



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 27 February 2019
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

This meeting will be webcast at
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AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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.
- 3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 18)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 January 2019.
- 4. TACKING OBESITY (Pages 19 - 26)**
- 5. 2018/19 QUARTER 3 WIRRAL PLAN PERFORMANCE (Pages 27 - 42)**

6. **IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY AND DATA TRACKER (OFSTED READINESS)**

Presentation - The Director for Children Services to provide an update.
7. **FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3 2018/19 (Pages 43 - 50)**
8. **WIRRAL FOSTERING SERVICE (Pages 51 - 60)**
9. **EARLY HELP – COMMUNITY MATTERS (Pages 61 - 68)**
10. **FUTURE MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS - WORKSHOP REPORT (Pages 69 - 84)**
11. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT (Pages 85 - 100)**

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 24 January 2019

Present:

Councillor T Usher (Chair)

Councillors	D Burgess-Joyce	Robinson
	K Cannon	KJ Williams
	W Clements	C Carubia
	A Gardner	T Anderson (In place of P Hayes)
	C Povall	J McManus (In place of EA Grey)
	M McLaughlin	S Jones (In place of G Wood)
	C Meaden	

In attendance:

Councillor I Lewis

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Grey, P Hayes and G Wood. The Committee also received apologies for absence from Co-opted Members Julie Johnson and Chris Penn.

30 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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.

Councillor Chris Meaden made a declaration of personal interest in respect of the agenda generally by virtue of her daughter's employment in the Children and Young People's Department.

Councillor Jean Robinson made a declaration of personal interest in respect of the agenda generally by virtue of her work in Early Years.

Councillor Julie McManus made a declaration of personal interest in respect of the agenda generally by virtue of her son's employment in a Primary School in Birkenhead.

31 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

32 **IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY AND DATA TRACKER UPDATE**

The Corporate Director for Children Services made a presentation to the Committee on the Children and Young People's Services' Improvement Journey. He provided:

- a summary of progress;
- feedback from Ofsted's Monitoring Visit;
- details of areas for Improvement;
- information on the Peer Challenge and Annual Conversation;
- priorities for the next 12 Months;
- feedback from a Member visit with Children in Care and Care Leavers;
- performance details; and
- workforce information.

The Corporate Director reported that Children's Services was no longer subject to monitoring visits as they had all been completed. The next Ofsted visit would be an inspection. It was expected that this would take place in April or May or possibly June 2019. The Corporate Director did not expect intervention at the end of this process and informed he was confident of a good outcome. He also informed that Wirral was a Council requiring improvement and the distance between that and good was considerable.

Members asked the Corporate Director a number of questions which were answered accordingly. Matters discussed included the following:

- Concerns about the Staying Put Scheme as it was evident that these children were 'kicked out' as soon as they were 18 years old. Some foster carers love the job they do but clearly others do it for the money they receive. Some children were being forced to leave after a number of years in care and housing for care leavers needed to be looked at.
- The robustness of Social Workers Performance Appraisals and monthly supervision. Most had undergone an annual appraisal last year (97%) and received regular supervision. The Team Managers were now beginning to coach best practice rather than just describing it. The Service was better at tracking performance issues, there was still some work to do but mechanisms were in place that made managing the Service somewhat easier.

- The forthcoming Workforce Survey which will ask direct questions about what it's like working in Wirral with anonymity.
- The quality of first line management, turn over and HR support.
- Liverpool City Council's intention to recruit 130 Social Workers. This seemed optimistic as the average life of a social worker was only seven years. Social Workers in Wirral may apply and be successful. The problems this may cause if they were seduced into going and the possibility of destabilising the whole of the Liverpool City region as Liverpool was offering higher salaries than most of the other Local Authorities in the City Region. There was a City Region development group which was led by someone from Wirral. Wirral needed to ask social workers who might be tempted to leave some questions about why they were thinking of doing that and make sure Wirral's social workers were not seduced into doing something that would not be good for them professionally.
- The Managers were a stable group and the Head of Practice Improvement has constructed a work programme for Team Managers. They are being developed rapidly including their skills in effectively managing Teams. The Corporate Director was working with the Department for Education (DFE) and the Improvement Board on this and the Improvement Board Chair who is a DFE Advisor is going to carry out some mentoring to bring Managers up to the level the Council needs them to be at. There was also a 'floating Team Manager' who was very experienced and had come from another Borough who was working specifically with Team Managers in the permanency Service to develop their confidence and their decision-making so that they become more effective and impactful. Team managers had the most difficult jobs of all. They were in practice but they also had to manage. A longer term proposal was to develop a programme for Team Managers.
- The number children placed outside of the borough was low and an officer who worked part time carried out visits.
- There was a critical crisis emerging in education around funding. There were also an increasing number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the borough (30%) in the last five years, since the SEN reforms and there had been no additional funding. Many children with SEN were in main stream schools as there were not enough places in Special Schools. There was now also a requirement to extend support for those with SEN up to the age of 25 with no additional funding. The Government in its budget had released additional funding to go into the high needs block for 2019/20 which would go some way to closing the gap. There was within Wirral a potential £2m gap next year in the budget. There was an ongoing debate on whether Children's Services had adequate funding which seemed to demonstrate that there was a gap. The resources the Council had for SEN children and young people were being maximised

in terms of their needs. The findings of the SEN Review were awaited and the findings would be consulted upon.

- The discussions Members had with care leavers and how they had liked the Health Passports. They had had a positive impact as had the PAs who young people could talk to on a one to one basis. This showed the impact that could be made when Children's Services got it right. As part of the improvement journey Children's Services had to find ways to compensate the children for the things that had not been done well. It had to focus on the impact of not getting it right for children in the past.
- The Corporate Director believed that there was a good team in Children's Services and it was getting stronger. He was realistic about the outcome of the Inspection. If it is identified that Children's Services required improvement it is nowhere good enough but it is not because they are not trying it is because it is hard and they will have to catch up over the next two to three years going forward.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Corporate Director be thanked for his informative presentation;**
- (2) a report be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on the Staying Put Scheme as part of the next Improvement Journey Update; and**
- (3) Housing for Care Leavers be added to the Work Programme.**

33 SUMMARY OF STANDARDS PROVISIONAL OUTCOMES FOR KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5

The Lead School Commissioner presented a report that provided an executive summary and a more in depth analysis for the pupil outcomes at the age of 16 (GCSEs) as well as a brief summary of GCE outcomes.

It was reported that comparisons had been made with the results nationally wherever possible. However, many of the national results had not been published yet. When the statistical first releases were published the report would be amended.

It was noted that there had been ongoing changes to the content and grading system of GCSEs, making the subject content and exams far more challenging. In 2018 grading of outcomes in all curriculum subjects 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.

Members were informed that in Wirral the percentage of pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in English continued to improve and was above the national average. Outcomes in English continued to be higher than in mathematics. Also, more disadvantaged pupils attained grade 4+ in English so the gap narrowed by 1.1%.

Members were also informed that nationally there was a decrease in the percentage of pupils achieving a grade 4 or higher in mathematics. In contrast Wirral's results continued to improve and were above the national average. More disadvantaged pupils had attained grade 4+ in mathematics so the gap had narrowed by 1.6%.

The percentage of Wirral pupils attaining a Grade 4+ in English and Mathematics was well above the national average and showed an improvement from last year.

The Committee noted that attainment of both boys and girls nationally had increased. It was a similar picture for Wirral pupils. Nationally the gender gap has decreased, however the gender gap in Wirral had widened because more girls achieved higher grades than the boys.

It was noted that overall the Progress 8 measure for Wirral had increased slightly to 0.04 and was above the national average of - 0.02 and the North West average of - 0.16. Wirral was ranked second in the North West.

The report provided a detailed analysis of pupil outcomes which could be used to measure the impact of work undertaken in the following pledges:

- Children are ready for school.
- Young people are ready for work and adulthood.
- Vulnerable children reach their full potential.

The report also provided a very detailed analysis of outcomes for all pupil groups at the end of Key Stage 4 and some very provisional key headlines for Key Stage 5 in the secondary phase of education.

Appended to the report was a paper that set out an Executive Summary in respect of the provisional outcomes at key stage 4 (November 2018).

Members asked the Lead School Commissioner a number of questions which were answered accordingly. Matters discussed included the following:

- South Wirral seemed not to be achieving but only because the figures were skewed when looking at this by locality. The A Level results would not be made available until March so Members were looking at average point scores etc. as the only comparisons currently available. There had been massive reform in respect of A Levels as there was no

longer course work or AS Levels. Girls out performed boys and there was a need to focus on improving boys' attainment.

- The headlines were very positive and demonstrated significant improvement and there was a pattern of general improvement emerging.
- There was not a standard way to teach maths. Officers were looking at strategies in place where it was done well.
- There were no Grammar Schools in Wallasey.

RESOLVED:

That the report and its appendix be noted.

34 PARTICIPATION AND DESTINATION ANALYSIS OF WIRRAL YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 TO 19

Wirral has a complex post 16 education and learning landscape. Wirral's young people who made the transition at age 16 into further education and training had a number of options and pathways including school sixth form, further education (including study programme provision) and Apprenticeships. Post 16 opportunities were accessible locally. However, young people may choose to travel for specialist learning to a neighbouring local authority or beyond.

The Lifelong Learning Strategy Manager presented a report that identified the numbers of young people transitioning into post 16 learning and training opportunities whilst also assessing how successful they were by pathway. An analysis of learner attainment on entry to post 16 learning (all learning routes) had been completed in addition to valued added performance for some sectors. The report analysed the current destination data for Wirral young people upon leaving key stage 4 at age 16 and key stage 5 sixth form provision at age 18. In doing so the report supported Pledge 3 from the Wirral 20:20 Vision: Young people are ready for adulthood and employment.

The Lifelong Learning Strategy Manager informed that young people's post 16 participation rates in the borough were currently at or above sub-regional and regional averages. Challenges currently exist with recognised apprenticeship participation which was at an all-time low. To support this, schools and academies had to meet their statutory duty to provide robust, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance. The Council must also ensure there was sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet young people's needs.

The Committee noted that the national perspective on what was required of the education system in relation to young people beyond the age of 16 had changed significantly over recent years, and was continuing to evolve. There

had been a fundamental national reappraisal of the purpose of post-16 education and training, driven by the following three key factors:

- The Government's Post 16 Skills Plan aims to revitalise technical education policy with vocational 'T Levels' at the same level as A levels. Wirral's Further Education sector will need to ensure readiness to meet the opportunities presented by T Levels prior to 2020. The ability to offer quality work placements will underpin a shift-change in employer involvement.
- Government Apprenticeship reforms have resulted in all apprenticeships being real paid jobs; having a minimum duration of 12 months and involve sustained training and clear skills gain with at least 20% off-the-job training. The Government also introduced the Apprenticeship levy for large private and public sector employers from April 2017.
- There is an economic need to increase the number of young people receiving technical and vocational education to meet the demands of the future workforce. This demand is driven by a significant future need for new employees to replace those leaving an ageing workforce, and also the need for additional employees to meet the demands of economic growth. There is a political consensus that there should be an expansion in the number of young people taking apprenticeships and following work related education that is valued by Higher Education and/or Employers. This is necessary not only to meet labour market demands, but also to improve the employability of young people and thus further reduce the current levels of unemployment amongst young people.

It was noted that in addition to the national policy changes impacting on the roll and positioning of post 16 education there were also a number of substantial national developments which were influencing and shaping current and future services/delivery. The national influences having the greatest impact included:

- Qualifications are changing to become more demanding in the areas of both academic and vocational education. This is particularly so at GCSE level where the new english and maths curricular is extremely challenging.
- The apprenticeship reform agenda, including standards development, the removal of some level 2 opportunities and end point assessments are making this route way into employment inaccessible for some young people.

- The number of local post 16 training providers delivering on Wirral has reduced year on year as a result of real terms funding cuts, increasing study programme curriculum demands and inflexibilities and the challenges of meeting the needs of vulnerable young people.

The Lifelong Learning Strategy Manager informed that locally, post 16 participation rates were good with some 93.5% (as at August 2018) of the 16 and 17 year old cohort (7,134 young people) participating in some form of employment, education and training (EET). The proportions of Wirral young people not in employment, education and/or training (NEET) had been maintained at a low level for the last 4 years. The local authority NEET national indicator (mean NEET for December, January and February 2018), published March 2018, detailed the average NEET to be 3.2 percent and Not Known 1.7 percent. Against the same indicator the Northwest NEET average was 3.4 percent and 3.1 percent Not Known.

The Committee considered an analysis of Client Caseload Information Suite (CCIS) data (August 2018) which illustrated the proportions of young people that accessed the key types of local post 16 education and training provision. It also had regard to a diagram which illustrated, in general terms, how the current mainstream Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency post 16 provision met the needs of young people locally. The diagram illustrated that the highest attaining young people at age 16 generally progressed into schools sixth form provision at a grammar school. Moving down the attainment continuum provision was offered at the sixth form college and other secondary schools.

It was reported that the majority of young people choosing vocational options do so at Wirral Metropolitan College where the specialist facilities and resources existed. Some schools, through their sixth form offer, were also offering increasing volumes of vocationally related qualifications. Those more vulnerable young people with a lower level of academic achievement would access first steps provision at an independent learning provider as a stepping stone to further education and/or training. GCSE maths and english were key components of all study programmes, particularly for those young people that had not achieved a grade 4 or above.

Members asked the Lifelong Learning Strategy Manager a number of questions which were answered accordingly. Matters discussed included the following:

- The number of young people who were employed in education or training should be celebrated and everyone involved in helping to reduce the number of people in NEET were to be congratulated.
- The Sale Sharks Community Trust Project tackled youth unemployment and sought to boost job prospects for 16 to 18 year olds. There had been one cohort so far and it was delivered at the Hive

in a secure supportive environment. It was for those predominantly 17 year olds who had certain vulnerabilities or were vocationally undecided. It plugged a gap and gave young people the confidence to make that next step. Young people who accessed this were from right across the Borough and often were from the “hotspots” areas of Birkenhead, Seacombe, Tranmere and Rockferry.

- Schools with smaller sixth forms had less success. An independent review of sixth form provision had been conducted approximately two years ago. It was fed back through WASH and the outcome was that in schools with small sixth forms there was a correlation in terms of young people’s attainment in those schools. The challenge was to work with Headteachers to shift that provision but there was not a willingness among Headteachers to lose their sixth form provision. The recommendation of the consultant was that if that was the scenario it should be left to the market to shape that type of provision.
- The Service would continue to prioritise the ‘Ways to Work’ supported employment grants (European Social Fund monies) for young people aged 16 to 21 currently not in employment, education and/or training. There had been an extension of European funding granted by DWP and in terms of funding Officers were working with Officers in the Combined Authority on an extension to the programme. Post 2020 Officers were working with the Combined Authority on an extension to the programme. There were some underspends in the London Boroughs that Officers were trying to access and the underspends linked back to the Youth Employment initiative and they hoped to combine that with the extension which the DWP were granting the Council around European funding to create a new programme which would come under strand 1.3. This would take the Service up to March 2022. Officers were also looking at professional careers information advice and guidance which was also funded under the European programme at the moment and that would also be extended hopefully to 2022.
- There was a lean and well connected team who go out and work almost on a pastoral basis both with employers and with the young people who provide intermediary that enables and cajoles employees to give first, second, third and fourth chances. There was a whole series of different barriers that some of these vulnerable young people were faced with. The Team worked with Social care colleagues to support these young people moving forward. These young people would start to develop their talents, routines and employability skills and employers could knock any rough edges off. This was a sustained opportunity for these young people.
- Officers were trying to ensure that the Council’s contractors offered ring fenced opportunities to care leavers.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the following actions taken to support young people be noted:

- (a) Children's Services (14-19 Team) and the Strategic Commissioning team will continue to develop and pursue new innovative approaches to leaver social value from the Council's contractors and service providers. Social value in this context involves offering 'ring fenced' employment opportunities to vulnerable young people currently not in employment, education and/or training (NEET). A model has been established, tested and trialled with BIFFA and Continental Landscaping.**
- (b) Ensure that Wirral Growth Company and Wirral Waters developments prioritise opportunities for Wirral young people. Children's Services (14-19 Team) will be represented at planning meetings with MUSE Developments alongside Wirral Metropolitan College. The Council's 14-19 Team will identify the NEET young people and make referrals as appropriate. Detailed planning dialogue regarding opportunities for young people commenced in January 2019.**
- (c) The Council will produce and publish a local skills strategy, led by the Place and Investment team that clearly identifies local growth, replacement employment sectors and the skills and attributes key to a prosperous local economy. The education sector (particularly schools) need to understand local employer plans regarding workforce succession planning and future industry skills needs. Greater intelligence in this area will help educators support meeting the demand for skills from local employers.**
- (d) Providing quality careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) to compulsory school age children is key to raising aspirations and supporting robust careers decision making. Delivery of careers education is the statutory responsibility of schools and academies. The Council's 14-19 Service will continue to resource, support and challenge schools to shape and inform their CEIAG programme offer but also scrutinise existing practice.**
- (e) Continue to prioritise the 'Ways to Work' supported employment grants (European Social Fund monies) for young people aged 16 to 21 currently not in employment, education and / or training. The grant can provide a real opportunity for the most vulnerable young people of the Borough for whom local employers might**

not ordinarily take a chance on. The programme has proved that, with the right support, employment can be sustained beyond the grant phase and young people can have a happy and prosperous future. Of the 168 participants between June 2016 and July 2018, 64 percent were sustained in employment beyond grant funding. The grant will be in place until March 2020.

(2) a copy of the NEET map be sent to all Members of the Committee.

35 IMPROVING LIFE CHANCES STRATEGY

The Director for Strategy and Partnerships presented a report which provided the Committee with an update on the progress being made around tackling child poverty since the last update in March 2018. The report informed that the Improving Life Chances (ILC) Steering Group had worked actively on delivery of the strategy from 2015-2017. The Group had evaluated the causes and impact of poverty, and the work underway through other pledge areas and had agreed a focus on targeted action in geographical areas. Targeted 'pilots' had been established in St James, Seacombe and Beechwood wards and a range of initiatives had been put in place working directly with local groups. Members noted that the pilots had been completed in March 2018. However, the work in those areas was continuing and was linked to the Wirral Together model through the Community Services Pledge.

The Director also reported that in late 2017 the Wirral Partnership had agreed that having a separate Strategy Group meant that action to tackle poverty was not embedded throughout the other themes and, therefore, did not get the visibility required to ensure the right targeted action. An annual "Improving Life Chances" event was now being held once a year and 'champions' from this pledge attended other key Wirral Plan 2020 steering groups to ensure that reducing child and family poverty was a priority across the plan; champions could hold other pledge leads to account. From 2018-19 key measures were being transferred to other pledge reports alongside relevant ongoing activities.

Members asked the Director for Strategy and Partnerships a number of questions which were answered accordingly. Matters discussed included the following:

- Families in Birkenhead were struggling with financial hardship. There was a greater number than what there had been a few years ago and the data provided in the report was not matching this experience. It was agreed that things needed to be got right before birth if life chances were to be improved. The percentage of women booked to access professional maternity services on or before 12+6 weeks gestation had fallen to 78% in the last quarter which was lower than at the start of the Wirral Plan when it had been 80.8%. The target was for

only 90% and that meant there was 10% of woman who were pregnant who did not have access to maternity services before their first few weeks of pregnancy which was a dangerous situation to be in. Members asked if there was a poverty indicator that balanced out income and outgoings. Some people had a high level of debt and debt management services were difficult to access. There was agreement that the data provided gave Members some indication of improvement but it did not show what really was going on and Members wanted to see a set of indicators which better reflected the lives of people that were in the very difficult situation that so many families in Birkenhead were actually in.

- Members queried the number of reports of anti-social behaviour that were detailed in the report and asked if the figures were up to date and accurate. The report informed that anti-social behaviour continued to reduce. The annual figure at the start of the Wirral Plan had been 11837 reports of anti-social behaviour in Wirral and at the end of year 2017/18 it was 8617, a 37.4% reduction. Members did not consider that this reflected what was happening around the Borough. The Director agreed to check the figures and informed that overall there had been a reduction in the number of reports about anti-social behaviour but that did not mean that there were not pockets of anti-social behaviour in the Borough that still needed to be addressed, so overall there was an average reduction where there has been targeted action. This was picked up from Police data and that of others. It did not mean that every aspect of anti-social behaviour had been addressed. There may be some areas in Wirral that need to be targeted and focused upon.
- Attention was drawn to the increase in anti-social behaviour in Hoylake, Meols and West Kirby. This was quite noticeable and Members queried whether the strategy was pushing it around the Wirral to places where the reporting was a bit slower and if that had been reflected in the figures.
- Members asked if the definitions of poverty being used were those of the Rowntree Foundation and were informed that they were the definitions that were used nationally. They were kept consistent because of the need to compare like with like. It related to families who lived below average income. It was usually measured as 60% below average income.
- Group Spokespersons agreed to include a proposal to have a Joint Workshop on poverty and the work that goes on in respect of it included in the agenda for the next agenda setting meeting.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Director for Strategy and Partnerships be requested to circulate the formal definition of poverty along with updated anti-social

behaviour figures provided by the Police to all Members of the Committee.

36 **LOCAL ACTION TO TACKLE OBESITY**

The Acting Director for Health and Wellbeing presented a report in response to the request from Members for an update on each of the following action to tackle increasing rates of obesity within Wirral:

- Local obesity statistics (with the inclusion of data on diabetes prevalence).
- 'Eat Well Wirral' programme.
- Takeaway licensing.

The Acting Director reported that this work was a key strand of the Wirral 2020 Plan Pledge 'Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives' and sat within a much broader set of actions designed to tackle obesity. She informed that action to reduce levels of obesity needed to take a system-wide approach incorporating the following:

Planning; transport; housing; environment; behaviour-change; and social and health care systems.

Members noted that further work was required to develop a system wide response and that action on reducing childhood obesity would provide the focus of a report to the Committee in February 2019.

Members asked the Acting Director for Health and Wellbeing and a Planning Officer who was working on policies for the Local Plan to which planning applications would be determined (Eddie Fleming) a number of questions which were answered accordingly. Matters discussed included the following:

- Reference was made to a school on the Wirral where most of the children had a take-away on a daily basis and that was despite the fact that the majority of the children in the school were also on free school meals. There was a real dilemma here about education and meeting nutritional needs. It was proposed that consideration be given to how this awareness of poor quality could be tackled.
- In parts of the Borough there were numerous take-away restaurants grouped together. It was noted that to produce a planning policy and supplementary planning guidance there had to be an evidence-base and it had to be subject to statutory procedures before the Council could introduce it. Planning Officers were working with colleagues in Public Health and Environmental Health. They had a copy of the report and were looking at the best way to include it in an evidence base as the intention was to strengthen one of the draft policies in the Local Plan so that it could control the number of take-away restaurants in

areas and particularly where there were schools. Recommendations would be made to the Cabinet and then the Council's approval would be sought before it went out to public consultation. When all of the comments were received they would be inspected by the Secretary of State's Planning Inspector and if the evidence was shown to be robust enough to defend a policy that restricted takeaways around schools or anywhere else that the Council deemed fit. That would become an adopted policy that would have to be adhered to when determining planning applications. The aim was to produce a draft Local Plan with Supplementary Planning documents for consideration by the Council in July 2019.

- Members wanted to know what needed to be done to ensure that there were not loads of very poor eateries close to each other that were destroying children's lives.
- The report referred to 80% of obese children in Wirral who would become obese adults. The Government did not set any direction so the Council should and it needed to know how to do it.
- Reference was made to the 'Eat Well Wirral' programme referred to in the report and the way foods that could go on sale could be tackled. However, the problem was that Planning did not have any control over existing take-away restaurants. Planning could only control planning applications for new development. The best thing that could be done to support a planning policy was robust evidence that was traceable and could be monitored. If there was an appeal against a decision to refuse planning permission, a Planning Inspector would make the determination and robust evidence would need to be available to support the policy whether it be a Local Plan or through supplementary planning documents to support the Local Plan.
- Members wanted to know what the results of the 'Eat Well Wirral' programme were to date.
- A system wide approach was required and planning was a part of this but it was about working through the Wirral Together approach and working with communities to understand how they could be helped to have a better relationship with food e.g. How to make the most of allotments in the local areas, Children's Centres, Cookery Classes and what Health Visitors were doing with new mums etc. There were a lot of things that could be done, that were community based, so that people could have a better relationship with food.

RESOLVED:

That the actions taken to tackle growing trends in obesity as outlined in the report be noted.

37 REALITY CHECK VISIT FEEDBACK REPORT

The Chair introduced a report which reminded the Committee of its agreed principle of undertaking a series of Reality Check visits by small groups of Members to enable Members to engage directly with frontline staff. Reality visits and subsequent recommendations would enable the Committee to complete part of its Work Programme.

The Committee was aware that key to the success of scrutiny was the ability of Members to check evidence from a variety of sources. Whilst Members routinely received reports from senior management and had access to performance monitoring reports, it had been proposed that greater access to frontline staff and service users would enable them to triangulate evidence with other sources and give them greater confidence in the outcomes of their scrutiny work. Therefore, it had been agreed to establish a programme of Reality Check Visits through which Members could engage independently and directly with frontline staff. The key operating principles for the visits were detailed in the report.

Appended to the report was a paper that set out the proceedings of the Reality Check Visit to St Catherine's Hospital on 3 December 2019.

The Director of Quality and Patient Safety, Wirral CCG was in attendance at the meeting and discussed the following issues that were raised with Members:

- These visits were really worth doing and Members got a lot out of them. When Members spoke to the staff their Managers/Directors purposely left the room and frank conversations were able to be held.
- Members had been able to tour the building and have a look at the facilities.
- Members were able to meet Doctors and Nurses etc. who were involved in the journey of children who were looked after.
- The Health Passports had really impressed Members and they considered that they should be given to all Wirral's care leavers.
- There were things that the staff wanted to work with Members on.
- There had been some improvements and there would be more.
- There were shortcomings with the Liquid Logic system.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report and the recommendations therein be noted; and**
- (2) the Director of Quality and Patient Safety, Wirral CCG be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.**

38 **2019/2020 BUDGET SCRUTINY WORKSHOP REPORT**

The Chair presented a report by a Scrutiny Officer informing of a Scrutiny Workshop held on 5 December 2019 when Members had considered the 2019/20 budget proposals being put forward in respect of its remit. Attached to the report was a further report that detailed the proceedings of the Workshop.

The Workshop had provided Members with the opportunity to examine in greater detail a number of budget proposals. The budget proposals selected for further examination had been identified by the Chair and Group Spokespersons as those deemed to be of greatest significance in terms of value and the public interest. The report summarised the proposals scrutinised and the comments and suggestions of those Members who had been in attendance at the Workshop.

Those Members who had attended the Workshop were in agreement that the proposed budget savings options were measured and achievable. They had also agreed that the £20m invested last year had stabilised services and the focus was now on investing in the longer term and reducing this figure.

Members had also agreed that they wanted to look closer at the cost of placements for looked after children, and it had been proposed that this be added to the Committee's Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report on the Workshop (Appendix 1 to the report) be agreed as the Committee's formal response to the 2019/20 budget proposals; and**
- (2) the report and its appendix be referred to the Cabinet for consideration at the time when it is making recommendations to the Council in respect of the Council's Budget for 2019/20.**

39 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**

The Chair introduced his report advising that this Committee, in co-operation with the other three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, was responsible for proposing and delivering an annual Scrutiny Work Programme. 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 report provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the Municipal Year. Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a report on a Mental Health Workshop that Members had attended on 11 October 2018. The Work Programme was attached as Appendix 2 to the report, based on issues which were of interest to members of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the municipal year 2018/19.

The Chair reported that there was a multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangement Workshop scheduled for 28 January 2019. Members had received information about it and they would explore the arrangements that could be put in place after the Safeguarding Children Board stood down. The Chair considered it very important that as many Committee Members as possible were in attendance at this meeting to help ensure appropriate scrutiny in respect of the new arrangements.

The Chair also reported that after receiving one of the Ofsted monitoring letters it had been decided to focus the next few reality checks on the Council's partners. The next reality check had not yet been confirmed but hopefully Superintendent Ian Hassall would be in attendance to explore the Police's safeguarding role.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the content of the report be noted; and**
- (2) the proposed Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2018/19 be approved.**

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CHILDREN & FAMILIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27TH FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT TITLE	Tackling Obesity
REPORT OF	Julie Webster Acting Director for Health and Wellbeing Rebecca Mellor, Senior Public Health Manager

REPORT SUMMARY

Obesity is one of the most serious health challenges of the 21st century – it is a complex issue with several different but often interlinked causes. No single measure is likely to be effective on its own in tackling obesity it requires action across agencies, sectors and with local people.

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee further detail on the key challenges that Wirral faces in relation to overweight and obesity and opportunities to help local people maintain a healthy weight; outlining a series of recommendations for action.

This report affects all wards within the Borough; it does not contain any key decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that The Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- i) establish a working group to develop via a series of workshops an action plan to identify key areas of work to support local people maintain a healthy weight
- ii) note the opportunities identified within this report to promote healthy weight
- iii) endorse the proposed development and commitment to the Local Government Declaration on Healthy Weight for Wirral.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The causes of obesity are complex and the journey to becoming overweight is a highly personal one. For some there may be a biological susceptibility to weight gain, but for all of us a crucial factor is our environment and how far that helps or hinders us to make healthy food choices and build activity into our everyday lives. What this means is that achieving a healthy weight is not just the responsibility of the individual, and to make a difference at a population level we will require a collaborative approach that creates system wide change.

In seeking to tackle obesity, we are addressing changes in the way that we live our lives that have evolved over decades. There are no quick wins. To stop the rise in obesity we will require collaborative effort from across the public, private and voluntary sectors and amongst individuals, families and communities.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is uniquely positioned to lead this work.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Tackling overweight and obesity is a key strand of the Wirral 2020 Plan pledge “*Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives*” and sits within a much broader set of actions designed to address obesity. However tackling obesity is everybody’s business

A report was taken to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2019. This report provided an update on; local obesity statistics (with the inclusion of data on the prevalence of diabetes); ‘Eat Well Wirral’ programme and takeaway licensing. Members asked for further clarification on the key challenges that Wirral faces around tackling obesity and a set of recommendations on further action.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Almost two thirds of local people are either overweight or obese. The impact of this is far reaching and the causes multiple. There is no single effective solution. **Without action across agencies, sectors and with local people** the health of individuals will continue to suffer, health inequalities associated with obesity will remain and the economic and social costs will increase to unsustainable levels.

A number of actions will require national policy. Councils are well placed to lobby national government on behalf of local people e.g. The UK Government has committed to consult on TV and online advertising to children of products high in fat, sugar and salt, we need to be prepared to respond to the consultation including the views of local people.

At a local level, there is the opportunity to go beyond educating people about healthy eating to tackling key local environmental drivers of obesity and supporting people who are already overweight. A whole systems approach to obesity provides local authorities with

the process to do this. It epitomises 'Health in All Policies'¹, drawing on the local authority's strengths, fitting with its business priorities and recognising that councils can achieve better and more effective results by engaging their community and local assets.

4.0 PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee support a whole system approach to tackling obesity by working with stakeholders to develop an understanding of the reality of the challenge, consider how the system is operating and where there are the greatest opportunities for change.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is well placed to lead this approach which can be challenging in the current environment of significant financial constraints which dictate that, for many Councils and partners, jobs, local prosperity and statutory services take priority.

There are several issues that could be explored via this approach that could lead to local action. These include:

- The role of physical regeneration in promoting safe spaces for cycling and walking
- The potential levers of the Council's statutory responsibilities e.g. planning and licensing.
- The role of business in developing innovative solutions
- Engaging residents in the development of solutions
- The development of transport plans including the provision, access and affordability of public transport, safe environments and infrastructure for walking, cycling and recreation
- Addressing the availability of assets in communities to support healthy weight for example; access to affordable fruit and vegetables, concentration of 'unhealthy' food and approaches to food and fuel poverty locally
- The role of health and care providers to address overweight and obesity
- The opportunities for nurseries, schools and colleges to increase physical activity and facilitate healthy eating
- Adoption of the Local Government Declaration on Healthy Weight. This has been successfully employed in fifteen North West Councils and is designed to support Councils to exercise their responsibility in developing, implementing and enforcing policies which promote healthy weight

Support is available from Public Health England to work with the Council to develop a systems approach to promoting healthy weight.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional legal implications arising directly from this report

¹ Health in All Policies (HiAP) is an approach to policies that systematically and explicitly takes into account the health implications of the decisions made; targets the key social determinants of health; looks for synergies between health and other core objectives of Councils and the work we do with partners; and tries to avoid causing harm with the aim of improving the health of the population and reducing inequity.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are no resource implication arising directly from this report

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

If the action outlined in this report does not progress it is highly likely that the trends, we are observing in increasing levels of people who are overweight and obese will continue.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Engagement has taken place with local people via the Healthy High Street insight work and work to develop a local food plan.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATION

An equality impact assessment has not been completed due to the nature of this report.

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APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Report to Children and families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 24 January 2019 – Local Action to Tackle Obesity - <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50055110/Tackling%20Obesity%20Report.pdf>

Healthy Weight Declaration (appended)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
As above	

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON HEALTHY WEIGHT



THIS LOCAL GOVERNMENT
DECLARATION ON HEALTHY WEIGHT IS
A STATEMENT, INDIVIDUALLY OWNED BY
BLACKPOOL COUNCIL.

It encapsulates a vision to promote healthy weight and improve the health and well-being of the local population. We recognise that we need to exercise our responsibility in developing and implementing policies which promote healthy weight.



childrensfood.org.uk
Children's Food Campaign



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Cliff Arny Cross,
Cabinet Member for Reducing
Health Inequalities


Dr Arif Rajpura,
Director of Public Health

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT:

- > Unhealthy weight is a serious public health problem that increases disability, disease and death and has substantial long term economic, well-being and social costs. The proportion of the population affected by unhealthy weight continues to rise;
- > Unhealthy weight is affected by health inequalities and is more common in lower-socio economic groups;
- > Poor diet and an unhealthy weight are risk factors for cardiovascular disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes which contribute powerfully to poor health and premature death;
- > Energy dense food and drinks high in fat and sugar and low in essential nutrients contribute to a significant amount of additional and unnecessary calories in the diet;
- > There is greater availability and access to food and drinks high in fat and sugar, which are increasingly eaten outside of the home, contributing to excess energy intake;
- > Increased intake of foods high in fat and sugar and low in fruit and vegetables are strongly linked to those in manual occupations;
- > People living in more socially deprived areas have less access to healthy foods;
- > Advertising and marketing of foods and drinks high in fat and sugar increases their consumption;
- > Education, information and the increased availability of healthy alternatives help individuals to make healthy, informed food and drink choices;
- > Modern physical activity environments contribute to sedentary lifestyles;
- > Urban planning can have a significant impact on opportunities for physical activity, promoting safer environments for walking, cycling and recreation.

AS LOCAL LEADERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH WE WELCOME THE:

- > Opportunity for local government to lead local action to prevent obesity, securing the health and well-being of our residents whilst considering available social, environmental and financial NHS and social care resources;
- > Opportunity to protect some of the most vulnerable in society by giving children the best start in life and enabling all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and make informed choices;
- > National commitment to address childhood obesity;
- > Endorsement of this declaration by national organisations.

Support for the Local Authority Declaration on Health Weight from the following organisations:

Association of Directors of Public Health North West, British Dental Association, Children's Food Campaign, and the UK Health Forum.

WE COMMIT OUR COUNCIL FROM THIS DATE

20.01.2016

...to sign the Declaration to show commitment to reducing unhealthy weight in our communities, protect the health and well-being of staff and citizens and make an economic impact on health and social care and the local economy by striving to:

- > Protect residents from the commercial pressures and vested interests of the food and drink industry supplying high fat, salt and sugar products;
- > Consider how commercial partnerships with the food and drink industry may impact on messages communicated around healthy weight to the local community;
- > Review provision in all our public buildings, facilities and providers to make healthy foods and drinks more convenient and affordable and limit access to high-calorie, low-nutrient foods and drinks (to include all public institutions such as schools, hospitals, care homes, leisure facilities);
- > Increase public access to fresh drinking water on local authority controlled sites;
- > Consider supplementary guidance for hot food takeaways, specifically in areas around schools, parks and where access to healthier alternatives are limited;
- > Advocate plans with partners including the NHS and all agencies represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board, Healthy Cities, academic institutions and local communities to address the causes and impacts of obesity;
- > Protect our children from inappropriate marketing by the food and drink industry;
- > Support the government in taking action at national level to help local authorities reduce obesity prevalence and health inequalities in our communities;
- > Ensure food and drink provided at public events includes healthy provisions, supporting food retailers to deliver this offer;
- > Support the health and well-being of local authority staff and increase knowledge and understanding of overweight and obesity to create a culture and ethos that de-normalises unhealthy weight;
- > Consider how strategies, plans and infrastructures for regeneration and town planning positively impact on physical activity;
- > Monitor the progress of the plan against commitments and publish the results.

IN ADDITION OUR LOCAL AUTHORITY WILL WORK TOWARDS:

- > Considering weighted/financial support for 'healthier' retail (e.g. greengrocers, co-operatives etc.) in deprived areas;
- > Improving the quality of packed lunches by developing a local agreement with schools to implement guidance;
- > Working with schools to achieve 'walk to school';
- > Taking a stepped approach to reduce sugary drinks available in vending machines on locally controlled sites;
- > Working with commercial outlets within all public sector premises to develop a food and drink policy.

Signatories:



Cllr Amy Cross,
Cabinet Member for Reducing
Health Inequalities



Dr Arif Rajpura,
Director of Public Health

To be reviewed by 20th January 2017.

**FOOD
ACTIVE**

Blackpool Council

The Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight has been designed and developed on behalf of Food Active, by the Health Equalities Group and is based on the the Local Authority Declaration for Tobacco Control.



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 February 2019

REPORT TITLE:	2018/19 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance
REPORT OF:	Director for Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the 2018/18 Quarter 3 (October - December 2018) 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 an overview 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

- The take up of the 2-year old offer is at 93.1% achieved through improved analysis, face-to-face contact with those families not engaged, integrated working with partners including promotion in particular by Health Visitors.
- 97.7% of early years childcare providers are judged good or better by Ofsted with none assessed as inadequate. The Early Years team work directly with providers with bespoke packages of support, pre-inspection preparation, cluster meetings to enable best practice operation to be shared and provision of a quality framework and toolkit. This is significant progress compared to the Wirral Plan start of 78% in 2015-16
- Young Chamber work developing young people's aspiration in Quarter 3 included "Introduction to The World of Work" with over 250 young people, presentation skills sessions and the Great Debate at Birkenhead High School Academy.
- Validated Key Stage Four results show the Progress 8 measure for Wirral increased slightly to 0.04 and is above the national average of -0.02 and the North West average of -0.16. Wirral ranks 2nd in the North West. Six Wirral schools are featured in the top ten highest performing schools in Merseyside although there is wide disparity in Wirral with four secondary schools listed in the lowest 346 schools in the country.
- Post 16 participation rates are good with 93.5% 16 and 17 year old cohort (7,134 young people) participating in some form of employment, education and training (EET). The proportions of Wirral young people NEET have been maintained at a low level for the last 4 years; NEET 3.2% and Not Known 1.7% with Northwest figures higher - NEET 3.4% and Not Known 3.1%.

- The children looked after rate has remained relatively stable this year to date but remains high. The recent Ofsted monitoring visit has highlighted improved practice for children in care. There is now a stronger focus on permanence with 34 care orders discharged, and 19 children have been adopted so far this year. However, there is still more to do and there is a continued focus.
- The number of children on Protection Plans (CPPs) is anticipated to remain high in the short term whilst work is focused on reducing the number of children who are unnecessarily subject of Care Orders where there is no improvement for the child.
- MARAC cases continue to rise when compared to last year. Following a reduction in staffing in the Family Safety Unit over the previous quarter, the IDVA service is now back to a fully staffed service and we are able to deal with the demand of new cases. Repeat rate of Domestic Abuse show a worsening trend over the previous 12 months. This increase was expected due to national changes in repeat criteria and we will continue to monitor over the remainder of the plan.
- In October we held the first Wirral Zero Tolerance towards Domestic Abuse Conference. A new Business Quality Mark was launched supporting businesses to tackle Domestic Abuse in their own workforce or communities around them. The conference also saw the launch of www.itsneverokwirral.org a website designed to provide information and support for Domestic Abuse victims, survivors and practitioners in one place.

RECOMMENDATION

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

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 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 effective 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 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 2018/19 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. 2017/18 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: <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
- People with Disabilities live Independent Lives – Graham Hodgkinson
- Zero Tolerance to Domestic Violence – Mark Camborne

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 Children and Families Committee 2018/19 Quarter 3 Pledge Reports

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	22 March 2018
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	3 July 2018
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	25 September 2018
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13 November 2018

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Appendix 1

Wirral Plan Children and Families Committee

2018-19 Quarter 3 Reports

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Children are ready for school

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Work undertaken by the Early Years Quality Improvement and Training Team to support providers continues to have an impact, with 97.7% providers judged good or better by Ofsted. The Team continue to provide bespoke packages of support to providers to reach good or better and have widened their offer to include pre-inspection preparation for those already at good or above. Cluster meetings are bringing providers together to consider transition arrangements for children and promote sector-led improvement. The Early Years Team review the outcomes and recommendations from all early years setting inspections and consider findings and trends through the Cluster Meetings. A Quality Framework and Toolkit has been rolled out to providers, receiving positive feedback.

Strategies to increase take up of early years education are working. The take up of the 2-year old offer is at 93.1% This has been achieved through improved data management and analysis, continued use of face-to-face contact with those families not accessing it, work with partners to understand reasons for not engaging and responding appropriately, partnership promotion in particular relationship with Health Visitors. There has been good take up of the 30-hour offer, with an additional 14,000 hours of entitlement being accessed. We were successful in a grant application to support the roll out of the 30-hour offer and have provided workshops on the practicalities of delivering the offer and bespoke 1:1 business support for providers.

Better use of data is leading to more targeted approaches for groups and individual children. We have implemented a provider portal for 30-hour eligibility checks, 2 year old funding applications, headcount submissions, self-updates, Better Start cohort tracking, Early Years Census, and Disability Fund Applications. The centralising of this data is enabling more effective support for children and improved tracking data for funded children. Cluster Meetings and Advisory Boards are using this data more effectively to monitor outcomes.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Foundation Stage - % achieving a good level of development	Annual Higher is better	62.8% (2013-14 Acad Year)	England: 71.5% (2017-18 Acad Year) North West: 68.9% (2017-18 Acad Year) Statistical Neighbours: 69.9% (2017-18 Acad Year)	69.4% (2016-17 Acad Year)					70.5% (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	This is the finalised figure of that provisionally reported on in Q2 and represents very good progress. The % of Foundation stage children now achieving a good level of development has surpassed a milestone (70%) that has been worked towards for the last 3 years, and the progress in this area received favourable comment during the recent Ofsted visit. In addition to showing an increase upon the 2016-17 Academic year figure of 69.4%, Wirral is also ahead of that of the North West (68.9%). Whilst our figure is 1% below that of England as a whole (71.5%), work is on going to meet and surpass this in the future. The next provisional figures will become available in September 2019 for the 2018-19 academic year.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	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)		76.0% (2017-18)	Amber Actual: 89.5% Target: 90.0% (Q1 2018-19)	Amber Actual: 78.0% Target: 90.0% (Q2 2018-19)	Amber Actual: 75.0% Target: 90.0% (Q3 2018-19)			Worse	The reason for the decrease since Q1 is that, at that time, booking and scans were completed during the first visit, which had to take place on/around 12 weeks. The process was then changed due to the high demand on scans and lack of flexibility for women booking. Now, women generally have a scan before the 12th week of pregnancy but the booking, which this PI measures, takes place after, when the gestation of the pregnancy is confirmed. Women are also triaged when they refer and choose a booking appointment that fits in with their availability. This may be after 12+6 gestation. Despite not all women have a booking in appointment before 12.6 weeks they do, in the main, access services before this gestation. The standard nationally is women accessing services not necessarily completion of the booking.
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)	England: 72.0% (Jan 2018) North West: 83.0% (Jan 2018) Statistical Neighbours: 91.3% (Jan 2018)	91.3% (Jan-Mar 2018)		91.0% (Apr-Jul 2018)	93.1% (Sept-Dec 18)			Better	Based on Headcount/Census for Autumn Term 2018/19 Total Children: 1165 Eligible Children: 1251 Performs favourably against National Average of 72% (Jan 18) and is a slight increase from Q2 figure of 91.0% due to better processes enabling better targeting of interaction with eligible families. Increase in cross team working with SEND team to increase SEND applications. The offer is still being promoted as much as possible and reviewing take up of target groups e.g. CLA and children with SEND.
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: 17.0% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 18.0% (2016-17 Acad Year)	22.0% (2016-17 Acad Year)					18.0% (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	This is a 4% reduction on the previously reported academic year and represents very good progress in this area. Work has continued on the progress tracker to ensure that as many providers as possible are using it to identify those children who need additional support to improve their school readiness. The next provisional figures will become available in September 2019 for the 2018-19 academic year.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend	Comment
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)	25.60% (2016-17 Acad Year)					25.10% (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	Training is being rolled out for early Years settings in relation to nutrition and has a focus on managing obesity for 0-5 year olds. An expression of interest was submitted to the Local Government Association to become a childhood obesity trailblazer site. The expression focused on healthy eating support for 0-5s and their families. Results are due by the end of January. 2018-19 figures will become available in October 2019.
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: 84.9% (Q4 2017/18) North West: 87.0% (Q4 2017/18)		Amber Actual: 84.0% Target: 90.0% (Q1 2018-19)	Amber Actual: 81.0% Target: 90.0% (Q2 2018-19)				Worse	Latest figure available: (Q2 2018-19). Q2 performance has reduced slightly from the previous quarter due to the impact of summer holidays of both families and service providers (GPs) and the tight time-frame for completion.
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: 77.6% (Q4 2017/18) North West: 82.8% (Q4 2017/18)		Amber Actual: 80.0% Target: 85.0% (Q1 2018-19)	Amber Actual: 77.0% Target: 85.0% (Q2 2018-19)				Worse	Latest figure available: (Q2 2018-19). Q2 often leads to increased lack of attendance (DNAs) due to the school summer holidays. This was managed by offering weekend reviews during Q3 which have been very popular and ensures that children have the opportunity to have their development assessed so that onward referrals can be made where necessary. This has resulted in increased attendance in Q3 (not yet reported). Nurseries continue to have a link practitioner who attends the setting regularly, this has enabled earlier identification for children requiring additional intervention to support their needs. In Q3 there were 185 referrals made as a result of nursery contacts which enables early identification of need. In addition there has been an increase in home visits over the summer following the above-mentioned DNAs, however the initial DNAs will still have impacted on the Q2 performance.
Percentage of children who received a 2½ year Health Visitor review	Quarterly Higher is better	73.0% (Q1 2015-16)	England: 76.4% (Q4 2017/18) North West: 79.9% (Q4 2017/18)		Green Actual: 82.0% Target: 85.0% (Q1 2018-19)	Amber Actual: 79.0% Target: 85.0% (Q2 2018-19)				Worse	Latest figure available: (Q2 2018-19). Q2 often leads to increased lack of attendance (DNAs) due to the school summer holidays. This was managed by offering weekend reviews during Q3 which have been very popular and ensures that children have the opportunity to have their development assessed so that onward referrals can be made where necessary. This has resulted in increased attendance in Q3 (not yet reported). Integrated reviews continue and in Q3 the service has completed 586 2 year reviews. Nurseries continue to have a link practitioner who attends the setting regularly, this has enabled earlier identification for children requiring additional intervention to support their needs. In Q3 there were 185 referrals made as a result of nursery contacts which enables early identification of need. In addition there has been an increase in home visits over the summer following the above-mentioned DNAs, however the initial DNAs will still have impacted on the Q2 performance.
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: 126.3 (2016-17) North West: 184.4 (2016-17)	143.7 (2016-17)						n/a	Latest figure available: 143.7 (2016-17)
Percentage of early years childcare providers rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	Quarterly Higher is better	78.0% (Aug 2015)	England: 94.0% (Mar 2018) North West: 94.0% (Mar 2018)	91.0% (Dec 2017)	93.0% (Mar 2018)		97.7% (Jan 2019)			n/a	The latest data available from Ofsted DataView is as at 31 March 2018 (93.0%). This shows a 15% improvement since the start of the Wirral Plan. This figure shows an increase of 2% in the percentage of early years childcare providers rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted, since December 2017. Wirral's figure is slightly below the regional and national figure of 94%. Data for August 2018 will become available in November 2018.
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development	Annual Higher is better	20.0% (2013-14 Acad Year)		47.8% (2016-17 Acad Year)					61.5% (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	Please note 'Year end' figures refer to the end of the 2017-18 Academic year. This is an improvement on the provisional figure of 60.0% supplied in Q2. This reflects a very small cohort of children (>15) and therefore can be a volatile figure. The next figures will provisionally become available in September 2019 for the 2018-19 academic year.

Young people are ready for work and adulthood

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Validated Key Stage 4 data has highlighted some real successes:

- There are more pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in English with attainment above the national average.
- More students achieve the expected standard in English than in mathematics.
- This year more disadvantaged pupils attained grade 4+ in English so the gap narrowed by 1.1%.
- More disadvantaged pupils attained grade 4+ in mathematics so the gap narrowed by 1.6%.
- More Wirral pupils achieved a Grade 4+ in English and Mathematics with attainment being well above the national average and an improvement from last year.
- Attainment of both boys and girls in Wirral and nationally has increased. The gender gap in Wirral has widened because more girls achieved higher grades than the boys, Nationally the gender gap has decreased.
- In 2018 more pupils with an EHCP met the standard grade 4+ in English and mathematics with attainment being above the national average.

Overall the Progress 8 measure for Wirral increased slightly to 0.04 and is above the national average of -0.02 and the North West average of -0.16. Wirral ranks 2nd in the North West. Six Wirral schools are featured in the top ten highest performing schools in Merseyside. However the individual school Progress 8 measures indicate wide disparity with four Wirral secondary schools listed in the lowest 346 schools in the country.

Wirral has a complex post 16 education and learning landscape with a number of options and pathways including school sixth form, further education (including study programme provision) and Apprenticeships. Post 16 opportunities are accessible locally however, young people may choose to travel for specialist learning to a neighbouring local authority or beyond.

Locally, post 16 participation rates are good with 93.5% (August 2018) of the 16 and 17 year old cohort (7,134 young people) participating in some form of employment, education and training (EET). The proportions of Wirral young people not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) have been maintained at a low level for the last 4 years. In 2018 NEET is 3.2% and Not Known 1.7% with Northwest figures higher - NEET 3.4% and Not Known 3.1%. Challenges exist with recognised apprenticeship participation which is at an all-time low. To support this, schools and academies must meet their statutory duty to provide robust, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance. The Council must also ensure there is sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet young people's needs.

The number of young people aged 16 to 18 attend Wirral Met College increased over the last three years to 1,957 in 2017/18. Between 2017 and 2018 level overall achievement rates improved by 8.2 percent. Early indications are that this has improved again in 2018. Outcomes for young people attending the College are in line with national averages.

The numbers of young people accessing post 16 education at the Birkenhead Sixth Form College are the highest ever in 2017 at 1,278, with achievement rates at Level 2 improved year on year (2017 89.9%) and constantly above national averages (86%). Level 3 long programme success rates have also improved year on year but remain 1 percent below the national average (2017, -1.1% at 86.6%). The college performing in the top 15% of all schools / colleges nationally for adding value to learners outcomes between Key Stage 4 and finishing at the college.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	Quarterly Higher is better	84.0% (Aug 2015)	England: 86.0% (Mar 2018) North West: 88.0% (Mar 2018)	89.0% (Dec 2017)	Red Actual: 86.0% Target: 100.0% (Mar 2018)	Red Actual: 84.0% Target: 100.0% (Aug 2018)				Worse	The latest data available is at 31st August 2018. This figure has continued to decrease in to Q3, and is now below both the national and North West benchmarks. It has now returned to the same level as at the start of the Wirral Plan, having increased to 89% at year end 2017-2018.
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)	England: 6.0% (2016-17) North West: 6.7% (2016-17)	5.3% (2017-18)	5.5% (May 2018)	6.4% (Aug 2018)	5.3% (Nov 2018)			Worse	Reported as at November 2018: NEET 3.0% and Not Known 2.3% = overall 5.3%. Wirral NEET & Not Known performance remains strong at just 0.6% up on November 2017. The slight increase compared to the same period last year in NEET and Not Known is attributed to the recent loss of the Vocational College training provider and reduction in apprenticeships starters. This trend has been noted on a national scale resulting from national policy change and Apprenticeship reform.
Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend	Comment
Progress 8 Score for Wirral	Annual Higher is better	(n/a)	North West: -0.17 (2017-18 Acad Year) Statistical Neighbours: -0.30 (2017-18 Acad Year)	0.01 (2016-17 Acad Year)					0.04 (P) (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	Please note 'Year end' figures refer to the end of the 2017-18 Academic year. Whilst an improvement on the previous academic year, Wirral still lags behind the region and our statistical neighbours.
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: 22.0% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 22.0% (2016-17 Acad Year)	22.0% (2016-17 Acad Year)					23.0% (2017-18 Acad Year)	Worse	Please note 'Year end' figures refer to the end of the 2017-18 Academic year. A slight increase upon the previous academic year, however this figure is in line with England and the North West.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend	Comment
The percentage of children in good or better schools as rated by Ofsted	Quarterly Higher is better	81.0% (Aug 2015)	England: 85.0% (Mar 2018) North West: 84.0% (Mar 2018)	88.0% (Dec 2017)	84.0% (Mar 2018)	84.0% (Aug 2018)				Same	Most recent available figures relate to August 2018, and is the same as the position in March 2018. There has been a decrease of 4% compared to the end of 2017, but an improvement on the Wirral Plan start. Wirral has similar levels to that of the North West and England.
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at Key Stage 4	Annual Lower is better	(n/a)	England: 0.66 (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 0.43 (2016-17 Acad Year)	0.60 (2016-17 Acad Year)					0.74 (P) (2017-18 Acad Year)	Worse	Non Disadvantaged 0.25, Disadvantaged -0.49
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: 1.11 (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: -1.05 (2016-17 Acad Year)	1.21 (2016-17 Acad Year)					0.97 (P) (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	Non SEN 0.13, Statement/EHCP -0.84
The percentage of persistent absence in Wirral Schools (post 2016)	Annual Lower is better	(n/a)	England: 10.80 (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 11.10 (2016-17 Acad Year)	13.10 (2016-17 Acad Year)						n/a	Latest data available: 13.10 (2016-17) Next data to become available is for 2017-18 and will be available in March 2019.
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)	England: 17.5% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 16.8% (2016-17 Acad Year)	16.7% (2016-17 Acad Year)						n/a	Indicator not yet available. 2017-18 Academic year figure will become available in March 2019.
Progress 8 Score for Children Looked After in Wirral	Annual Higher is better	(n/a)	England: -1.18 (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: -1.37 (2016-17 Acad Year)	-1.17 (2016-17 Acad Year)					-1.35 (P) (2017-18 Acad Year)	Worse	Provisional figures show an improvement compared to the previous academic year. Wirral is performing better than nationally but our score is slightly lower than that of the North West.
Reduce the percentage of permanent exclusions in Wirral - primary schools	Annual Lower is better	(2012-13)	England: 0.03% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 0.03% (2016-17 Acad Year)	- (2015-16 Acad Year)						n/a	Latest Published data is for 2016-17 and became available in August 2018. 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: 0.20% (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: 0.31% (2016-17 Acad Year)	0.25% (2015-16 Acad Year)					0.28% (2016-17 Acad Year)	Worse	Latest published data of 0.28% is for 2016-17 and became available in August 2018. This is an increase of 0.03% from previously reported figures. Permanent Exclusions 2012/13 to Present. More recent but unpublished figures however reflect an improvement this academic year 2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 to date 24 30 26 52 64 40 21 Based on these, Permanent exclusions reduced by 37% last academic year. This was due to a number of strategies implemented effectively such as:- a) Working with secondary school head teachers to determine alternatives to permanently excluding pupils b) Holding head teachers to account for the permanent exclusions c) Reintegrating permanently excluded Key Stage 3 pupils into mainstream secondary schools.
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: 89.8 (2014/15-16/17) North West: 131.0 (2014/15-16/17)	179.2 (2014/15 - 2016/17)					179.2 (2014/15 - 2016/17)	Same	Directly standardised rate per 100,000 population. The latest figures show that Wirral is significantly higher than England's average. This is in part due to the accuracy of recording locally by comparison to other areas. There is considerable work currently underway to better understand and address local issues underlying these admissions.
Under 18 conceptions - rate per 1,000	Annual Lower is better	33.7 (2013)	England: 18.8 (2016) North West: 22.3 (2016)	25.9 (Sep 2016)					20.5 (P) (Sept 2017)	Better	The most recent figure for the rate of under 18 conceptions was 20.5. For England as a whole, comparing Quarter 3 2017 with Quarter 3 2016, there has been a decline from a rate of 17.7 per 1,000 15-17 year old females (4,012 conceptions) in 2016 to 16.5 (3,684 conceptions) in 2017. In Wirral there has been a decline from 26.9 per 1,000 in 2016 to 14.7 in 2017.

Vulnerable children reach their full potential

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

Ensuring vulnerable children reach their potential has two strong elements to the pledge. The first element is around ensuring that children and young people are safe, and this is the main focus of the plan's performance indicators. This needs to be achieved before children can make best use of services to reach their potential. Since the creation of the pledge plan external scrutiny identified that services required to keep children safe were ineffective. Therefore, the original targets within the plan were not achievable as they were not based on a sound knowledge of the needs of children in Wirral. Progress within the plan is therefore being considered since the true position was established.

The direction of travel for the first two indicators the rate of children looked after and the rate of children in need is showing a small decrease in the number of children that need high-level services. This indicates an improvement in services to support these children. The higher rate of children who've become subject to a child protection plan was deliberate and anticipated as part of our improvement strategy as we recognise how to more effectively deal with risk in a shared way with our local partners.

In supporting vulnerable children to achieve their potential it is positive to note that the indicators around children being ready for school continue to improve. Further work has been done at our integrated front door which, as the partnership gateway to services, has supported the improved performance in the section around children accessing services. In addition, this agenda has been strengthened through 'Community Matters', introduced in January 2019, which sees Early Help and Prevention Services commissioning a number of providers to deliver support directly to families.

Work continues to be done to support key area of development around securing sufficient services for children and young people experiencing mental health issues. Work is in progress, but this area is a priority for both young people and services.

Overall the actions with in the pledge remain on target with a review of pledge actions planned to ensure a strong focus on improving outcomes in the last 12 months the pledge.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000	Monthly Lower is better	99.3 (2014-15)	England: 64.0 (2017-18) North West: 91.0 (2017-18) Statistical Neighbours: 97.0 (2017-18)	125.6 (2017-18)	123.5 (Jun 2018)	124.5 (Sep 2018)	124.1 (Dec 2018)			Better	As at end of December 2018. Numbers of children looked after this month have dropped to the lowest so far this year at 829 as at the end of November 2018. However, in early December we have had two large sibling groups admitted to care, so this number will not be maintained next month. A very high proportion of our children looked after still enter the care system as a result of a court order and work continues to look at ways in which we can manage children more safely without resorting to court intervention. The recent monitoring visit has highlighted improved practice for children in care. There is now a stronger focus on permanence with 34 care orders discharged, and 19 children who have been adopted so far this year. However, there is still more to do to ensure there are no delays.
Children in Need rate per 10,000 0-17 population	Monthly Lower is better	426.3 (2014-15)	England: 341.0 (2017-18) North West: 379.0 (2017-18) Statistical Neighbours: 423.0 (2017-18)	397.9 (2017-18)	393.6 (Jun 2018)	404.8 (Sep 2018)	398.8 (Dec 2018)			Better	As at end of December 2018. The rate of Children in Need (CiN) has reduced compared to the previous quarter, but remains above that of the North West and England. The figure is comparable to that of YE 2017-18, albeit slightly higher. Overall the rate of CiN in Wirral is much reduced compared to the start of the Wirral Plan, and the trend is better.
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: 45.3 (2017-18) North West: 53.7 (2017-18) Statistical Neighbours: 50.0 (2017-18)	39.3 (2017-18)	52.0 (Jun 2018)	65.6 (Sep 2018)	68.8 (Dec 2018)			Worse	As at end of December 2018. The number of children on Protection Plans (CPPs) is anticipated to remain high in the short term as a result of efforts by Children's social care to reduce the number of children who are, unnecessarily, subject of Care Orders. The focus being Care Orders where in actual fact the Order is causing no improvement for the child, and the legal threshold to remove a child from their parents care will not be met in court. Social workers are now being challenged more appropriately as to the benefits and necessity of these orders. As a result, where appropriate, these cases will be managed as part of the Child Protection System.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	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)	England: 72.0% (Jan 2018) North West: 83.0% (Jan 2018) Statistical Neighbours: 91.3% (Jan 2018)	91.3% (Jan-Mar 2018)		91.0% (Apr-Jul 2018)	93.1% (Sept-Dec 18)			Better	Based on Headcount/Census for Autumn Term 2018/19 Total Children: 1165 Eligible Children: 1251 Performs favourably against National Average of 72% (Jan 18) and is a slight increase from Q2 figure of 91.0% due to better processes enabling better targeting of interaction with eligible families. Increase in cross team working with SEND team to increase SEND applications. The offer is still being promoted as much as possible and reviewing take up of target groups e.g. CLA and children with SEND.
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development	Annual Higher is better	20.0% (2013-14 Acad Year)		47.8% (2016-17 Acad Year)					61.5% (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	Please note 'Year end' figures refer to the end of the 2017-18 Academic year. This is an improvement on the provisional figure of 60.0% supplied in Q2. This reflects a very small cohort of children (>15) and therefore can be a volatile figure. The next figures will provisionally become available in September 2019 for the 2018-19 academic 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% (2017-18) North West: 22.30% (2017-18) Statistical Neighbours: 18.00% (2017-18)	18.70% (2017-18)	24.20% (Jun 2018)	24.30% (Sep 2018)	24.30% (Dec 2018)			Same	% Re-referrals annualised. The number of repeat referrals remains just above the anticipated amount. Suggesting that, despite initial referrals being received and assessed, referring agencies still believe that cases require further intervention, and refer them back. Understanding and managing this (demand management strategy) is a significant piece of work over the next 12 months. Almost all referrals (94%) are subject to an assessment and the data book shows that following assessments, 48.9% of cases close with no further action. Early help data suggests that we need to examine more carefully the interaction (step-up and step-down) between Preventative and Social Care services. There has been a recent introduction of a transfer meeting to look weekly at cases moving between the two services. It is believed that, over time, this will give us a better understanding and more control of how cases move in and out the social care system. Tighter management will also have an impact on the number of cases that are re-referred, as these often occur within this step-up and step-down group.
Children's Centre's sustained contact with priority groups in early years	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		65.18% (2017-18)	66.20% (Jul 2017 - Jun 2018)	62.53% (Oct 2017 - Sep 2018)	65.01% (Jan 2018 - Dec 2018)			Better	Q3 figure is 65.01%, an improvement of 2.48% on last quarter and about the same as year end 2017/18. In Q3 weekend appointments have been made available at Children's Centres' which may have also had an impact on this measure.
Percentage of individuals subject to Team Around Family episodes closed with needs met	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)			73.0% (Q1 2018-19)	48.2% (Q2 2018-19)	55.0% (Oct - Dec 19)			Better	This figure has reduced considerably due to various factors. The main reason is likely to be related to the disbandment of the Early Help Team announced end June 2018. The team, consisting of 11 Early Help Social Workers and administrators, would track and challenge closures of TAF support that closed without needs being met, such as family disengaged, closure due to gaps in service provision or lack of appropriate professional support. Without challenge, recording of such instances have been recorded as 'needs not met'. To address the gap left by the Early Help Team, 'Community Matters' has been introduced in January 2019, under this banner Early Help and Prevention Services have commissioned providers to deliver support directly to families. Community Matters providers will be able to provide challenge and support when reviewing family plans /TAF closures and direct support to Key Workers and Lead Professionals to enable challenge through the Wirral Allocations and Stuck Case meetings. In addition, where it would benefit a family to have the support of a Key worker to complete an EHAT and Family plan, the Community Matters providers will be able to allocate same to enable effective family plans and promote needs being met.

People with disabilities live independent lives

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

The number of adults with a learning disability who live in stable and appropriate accommodation has increased again to 85% this quarter (up from 83.5% in Q2 and from 82.7% from the start of the year). Wirral is on track to deliver more than the original target of 300 units of additional care homes however original timescales won't be met due to the impact of the significant delay on the Government decision regarding funding for Extra Care schemes. Four schemes are completed or on site (75 units) and four more schemes are due to be fully completed by the end of 2021/22 (387 units).

We're working hard to meet the national target of 75% disabled people completing annual health checks by 2020. Currently around 50% of disabled people complete annual health checks in Wirral however anecdotal evidence indicates that this figure is under-reported. We are working with Wirral Intelligence Service to address potential coding issues with GP practices and providing an information pack to practices to raise awareness of the importance of this task. We will undertake a cross check with payments and number of health checks reported. Health passports will increase proportionally as they are an outcome of the annual health checks.

Merseyside Jobcentre Plus has made great inroads into increasing the number of employers who are now signed up to being Disability Confident. As of 30th November there are 80 Wirral based employers signed up to being Disability Confident with 1 at level 3 Disability Confident. Employer sign up events are being held by Jobcentre Plus and their staff are advising employers that being Disability Confident can support their recruitment and retention policies. Wirral Council is already a Disability Confident employer and working towards Level 3.

The Live Well Directory has been developed to provide easy access to information and support vacancy management. Live Well will share basic service profile content with the Best You App so that users of the app can identify services "near me" and can easily access comprehensive information on the service. Reviews of how Live Well supports carers and how autism services are represented are planned in the new year. A specification has been produced for a self-help tool to support social prescribing.

We're pursuing a 'payment by results' Travel Training option with HCT Group and the National Lottery with the formal award expected in June 2019. A programme will be ready for delivery last quarter of 2019.

A number of settings have been agreed to trial home smart monitoring and extra-care facilities will be included, incorporating people with dementia, people with learning disabilities and older people. Opportunities to deploy medication management technologies are being explored as well as platforms to support the safe and secure use of GPS tracking technologies. Following positive results, a pilot scheme examining the use of electronic care planning with domiciliary care providers has been extended until May 2019 and the residential home version of Safe Steps, a falls risk reduction app has been launched.

The first items from the "innovation" fund are about to be purchased to test an interactive projector system to aid learning / memory and provide stimulation to people with disabilities and people with dementia and a biometric locking system for an extra care facility to improve security.

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Health related quality of life for people with long term conditions	Annual Higher is better	0.698 (Jul 2014 - Mar 2015)	England: 0.737 (Jan-Mar 2017)	0.700 (Jan-Mar 2017)						n/a	Health-related quality of life for people with long-term conditions improved to 0.700 in Jan-Mar 2017 compared to 0.695 the previous period but falls short of the average for the rest of England (0.737). This data is captured by NHS England through the GP Patient Survey and reported as part of the NHS Outcomes Framework.
Employment rate aged 16-64 - Equality Act core or Work Limiting Disabled	Quarterly Higher is better	37.5% (Jul 2014 - Jun 2015)	England: 54.1% (Oct 2017 - Sep 2018) North West: 50.4% (Oct 2017 - Sep 2018)	44.1% (Jan - Dec 2017)	47.5% (Apr 2017 - Mar 2018)	48.8% (Jul 2017 - Jun 2018)	45.8% (Oct 2017 - Sep 2018)			Worse	The Employment rate aged 16-64 - Equality Act core or Work Limiting Disabled measure from the Office for National Statistics has dipped in Q3 from its high last quarter to 45.8%. It's up 3.8% since the start of the year and 22.1% since the start of the plan.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	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: 1.11 (2016-17 Acad Year) North West: -1.05 (2016-17 Acad Year)	1.21 (2016-17 Acad Year)					0.97 (2017-18 Acad Year)	Better	Non SEN 0.13, Statement/EHCP -0.84
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: 59.6% (Jan-Mar 2018)	67.2% (Jan-Mar 2017)					60.1% (Jan- Mar 2018)	Worse	The proportion of people who are feeling supported to manage their condition is 60.1% for the period January 2018 - March 2018. This has reduced from 67.2% the previous year. Whilst this reduction is disappointing it reflects the sentiment across the rest of the country. The national average is 59.6%, down from 64% last year.
The number of disabled people in receipt of personal budgets (including Direct Payments and Personal Health Budgets)	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		Total: 808 Adults: 605 Childrens: 203 (Q4 2017-18)	Total: 831 Adults: 616 Childrens: 215 (Q1 2018-19)	Total: 779 Adults: 606 Childrens: 173 (Q2 2018-19)	Total: 801 Adults: 610 Childrens: 191 (Q3 2018-19)			n/a	22 more people are in receipt of personal budgets this quarter. 610 adults were reported by the Department of Adult Social Services to be in receipt of personal budgets (up from 606 last quarter). 191 young people were in receipt of personal budgets, up from 173 last quarter.
Adults with a learning disability who live in stable and appropriate accommodation	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)	North West: 87.8% (Q2 2018-19)	82.7% (2017-18)	82.8% (Q1 2018-19)	83.5% (Q2 2018-19)	85.0% (Q3 2018-19)			Better	Ensuring people with disabilities have stable and appropriate accommodation improves their safety, increases their independence and reduces their risk of social exclusion. The Q3 figure of 85% has increased again from last quarter (83.5) and has increased by 2.3 percentage points from the start of the year. However we're still behind the latest available North West benchmark (87.8% at Q2). There has been an increase in Extra Care schemes throughout the borough, which aims to increase the number of adults with a learning disability who live in stable and appropriate accommodation.

Zero tolerance to domestic violence

Overview from Lead Cabinet Member

In October we held the first Wirral Zero Tolerance towards Domestic Abuse Conference. It was pleasing to open the conference by announcing that Wirral Council will be following the example of New Zealand and Canada by providing leave to support employees who are experiencing Domestic Abuse. Moving forward we will be encouraging organisations to tackling Domestic Abuse in their own workforce or communities around them, offering training toward a Zero Tolerance to Domestic Abuse Business Quality Mark. The training run by Involve North West, covers recognising the signs that someone may be subject to Domestic Abuse, providing a safe space and the opportunity to disclose and where to refer if a disclosure is made (using 'Recognise/Respond/Refer'). A number of organisations having completed their training received the Quality Mark award during the conference. The conference also saw the launch of www.Itsneverokwirral.org, a website designed to provide information and support for Domestic Abuse victims, survivors and practitioners in one place. It aims to clearly signpost resources available to residents. A communications and marketing campaign was run alongside this and highlight that domestic abuse is not only physical with a key message that It's Never Ok.

Wirral supported 16 days of Activism in November aimed at to dispel harmful myths and misconceptions around Domestic Abuse, which may hamper survivors from accessing vital support. Wallasey and Birkenhead Town Hall glowed orange for the weekend from 23rd - 25th November, in solidarity with the campaign theme and colours. Tranmere Rovers Football Club also dedicated a home game to the day, on 24th November, supporting the #ItsNeverOk campaign.

In addition we have launched the pilot of an out of hours IDVA provision over high/peak demand periods (eg weekends and bank holidays). The IDVA service is now back to a fully staffed service and we are able to deal with the demand of new cases.

As part of our priority for Prevention and Early Intervention of Domestic Abuse, we have commissioned a social research group, Revealing Reality to work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify the scale, size and complexity of BAME and LGBT populations who have experience Domestic Abuse in Wirral.

There are a number of risks and challenges that the board are proactively addressing, these include

- MARAC cases continue to rise when compared to last year. Following a reduction in staffing in the Family Safety Unit over the previous quarter, the IDVA service is now back to a fully staffed service and we are able to deal with the demand of new cases. Repeat rate of Domestic Abuse show a worsening trend over the previous 12 months. This increase was expected due to national changes in repeat criteria and we will continue to monitor over the remainder of the plan.
- It is disappointing to note a joint LCR bid to purchase licences for all Merseyside Local Authorities to use an updated Barnardos tool assessing the impact of Domestic Abuse on children was not successful. Securing funding to purchase this tool remains a priority and alternative funding channels are being explored.
- Following the publication of a draft specification to review the effectiveness of the Integrated Offender Management programme, Liverpool John Moores University have applied for funding to support their research. We are awaiting confirmation of this funding being secured and this priority remains at risk whilst we explore funding options.

We are delighted that the Safer Wirral Hub has been shortlisted for the highly prestigious Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards for 2019 in the Public/Public Partnership category. This is a great testament to this unique partnership which brings together all the public and community safety functions of Wirral Council, Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service into one single management structure and operations base.

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

Wirral Plan Indicator	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend (See Key)	Comment
Number of Domestic Abuse Wirral MARAC cases per 10,000 adult females (annualised)	Quarterly	54.0 (2014-15)	Most Similar Force Group: 52.0 (Oct 2017-Sep 2018) National: 38.0 (Oct 2017-Sep 2018)	52.3 (Apr 2017-Mar 2018)	52.5 (Jul 2017-Jun 2018)	59.3 (Oct 2017-Sep 2018)	63.7 (Jan-Dec 2018)			n/a	There were a total of 873 cases that were dealt with at MARAC in the 12 months prior to December 2018. This equates to 63.7 cases per 10,000 female population and is a significant increase on the same in the previous year (53.2). The volume of cases at MARAC was highlighted at the MARAC self-assessment and will be an agenda item at the next MARAC steering group.
Children and young people experience domestic abuse (Wirral MARAC cases)	Quarterly	1,289 (2014-15)		1,302 (2017-18)	334 (Apr-Jun 2018)	394 (Jul-Sep 2018)	264 (Oct-Dec 2018)			n/a	Data is for the period October-December 2018 and is higher than the same period last year (208). We now have a Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Safeguarding Advisor agency worker in the Family Safety Unit who will complete checks on all MARAC cases. This means the figure is likely to increase in future as extra children are identified from CYP databases.
Percentage of incidents of repeat domestic abuse (Wirral MARAC cases)	Quarterly Lower is better	16.0% (2014-2015)	Most Similar Force Group: 33.0% (Oct 2017-Sep 2018) National: 28.0% (Oct 2017-Sep 2018)	28.3% (Apr 2017-Mar 2018)	26.1% (Jul 2017-Jun 2018)	32.0% (Oct 2017-Sep 2018)	32.9% (Jan-Dec 2018)			Worse	Data is for repeat MARAC cases over the previous 12 month period and shows an increase compared previous quarter (32.9% compared to 29%). This equate to 287 out of 873 cases. We are also expecting an increase to around 40% (predicted by SafeLives) in the coming year due to a change in the criteria for repeat referrals.

Supporting Measure	Indicator	Wirral Plan Start	Benchmark Data	Year End 2017-18	2018-19 Q1	2018-19 Q2	2018-19 Q3	2018-19 Q4	Year End 2018-19	Trend	Comment
Number of Domestic Abuse cases referred to the Family Safety Unit (FSU)	Quarterly	949 (2014-15)		928 (2017-18)	276 (Apr-Jun 2018)	258 (Jul-Sep 2018)	282 (Oct-Dec 2018)			n/a	From October to December 2018 there were 282 referrals to the Family Safety Unit. This is an increase of 27.6% compared to the same quarter last year (221). Referrals from police form the majority of referrals and have increased slightly from 65% to 67% of total referrals.
% of children and Young People single assessments completed with Domestic Violence (DV) related factors	Quarterly Lower is better	(n/a)		33.3% (Apr 2017-Mar 2018)	35.2% (Apr-Jun 2018)	32.4% (Apr-Sep 2018)	28.2% (Apr-Dec 2018)			Better	Data is for the period April - December 2018. At 28.2% shows an improvement on the same period in the previous year (34.3%) and overall performance for 2017-18 (33.3%). Statistics for children subject to a second or subsequent child protection plan for 2018-19 is 32.4%, further analysis identifies key issues for these families such as drug/alcohol issues and domestic abuse.
Rate of referrals to social care presenting Domestic Violence issues (adults aged 18+ years) per 100,000	Quarterly Higher is better	(n/a)		21.30 (Apr 2017-Mar 2018)	3.42 (Apr-Jun 2018)	6.52 (Apr-Sep 2018)	8.40 (Apr -Dec 2018)			Worse	Data is for the period April-December 2018. This is significantly lower when compared to the same period last year (16.56) and represents 27 referrals for Domestic Violence which represents 2.7% of total Safeguarding enquiries for the period.

Report Key

Trend - Performance is shown as Better, Same or Worse compared with the last reporting period except for: 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, % 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.

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)



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 February 2019

REPORT TITLE:	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2018/19
REPORT OF:	Director of Finance & Investment (S151)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The report provides Members with detail to scrutinise budget performance for this area of activity. The financial information is at close of quarter 3 2018/19.

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)
- Performance against the capital budget

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1 That members note the report and appendices.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committees receive regular financial updates throughout the year. These allow Committees to understand the financial position of the council and to scrutinise decisions and performance as required.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Not applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The position financially at quarter 3 for the council as a whole was presented at cabinet on the 18th of February 2019. The quarter 3 revenue forecast is an overall overspend of £0.72 million for the year. Delivery Services forecast overspends making up all of this.

The quarter 3 capital report recommends that Cabinet agree the 2018/19 Capital Programme of £53.5 million which takes into account re-profiling identified during 2018/19. Expenditure to date is £33.3 million.

3.1.0 CHANGES TO THE AGREED BUDGET

- 3.1.1 The 2018/19 Budget was agreed by Council on 5 March 2018. Any increase to the overall Council Budget (but not use of the existing budget contingency) requires agreement by full Council.

Table 1: 2018/19 Original & Revised Net Budget

Theme	Q2 Budget	Budget Changes Q3	Revised Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000
Children and Families	89,526	45	89,571
Net Cost of Services	89,526	45	89,571

Budget movements in quarter three cover a number of small issues. These movements have no effect on the bottom line budget of the Council and are just adjustments to better reflect where budgets should be placed.

3.2.0 PROJECTIONS AND KEY ISSUES

3.2.1 The projected outturn position as at the end of December 2018 and Wirral Plan: 2020 Vision Themes updates are detailed in the following sections.

Table 2: 2018/19 Projected Budget variations

Theme	Portfolio	Revised Budget	Actuals at Quarter 3	Forecast Outturn	(Under) Overse Quarter 3
Children and Families	Childrens	17,907	12,497	17,138	-769
	Schools	22,482	13,956	22,375	-107
	Modernisation & Support	7,258	3,889	7,523	265
	Early help & Prevention	8,765	5,934	8,601	-164
	Head of Practice and Improvement	87	262	78	-9
	Head of Safeguarding Unit	2,322	1,547	2,346	24
	Lead Commissioner Looked after Children	26,683	20,787	29,542	2,859
	One off Pressures	4,067	769	1,968	-2,099
	TOTAL		89,571	59,641	89,571

Children and Families

The cost of Children Looked after (CLA) continues to present a pressure for the Directorate. However, the number of CLA has stabilised over the past 9 months. The increasing complexities of needs still represent a challenge and work continues to be undertaken to bring this cost pressure down.

The investment provided in the 2018/19 budget is taking shape with new practices embedded within the Directorate creating efficiencies and enabling reactive expenditure to be diverted to prevention. This investment will continue to shape the Directorate into 2019/20.

Pressures on the schools budget continue to grow and are now projected to total £2m, due to the further identification, demand, and complexity of pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN). These are partially offset by the transfer from the Individual Schools Budget not being fully utilised, as well as other small underspends within the DSG budget. The remaining projected 2018/19 overspend of £1.13m will be met from the DSG reserve.

The SEN pressures are reflected nationally, and will continue in 2019/20. Wirral has commissioned Premier Advisory Group to carry out an in-depth independent review of SEN provision, which will take place in 3 phases over the 2018/19 academic year, with the aim of reallocating DSG resources to meet need and to avoid future overspends. Any changes however will not impact the budget until 2020/21.

3.4.0 PERFORMANCE AGAINST CAPITAL BUDGETS QUARTER 3 (December 2018)

3.4.1 Capital Programme 2018/19 at end of Quarter 3 (31 December)

	Capital Strategy	September	December	Actual Spend Dec 2018
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Childrens Services	19,099	18,341	17,164	11,684
Total expenditure	74,561	60,948	53,577	33,268

* Break down of these figures can be found in appendix 1

- 3.4.2 Higher Bebington Junior School: This scheme was required to cater for an increase in pupil numbers [capacity]. It consists of extending three existing classrooms, new pupil toilet facilities (DDA compliant), major internal re-configuration of four classes, re-location of staff offices and improved main entrance. Estimated expenditure is over £0.6 million. It is on target financially and contractually to be completed by the middle of February.
- 3.4.3 Well Lane Primary School: This project consists of the internal refurbishment of the key stage 2 areas including new pupil toilets, enlarging two classrooms, a new main entrance and office accommodation. Estimated expenditure is £0.3 million. It is on target financially and contractually to be completed by the end of January.
- 3.4.4 West Kirby Primary School: The project consists of a new main entrance with improved security, reception and Head-teachers office, minor internal re-configuration, infill of an unused area to form a new classroom in a non-traditional design. Estimated expenditure is £0.3 million It is on target financially and contractually to be completed by the end of March.
- 3.4.5 New Brighton Sports Barn: This is a stand-alone sports barn development to provide the school and community with the facility to carry out sports curriculum and improve pupil lifestyle and well-being. The project has been tendered to the amount of £400,000 including professional fees and statutory costs. The project is due to commence early February 2019 and is estimated to be completed by early July 2019.
- 3.4.6 Improvement Programme - this represents a continuation of the transformation funding allowed under the flexible use of capital receipts criteria. In 2018/19 it has been allocated across Children's Social care, Safeguarding, Quality, Performance and Improvement and Children with Disabilities. The funding will be used to improve social work practices and outcomes for children, reduce numbers of Children Looked After and establish a stable workforce and reduce reliance on agency workers. Presently this is being monitored through revenue and will be transferred to capital at the year end.

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 There are none arising directly from this report.

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 There are none directly relating to this report. The monitoring of financial performance is important to ensure robust financial control procedures are in place. The council faces financial challenges in this period as it seeks to increase income, reduce costs whilst transforming its approach to services. There is a risk in future years that the Council does not achieve a planned approach.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

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

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

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

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Capital Programme and Funding 2018/19

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Budget Council	5 March 2018
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 1	16 July 2018
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 1	16 July 2018
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 2	26 November 2018
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 2	26 November 2018
Cabinet – Revenue Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 3	18 February 2019
Cabinet – Capital Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 3	18 February 2019

Capital Programme and Funding 2018/19

APPENDIX 1

Childrens Services	Revised Programme £000	Spend to Date £000	Council Resources £000	Grants £000	Total Funding £000
Condition/modernisation	3,600	2,492	-	3,600	3,600
School remodelling (Primary places)	600	138	600	-	600
Basic Needs	1,000	431	-	1,000	1,000
SEN and disabilities (new grant)	206	23	-	206	206
Healthy Pupils Capital Fund	245	19	-	245	245
SEND assisted travel (replace adult fleet)	266	256	250	16	266
Systems improvements (liquidlogic)	147	-	147	-	147
Improvement Programme	11,100	8,325	11,100	-	11,100
	17,164	11,684	12,097	5,067	17,164

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Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 February 2019

REPORT TITLE:	Wirral Fostering Service
REPORT OF:	Director for Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

The in-house fostering service recruits and supports carers and provides placements for children from across the borough. The purpose of this report is to provide an update for the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Wirral's in-house fostering Service. Committee Members have identified the key lines of enquiry as follows:

1. Details of foster carer recruitment and retention
2. Training and support offered before and during placements
3. Levels of placement breakdowns and the reasons
4. Numbers of young people who remain in the 'staying put' scheme

This report sets out our current practice in the areas above and provides some further contextual information for consideration.

Wirral currently has 833 Children Looked After (CLA) as at 25th January 2019. These children are placed in a small number of different types of provision as follows:

- 623 (75%) in some form of foster placement (more than in similar authorities)
- 73 (9%) in residential placements (the same as similar authorities)
- 104 (12.5%) placed at home with their own parents (more than similar authorities)

The remainder are placed in a variety of other arrangements e.g. Residential Special Schools, mother and baby placements, independent living etc.

Foster placements for Wirral children looked after are sourced via a mixed economy model utilising both in-house and externally purchased placements. Of the 623 children in foster care a high proportion 511 (82%) are placed within our in-house fostering service. Wirral therefore has the second largest local authority fostering services in the North West region.

A key function of a fostering service is to recruit foster carers. Nationally fostering services are struggling to recruit enough carers to meet the demand for placements, with a small decrease year on year of the total number of registered carers. So far this year 18 mainstream foster carers have been recruited by Wirral; a further 8

assessments are likely to be presented to the Fostering Panel before the end of March giving a predicted total of 26 new fostering households this year, 3 more than last year. There has also been a change in the profile of carers being recruited with an increase in the number of kinship carer assessments taking place.

We have had some recruitment success and our overall numbers of fostering households has increased over a two year period from 305 to 315. Whilst 28 foster carers have left the service in the current year, the service numbers have been bolstered by an increase in the number of kinship foster carers.

Foster carers leave the service for a variety of reasons. Some have been deregistered by the service due to concerns about practice. In other cases, foster carers have resigned because they feel they have reached the end of their fostering career or because they have adopted the child in their care. In other cases, foster carers have decided to no longer foster as they are continuing to care for a previously fostered child under the auspices of a staying put arrangement. This is good practice but reduces the number of placements available.

The fostering service is continually looking for opportunities to better support carers with what can be a very challenging but important role. A range of support and development opportunities are offered to foster carers in Wirral. Each foster carer has an annual development plan that includes a mixture of mandatory and optional training covering a wide range of topics. Foster carers are supported via regular visits from their "Supervising Social Worker", in addition to the visits undertaken by the social worker for any child in placement. The service also runs a range of regular support groups for carers targeted at specific groups e.g. Kinship Carers. This offers the opportunity for carers to get together, share ideas and gain peer support. A Peer Mentoring system is also in place where more experienced carers are linked to new and less experienced carers in order to provide practical advice and guidance relating to the fostering tasks.

As part of our ongoing improvement work, we are looking at ways of improving our support offer to foster carers both from the fostering service, and via our partnership with Health to ensure a more responsive CAMHS service. This will support carers better where behavioural, mental health, and attachment issues are causing placement instability. In addition, our training programme for foster carers includes modules that better prepare them to work with children who exhibit these more complex behaviours.

Feedback from foster carers in Wirral about the support they receive is outdated and we plan to introduce a survey during 2019 that will then be repeated annually.

Unplanned breakdowns and disruptions in placements should always be avoided if possible due to the uncertainty they create for children. The majority of our placements breakdown following a notice period by the foster carer so a planned move can be organised. In-house foster carers gave notice on the placements of 27 children in the current financial year. Following additional work and support 8 of these have subsequently remained in their placement. The remainder have moved to alternative placements including return to birth family in some of these cases. In 2019 we are implementing a new process to ensure we learn the lessons from placement breakdowns, and take steps to reduce levels still further.

At the present time 38 care leavers have continued to live with their previous Wirral foster carers under a “Staying Put” arrangement. While this is right and appropriate for these individuals, one of the consequences is that it reduces the capacity within our existing pool of foster carers. Up to date comparative data is not available. However, for the year ending 31st March 2017, Wirral had more children in staying put arrangements than any other local authority in the North West, and this shows a high level of commitment to supporting the transition of young people into adulthood. Staying Put arrangements are monitored via the care leavers panel that was introduced in 2018 in order to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of individual children.

RECOMMENDATION/S

For the report to be noted.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

Not Applicable

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Wirral currently has 833 children looked after (CLA) as at 25th January 2019. These children are mainly placed in a small number of different types of provision as follows:

- 623 (75%) in some form of foster placement
- 73 (9%) in residential placements
- 104 (12.5%) placed at home with their own parents

The remainder are placed in a variety of other arrangements e.g. Residential Special Schools, mother and baby placements, independent living etc.

Foster placements for Wirral children looked after are sourced via a mixed economy model utilising both in-house and externally purchased placements. A high proportion of children 511 (82% of those in foster placements) are placed within our in-house fostering service and this makes Wirral one of the larger local authority fostering services in the North West region. For comparison purposes, at 31st March 2017 (the last set of published data) Wirral was the second largest provider of local authority foster placements in the North West Region. Only Lancashire provided more placements (620) and had a children looked after population of 1850. In the intervening period we have continued to provide for the placement needs of a similar number of children although due to the increases in numbers of children looked after the actual proportion placed in the in-house service has decreased. In house foster placements are provided for 61% of our total children looked after population, this is 6% higher than similar local authorities.

The cohort of in-house foster placements can be divided still further into 2 distinct categories:

- a) Mainstream foster carers – these are carers that the local authority has actively recruited and assessed. They account for 316 (51%) of the children in the total foster placement cohort. These placements are provided by 180 fostering households. We have an ongoing recruitment campaign to build on this cohort who have a range of experience, from recent recruits to others who have been fostering for very many years.

- b) Kinship Carers – these are carers who are part of the child’s extended ‘family & friends’ network. They account for 195 (31%) of the children in the total foster placement cohort. These placements are provided by 135 fostering households. Kinship carers usually put themselves forward as carers once concerns about children become apparent. They are usually approved under temporarily arrangements at the start of legal care proceedings pending a fuller assessment that determines suitability to provide a more permanent home.

A number of mainstream fostering households (28) are currently “inactive” for a range of reasons including carers taking a break from fostering, foster carer ill health etc. This figure amounts to 15.5% of mainstream and is broadly in line with average for England (16%) reported for the year 2016/17.

Committee members will be aware of the increase in numbers of children looked after in Wirral over the last 3 years. This trend is replicated across the North West. The increase has coincided with a decline in the number of recruited foster carers across the region resulting in all local authorities having difficulties in providing sufficient placements. The supply and demand issues in foster care has resulted in children’s home placements being used for children who previously would have been looked after by foster carers. The overall placement market is therefore more challenging than at any point in recent or distant history.

This regional picture is reflected nationally. In July 2018 the government published its response to a) the Education Select Committee “inquiry into fostering” (Dec 2017), and b) the DfE Independent review “Foster Care in England” (Feb 2018). The response report noted that:

“...there continues to be a steady decrease in the number of approved fostering households and there are fewer actual places available for children. The number of children in care increased at a faster rate than the number of fostering places, which may suggest the fostering sector is struggling to keep up with increased demand”.

Despite this challenging environment Wirral continues to place a good proportion of children in foster placements, and within the in-house fostering service, despite the increase in numbers of children looked after. External placements are only sought when it is apparent that the in-house fostering service is unable to meet the need for individual children.

The average placement cost in Wirral is £294.53 (without any addition for overheads). Work has been undertaken nationally to try to establish the true cost of local authority foster care with no reliable formula available. However, using the above figures and for illustrative purposes, allowing 10% overheads increases the unit cost to £323.98; adding 25% overheads increases the unit costs to £368.16. Our in-house costs compare favourably to other local authorities and are significantly better than Independent Fostering Agencies whose average placement cost is around £800 per week.

3.2 Foster Carer Recruitment

3.2.1 In the current financial year, the Wirral fostering service has received 226 enquiries from prospective new mainstream foster carers. The full year figure to 31st March 2018 was 245 enquiries suggesting the level of activity this year is similar. The fostering service has an annual recruitment and marketing strategy that includes events running during the national “Fostering Fortnight”. Our range of other recruitment activity includes contributing to the North West “You Can Foster” campaign. Recruitment activity has included:

- Foster carer “ambassadors” have run stalls at supermarkets, summer fetes/festivals. They have also held regular drop in sessions at Starbucks in new Brighton and West Kirby Library
- Foster carers sharing information on social media including use of facebook and Tweeting information re fostering
- Press and social media advertisements and interviews with foster carers
- “Bus backs”, billboards and display screens
- Activities in relation to the May fostering fortnight including a fostering fun run
- “Big Heart” campaign launched in November
- Targeted recruitment for specific groups e.g. teenagers
- Regional You Can Foster Campaign
- April month of radio campaigns with Radio City

Specific focus campaigns for the early part of 2019 are: January teenagers; February Sibling Groups; March children with a disability.

The vast majority of prospective foster carers make contact with the Wirral fostering because they have heard about us from other professionals (word of mouth) or through recommendation by existing Wirral foster carers. This cohort accounts for 42% of all contacts into the service. A further cohort (22%) contact the service following internet searches. A slighter smaller proportion (14%) make contact in response to newspaper adverts, and 9% come to our attention via the Regional You Can foster campaign.

The number of new mainstream approvals so far this financial year is 18 with a further 8 likely to progress to the fostering panel before the end of March. This will mean 26 new households will have been recruited and is 3 more than last year.

Wirral processed and approved 110 Family and Friends foster carer applications in the last financial year. This was by far the highest in the North West. The next highest number was completed by Liverpool and this may be indicative a) of the approach being taken by the Liverpool courts, and/or b) the number of care applications that have been filed.

Our capacity to recruit new mainstream carers to the service in a timely manner this year was reduced by:

- a) maternity leave and sickness absence in the service
- b) the impact of needing to undertake a high volume of kinship care assessments as part of court directed work.

In relation to the latter issue, a number of “court ordered” assessments of family members have resulted in no placement being made despite the carers being assessed and approved. This is because plans change during the course of care proceedings, but a lot of time and effort goes into work that does not add any value to the fostering service.

3.3 Retention

- 3.3.1 In the current financial year 25 mainstream foster carers have left the service. The reasons for carers leaving are varied and are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Reasons for foster carers leaving the service

Reason	Number of Carers
Adopted Child	1
Approval Terminated by the local authority	5
Carer Resigned	17
Carer Retired	1
Carer’s health	1

3.4 Foster Carer Training and Support

- 3.4.1 Foster carers in Wirral are supported by their allocated supervising social worker who undertakes regular visits to review progress in relation to children placed, and reviews development and support needs including training.

The service runs weekly support groups for carers with different levels of needs. This offers the opportunity for carers to get together, share ideas and gain peer support. Training is also offered in small taster sessions. The mainstream group runs every Monday morning and Kinship carers are also welcome to join this group. Another group is held specifically for those carers who tend to have children with more complex needs placed with them. Connected carers are invited to attend a group designed to meet their specific needs. “Kids for Caring” is a support group for the sons and daughters of foster carers who are of secondary school age. The group meets once a month.

It is a requirement that all prospective carers undertake the “Skills to Foster Training” before they progress to stage 2 of the application process where the full fostering assessment is undertaken.

In addition, foster carers need to attend training as part of the requirements of their registration. Training courses are grouped as “Priority” and “Continuing Development”. Priority courses should be completed within the first 12

months of approval and include: Basic First Aid; Equality and Diversity; Internet Safety; Managing Behaviour that Challenges – Basic Level; Recording and Reporting; Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse & Neglect.

There is a wider range of training in the Continuing Development module including Mental Health; Attachment and its Implications; Preparing Young People for Adult; Therapeutic Interventions. This is not an exhaustive list and the full range of training and support is set out in a comprehensive resource booklet for carers. Carers are expected to use this to formulate an annual training plan with their Supervising Social Worker.

3.5 Placement Stability

3.5.1 In the current financial year 22 carers have given notice on children placed. This relates to 27 children. Eight of these have remained in placement following the convening of “Disruption Meetings” and the provision of additional support. For a further 2 children, although they remain in the same placement, work is being undertaken to find suitable alternative long-term placements. Five children have now returned to live with their birth families either through rehabilitation to parents or to live with another family member. Ten children have moved to alternative foster placements and are now settled, and a further 2 children have moved into residential placements.

Reasons for placement breakdowns include incompatibility of children placed, behavioural issues, or carers deciding to stop fostering e.g. due to ill health or a change in family circumstances. As part of our ongoing improvement work, we are looking at ways of improving our support offer to foster carers both from the fostering service, and via our partnership with Health to ensure a more responsive CAMHS service. This will support carers better where behavioural, mental health, and attachment issues are causing placement instability. In addition, our training programme for foster carers includes modules that better prepare them to work with children who exhibit these more complex behaviours.

3.6 Staying Put

3.6.1 The Children and Families Act 2014 amended Section 23 of the Children Act, 1989 to introduce a duty on local authorities to enable children formerly looked after to be able to remain living with their foster carers once they become 18 and up to the age of 21. Wirral currently has 38 care leavers who have remained living with their existing foster carers who have been approved by Wirral. These arrangements can remain in place until a young person becomes 21 years of age although some opt to move on to their own accommodation before.

3.7 Response to the Challenges

3.7.1 Despite what appears to be a well performing fostering service with numbers bolstered by our level of kinship care placements, we are keen to continue to improve to future proof ourselves against some negative market factors. The supply and demand factors are leading to increased costs in the independent

fostering market and a consequent similar dynamic within the residential market. Having a high performing fostering service is therefore key to insulating ourselves against the current market forces.

We have a comprehensive action plan to progress the quality of service delivery. This action plan includes key development activity that will modernise the service and create better opportunities to further develop the service. Higher level activity includes:

1. Reconfiguration of the fostering teams into functional areas to ensure a stronger focus on recruitment and assessment; mainstream foster carer support; and kinship care assessment and support.
2. Implementation of a new format for conducting Exit Interviews so that we fully understand why foster carers leave the service and what action we can take to better retain existing carers.
3. Annual survey of all foster carers to establish levels of foster carer satisfaction and establish their views about what we need to do to improve the service.
4. Seeking to maximise use of our existing approved carers by closer tracking and monitoring of those households classed as inactive.
5. Looking to maximise recruitment of mainstream carers by converting experienced kinship carers who have a good track record to become mainstream carers.
6. Review of our marketing and recruitment strategy to ensure we maximise opportunities to recruit new carers by investing more resources in the methods we know we work best.
7. Creating a standalone website to ensure any internet searches take the reader straight to the Wirral fostering site.
8. Reviewing our arrangements for out of hours support to foster carers.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report. It is however worth noting that the more placements we can provide in-house the less placements will need to be sourced via the independent sector. Our current objective is therefore to increase the proportion of placements provided via the in-house fostering service.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The in-house fostering service is bound by the legislative framework set out in the Care Standards Act and the associated Fostering Services Regulations & National Minimum Standards. These provide a tight legal framework for conduct. Whilst the fostering service is not required to formally register with the Regulator, it does need to have a nominated manager who is approved by Ofsted as a suitable person to Manage the service.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 None to note other than the increased costs associated with not running an effective in-house fostering service that provides less placements than it currently does.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not Applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not Applicable

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APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 27 February 2019

REPORT TITLE:	Early Help – Community Matters
REPORT OF:	Director for Children's Services

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the committee with an overview of the new Community Matters initiative which has been established to provide early help for children, young people and families in Wirral.

The Community Matters initiative supports the following Wirral Plan Pledges:

- Children Are Ready for School
- Vulnerable Children Reach their Full Potential
- Young People are Ready for Work and Adulthood

The Community Matters initiative affects all Wards within the borough.

This report does not relate to a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are asked to note the report and to support the Community Matters initiative.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure members of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee are fully informed on the development of the new early help offer and provision.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Not applicable.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 **Early help** means taking action to support a child, young person or their family as soon as a problem emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life, from pre-birth to adolescence, and applies to any problem or need that the family can't deal with alone. Early help can lead to better outcomes for children, prevent problems escalating or overwhelming families, create social mobility and support communities to thrive.

- 3.2 It is an ambition of Wirral Council and its partners to make Wirral great for children, young people and their families. Children and families need to feel a sense of belonging in the communities where they live, to be able to access help from those around them in the least intrusive and most accessible way. Therefore, we are committed to changing the way in which early help is delivered by investing in voluntary, community, faith, and educational organisations. With the right support, families and communities can collaborate to achieve outcomes which are mutually beneficial.

- 3.3 Community Matters seeks to create the right conditions for community-based early help to thrive. This includes:

- Revitalising the voluntary, community and faith sector by creating a vibrant and visible network of providers;
- Providing support to children and families which is straight-forward and effective, easy to engage with and not constrained by overwhelming processes;
- Engaging all stakeholders in the process of developing a long-term approach to early help which is sustainable, responsive to need, proactive in delivery, and is owned by communities.

Working as a partnership, we seek to use the Community Matters initiative to build capacity, develop skills, maximise existing resources and achieve a collective impact which will improve the daily-lived experience of our children, families and residents. The Community Matters programme has an initial timeframe of January 2019 to March 2021.

3.4 The Community Matters initiative has been developed, using existing resource differently, to provide a more engaging early help offer through commissioned services. Pre-Community Matters, the Local Authority employed an Early Help Team consisting of 1.0 FTE Partnerships Manager, 3.4 FTE Administrators, 3.0 FTE Advanced Social Work Practitioners and 8.0 FTE Social Workers. The Early Help Team budget was approximately £670,000.

3.5 The duties undertaken by the Early Help Team were:

- To publish an early help offer;
- To host quarterly early help networking events;
- To maintain and manage the information systems, recording all early help referrals and casework activity;
- To provide consultations and advice to professionals delivering early help to children and families;
- To triage requests for service, signposting to appropriate provision; and
- To support organisations to participate in early help.

The Early Help Team did not undertake any casework for children and families.

3.6 In early July 2018, the decision to develop the Community Matters initiative was taken by Children's Services Senior Leadership Team based on the following considerations:

- Schools were repeatedly reporting increased pressure caused by having to lead on the delivery of early help casework;
- Partners were reporting a lack of early help provision;
- Relationships with the voluntary, community and faith sector had significantly diminished;
- The Integrated Front Door was under significant pressure, receiving 1,800 to 2,000 requests for service per month;
- There were in excess of 50 social work vacancies within Children's Social Care and 11 qualified Social Workers within the Early Help Team who did not case-hold.

On 31st July 2018, the Social Workers from the Early Help Team were re-allocated into frontline teams within Children's Social Care. At the same time, the Administrators were re-allocated into existing vacancies within Children's Services. The Partnership Manager post was retained to provide oversight of early help and the Community Matters programme. There were no redundancies caused by this change. A budget of £650,000 was retained to finance the new initiative.

3.7 Implementing the programme took several months, with the timeline as follows:

July 2018	Early Help Team members re-allocated within Children's Services
September 2018	Stimulating the market event and provider engagement activity
October 2018	Tenders live on the chest
November 2018	Submission of bids and short-listing panel
December 2018	Contracts awarded
January 2019	Community Matters went live

3.8 There are three distinct parts of Community Matters now being provided as follows:

Lot	Description	Annual Cost	Provider
Lot 1	<p>Co-ordination of early help- Revitalising the voluntary, community and faith sector by creating a vibrant and visible network of providers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - publishing the early help offer - re-launching the Link Forum (network for VCF providers) - hosting quarterly networking events - triaging requests for service and signposting children and families to support - allocating families to Lot 2 providers for casework support - maintaining information system, recording all early help activity and casework 	£100,000	Home-Start Wirral
Lot 2a	<p>Delivery of early help support- Providing support to children and families which is straight-forward and effective, easy to engage with and not constrained by overwhelming processes.</p> <p>To work with 120 families (annually), ensuring each family has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a lead worker - an early help assessment - an early help plan - a recorded outcome and closure summary 	£60,000 per lot, totalling £360,000	Fender Community Hub
Lot 2b			Caritas
Lot 2c			WEB
Lot 2d			WIRED
Lot 2e			WIRED
Lot 2f			To be confirmed
Lot 3	<p>Development of early help- Engaging all stakeholders in the</p>	£150,000	Capacity (Public Services Lab)

	<p>process of developing a long-term approach to early help which is sustainable, responsive to need, proactive in delivery, and is owned by communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder engagement - Capacity building - Evaluation- what works - Collective impact modelling - Launch a new model by April 1st 2021 		
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3.9 Lot 2f will be awarded and in operation by 1st April 2019. This contract was not awarded as the panel were seeking an organisation who could provide a whole-family mental health and wellbeing service, as this is an area of high demand.

3.10 In addition to the successful providers outlined in the table above, we are also entering into a Community Matters contract with Safer Wirral Hub. Safer Wirral Hub submitted a very strong bid to work with 240 families per year delivering support through a formal domestic abuse programme. Safer Wirral Hub proposed to use the funding to employ a small delivery team. It was agreed by the panel that this would be beneficial to children and families in Wirral and meet a specific need, however, there was no need to enter into a financial arrangement as the staff required by Safer Wirral Hub could be provided through the re-allocation of existing resources within Children's Services. Therefore, an additional 240 families will receive a service from Safer Wirral Hub as part of Community Matters but payment will be made 'in kind' by providing staff.

3.11 Community Matters is already gathering momentum with other provision now been linked under the initiative, this includes:

- The Feeding Wallasey project- initiated by Wallasey Constituency Committee, this will be delivered through Community Matters. The infrastructure to award and monitor contracts will be provided through Community Matters allowing the maximum amount of funding to be invested in service delivery;
- Wirral Crucial Crew- a Police-led child safety programme will be delivered to over 350 pupils across a range of schools;
- Reducing Parental Conflict- the Partnerships Manager overseeing Community Matters has successfully acquired funding to deliver awareness raising events, multi-agency training and early help support to reduce parental conflict. This is a partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions;

- A pilot project with Birkenhead Park Forest School is under consideration. This would target a number of disadvantaged families where parenting capacity could be improved through learning to spend time together outdoors.

3.12 Community Matters will provide a wider and more active early help offer in comparison to the former Early Help Team provision. The benefits of the new arrangements are summarised as follows:

- All co-ordination of the early help offer has been maintained and is now delivered through Home-Start Wirral rather than the previous Local Authority team;
- The Link Forum has been re-established;
- 960 families will receive an early help support package, which will significantly reduce pressure on other services such as schools;
- Those agencies delivering the early help support packages are receiving payment;
- Pressure on the Integrated Front Door will significantly decrease as families and partners are able to contact Community Matters rather than directing all requests for service to Children's Services;
- Processes have been streamlined to make access to and provision of support much simpler;
- Investment and capacity building with the wider partnership and VCF sector;
- Widescale engagement and consultation with residents and stakeholders over 2 years to develop a collective impact model for early help.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications as the new initiative is being delivered within the existing financial envelope.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The procurement of Community Matters programme has followed the existing procedural and legal framework in line with Council standards and expectations.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 As described in Section 3, this is a re-allocation of existing resource.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Risks to contract delivery are managed through the Council's existing contract compliance monitoring and performance schedules. Quality assurance of provision is provided through the Partnerships Manager's role.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 During the period of July to September 2018, consultation and engagement activities and events took place with all stakeholders, including children, young people and families. Governance has been provided through Children's Services Senior Leadership Team, with Wirral Safeguarding Children Board receiving regular reports.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Through consultation and engagement with stakeholders it was agreed that an impact review of equality was not required due to both the regulations for providing an early help offer and the framework associated with the Council's procurement processes.

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SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Not applicable	Not applicable

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27TH FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT TITLE	Future Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements – Workshop Report
REPORT OF	The Chair of the Committee – Councillor Tom Usher

REPORT SUMMARY

A workshop was held on Monday 28th January 2019 at which members of the Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviewed the proposed Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. This report provides feedback and suggested recommendations from the workshop.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that Committee:

Note the contents of the report and agree any recommendations arising from the scrutiny workshop.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

For the Committee to endorse the work of the scrutiny workshop and to consider any recommendations moving forward.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to convene a scrutiny workshop to review the draft model for the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements due to be delivered later in 2019. The workshop was held as part of the Committee's work programme for 2018/19. This workshop was held on 28th January 2019, and was attended by officers from the Local authority, Wirral CCG and Merseyside Police.

3.2 The workshop was conducted through presentations delivered by the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board's Business Manager before being opened to a question and answer session.

3.3 A summary of the workshop presentations and Member comments is detailed in the report attached as **Appendix 1**.

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: Future Multi Agency Safeguarding – Workshop Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee – safeguarding annual report	13th November 2018

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Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Future Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements
Workshop

January 2019



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Background to Workshop

At the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 13th November, it was agreed that a workshop session be convened for members to scrutinise the draft safeguarding proposals before approval at Cabinet. This was an outcome from an agenda item on Future Safeguarding Arrangements presented at Committee.

As the Children and Social Work act 2017 will replace the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in approximately September 2019, Members wanted more information regarding the proposed model for Local Safeguarding arrangements.

Draft Proposals

Members received an overview and presentation of the new safeguarding model by the Business Manager of Wirral Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB).

It was explained to Members that the new model will be known as Wirral Safeguarding Partners and will be led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

- Wirral Council
- Merseyside Police
- Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The new model also places a duty on Child Death Review partners, the Local Authority and CCG to review deaths of children normally resident in the local area.

The Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), provides the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There is a clear framework within this guidance to enable the three safeguarding partners to decide how best to work together and respond to the needs of local children:

- The three safeguarding partners must set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- All schools must be included in the arrangements.
- The partners must also set out how their arrangements will receive independent scrutiny.
- Once agreed, the safeguarding partners must publish the arrangements.

The new local arrangements have been designed to support and enable local agencies to work together. Fundamental to these proposals is that the public feel confident in local safeguarding and that children are protected from harm.

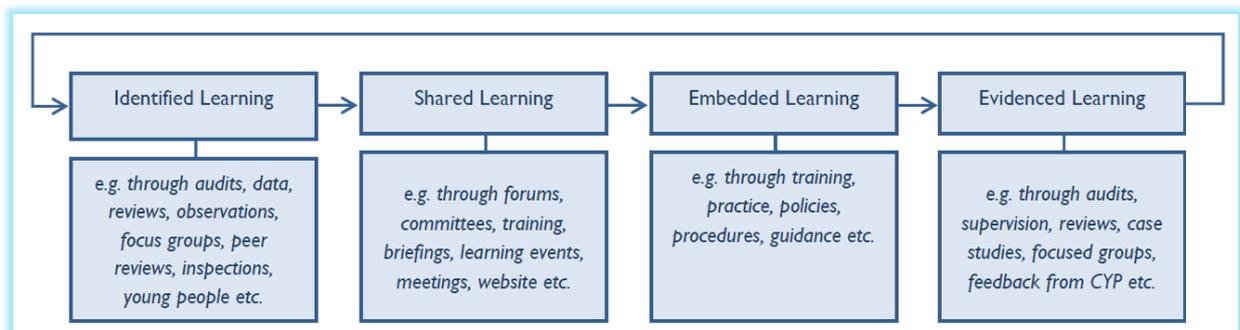
There are three central parts to the proposed model: governance, services and practice. Embedding excellent practice is the foundation of the model, as well as shared partnership arrangements to

ensure positive outcomes for Children. Governance will be developed last to ensure it reflects how the safeguarding partners want the model to work.

The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.
- Excellent practice is the standard.
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively.
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats.
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

The draft model also includes an 'intelligence function' to support an evaluation of safeguarding. This will include data analysis, audit, reviews and feedback from families, children and frontline professionals. Also included within this will be feedback from learning events, inspection results and research.



There will be opportunities for local and regional collaboration to be pursued where beneficial. This will include looking at outside organisations approach to policy and strategy, workforce development, communication and child death reviews, section 11/175 Audits (agency and school safeguarding audits), case reviews and peer reviews.

Overview of Model

Statutory Safeguarding Partners Executive Group

- Comprises of the 3 statutory Partners and are responsible for ensuring effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Wirral Safeguarding Partnership Group

- A stakeholder group drawn from relevant agencies, to include lead and lay members, as well as child and young people representation. This will meet bi-annually.

Independent Scrutiny

- The WSBC chair, will provide independent scrutiny of the arrangements and provide an annual report for partners. An updated protocol will be formalised with the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Business Intelligence and Quality Assurance

- This is central for providing and understanding data and information from across different agencies. This could include information from audit, case or peer reviews, or feedback from families, professionals and performance teams.

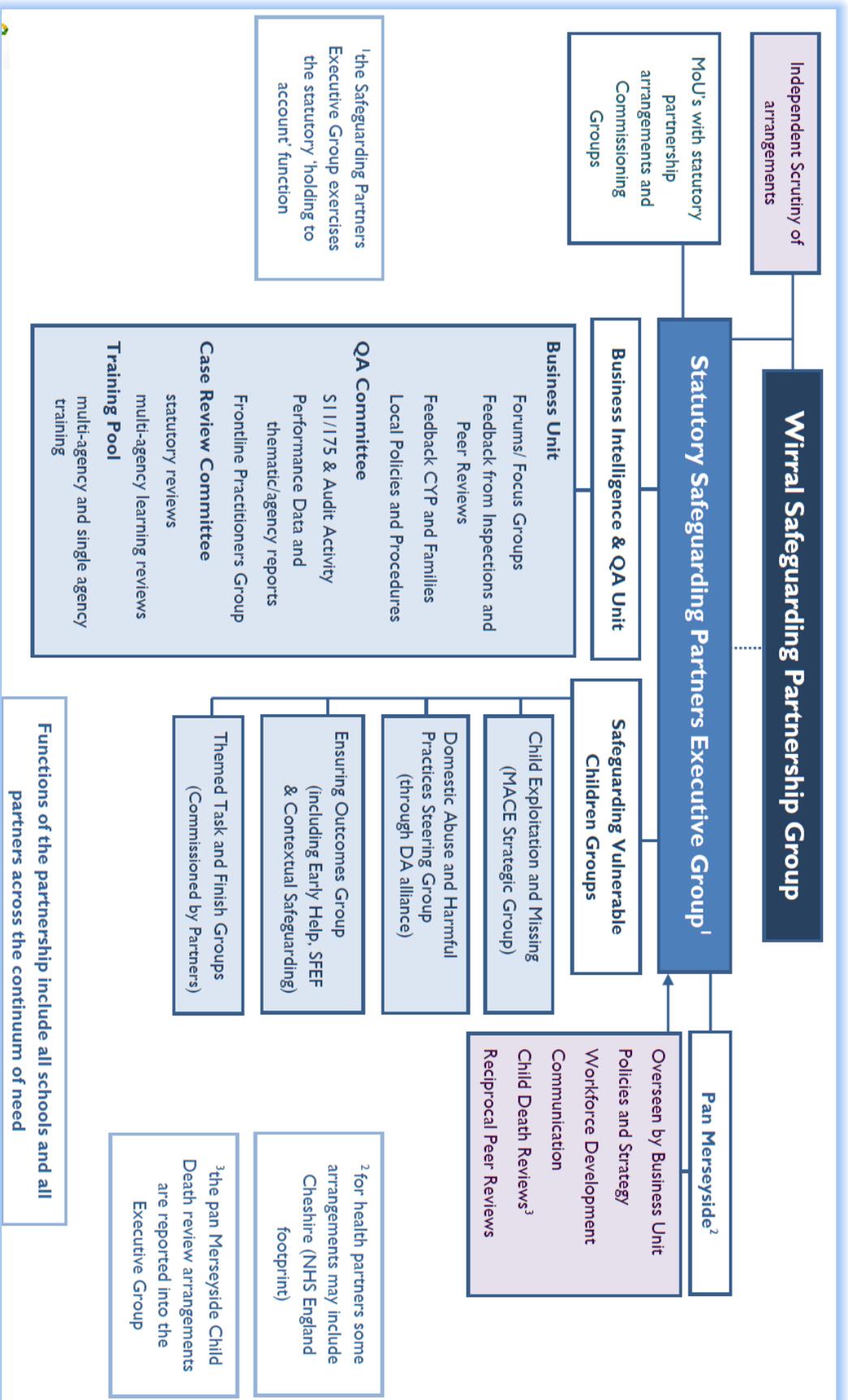
Safeguarding Vulnerable Children Groups

This group will undertake specific multi-agency activity to ensure there are robust and tested safeguarding arrangements around key areas. This may include but is not exclusive to:

- Early help
- Exploitation
- Child and domestic abuse
- Neglect
- Supporting Families Enhancing Futures (SEFE) initiative
- Contextual safeguarding. (Contextual Safeguarding is a national framework to better protect children and young people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability within their schools, environment and wider community.)

Pan-Merseyside Groups

- These will focus on collaborative approaches to policies and strategy, workforce development, Child Death Overview Panels, case reviews and communications.



Timeline

January 2019

- **28th January** OSC Spotlight Session
- **31st January** Consultation ends

March 2019

- **25th March** Agreement of Model at Cabinet
- **29th March** Publication of Model

April 2019

- **1st April** Introduction of new arrangements in shadow form

August 2019

- **31st August** WSCB stands down at midnight

September 2019

- **1st September** New statutory arrangements in place

Officer and Member Discussion

- Members queried whether the arrangements would be scrutinised by the Department for Education (DfE). Officers advised that the DfE will be contacting every local authority regarding their draft proposals. The DfE cannot reject the arrangements but can give their opinion on how they think it may work.
- Officers informed Members that there will be an independent scrutiny body. It was explained that most local authorities will be retaining their current safeguarding chairs. It was also noted that Ofsted will not check on the framework as models will be completely different across local authorities, however it is anticipated that Ofsted will inspect the practice and outcomes. Therefore, there will be great importance attached to internal and external scrutiny.
- Assurances were made that the new model will be built on excellent practice and the cross fertilisation of ideas. Sharing policies and strategies from across Merseyside will be pivotal to these arrangements and will be a positive move forward. It was noted that there is power in a pan-Merseyside approach.

- Concerns we raised by Members regarding safeguarding around social media use and queried whether there would be anything included in the proposals to cover this. It was noted that children and young people can be more technologically adept than their parents or carers and could easily get around parental controls on devices.
 - Officers advised that this guidance sits within business support and the support website is updated weekly. There are also 'school champions' who offer peer-on-peer support. There is training in place for year 12/13 young people to deliver online safety to year 7s. Officers also explained that technology is moving so fast it is hard to keep track of which websites and apps are safe, and which pose risks. The list is updated once a month and informed by all agencies such as the Police and Catch22.
 - It was also noted that online safety is a concern for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who may be unable to determine boundaries or voice concerns due to their needs. The vulnerability of this group highlights why it is vital that agencies talk to each other.

It was concluded that the best way to tackle this issue is to ensure that all parties are educated and aware of this issue.

- Members voiced concerns that the new model could be corporate-led and wanted assurances that it would be service based and involve the community where possible.
 - Officers confirmed that the partnership group will meet twice a year to find out what children and young people think about the model. It was agreed that thought needs to be given to how children, families, carers and youth groups are involved. A young people's panel had been set up with 15 young people ready to take part. It was agreed that officers would take the model out into the community, but it was understood that there would be some elements that would need to be discussed behind closed doors.
 - Officers referred to a contextual safeguarding group, and how Wirral responds to the issues it presents. There are further questions to be asked regarding how 'our' children feel. Do they feel safe?
- It was agreed that there had been issues with stakeholder participation in the past and the current model seemed better structured. It was noted by officers that safeguarding is in a stronger place than at the last Ofsted inspection in 2016, but that Ofsted would not be looking at future arrangements in any detail.
 - Members also queried whether there will be more stress placed on Partners to come together ensure better practice. Officers responded by advising that they all have ownership over the framework as they have had equal input. Rather than joining a model that has already been decided; they can see their own ideas coming through. All in attendance agreed that this new model feels like a partnership of

equals. It was agreed by the stakeholders that the importance of safeguarding is recognised more than ever. This new framework is based on learning and collaboration, with emphasis on avoiding any sort of blame culture.

- Members questioned how stakeholders will monitor and address the areas of the partnership which are not working well. Will partners be able to challenge each other in a constructive way?
 - Officers noted that a lot has changed since the Ofsted report of 2016, and that the old prescribed model did not work well for Wirral. The new framework offers a totally different approach, and partners are now asked how they want to contribute. It will be possible to refer to the original plans and make sure it is still being followed, however the arrangements will be much stronger in the first instance. Partners commented that a by-product of austerity is that agencies know their business more than ever. They know where the gaps are and what is failing.
- It was agreed by everyone that Children and young people should be central to the new framework. Often Members got the impression from speaking to Children and young people that things are being done *to* them and not *with* them. The draft model gives an exciting opportunity to involve children more, by asking them directly what they want.
 - It was noted that Wirral has been behind other Local Authorities in listening to the voice of the child. Previous arrangements had not sought this out. Merseyside Police advised that they are looking at introducing new I.T so that their frontline practitioners cannot proceed with their online forms until certain questions have been asked. Officers confirmed they wanted to consult with children and involve them in a way that will add value and is not tokenistic.
- Members queried the stability of budget arrangements for the new model and It was noted that they are not obliged to have an independent scrutiny chair.
 - Officers responded to confirm that the budget during year one will be the same as previous years and provided by the same partners. During year one, subsequent funding will be discussed. It was also pointed out that officers have deliberately not discussed money during set-up to ensure the best arrangements are put in place. All recognised how tight spending constraints are, and partners will be honest with each other and make sure it is an economically efficient as possible, whilst still being robust. Partners emphasised that they have looked at what is required in terms of opportunity - not hard cash.
- Further discussions highlighted the value of 'reality check visits' and this was demonstrated in previous visits and it was noted how useful they were to both members and officers. It was agreed that these should continue under the new arrangements, to speak to front-line staff and to hold departments to account. Members also appreciated the attendance and input at the workshop from 3 main stakeholders.

Recommendations

- A draft protocol to be produced between the Scrutiny Committee and Wirral Partnership Group and shared with attendees of the workshop for further suggestions and comments. This will be put in place once both bodies are satisfied with it and prior to Wirral Partnership Group going live and the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board standing down.
- Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee should receive bi-annual updates from the Wirral Partnership Group, one of which is to be an annual report.
- Consideration should be given to formalising arrangements whereby Scrutiny could become involved in the Wirral partnership group and informed of its activities. Thought should also be given to whether the Chair of the Committee should be included in the partnership group, or formalised scrutiny visits to the Executive or Partnership groups.

Special Thanks. The Corporate Director of Children's Services Paul Boyce expressed his thanks to David Robbins (Business Manager, WCSB) for his hard work in formulating the draft model. Members agreed that this should be recorded and expressed their appreciation regarding the content of the proposals and the presentation received.

Attendance

Councillors:

Cllr Tom Usher (Chair)

Cllr Chris Carubia (Party Spokesperson)

Cllr Chris Meaden

Cllr Kate Cannon

Cllr Jean Robinson

Cllr Liz Grey

Officers:

Dr Maggie Atkinson (Independent Chair, WCSB)

Paul Boyce (Corporate Director for Children's services)

David Robbins (Business Manages WCSB)

Simone White (Deputy Director – Children's services)

Elizabeth Hartley (Assistant Director: Early Help & Prevention)

Ian Hassell (Superintendent – Local Policing Commander, Merseyside Police)

Nicholas Guntilleke (Merseyside Police)

Rachel Wilson (Merseyside Police)

Lorna Quigley (Wirral CCG)

Sue Fogarty (Wirral CCG)

Joanne Chwalko (Wirral Community NHS Trust)

Anna Perrett (Scrutiny Officer – Children and Families)

Alexandra Davidson (Scrutiny Officer – Adult Care & Health)

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**Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Wednesday 27th February 2019**

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 co-operation with the three other 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, and 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 24th January 2019. 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 2018/19, 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 24th January, activity has taken place relating to the following:

Joint workshop – Pooled Funds Arrangements

A workshop was convened between the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee was held in January 2019. The workshop was convened to allow Members to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on proposals regarding the section 75 funding arrangements for the period of April 2019 to March 2020. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix 2.

Future Multi -Agency Safeguarding Arrangements Workshop

Further to the future multi-agency safeguarding arrangements report presented to Committee in November 2018, members requested a workshop session be held to discuss the future arrangements. A workshop was held in January 2019, and a full report presented to committee as a separate agenda item.

Statutory Care Plan Scrutiny Review

This Task & Finish was initiated to review the quality and effectiveness of Statutory Care Plans. The first evidence sessions took place late in 2017, and it was agreed that it would be continued into this municipal year. Further evidence sessions took place in September and December 2018 and a meeting was organised between Members and the Children in Care Council in January 2019. Further sessions are being planned for early 2019.

3.2 FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Reality Check Visits

Further reality check visits will take place in the upcoming municipal year, to give members to opportunity to visit service areas and speak to frontline staff.

If members have any suggestions for visits please refer them to the Chair, Vice Chair and party spokespersons.

3.3 FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

In line with the remit of the Committee and the principles for prioritisation, as described above, Members are requested to suggest possible topics for inclusion in the work programme. Committee Members should also consider how best to further develop the work programme in advance of the next scheduled Committee meeting in November. This could be achieved by Committee providing delegated authority to the Chair, Vice Chair and Party Spokespersons to provide further detailed input to the work programme development.

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

Appendix 2: Pooled Funds Workshop Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

Proposed Agenda Items for 27th February Committee

Item	Format	Officer
Minutes from Children & Families OSC	Minutes	
Child Obesity	Minutes	Julie Webster
Performance Monitoring Q3	Report	Nancy Clarkson
Improvement Journey & Data Tracker (Ofsted readiness)	Presentation	Paul Boyce
Financial Monitoring Q3	Report/Presentation	Pete Molyneux
Foster Care	Report	Ian Godfrey
Early Help	Report	Elizabeth Hartley
MASA Spotlight Session	Report	Anna Perrett
Work Programme Update	Report	Anna Perrett
Deadline for reports to be with Committee Services: Monday 11th February		

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Format	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Statutory Care Plan scrutiny review (on completion of the task & finish review)	Report	To be agreed	Report of the Chair (Scrutiny Officer to provide report)
The HIVE – progress report	Possible report	To be agreed	
Care leavers – employment prospects	Possible report	To be agreed	
Report on Children In Custody	Report	To Be agreed	
Outcomes from Special Needs Education consultation	Report	To be agreed	
Strategy Action Plan – Update Reports	Report	To be agreed	

Note:

It is expected that both Performance Monitoring and Financial Monitoring reports will be reported to committee on the following basis:

3 rd July	Q4 2017/18	27th February	Q3 2018/19
25th Sept	Q1 2018/19	24th Jan	No reports
13 th Nov	Q2 2018/19		

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 / Anna Jones	Ongoing
Reality Check visits				
Reality Check - Merseyside Police	Member visit	Feb 2019	Ian Hassall	TBC
Spotlight sessions / workshops				
Specialist Transport	Workshop	To be agreed	Julie Barnes	Potential joint workshop with members of AH&C OSC. Deferred from 2017/18
Corporate scrutiny / Other				
Transformation Programme – business cases	Workshop	Whenever required	Mike Callon	



Pooled Funding Arrangements Scrutiny Workshop

Report of Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee

January 2019



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1. INTRODUCTION

A meeting of the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee was held on 27th November 2018 to consider the decision taken by the Joint Strategic Commissioning Board (JSCB) on 16th October 2018 in relation to 'Wirral Health and Care Commissioning Pooled Fund Arrangements'. This decision had been called-in in accordance with Council procedure rule/standing order 35. The Committee had a number of concerns and resolved that the matter should be referred to Council in order that further discussions could take place around the proposed contract.

At the full Council meeting of 10th December 2018, a motion was passed which agreed that Council would not cause further delay in developing arrangements to enter into the Section 75 agreement for the 2018/19 year, but that there was a 'need to secure open and transparent working arrangements with the commissioners of local health and related services.' In addition, Council endorsed the view that there should be 'improved and early dissemination of information to elected Members, especially to the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees most closely involved.' Council also agreed that 'members of the Joint Strategic Commissioning Board ensure that a meaningful dialogue is established with Councillors and that the mechanisms requested be established.'

It was agreed by the Chair and Party Spokespersons of both the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee that a joint workshop be convened to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on the developing pooled funding proposals for the period covering April 2019 to March 2020.

2. SECTION 75 POOLED FUNDING PROPOSALS – OVERVIEW

It was proposed at the start of the workshop by the Chair of the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee that any recommendations that arose as a result of the workshop would be agreed by the Chair and Party Spokespersons of both the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee. In addition, the workshop report and any accompanying recommendations would then be approved by the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 29th January 2019 in order to fit into the timeline of the decision-making process for the proposed plans. Following a show of hands, the majority of Members in attendance agreed to this statement. Cllr Muspratt and Cllr Norbury did not agree to this course of action and requested that this be noted.

The Director of Care and Health introduced his presentation on the proposed Section 75 funding arrangements covering April 2019 to March 2020. The aims of the workshop were clearly set out as part of the presentation, with Members informed that the purpose of the session was to illustrate proposed arrangements for 2019/2020, enable scrutiny of the proposed pooled fund and ensure that Member questions and concerns were comprehensively responded to. In direct response to the Council motion, the workshop also aimed to contribute to more transparent working arrangements with the commissioners of local health and related services and to support improved and early dissemination of information to elected members.

The scope of the pooled fund for the 2018/19 period will remain unchanged, with only minor changes generated by a small increase to the Better Care Fund (BCF) and inflationary fluctuations etc. Another amendment to the previous contract will be that shadow funding reporting will no longer be included. The agreement for 2018/19 included wider NHS budget information as the initial proposal for a pooled fund was intended to encompass a

much larger budget. As the scope for 2019/20 will follow the previous outline, there is no requirement for shadow funding to be included. In addition, it is hoped that this will allow for a better understanding of the arrangement.

It was made clear to Members that the arrangements presented are for 2019/20 only; following this period the BCF will cease, and with no replacement funding announced as yet, it is not prudent to speculate on future plans at this stage. Social care funding issues affect all local authorities across the country and the future of social funding is universally uncertain. For this reason, proposals do not go beyond March 2020.

The total value of the BCF for this period (subject to confirmation) is £57m, with many joint services free at the point of delivery, and over 2000 people in Wirral supported each day. The pooling of resources is a legal requirement in order to be able to access BCF funding and a wide range of services can be delivered as a result of this money; from assistive technology to home care support and the mobile nights scheme. Members were informed that pooled resources would also include funding for those with complex learning disabilities and mental health needs to a value of £49.3m in total, along with £3m to provide care for children.

To ensure a focus on wellbeing and early intervention, a total of £13m of public health money will be included in the pooled fund. Public health services are at the centre of the 'Healthy Wirral' plan to address health inequality and provide an inclusive approach to health and care for local residents.

As concerns had previously been raised regarding the governance arrangements for the JSCB, attention was given to this during the presentation. Members were informed that elected members and the CCG Governing Body each have one vote, with the latter not voting on 'Council only' decisions and vice versa. In addition, elected members are able to influence key decisions relating to health services through debate, and potentially impact on decisions made exclusively by the CCG Governing Body prior to the formation of the JSCB.

3. SUMMARY OF MEMBER COMMENTS AND WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

- Members asked if it would be possible to review alternative Section 75 arrangements in place at other local authorities such as Manchester City Council.
Members were informed that other local authorities such as the example given of Manchester, have very different operations to those on Wirral. Specifically, Manchester has a devolved health and social care system which affects which services are operated locally, and how, and impacts on their ability to make such arrangements. For this reason, it is not practical to make a comparison due to the differences in setup and development. The process of constructing the proposed arrangement for Wirral has included extensive legal input from both Wirral Council and Wirral CCG. As part of this process, a number of different arrangements were reviewed to ensure that the right case for Wirral was put forward.
- Members questioned whether it would be possible to abstain from signing a Section 75 agreement and still secure the BCF programme money.
The Director of Care and Health advised that in order to draw down the BCF funding, there is a legal requirement to pool resources. It is not, however, mandatory to include the Public Health and complex disability elements –these have been incorporated to ensure a better system for Wirral.

- Members asked for clarification around governance arrangements for the JSCB. It was stated that constitutionally a Cabinet decision is approved by Council – Members questioned where the JSCB fits in with this process and sought assurance that there was a line through to Council and scrutiny.
Members were assured that arrangements for JSCB work in the same way as they would for a Council cabinet decision. Reports are administered through the 'ModGov' system and available in advance. Decisions made by JSCB are open to scrutiny as well as 'call in', and the Council constitution was updated in summer 2018 to include this.

- Members asked for examples of joint social care services that were free at the point of delivery, and how pooled resources assist with facilitating this.
Members were advised that in the case of home adaptations, BCF funding is issued directly to the Housing Team who carry out the work – following this, an eligibility assessment is made to consider the cost to the resident, without delay to necessary adaptations. For intermediate care requirements, such as a patient leaving hospital and receiving residential care in order to prepare them for returning home, the cost will be funded by the pooled resource as this clearly sits between health and social care. In both of these cases, the pooled fund facilitates the provision of care at the point that it is needed, without interruption caused by the issue of financial responsibility. Prior to the setup of the pooled fund, health and social care teams would have needed to establish who would fund this care – thus resulting in delays to the timely delivery of care.
Frontline officers in attendance advised Members that in their experience, the inclusion of public health and wellbeing services in pooled funding can also be invaluable; it enables care to cut across health and social care boundaries rather than having a defined role for each.

- Members asked where responsibility lies for the sign off of high cost care packages – specifically those for children where weekly costs across the region can spiral into the thousands of pounds.
The Director of Care and Health informed those in attendance that the DASS has the ultimate responsibility for care spending, but that there is a robust process of sign off and decision making in place. Social workers and team managers can agree to costs for care packages, with higher spends and complex cases approved at Director level. There was assurance given that these decisions are always based on need and are made regardless of the budgetary position at the time.
Frontline officers supported this claim and gave insight into previous experiences where protracted referrals to health care practitioners have taken place in order to identify medical needs. Often where cases involve complex needs or high costs, this results in a dispute between services which ultimately impedes how quickly a decision can be made. The integrated Disability Service care team manager advised Members that he has worked extensively both within and out of a Section 75 arrangement and that, in his opinion, care is uniformly better when an agreement is in place. It facilitates straightforward conversations about the best outcomes for the person, without blame or responsibility that ultimately impacts the pathway of care for a person and their family.

- Members questioned how Continuing Healthcare funding fits into the pooled fund arrangements.
Officers advised that there is a national framework for Continuing Healthcare (CHC) eligibility, and this process will continue. The pooled fund enables people to receive the care they need when they need it, whilst allowing time for the process of eligibility to be considered without delay to care provision. Members expressed an interest in reviewing

how CHC packages of care are impacted by the pooled fund arrangements. Although not all CHC funding has been included in the pooled fund (such as Older People's CHC and end of life CHC pathways), it was agreed that the production of performance figures for future Scrutiny meetings would allow Members to have sight of the bigger picture of CHC in Wirral.

- Members queried how they could easily access information relating to waiting times for social care services and home adaptations in particular, in order to assist their constituents with concerns and queries as well as ensuring that potential issues are identified. This suggestion was welcomed by officers, and Members were informed that this data is not currently published. Consideration was given to whether it may be beneficial to develop a service level agreement with partners involved in this home adaptations process and to ensure performance (such as average waiting times) is reported in future.
- Members questioned how funding is allocated for home adaptations; and how the relationship between the Council's housing team and social housing providers operates. In addition, a Member wished to ascertain whether the funding limit for adaptations was likely to change. Although this service is not directly provided by social care, but rather through a delegated arrangement with the Council's housing team, the query was welcomed by officers. There was discussion as to whether it may be useful for the relevant housing department to bring a report before a future scrutiny meeting in order to allay any concerns and questions.
- Members questioned whether the legalities and 'terms and conditions' of the Section 75 agreement would be renegotiated based on concerns voiced at previous meetings on the subject. The Director of Care and Health advised Members that there will be no renegotiation of the contract for 2019/20 as the scope of the pooled fund will remain unchanged from that agreed by Council in December 2018. The arrangements have in essence been agreed by JSCB and Council, as well as being subjected to scrutiny through the call-in process. Members were asked if they had any specific concerns that they wanted to raise or recommendations they would like to make about the 'terms and conditions' of the Section 75 agreement. None were given at the workshop.
- Members requested clarification on the role of the social care precept within pooled funding arrangements. Members were advised that the social care precept was not included in the pooled fund but was spent immediately on annual fee uplifts and used solely for care purposes.
- Concerns were raised around the future of social care funding following the cessation of the BCF in 2020. All local authorities are currently awaiting publication of the social care green paper due in spring 2019 to ascertain what plans are in place for the future of social care funding. It was suggested that scrutiny examine the recently published NHS Long Term Plan in the new municipal year in order to prepare for possible changes and potential future arrangements. Members also queried whether the Section 75 agreement means the Council is tied into a contract where funding implications are uncertain beyond 2020. In response, it was made clear that this agreement runs only to March 2020 and that the contract is due to be reviewed annually.
- Members requested that governance procedures are made clearer, and that all-encompassing guidance is provided to Members (ideally in flow chart format) to

demonstrate the decision-making process for the JSCB. It was envisaged that this would include detail on the call-in procedure and the course of action were there to be disagreement between the JSCB and the Wirral CCG Governing Body.

- There were discussions around the use of the term ‘Accountable Care Organisation’ (ACO) in the PCW ‘Financial Risks and Mitigations’ document, an issue previously discussed at the call-in meeting of the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Director of Care and Health categorically stated that the pooled fund arrangements do not relate to the formation of an ACO, and the focus and outcome is solely to allow better partnership working and more effective joined up services. Assurance was given to Members that the agreement is based on care provision and not privatisation.
In addition, Members requested clarification relating to the tendering of services - specifically how Wirral CCG is affected by the Section 75 agreement and if the legislation requires commissioners to set out to tender services that could be delivered by any organisation other than the NHS. Members were concerned that if this was the case, it might give private providers an advantage, due to the fact that they are more experienced in winning tenders. Officers assured Members that this was not the case. With the Section 75 agreement in place, the council could deal only with the CCG if it so wished, and approach them to deliver a service within partnership.
The Head of Operations at Cheshire and Wirral Partnership assured Members that the ‘Wirral approach’ is based on partnership and integration. Although Trusts have experience of bidding on and winning contracts successfully, the proposed agreement ensures that the focus is on delivery of care as opposed to the wasted effort put into processes. The Section 75 assists with joining up services and providing continuity and stability of care.
- There was broad agreement that, although there is no control at a local level of the decisions that will be made by central government around social care funding, focus should be placed on providing care for those that need it now – the most vulnerable need to be protected. However, it is vital to be mindful of future changes and the direction that the health and social care system will take in future.
- Members noted that having frontline practitioners at the workshop gave them a direct account of the practical implications a Section 75 agreement had on services.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1; Pooled fund budget performance reporting

A more transparent and detailed financial reporting process should be established in order that Scrutiny Members may have sight of the full budgetary position, pooled budget performance and funding breakdowns. It is suggested that monitoring reports are brought before scrutiny on a regular basis, and that Members are alerted to upcoming changes in funding.

Recommendation 2; Explore the development of performance reporting on waiting times for social care services

Members welcome the inclusion of average waiting times for services such as home adaptations and care packages in the quarterly Health and Care Performance report brought before the Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, so that they may maintain an awareness of performance statistics and be better able to advise the residents that they represent. In addition, it is suggested that a scrutiny report detailing the funding and allocation of home adaptations is brought before the Adult Care and Health OSC at a future meeting.

Recommendation 3; Continuing Healthcare monitoring

It is suggested that CHC performance data is provided to scrutiny; including numbers of CHC assessments carried out, funding allocations and outcomes. In addition, it is requested that comparative data be provided so that Members are able to see the impact of the pooled fund on CHC care package provision.

Recommendation 4; The production of clear guidelines outlining governance and decision making processes

Members request that guidance is provided in 'flow chart' format that plainly illustrates the proposed process for dispute resolution between the Joint Strategic Commissioning Board and Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body, alongside the 'call in' procedure.

Recommendation 5; Consideration is given to holding a scrutiny session to examine 'The NHS Long Term Plan'

It is suggested that scrutiny work is undertaken to explore the NHS Long Term Plan in order to anticipate the direction of future health and care arrangements and ensure they can work well for Wirral.

Recommendation 6; Improved engagement with service users or those close to service users, and continued use of external stakeholders where relevant

Members welcome the opportunity to engage with those affected by services that are included in the pooled funding arrangements and are keen that they play a fundamental role in ensuring legitimate scrutiny. Participation will be encouraged by way of Member visits, involvement in advocacy sessions or (where possible) through service user attendance at Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

Appendix 1 – Workshop Attendance

Members:

Cllr Bruce Berry
Cllr Kate Cannon
Cllr Chris Carubia
Cllr Wendy Clements
Cllr Tony Cottier
Cllr Samantha Frost
Cllr Phil Gilchrist
Cllr Liz Grey
Cllr Mary Jordan
Cllr Moira McLaughlin
Cllr Julie McManus (Chair of the Adult Care and Health OSC)
Cllr Chris Meaden
Cllr Christina Muspratt
Cllr Tony Norbury
Cllr Leslie Rennie
Cllr Jean Robinson
Cllr Tom Usher (Chair of the Children and Families OSC)
Cllr Gillian Wood

Officers:

Graham Hodgkinson, Director for Care and Health
Jason Oxley, Assistant Director Health and Care Outcomes
Alexandra Davidson, Scrutiny Officer
Anna Perrett, Scrutiny Officer

Visitors:

Patricia McCormack, Head of Operations – Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Paul Carr, Team Manager - Integrated Care
Clifford Mukumbira – Advanced Practitioner – Integrated Care

Apologies:

Cllr Gerry Ellis
Cllr Sharon Jones
Cllr Irene Williams
Cllr Jerry Williams
Suzanne Edwards, Associate Director - Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

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