us”

Reflections

- **Development and progression** of the CP's has differed across each of the areas.
 - Gautby Road, Beechwood and Seacombe continue to need support from the Community Asset Officer.
 - Gautby Road and Seacombe are prioritising the identification of funding to continue delivery.
 - The St James Centre operates independently. A wide range of activities and support is available, although these are sometimes limited in terms of provision due to the availability of funding.
- All areas have benefited from increased **partnership working** as a result of the CP umbrella.
- Impact on individual children, young people and families is evident from case studies and anecdotal feedback. **Robust data collection** is needed to evidence improving life chances strategy outcomes.

Any questions?

Define population outcome

- Our ambition is to ensure that no child in Wirral lives in poverty. We will start by supporting 1000 Wirral families to move out of poverty by 2018. This would mean we could reduce child poverty to 20.1% in those we currently know fall into our definition of child poverty. In addition to a range of activity across the borough, we will pilot a radical new approach in our communities where there are particularly high levels of poverty.

Five key factors which make it harder for families to work their way out of poverty

- Long-term worklessness
- Having low qualifications
- Raising children on your own
- Having 3 or more children to care for
- Experiencing ill-health

Priorities

- Supporting people into sustainable employment
- Improving life chances for children and young people (early years development, health, education and skills)
- Helping families to become more financially resilient
- Tackling the immediate impacts of poverty

How are we doing?

- Child poverty 19.9% (2015 figures)
- 2587 jobs created or safeguarded
- Children at good level of development 69.4%
- Increasing quality of housing through selective licensing
- Still very real challenges
 - Impact of austerity
 - Are we increasing jobs in most deprived areas?
 - Significant numbers of children in care

Do we understand the story

- What's going on here
- What factors are causing the problems
- Why is the situation so much worse in some communities than others
- What information is missing?

What Works?

What would it take to turn the curve?

What works elsewhere? Is it right for our communities?

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Come up with specific ideas/proposals

Who needs to take ownership of this work?

How do we ensure this Pledge is sustained?

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Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 22 March 2018

REPORT TITLE:	Pupil Attendance and Exclusions in Wirral Schools
REPORT OF:	Director for Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

The Pupil Attendance and Exclusions in Wirral Schools report provides information about the issues pertaining to attendance/absence and permanent exclusions.

The report provides the Department for Education definition of attendance and the procedure for recording it. Absence must be taken seriously by all partners as a pupil not attending school could be a safeguarding issue.

Key Absence Measures are highlighted, in particular authorised absence, unauthorised absence and persistent absence. National statistics are presented as well as the statistics for Wirral. The Department for Education Statistical First Release (SF55/2017) published in October 2017 provides an analysis of absence for autumn 2016 and the spring term 2017. Comparisons have been made with Wirral figures.

There are two main areas of development for Wirral Schools, reducing the percentage of authorised absence and reducing persistent absence.

The second part of the report looks at the exclusions from Wirral schools. Nationally permanent exclusions for secondary school pupils have increased. This is also the case in Wirral. The report examines the strategies to reduce permanent exclusions.

This report provides a detailed analysis of issues around absence and exclusions in Wirral which can be used to measure the impact of work undertaken in the following pledges:

1. **Children are ready for school**
The Wirral plan indicator scrutinises the percentage of children attaining a good level of development. A supporting measure is the narrowing of the gap between the attainment of children in receipt of free schools meals and those children who are not. Another supporting measure looks at the percentage of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development
2. **Young people are ready for work and adulthood**
The supporting measures in this pledge are: - to reduce the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2; to narrow the gap in progress between pupils with a SEN statement/EHCP and

their peers at the end of Key Stage 2 and to increase the percentage of children looked after who attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

3. Vulnerable children reach their full potential

One of the supporting measures in this pledge is the same as the one in Children are ready for school pledge e.g. at the end of the Foundation Stage the percentage of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development increases.

This report provides the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an analysis of absence/attendance and exclusions.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to approve the Absence/Attendance and Exclusions 2018 report which is appended to this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Absence/Attendance and Exclusions report has been produced to evaluate some of the Wirral Plan pledges, in particular Children are Ready for School; Young People are Ready for Work and Adulthood and Vulnerable Children Reach their Full Potential. The report will be shared with headteachers and used as an essential tool to challenge permanent exclusions and persistent absence as well as celebrate successes/improvements in Wirral schools.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Pupils attendance/absence and exclusions are scrutinised by local authority officers as the data is initially received. Due to the data collection points there is always a delay in receiving it. The data is used to determine where there have been improvements in attendance and where it may have declined. The data is analysed at a local authority level to challenge schools. Further scrutiny takes place using pupil characteristics such as SEND (k code and pupils with an EHCP/Statement), children looked after (as and when the data becomes available) to determine key areas for challenge and development.

Permanent exclusions are being closely monitored on a case by case basis.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Absence/Attendance & Exclusions 2018 report will be a key document used to implement the Wirral Schools strategy. The necessary challenge to schools with high persistent absence, low attendance or an increase in the number of pupils permanently excluded will be co-ordinated in partnership by existing staff resource.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Corporate Risk Register will be refreshed in line with the new Wirral Plan developments to ensure that any risks to delivery are understood and mitigating actions are put in place as appropriate.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The contents of the report have been shared with headteachers. The Director of Children's Services will hold headteachers to account for pupils who are permanently excluded.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

(a) Yes and impact review is via following link.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017-1>

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APPENDICES Absence/Attendance and Exclusions Report 2018

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

Absence and Exclusions

Executive Summary

There are a number of development areas for Wirral schools regarding absence and exclusions. The authorised absence for both primary and secondary schools needs to decrease. Persistent absence i.e. pupils with less than 90% attendance is a key issue for many Wirral schools.

Nationally permanent exclusions in both primary and secondary schools have increased. In Wirral there have been very few primary pupils excluded permanently. There have been an increasing number of pupils permanently excluded from Wirral secondary schools.

For the last three years the pupil referral unit (Emslie Morgan Academy) has been oversubscribed. The Local Authority has commissioned the Progress-School to provide an alternative to excluded Key Stage 3 pupils going straight to Emslie Morgan Academy. The arrangements for a fresh start for these pupils to attend another secondary school have been reconfigured, through a more robust Fair Access Panel process.

Close scrutiny of all permanent exclusions is enabling early help services determine the best opportunities to support families who need support.

1. Absence

The Department for Education stipulates that all maintained schools are required to provide two possible sessions per day, morning and afternoon, to all pupils. The length of each session, break and the school day is determined by the school's governing body. Schools must meet for at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year to educate their pupils. If a school is prevented from meeting for one or more sessions because of an unavoidable event, it should find a practical way of holding extra sessions. However, if it cannot find a practical way of doing this then it is not required to make up the lost sessions. Academy and free school funding agreements state that the duration of the school day/sessions is the responsibility of the academy trust.

Schools are required to take attendance registers twice a day: once at the start of the first/morning session of each school day and once during the second/afternoon session. In their register, schools are required to record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Where a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, schools have a responsibility to:

- Ascertain the reason
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Indicate in their register whether the absence is authorised by the school or unauthorised
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is then used to download data to the school census.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age is required to ensure that the child receive a suitable full time education to the child's ability, age, aptitude and any special education needs the child may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Failure of a parent to secure regular attendance of their school registered child of compulsory school age can lead to a penalty notice or prosecution.

1.1 Key Absence Measures

The Department for Education monitors pupil absence levels using two key measures - overall absence rate and persistent absence (PA) rate. The key measures are calculated for pupils who are of compulsory school age i.e. aged between 5 and 15 as at the start of the academic year.

Overall absence is the aggregated total of all authorised and unauthorised absences.

Authorised absence is absence with permission from a headteacher or other authorised representative of the schools. This includes instances of absence for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided e.g. illness.

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences and arrivals after registration has closed.

Persistent absence is when a pupil enrolment's overall absence equates to 10 per cent or more of their possible sessions. The persistent absence measure was introduced in 2005/06. From the academic year 2010/11 to 2014/15 the persistent absence measure was 15%. From September 2015 it was decreased to 10%.

1.2 Approaches to Reduce Absenteeism

Researcher identified the need for identifying and intervening early, monitoring progress overtime, assessing functional behaviour, and the implementation of evidence-based procedures and protocols, and of team-based approaches.

1.3 Absence Data Published by the Department for Education

The Department for Education publishes termly pupil absence data via three National Statistics releases each year. These are:

- Autumn term, published in May
- Autumn and spring terms, published in October
- Full year, published in March

Only the full year absence release gives a definitive view of pupil absence. Termly publications can be affected significantly by term length and therefore findings from these releases are for indicative purposes only and the results should be treated with caution.

1.4 DfE Statistical First Release 2017

The Department for Education Statistical First Release (SF55/2017) published in October 2017 provided an analysis of absence for autumn 2016 and the spring term 2017. Nationally the overall absence rate increased from the previous year. The overall absence rate increased from 4.4 per cent of possible sessions in autumn/spring 2015/16 to 4.5 per cent in autumn/spring 2016/17.

Nationally unauthorised absence rates have increased across primary and secondary schools since last year, from 0.9 per cent in autumn/spring 2015/16 to 1.1 per cent in autumn/spring 2016/17. This is due to increased levels of unauthorised family holiday and other unauthorised absence.

Nationally persistent absentees in autumn/spring 2016/17 was 10.4 % which was slightly higher than autumn and spring 2015/16 (10.3%).

The overall absence rate across state-funded primary and secondary schools was the same for boys and girls (at 4.5%). Persistent absence rates were also similar for boys and girls, at 10.5% and 10.4% respectively.

Absence rates were higher for pupils who are known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals. The overall absence rate for these pupils was 7%, compared to 4% for non-FSM pupils. The persistent absence rate for pupils who were eligible for FSM was more than twice the rate for pupils not eligible for FSM (21.3% and 8.3% respectively).

Pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education healthcare plan (EHC) had an overall absence rate of 7.1% compared to 4.2% for those with no identified SEN. The percentage of pupils with a statement of SEN or an EHC plan that are persistent absentees is more than two times higher than the percentage for pupils with no identified SEN.

The overall absence rate for autumn/spring 2016/17 in special schools was 9.7%. This was higher than in state-funded primary and secondary schools but was similar to the special school absence rate seen for the previous full academic year, 2015/16, which was 9.1 %. Persistent absence was also higher than in primary and secondary

schools at 28.2% and was also similar to the special school persistent absentee rate for the 2015/16 full academic year (26.9%).

1.5 Wirral Absence Figures

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence for primary schools in 2015/16 was 3.7% which was higher than the national average (3.1%). When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 149 out of 152. Authorised absence for secondary schools in 2015/16 was 4.2% which was higher than the national average (3.8%). When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 131 out of 152.

Absence for Children Looked After in 2015/16 was 4.3% which was higher than the national average (3.9%) When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 103 out of 152.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence for primary schools in 2015/16 was 0.9%.which was in line with the national average (0.9%). When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 57 out of 152. Unauthorised absence for secondary schools in 2015/16 was 1.2% which was in line with the national average (1.2%). When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 47 out of 152.

Unauthorised absence for Children Looked After in 2015/16 was 1.3% which was higher than the national average (1.0%) When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 116 out of 152.

Persistent Absence

Persistent absence for primary schools in 2015/16 was 10.8%.which was higher than the national average (8.2%). When ranked with other local authorities 146 out of 152. Persistent absence for secondary schools in 2015/16 was 14%.which was lower than the national average (13.1%). When ranked with other local authorities 108 out of 152.

Persistent absence for Children Looked After in 2015/16 was 9.4% which was higher than the national average (9.1%) When ranked with other local authorities Wirral was 68 out of 152.

1.6 Wirral Primary School Attendance

Analysis of primary school attendance during 2015/16 shows that:

- Oxton St Saviour's CE Primary School Greasby Juniors, Our Lady of Pity and Thornton Hough Primary Schools had the highest attendance.
- The primary schools with the most improved attendance were Eastway, Bidston Avenue and Mendell Primary Schools.

- Three primary schools had attendance above 97%.
- 27 primary schools had attendance at or above the national average of 96%.
- 56 primary schools had attendance above 95% compared with 58 in 2014/15.
- 14 primary schools had attendance below 94% compared with 12 primary schools in 2014/15.
- Four primary schools had attendance below 93% compared with one in 2014/15.

1.7 Wirral Secondary School Attendance

- Wirral Grammar School for Girls, West Kirby Grammar School, Wirral Grammar School for Boys and Upton Hall School had the highest attendance.
- The secondary schools with the most improved attendance by comparison with 2014/15 were Woodchurch High School and St Mary's College.
- Five secondary schools had attendance above 96% compared with six in 2014/15.
- Eight secondary schools had attendance of above 95% in 2015/16 and this was also the case in the previous year.
- Ten secondary schools had attendance equal to or above the national average in 2015/16 compared with nine in the previous year.
- Seven secondary schools had attendance of below 94% in 2015/16 compared with nine in the previous year.
- Two secondary schools had attendance below 93% compared with one in 2014/15.

1.8 Special School Attendance

- Orret's Meadow and Clare Mount School had the highest attendance.
- The two special schools with most improved attendance were Gilbrook and The Observatory Schools.
- Two special schools had attendance above 95% as in the previous year.
- Five special schools had below 92% attendance compared with six in the previous year.
- Four special schools had below 90% attendance as in the previous year. Of these four special schools with attendance below 90%, three were for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and one had significant numbers of students with serious health problems including terminal illnesses.

1.9 Autumn 2016/Spring 2017

The table below provides the Wirral data for a number of pupil groups (boys, girls, pupils in receipt of free school meals, pupils with EHC plans/statements, SEN support (K) pupils and pupils with no SEN).

	Primary			Secondary		
	Absence	Authorised	Unauthorised	Absence	Authorised	Unauthorised
Boys	4.50	3.71	0.78	5.3	4.3	1.0
National	4	3.1	0.9	5.10	3.80	1.30
Girls	4.49	3.69	0.80	5.4	4.4	1.0
National	3.9	3.0	0.9	5.20	3.80	1.30
FSM	6.9	5.3	1.6	9.5	6.5	2.9
National	5.9	4.1	1.8	8.50	5.10	3.40
EHCP & Statement	6.7	5.6	1.1	7.5	5.2	2.4
National	6.7	5.6	1.1	7.60	5.50	2.00
SEN Support (K)	6.0	4.8	1.2	7.8	5.7	2.0
National	5.3	4.0	1.3	7.50	5.10	2.40
No SEN	4.2	3.5	0.7	4.9	4.1	0.8
National	3.7	2.9	0.8	4.80	3.60	1.20

In summary, boys' and girls' authorised absence in primary and secondary schools was higher than the national average, whereas unauthorised absence was lower than the national average.

Free school meal pupils boys' and girls' authorised absence in primary and secondary schools was higher than the national average, whereas unauthorised absence was lower than the national average.

Primary school pupils with an Education Health Care plan (EHCP) authorised absence and unauthorised absence was in line with the national average. Secondary school pupils with an Education health Care plan authorised absence was lower than the national in contrast with the unauthorised absence being higher than the national average.

Primary school pupils who are classed as SEN (K) with support authorised absence was higher than the national average whereas unauthorised absence was lower than the national average. Secondary school pupils with SEN support attendance was lower than the national average for both authorised and unauthorised attendance.

There are considerable differences in attendance across schools with attendance significantly lower in areas of high social deprivation and in schools with high levels of Free School Meals.

1.10 Priorities

There are a number of key priorities for schools:-

1. Increase attendance of pupils by reducing the percentage of authorised and unauthorised absence
2. Reduce the number of pupils who meet the persistent absence criteria by providing support as well as challenge to the family of these pupils

2.0 Exclusions

There are two types of exclusions, fixed period (suspended) and permanent (expelled). A fixed period exclusion is where a child is temporarily removed from school. The child can only be removed for up to 45 school days in one school year, even if they've changed school. A pupil can have a total of 15 days fixed term exclusions per academic term.

Permanent exclusion means a child is expelled. Only the headteacher as the authority to permanently exclude a child. The DfE guidance regarding what constitutes a reason for a child to be permanently excluded lacks clarity which can result in inconsistencies around the threshold for exclusion. When a child is permanently excluded the Local Authority must arrange full-time education from the sixth school day.

2.1 Permanent & Fixed Term Exclusions Data 2012/13 to Present

Total Number of Permanent Exclusions

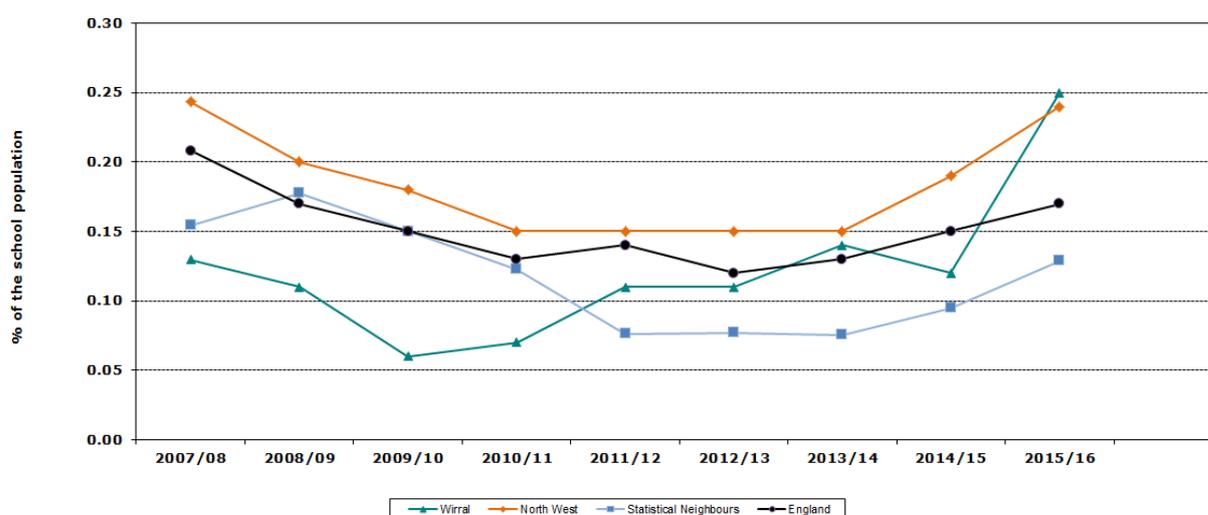
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Primary	0	2	2	2	1
Secondary	24	30	26	52	67
Special incl PRU	0	0	0	0	0

For the last five academic years the number of pupils who were permanently excluded from primary schools remains very low. There were no pupils excluded from special schools.

Of more concern is the increasing number of pupils excluded from secondary schools. During the academic 2016/17 there were 67 pupils permanently excluded. Three of these exclusions were rescinded at either the first or second stage of the appeal process. The increase in exclusions mirrors the national picture.

When with all local authorities for the academic year 2015/16 Wirral (0.25) was ranked 113/152 and was above the national average (0.12) and average for statistical neighbours (0.13).

Secondary Permanent Exclusions from school as a % of the school population



2.2 Number of Permanent Exclusions – Special Educational needs/Disabilities (SEND)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Primary	0	2	1	2	1
Secondary	17	15	16	32	20
Special incl PRU	0	0	0	0	0

The number of SEND pupils permanently excluded in primary schools was very low. The data shows that the majority of pupils permanently excluded in the primary phase had SEND.

Approximately 50% of pupils excluded in secondary schools had SEND.

2.3 Number of Permanent Exclusions - EHCP or Statement

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Primary	0	0	0	0	0
Secondary	0	0	2	0	0
Special incl PRU	0	0	0	0	0

A very small number of SEND pupils with an EHCP/Statement were permanently excluded in 2014/15 from mainstream secondary schools.

2.4 Strategy to Reduce the Number of Permanent Exclusions

The Director of Children’s Services has proactively engaged with secondary school headteachers to determine the factors resulting in permanent exclusions. Where a headteacher permanently excluded 3 or more pupils in the Autumn term the headteacher was requested to attend a meeting with the Director. Headteachers were

asked to provide a chronology leading up to the exclusion as well as providing reflections as to what partners could do collectively to support these families earlier. To date 5 headteachers have met with the Director.

2.5 Strategy to Return Permanent Exclusions Back into Mainstream Secondary Schools

Before September 2017 all students who were permanently excluded were offered a place at the pupil referral unit, Emslie Morgan Academy. For the majority of these pupils it was difficult to transition back into a mainstream secondary school, resulting in them staying at the pupil referral unit. The result was an ever increasing number of pupils on the roll of Emslie Morgan.

From September 2017 the Local Authority commissioned Progress-Schools to deliver a 12 week programme for Key Stage 3 pupils (aged 11 to 14 years) who had been permanently excluded for the first time. The Fair Access Panel (FAP) determines the secondary school place each pupil will be offered. Towards the end of the programme transition takes place to support the pupil moving to a new school for a fresh start. From September 2017 onwards 14 Key Stage 3 pupils were permanently excluded. Five pupils who were attending Emslie Morgan Academy also successfully attended the transition programme. So far 10 pupils have successfully started at a new school. Two pupils have extended transition and 5 more pupils will be allocated a secondary school shortly.

It is much more problematic to reintegrate permanently excluded pupils in Years 10 and 11. If pupils miss too much of the GCSE course content it is difficult for them to catch up and be prepared for the external examinations. Any parent whose child attends Emslie Morgan Academy can submit an application for their child to attend a mainstream school. Taking into account all the available information the Fair Access Panel decide whether the request is appropriate as well as the proposed school. Three Year 10 pupils are now attending mainstream secondary schools.

2.6 Breakdown of Permanent Exclusions in Secondary Schools September 2017 Onwards Compared with September 2016 Onwards

Autumn Term 2016	
Bebington High School	2
Kingsway	4
Mosslands	2
Pensby	3
Ridgeway	2
SJP	2
St. Mary's	6
SWHS	1
BPS	3
Weatherhead	2
TOTAL	27

Autumn Term 2017	
Bebington High School	4
Mosslands	4
Prenton	3
Ridgeway	3
St. Mary's	2
BPS	4
SWHS	1
TOTAL	21

There have been fewer schools permanently excluding pupils during the autumn term. Whilst the number of exclusions has reduced overall 5 schools have excluded more pupils during this time.

2.7 Fixed Term Exclusions

Below are the statistics regarding the total number of fixed term exclusions.

Total Number of Fixed Term Exclusions

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Primary	247	237	238	236	202
Secondary	1409	1430	1135	1554	1321
Special incl PRU	97	186	117	257	250

Last academic year (2016/17) saw a decrease in the number of fixed term exclusions in secondary and special schools. Fixed term exclusions in primary schools have decreased for the last three years.

Number of Fixed Term Exclusions - SEND (A & P & K Codes)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Primary	202	187	158	169	148
Secondary	727	714	566	619	588
Special incl PRU	4	76	17	62	84

There was a decrease in the number of SEND pupils who had a fixed term exclusion in primary and secondary schools. The increase in the number of fixed term exclusions in special schools is attributable to pupils attending Emslie Morgan Academy.

Number of Fixed Term Exclusions - EHCP or Statement

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Primary	8	12	4	20	11
Secondary	75	90	43	54	47
Special incl PRU	93	85	86	179	124

There were more fixed term exclusions in special schools, the majority of which were for pupils attending schools specialising in pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) issues. All three types of school showed a decrease from the previous academic year.



**Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 22 March 2018**

REPORT TITLE:	Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme update report
REPORT OF:	Chair of the Committee – Cllr Tom Usher

REPORT SUMMARY

The Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which are within the remit of the Committee.

The report provides an update regarding progress made since the last Committee meeting held on 25th January. The current work programme is made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, workshops, standing items and requested officer reports. This update report provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The current work programme for the Committee is attached as an appendix to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the updated Children & Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2017/18, making any required amendments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To ensure members of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 UPDATE ON CURRENT SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

Since the Committee meeting held on 25th January, activity has taken place relating to the following:

Statutory Care Plan Scrutiny Review

A task and finish group comprising Councillors Alan Brighthouse, Paul Hayes, Tony Jones, Moira McLaughlin, Chris Meaden and Cherry Povall has been established. The work of this group will focus on the effectiveness and timeliness of statutory care plans. The review will also test the effectiveness of special guardianship orders.

The first evidence sessions took place in October and December 2017. Further sessions will give members of the task & finish group an opportunity to review randomly selected anonymised care plans as well as meetings with social workers, team managers, Independent Reviewing Officers, a Head teacher representative, foster carers and Special Guardians. A focus group will also be held with children and young people. It is anticipated that this scrutiny review will now be continued in the new municipal year.

Reality Check Visits

The most recent Reality Check visit took place on 19th February when a group of members received a demonstration of the Performance Dashboard. A report regarding the outcomes of the visit is included as a separate item on this agenda.

There are no further Reality Check visits planned during the remainder of the current municipal year although it is anticipated that a new programme of visits will be included when the work programme for the 2018/19 municipal year is established.

Universal Credit

Led by the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee, two workshops have been held recently to investigate the implications of implementing Universal Credit. As this topic cuts across the remit of all four O&S Committees due to the wide-ranging impact affecting a number of service delivery areas, members of all four scrutiny committees were invited to participate. It is anticipated that a report from the workshops will be presented to the next meeting of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee, scheduled to be held on Tuesday 27th March.

3.2 FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Evaluation of Progress and Performance

Members have requested that a workshop be arranged to help develop the ability of Members to better evaluate service performance and, therefore, aid monitoring of progress towards delivery of the Improvement Plan. Due to the proximity of the election period, it is proposed that this session be held early in the new municipal year.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

The delivery of the scrutiny work programme will be met from within existing resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not Applicable

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work programme

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS – Thurs 22nd March 2018

Item	Format	Officer
Minutes from Children & Families OSC (25 th January)	Minutes	
Performance monitoring – 2017/18 Q3	Report	Nancy Clarkson to provide report
Financial Monitoring – 2017/18 Q3	Report / Presentation	Peter Molyneux / Andrew Roberts to provide report
Improvement Journey – Update	Presentation	Paul Boyce
Learning from Audit	Report	Simone White
Report from Member’s Reality Check visit to discuss the Performance Dashboard	Report	Report of the Chair (Alan Veitch to provide report)
Improving Life Chances Strategy – Pledge Update	Report	Fiona Johnstone / Julie Graham
School exclusions / Home schooling / Absenteeism	Report	Sue Talbot
Work programme update	Report	Report of the Chair (Alan Veitch to provide report)
Deadline for reports to be with Committee Services: Monday 5th March 2018		

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Format	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Statutory Care Plan scrutiny review	Report	July 2018	Report of the Chair (Patrick Torpey to provide report)
Future safeguarding arrangements - progress	Report	July 2018	David Robbins
The HIVE – progress report	Possible report	To be agreed	
Care leavers – employment prospects	Possible report	To be agreed	
School strategy – update on the delivery of the strategy	Report	To be agreed	Sue Talbot
All-age disability service transformation – update on progress (as requested at OSC on 14/11/17)	Report	To be agreed	
Edge of Care and ASH (follow-up to OSC meeting – 25/01/18)	Report	To be agreed	
Destination of school leavers at 18	Report	To be agreed	Sue Talbot
Outcomes from Special Needs Education consultation	Report	To be agreed	

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress / Comments
Task and Finish work				
Statutory Care Plans	Task & finish group	To be agreed	Ian Godfrey / Pat Torpey / Alan Veitch	Ongoing
Reality Check visits				
Reality Check visit: MASH	Member visit	Thurs 7 th Sept, 2017 10.00am	Simone White / Liz Davenport / Alan Veitch	Complete
Reality Check visit: Leaving Care Team	Member visit	18 th Oct 2017	Ian Godfrey / Pat Torpey	Complete
Reality Check visit: Early Childhood Service	Member visit	7 th Dec 2017	Elizabeth Hartley / Pat Torpey	Complete
Reality Check visit: Performance Dashboard	Member visit	Feb 2018	Carly Brown / Alan Veitch	Complete
Meet with group(s) of care leavers	Member visit	To be agreed		
Reality Check visit: MASH (re-visit to Solar Campus)	Member visit	To be agreed	Simone White / Alan Veitch	
Spotlight sessions / workshops				
All-age Disabilities and Mental Health transformation project	Workshop	Wed 2 nd Aug 2017, 6.00pm	Graham Hodkinson/ Jason Oxley / Alan Veitch	Joint workshop with members of Adult Care & Health OSC. Complete
Safeguarding governance - Scrutiny's relationship with the LSCB	Workshop	Wed 23 rd Aug 2017, 5.30pm	David Robbins/ Alan Veitch	Complete
Member training session: Children's Services	Training session	Tues 16 th Jan 2018	Carly Brown / Pat Torpey	Complete
Specialist Transport	Workshop	Jan / Feb 2018	Julie Barnes / Alan Veitch	Potential joint workshop with members of Adult Care & Health OSC
Evaluation of progress and performance	Workshop	Early 2018/19 municipal year		
Corporate scrutiny / Other				
Transformation Programme – business cases	Workshop	As and when required		
Budget scrutiny 2018 / 19	Workshop	11 th January 2018	Paul Boyce / Alan Veitch	Complete