



Children, Young People & Education Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 15 June 2021
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Palace Room, Floral Pavillion

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AGENDA

Members of the public are encouraged to view the meeting via the webcast, (see below) but for anyone who would like to attend in person, please contact the box office at the Floral Pavilion by telephone on 0151 666 0000, in advance of the meeting. All those attending will be asked to wear a face covering (unless exempt) and are encouraged to take a Lateral Flow Test before attending. You should not attend if you have tested positive for Coronavirus or if you have any symptoms of Coronavirus.

This meeting will be webcast at
<https://wirral.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- 2. APOLOGIES**
- 3. MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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.

- 4. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held 11 March 2021.

5. PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Public Questions

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, 10 June 2021 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10

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Statements and Petitions

Statements

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, 10 June 2021 to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.

Petitions

Petitions may be presented to the Committee. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding one minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. Please give notice of petitions to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

Questions by Members

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

SECTION A - DECISIONS

- 6. PREVENTION (Pages 9 - 58)**
- 7. YOUTH OFFER (Pages 59 - 72)**
- 8. CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME (Pages 73 - 86)**
- 9. SEND SERVICE UPDATE (Pages 87 - 92)**
- 10. APPOINTMENT OF PANELS, STATUTORY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES 2021/2022 (Pages 93 - 98)**

SECTION B - BUDGET REPORTS

- 11. 2021/22 BUDGET MONITORING AND 22/23 BUDGET PROCESS
(Pages 99 - 114)**
- 12. CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 4
(APRIL - MARCH 2021) (Pages 115 - 124)**

SECTION C - PERFORMANCE REPORTS

- 13. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (Pages
125 - 164)**
- 14. FOSTERING AND ADOPTION ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT.
REPORTING PERIOD 1 APRIL 2020 – 31ST MARCH 2021 (Pages
165 - 180)**

SECTION D - REVIEWS/ REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

- 15. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 181 - 190)**
- 16. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND
PUBLIC**

The following item contains exempt information

RECOMMENDATION: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

- 17. CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME
(Pages 191 - 192)**

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, 11 March 2021

Present: Councillor W Clements (Chair)

Councillors K Cannon S Spoor
C Carubia P Stuart
M McLaughlin T Usher
Cherry Povall A Wright
J Robinson

35 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed Members of the Children's, Young People and Education Committee, Officers and viewing members of the public to the virtual meeting. An update was sought from Paul Boyce, Director of Children, Families and Education on the return of schools.

It was reported that children had returned to school earlier in the week and early indications were that the return had been successful with good attendance reported throughout the borough. Secondary schools and colleges had undertaken lateral flow testing prior to opening, and out of the 6000 student and 700 staff who had been tested, none had returned positive results. It was further reported that the Council had continued to support the safe return of children to school, with additional support in place for children in vulnerable families and the provision of additional digital devices where required. Parents were urged to continue to maintain social distancing, wear face coverings and avoid gatherings at the school gate.

The Chair thanked the Director for Children, Families and Education for his update and informed the Committee that the following day would be Paul's last day in post. The Committee expressed its thanks to Paul for his leadership during his tenure as Director for Children, Families and Education, during which Wirral had received recognition from the Department for Education, and wished him all the best for the future.

36 **APOLOGIES**

A roll call of Councillors was undertaken by the Head of Legal Services. No apologies for absence were received.

37 **MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and, if so, declare and state what they were.

The following declarations were made:

Councillor Wendy Clements	Personal interest in respect of item 8, 'Early Years Sufficiency and Covid-19 Response' by virtue of her employment in a charitable early years setting.
Councillor Jean Robinson	Personal interest in respect of item 8, 'Early Years Sufficiency and Covid-19 Response' by virtue of her employment in early years.
Councillor Sarah Spoor	Personal interest by virtue of her membership of Parent Carer Participation Wirral, and her employment in a Liverpool City Region school.

38 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2021 be agreed.

39 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Head of Legal Services informed the Children, Young People and Education Committee that no public questions, requests to make a statement or petitions had been submitted.

40 **WSCP SAFER ADOLESCENCE STRATEGY**

Anthony Kirk, Head of Service Contextual Safeguarding introduced the report of the Director for Children, Families and Education, which provided an overview of the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) Safer Adolescence Strategy 2021-23.

The report set out the objectives of developing the strategy, which included:

- Promoting a more strategic preventative approach to adolescent safety by raising awareness of associated vulnerabilities;
- Enhancing the collective understanding of what is meant 'extra-familial harm', or 'risk outside the home';

- Embedding a shared set of partnership principles and values for working with adolescents; and
- Developing a Wirral contextual safeguarding framework.

The strategy further detailed the approach of contextual safeguarding, with a three levelled approach in terms of child level, location and groups level and a third level of themes and trends causing risk or harm or increasing vulnerability. Members welcomed the wide consultation and input from young people in shaping and developing the strategy, which included feedback from groups such as the Youth Voice Group, Junior and Youth Arts Group and Children in Care Council.

It was reported that there had been a similar level of contact during lockdown restriction, but the harm themes for adolescents had changed with a reduction around criminal exploitation and changes in anti-social behaviour patterns due to the restrictions on multi-household gatherings. It was further reported that there had been an increase in violence involving younger people during periods of lockdown easing. Further assurances were given around the national standards of transition to adulthood and the local measures to prevent children being held and charged as adults.

Resolved – That

- 1) the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership Safer Adolescence Strategy 2021-23 be supported.**
- 2) the approach and ongoing development work within the Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership be noted.**

41 WIRRAL PUPIL PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY 2021-2026

Simone White, Assistant Director for Children’s Services introduced the report of the Director for Children, Families and Education which detailed the proposed introduction of a Wirral Pupil Place Planning Strategy 2021-2026 to set out a transparent and equitable approach for pupil place planning.

It was reported that the Council had a statutory responsibility to ensure there were sufficient school places available for children and young people in the right locations and at the right time to meet demand, as well as to identify how to remedy any excess or insufficiency in the provision of school places. The Pupil Place Planning Strategy 2021-2026 set out a methodology for forecasting pupil places, proposed a phased approach for reviewing school places across the five years and provided a detailed appraisal and governance framework to guide the review planning of school places.

A key set of principles would underpin the review process as part of the strategy to provide consistency and result in positive outcomes for future provision. The principles included a commitment to:

- Using detailed and meaningful insight and data to allow accurate and robust forecasting;
- Taking a collaborative approach and a commitment to work with all schools and stakeholders in ensuring they are consulted and involved;
- Maintaining a focus on inclusion so that children with different needs are offered high-quality education which meets their need; and
- Ensuring that children's educational outcomes and attainment are at the forefront of decision-making.

Members discussed the school place planning areas detailed within the strategy, and the impact housing development could have on how these were shaped. It was acknowledged that the strategy was a working document that could change over time.

Resolved – That

- 1) the Wirral Pupil Place Planning Strategy be endorsed.**
- 2) the Director of Children, Families and Education be requested to inform the wider membership of the Council of the Pupil Place Planning Strategy.**

42 EARLY YEARS SUFFICIENCY AND COVID19 RESPONSE

Carol Fenlon, Head of Early Childhood Services introduced the report of the Director for Children, Families and Education, which provided an overview of Wirral's Childcare market sufficiency for the period of April 2019 – March 2020, in addition to the response to Covid-19 including securing childcare places specifically for vulnerable and keyworker children.

It was reported that the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment was a statutory duty which provided analysis on whether there was sufficient childcare to meet the needs of families presently and in the future. The Wirral Childcare Sufficiency Assessment identified that there was a decreasing birth rate and that on average early years settings were 80% full with most settings having vacancies for all ages. Planning for future sustainability of childcare places after Covid-19 was a priority for Early Childhood Services, with business recovery online training being made available for providers.

The report further detailed the sufficiency of early years places during the pandemic. The Committee was advised that 216 of the 384 settings closed following the announcements of lockdown restrictions in March 2020, of which many were childminder services closing due to lack of demand or through providers having to shield following advice from Public Health England. It was

further reported that were positive signs of recovery across 2,3- and 4-year-old offer following the commencement of the autumn 2020 term, but there were still fluctuations in take up of early years place due to increased working from home or furlough arrangements.

Members welcomed the work undertaken to support early years settings during the pandemic.

Resolved – That

- 1) publication of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 19/20 be endorsed.**
- 2) Wirral’s Childcare Providers’ Covid-19 response in continuing to offer Early Years Childcare and Education through unprecedented times be noted.**

43 TRANSFORMING CARE THERAPEUTIC SHORT BREAKS

Anne-Marie Carney, Children’s Commissioning Manager introduced the report of the Director of Children, Families and Education, which outlined a Transforming Care Therapeutic Short Breaks Capital proposal and context on a capital bid process which was underway with NHS England for a grant to be used for children and young people experiencing levels of crisis or difficulty and presenting with behaviours of concern.

It was outlined that following a successful expression of interest stage, a full project proposal had been submitted to NHS England seeking capital fund to provide a facility for up to three young people at risk of attendance at Accident and Emergency, in need of assessment and treatment for mental health issues or in need of a placement away from their normal residence. It was noted that there was no similar provision currently in Wirral. The proposal included the appointment of a care provider for a 9-month period whilst a full tendering process was undertaken, and the Committee was advised that the option to support the facility in-house had been considered but it was felt that it was not achievable to recruit the necessary clinical oversight required for such a facility in a suitable timeframe.

The proposal included the facility for up to three young people and a member queried whether it was anticipated that long term admissions may result in a limited availability of spaces. In response, it was confirmed that modelling had been undertaken based on the existing tier 4 hospital admissions and that demand for places was usually limited to 2 or 3 beds at a time, consequently it was felt that the provision was sufficient for current demand. It was however anticipated that the demand for such places would increase in the future, therefore the Council would continue to explore further funding opportunities to create additional similar provision.

The Committee further considered the ongoing cost of the provision where it was confirmed that the anticipated annual cost based on 100% occupancy was £0.753m compared to the current cost of £0.878m for three externally commissioned placements. Further annual contributions from NHS England Transforming Care of £0.173m for two year helped to mitigate the risk of the occupancy being below 100%.

Resolved – That Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to:

- 1. accept the capital grant monies of up to £700,000 from NHS England to enable the purchase by the Council of a property to be used for the purpose of providing a facility for children and young people with Learning Difficulties, Autism and presenting mental health difficulties along with the delivery of suitable services to such occupants;**
- 2. delegate authority to the Director of Law and Governance to finalise the associated grant agreement;**
- 3. delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, the Director of Children, Families and Education and NHS England to purchase a property at market value suitable for the purposes outlined within the report; and**
- 4. delegate authority to the Director of Children, Families and Education to procure a registered care provider for the first nine months of the facility's operation.**

44 **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 3**

Steven Prytherch, Senior Finance Business Partner, introduced the report of the Director of Children, Families and Education which set out the budget performance for Children, Young People and Education and the projected year-end revenue position as reported at Q3 2020/21.

It was reported that the overall financial forecast for Children, Young People and Education showed a full year favourable position of £0.433m, which was a significant change to the forecast at the previous quarter of an adverse position of £2.058m. The Committee was advised that national assumptions for additional demand for Children's Social Care were reflected in the previous quarter forecast, but that the increased demand had not materialised, and the subsequent forecast had therefore been reduced by £0.771m. Furthermore, the increased costs associated with children requiring transport to ensure social distancing had been fully funded by Covid-19 grants, which alongside slippage cause by delays to implementation of contracts for modernisation

and Early Help and Prevention Services had resulted in the change in position since the previous quarter.

Further detail was provided on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget to increase transparency on how it was being spent. The expenditure was forecast to be in line with the budget, but there were significant pressures on the high needs block due to increases in demand and complexity. This had resulted in anticipated underspends earmarked for DSG reserves not materialising and instead the extra use of DSG reserves having to take place. It was queried how the reserves would be replenished, and members were informed that further funding for the high needs block would help to correct the position, alongside a DSG management plan that had been put in place to bring expenditure back in line with funding and recover the deficit.

Members sought further detail on the replenishment of the DSG reserve to be included in the budget monitoring management plan.

Resolved – That the projected year end revenue forecast position of £0.433m favourable and the capital position of £1.89m favourable, as reported at quarter 3 of 2020/21 be noted.

45 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance, which outlined the proposed Children, Young People and Education Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2021/21 municipal year.

Members welcomed the performance monitoring data that would be available for future meetings and proposed a further item be considered at a future meeting on child mental health.

Resolved – That the proposed work programme for the remainder of the 2021/21 municipal year be noted.

46 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL APPEAL PANEL**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance which sought the Children, Young People and Education Committee's approval of the appointment of additional members to the Independent Appeal Panel and Independent Review Panel to consider Admission Appeals and Exclusion Reviews.

The Committee was advised that in advance of school place offers being circulated to parents for September 2021, a recruitment process had taken place to increase the pool of individuals able to sit on the Admission Appeal

Panel, and approval was sought to appoint those recruited to the Panel. The relevant qualifications of the prospective members were included in the confidential appendix.

Resolved – That the appointment of the following members to the Independent Appeal Panel and Independent Review Panel be approved:

- **Mr Peter Mawdsley**
- **Mr Colin Harwood;**
- **Mrs Ruth Winterton;**
- **Mr Matthew Lloyd Evans;**
- **Mr David Buckley;**
- **Mrs Paula Dixon;**
- **Mr Phil Sheridan ; and**
- **Mrs Lynn Ireland.**

47 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved – That

- 1) under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.**
- 2) further to Minute No.46, the content of the exempt appendix circulated with the agenda, be noted.**



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	PREVENTION
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an overview of the prevention approach recommended for adoption by Wirral Council, including a Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework. In addition, the report details the Breaking the Cycle programme, which seeks to demonstrate how a collaboration of preventative activity can maximise opportunity and lead to better outcomes for people, services, and organisations.

The report and strategy are aligned to priorities of Wirral Council's Plan 2025:

- Working for brighter futures for our children, young people and their families by breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and raising the aspirations of every child in Wirral.
- Working for safe and pleasant communities where our residents feel safe, and where they want to live and raise their families.
- Working for happy, active and healthy lives where people are supported, protected and inspired to live independently.

This matter affects residents across the borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that:

1. The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework be approved.
2. The Breaking the Cycle programme approach be endorsed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The emerging vision of Wirral Council is *equity for people and place and opportunity for all*, with emphasis on tackling health inequalities and improving outcomes. In this context, it is beneficial for the Council to outline a clear policy statement for prevention which promotes early intervention activity and approaches. The Prevention Framework is a tool for use by any public service to ensure that they are working to meet needs and resolve issues earlier, thereby contributing to Wirral Council's future vision.
- 1.2 Prevention is a cross-cutting theme of significance in Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and Public Health. It is therefore essential that there is cross-Council agreement to prioritise preventative activity and to outline the expectations and delivery methodology for preventative approaches.
- 1.3 The Breaking the Cycle programme is an example of how the Prevention Framework can be used to bring together a range of interventions working towards very similar outcomes. With eight projects, all working with people facing multiple disadvantage, it is anticipated that bringing them into a single programme will maximise the potential of the resource, reduce likelihood of duplication, and increase the chance of successfully supporting local people living in the most deprived wards to turn their lives around.
- 1.4 Supporting the Breaking the Cycle programme provides an opportunity to test the impact and potential of the Prevention Framework. Learning from the experience to then apply similar approaches to preventative work across people services.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is to continue delivering services without a cross-Council arrangements for prevention. However, with demand for acute services continuing to rise and budget pressures increasing, continuing with the existing status quo would make it unlikely that the Council would alleviate those pressures.
- 2.2 Existing arrangements, whereby individual departments lead prevention within their own scope of control, can lead to single-issue responses. Whilst this may be helpful to service providers, in that their single-issue objective is more easily responded to, it does not work well for people or families who experience multiple issues at once. There are many inter-dependencies between key life stages which require a more joined up response from services.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In September 2020, having been successful in securing funding for a range of preventative approaches, members of Children's Services Management Team presented an overview of activity to the Council's Senior Leadership Team. It was agreed that a cross-Council approach to prevention would support the work initiated by Children's Services to have greater impact.

- 3.2 The need for a cross-Council, cross-directorate approach is based on the understanding that the vast majority of children who enter the care system do so because of the circumstances affecting their parents, such as domestic abuse, poor mental health, and substance and/or alcohol misuse. Whilst the adult directly experiences these difficult circumstances, the impact of them is felt by the child and often compromises parenting.
- 3.3 The Council's Senior Leadership Team agreed that a more joined up approach, involving housing, community safety, leisure and library services, as well as Children's and Adult Social Care and Health departments, would lead to more effective prevention and potentially reduce the need for acute services and admission to care.
- 3.4 In the interim there has been a growing focus on health inequalities both at local and national level which add weight to the case for a bold preventative approach. Locally, the Health and Wellbeing Board has been refreshed to place greater emphasis on having an integrated approach to prevention and community-based health and wellbeing services that address wider determinants of health. The emerging vision for Wirral Council is focusing on *equity for people and place* and tackling problems which have become entrenched. Nationally, prompted by impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been many publications such as *The Marmot Review 10 Years On* and *Childhood in the Time of Covid* by the Children's Commissioner, which call for more joined up, preventative approaches.
- 3.5 Following a programme of engagement sessions with multi-disciplinary workers from across the borough, the Prevention Policy Statement, Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle Prospectus, included in the appendices of this report, have been produced.
- 3.6 The Prevention Policy Statement
The proposed policy statement is included in Appendix 1. The purpose of this is to enable Wirral Council to make a clear commitment to prevention within the policy context, highlighting the influential role of the Council and the benefits to people and services.
- 3.7 The Prevention Framework
The proposed framework is included in Appendix 2. This document aims to demonstrate how the Council's policy for prevention can be put into action. The framework is intended for use as guidance for anyone working in public services, as a practitioner, commissioner, manager or leader. It outlines the values and underpinning principles for prevention (as were articulated through the co-production activities) and provides a range of considerations as to how preventative services can be delivered to benefit local people.
- 3.8 The Breaking the Cycle Prospectus
The prospectus is included in Appendix 3. This preventative programme is an exemplar of the policy and framework in action. The programme will bring together eight separate projects, introduce adapted practice across Council services, and pilot an outcomes plan and data collation approach intended to improve understanding of impact.

- 3.9 As reflected within the Prevention Framework, there are many strands of preventative work which could be aligned to, or further developed, under the overarching framework. There is significant work in train to embed a new model of earliest help for children and families utilising the same principles. Likewise, for the new Youth Offer model, *Safer Adolescence Strategy* and emerging *Community Safety Strategy*, prevention is a key focus. Preventing need, such as hospital admissions or care, or extending early help to include those living with frailty, are within scope for a prevention framework approach.
- 3.10 Ensuring a strong relationship with the Health and Wellbeing Board as well as the Committees will enable prevention approaches to grow and develop.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. It is intended that existing resources will be used differently as opposed to new resources being sought.
- 4.2 Over the initial course of the Breaking the Cycle programme, which continues up to April 2023, a total of £6.54m is being invested. This includes £682k invested by Wirral Council and £5.858m from other funding sources. Each programme has specific funding, contract management and oversight arrangements. The Prevention Steering Group will have oversight of performance, but responsibility for delivery lies with the nominated Project Sponsors and Project Leads as detailed in the Appendix of the Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.
- 4.3 A number of the catalyst prevention programmes featured within the Breaking the Cycle programme are evidence-based and provide anticipated cost avoidances. Further work to consider cost benefit and cost avoidance will be undertaken throughout the programme to understand how preventative activity can contribute to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework are intended to be beneficial for resources by supporting and enabling public services to deliver high-quality activity for early intervention.
- 6.2 The Breaking the Cycle programme seeks to improve coordination of resource without impacting on staffing or assets.
- 6.3 It is intended that improved data and intelligence will lead to better understanding of need and better understanding of which interventions, or combination of

interventions, lead to the best outcomes for families. An improved level of data maturity can be achieved within the existing ICT capacity and resource.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Failing to deliver a co-ordinated approach to prevention programmes presents the risk of missed opportunity, both in terms of meaningfully tackling issues that lead to health inequality and in optimising the funding we have secured for these programmes. The Breaking the Cycle programme seeks to maximise the current opportunity and provide an evidence base for future, long-term preventative programmes.
- 7.2 A Risk Management plan has been completed for the Breaking the Cycle programme and is included within Appendix 3 - Breaking the Cycle Prospectus.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Over the months November 2020 to April 2021, considerable engagement has taken place to develop the Prevention Policy Statement, Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle Prospectus. Supported by external agency, Peopletoo, activity has included: workshops, focus groups, one-to-one conversations, use of online surveys and interactive message boards. Engagement has been across Council directorates, with partner agencies, third sector organisations and with youth voice groups.
- 8.2 Learning from other relevant engagement and consultation work, including the *Why Community Matters* report on early help, the Youth Offer consultation, and co-production activity for the *Domestic Abuse: No Excuse* and *Safer Adolescence Strategy* has also informed the prevention documentation and programme.
- 8.3 As detailed within the Prevention Framework, co-production is a fundamental building block of preventative activity. The framework outlines the commitment to ensure meaningful engagement and involvement of local people within all aspects of preventative work. The Prevention Steering Group, which will report to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, will have lay member representation for youth and adults.
- 8.4 The Partnership for Children, Young People and Families has had oversight of the engagement work, with progress reports being presented twice during this period. Monthly updates on progress have also been provided to the Programme Management Office.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 It is recognised that a disproportionate number of people facing multiple disadvantage have protected characteristics of the nine groups protected under the Equality Act 2010. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Breaking the Cycle programme and can be found via the following link:

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

9.3 To ensure that equality implications are appropriately considered throughout the duration of the Breaking the Cycle programme and across further prevention activity, an officer with expertise in Equality and Diversity has been recruited as a member of the Prevention Steering Group.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Prevention Policy Statement and Prevention Framework are intended for application across public services and relevant to each aspect of the Wirral Plan, including the *sustainable environment* domain. Both documents should be used to inform and support development of prevention activity with Wirral residents in relation to the environment and climate emergency.

10.2 There are no environmental or climate implications arising from the delivery of the Breaking the Cycle programme. It will have no impact on the emission of greenhouse gases.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Prevention Policy Statement
Appendix 2- Prevention Framework
Appendix 3- Breaking the Cycle Prospectus

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Marmot Review report – 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives | Local Government Association](#)

[Health Equity in England The Marmot Review 10 Years On full report.pdf](#)

[Childhood in the time of Covid | Children's Commissioner for England Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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N/A	NA
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Prevention Policy Statement

1. Introduction

As a local authority, we can have a positive influence through how we organise our operations and services; the regulations and policies we set; the goods and services we buy; the investments we make; and the example we set to others.

Taking a borough-wide approach to prevention presents major opportunities for the Council, with its partners, to practise, demonstrate and live by its commitment to improve quality of life, health and well-being of its local community through helping to identify and address needs at the earliest possible time. By prevention we mean literally “preventing” things that can have real life, long term impact on both current and future generations. More than this, it is about promoting the best outcomes and life experiences for Wirral residents, to achieve equity for people and place and opportunity for all.

2. Policy Context

Tackling inequality through prevention is at the core of key National legislation, policy and strategic plans. This Policy Statement outlines Wirral Council’s commitment to actively and demonstrably deliver key priorities set out within:

- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 2004
- The NHS Long-Term Plan
- The Five Year Forward Plan for Mental Health, Primary Care and the NHS
- The Public Health England Strategy 2020-2025
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

This Policy Statement is informed by the Marmot report, titled 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives', which emphasises the need to address the social determinants of health, the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age and which can lead to health inequalities. The detailed report contains many important findings, key to a preventative approach are:

- People living in the poorest neighbourhoods in England will on average die seven years earlier than people living in the richest neighbourhoods.
- People living in poorer areas not only die sooner but spend more of their lives with disability - an average total difference of 17 years.
- Health inequalities arise from a complex interaction of many factors - housing, income, education, social isolation, disability - all of which are strongly affected by one's economic and social status.

- Health inequalities are largely preventable. Not only is there a strong social justice case for addressing health inequalities, but there is also a pressing economic case. It is estimated that the annual cost of health inequalities is between £36 billion to £40 billion through lost taxes, welfare payments and costs to the NHS.
- Action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health, including education, occupation, income, home, and community.

Marmot highlights that, traditionally, government policies have focused resources only on some segments of society. To improve health for all of us and to reduce unfair and unjust inequalities in health, action is needed across the social gradient. For Wirral, this means a borough wide approach to prevention that does not simply focus on the bottom ten percent but takes action across the borough seeking to promote prevention for all, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage.

3. Defining Prevention

Prevention can mean different things to different people. In essence it is about helping people stay healthy, happy and independent for as long as possible. It means stopping problems from arising in the first place; focusing on keeping people healthy and thriving, not just treating them when they become ill or run into problems. If they do need help, it means supporting them to manage their health and wellbeing earlier and more effectively. This means giving people the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take full control of their lives, their health and social care and making better choices as easy as possible.

Wirral Council adopts the Public Health approach to prevention through a tiered model with three distinct levels:

- Primary prevention: all of the help, support, activities, and opportunities that are available to all of us, at any time.
- Secondary prevention: targeted interventions and specific projects and programmes, delivered at a local level by partnerships and communities.
- Tertiary prevention: interventions provided by statutory organisations, such as Councils and Health Boards.

4. The Benefits of Prevention

There is growing awareness and acceptance of the importance of taking a “prevention is better than cure” approach to policy making and the planning of services.

The benefits of a preventative approach are far reaching and can enable the following positive outcomes to be achieved.

Outcomes improving for the individual:

- improved wellbeing
- reduced offending
- reduced substance and alcohol misuse
- better physical and mental health
- secure housing
- increased financial security
- increased levels of education, employment, and training
- increased safety
- experiencing purpose, belonging and security
- improved experience of services through co-production

Outcomes improving for professionals and services:

- person-centred focus
- greater integration
- greater collaboration
- more effective delivery of service
- reduce demand on reactive services
- improved information sharing
- improved experience of work through co-production

Outcomes improving for organisations and systems:

- stronger multi-agency partnerships
- improved governance
- data shapes commissioning
- achieving common goals
- better value for money
- joint commissioning approaches
- improved system of practice through co-production

5. Wirral Council's Approach

In taking a preventative approach to policy making and planning, Wirral Council commits to improving, for its residents and businesses, quality of life, health, wellbeing, and the economy. Wirral Council is committing to acting to:

- Support partners and communities to work together, as equals, to tackle the biggest issues and risk factors that have a negative impact on health and wellbeing across Wirral.
- Build connections and strong communication across partner agencies and services, driving and enhancing collaboration.
- Support the coordination and creation of a positive eco-system within which individuals and families can thrive.
- Creating a Wirral which is flourishing, active and green.
- Embedding its approach to prevention through a co-productive approach with local communities-only by coming together will we create solutions that will truly help people in Wirral to achieve their goals and aspirations.

Wirral Council will do this by ensuring that policy, strategy, and decision-making across the Council promotes and enables a preventative approach.



Prevention Framework

A framework for embedding preventative approaches in public services

June 2021

1. Introduction

(a) Who this Prevention Framework is for

This framework is for all people engaged in the delivery of public services. It seeks to provide an understanding of what is meant by prevention, why it benefits us all, what it means to take a preventative approach, how to deliver preventative services, and most critically, the value of involving local people in the design and delivery of public services.

In our working lives, whether we are frontline practitioners, commissioners, strategic leaders or working in administrative roles, it is essential that we work in partnership to ensure that the children, young people, adults, families, and communities we serve get the education, advice, support and help they need at the earliest opportunity, so that they can live happy, healthy and purposeful lives.

This framework does not aim to replace strategic plans that public services in Wirral are working towards achieving. Shaped by national policy and the local direction of travel, this framework sets out our overarching aim, a clear set of principles and shared values within which we are committed to working.

(b) Defining Prevention

Prevention can mean different things to different people. In essence it is about helping people stay healthy, happy and independent for as long as possible. It means stopping problems from arising in the first place; focusing on keeping people healthy and thriving, not just treating them when they become ill or run into problems. If they do need help, it means supporting them to manage their health and wellbeing earlier and more effectively. This means giving people the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take full control of their lives, their health and social care and making better choices as easy as possible.

Multi-agency partners in Wirral define prevention as:

Building on the unique personal strengths and resilience of children, families and adults, through co-ordinated and enabled communities, to help people achieve the very best outcomes throughout their lives.

There are three distinct levels of prevention:

- Primary prevention: all of the help, support, activities, and opportunities that are available to all of us, at any time.
- Secondary prevention: targeted interventions and specific projects and programmes, delivered at a local level by partnerships and communities.
- Tertiary prevention: interventions provided by statutory organisations, such as Councils and Health Boards.

Providers of public services should consider the level of prevention they seek to work within, and where services are cross-cutting, providers should think about how their offer is adapted across levels.

2. The Aim of the Framework

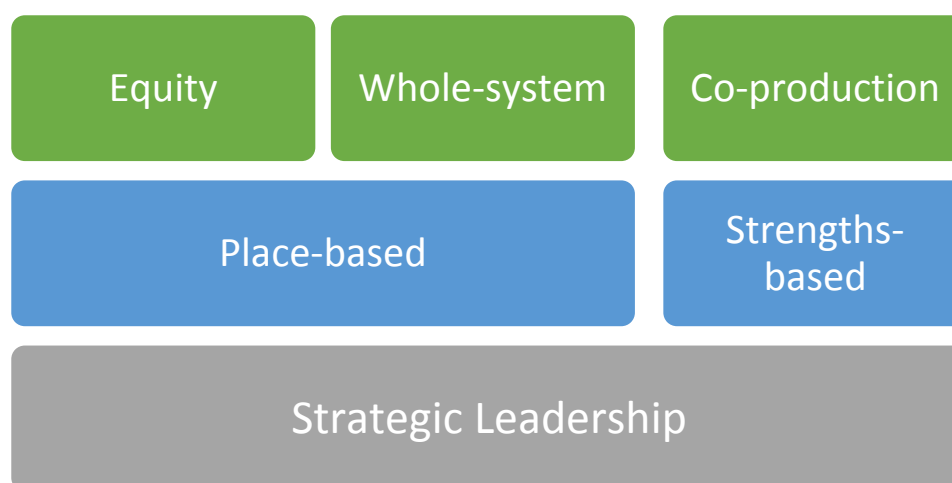
Across Wirral there are a growing number of examples of single-agency and community-level approaches to prevention that are making a positive difference to the lives of people in the borough. The aim of this framework is to enhance and build on those examples by providing guidance and structure for preventative work, which is collaborative, consistent and can lead to greater collective impact.

Whilst this framework is primarily focused on people services, which aim to tackle health inequalities and improve outcomes, taking a preventative approach is applicable across all aspects of public service. The foundations, principles, values and approaches described in this framework can be applied across the spectrum of the Wirral Plan.



3. The Foundations for Preventative Approaches

Multi-agency partners co-producing this framework, identified a core set of building blocks which form the foundation required for prevention. These building blocks should be considered in all that we do, whether as individuals living and working in Wirral and looking after our and our family's health and wellbeing, or as organisations shaping the living, learning, or working environment, and coordinating and providing services.



Strategic Leadership –Strategic leaders must recognise that no one agency, and no one person, can remove inequality or improve local neighbourhoods on their own. Through collaboration and investing in relationships, Senior Leaders can build wide and strong partnerships which deliver collective impact with and for Wirral residents.

Place-based – to ensure equity across the borough, prevention approaches should be place-based so that services and solutions meet the unique needs of people living within local communities. A coordinated approach which considers the assets, strengths and needs of the place, as well as individuals who live there, is key to tackling the inequalities in health and wellbeing.

Strengths-based – A strengths-based approach recognises that everyone has strengths, skills, capabilities, and protective factors that surround and support them within their lives. A strengths-based approach will ensure that staff and services enable people to build on these and can access opportunities to grow and achieve in the areas where they feel they need most support. The key to improved health and wellbeing is the feeling of empowerment, and strengths-based practice is essential to empowering and enabling people to become the architects of their own solutions.

Equity – A meaningful approach to prevention is dependent on equity across local communities, enabling everyone to have the same chances in life as everybody else. The concept of equity can often be challenging to explain and understand; however, we must recognise that some neighbourhoods and communities may need more help and resource than others. This will support the breakdown of structural and systemic barriers to equal opportunity and improve outcomes.

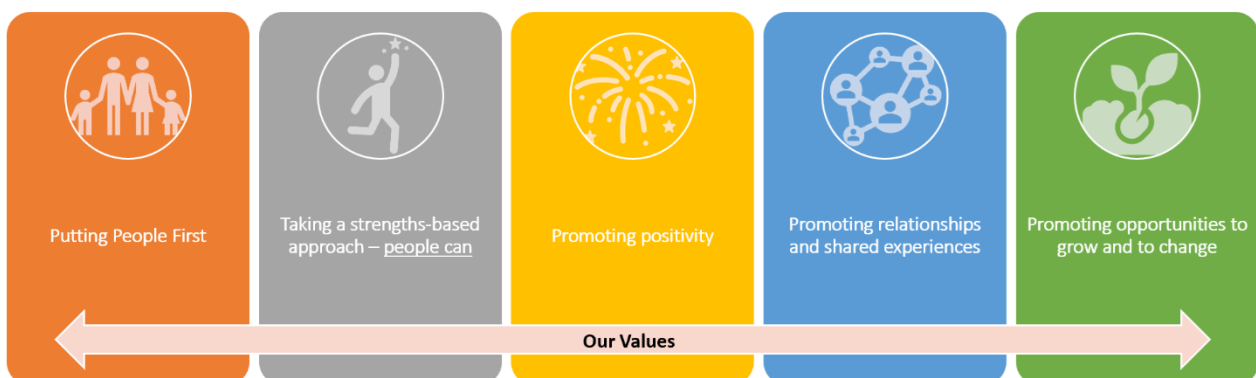
Whole-system – Applying a whole-system approach will ensure that partners work together more effectively to understand current and emerging issues and challenges impacting on the health and wellbeing of people living and working in Wirral. Embedding a whole-system approach will help to create the learning culture needed to evaluate and understand the impact of preventative work, to be flexible and responsive to emerging needs and to continually strive for improved outcomes across the borough.

Co-production – Co-production with people living and working in Wirral is essential to a meaningful, impactful approach to prevention. Co-production will ensure that partners fully understand people’s needs, hopes and ambitions and challenges faced, and it will also ensure that communities themselves are activated and supported to take meaningful steps towards improving their own health and wellbeing, creating improved connectivity, a sense of citizenship and increased social value along the way.

When establishing new services and projects, or reviewing the effectiveness of existing delivery, these foundations should be considered and evaluated.

4. The Values Underpinning Preventative Approaches

Multi-agency partners co-producing this framework, identified a core set of values which should underpin preventative approaches.



These values need to be at the heart of preventative approaches, driving decision-making and shaping projects and services. Living these values means that they should be evident in

all that we do including how agencies work with each other as well as how they deliver services to the public.

5. Considerations for Preventative Approaches

As services are designed and developed, there are many factors to consider in how they operate- where and when, how they are advertised, who they are for and what they will achieve. Where services do or can take a preventative approach, it is useful to consider the following to ensure that they are inclusive and optimise opportunities for people to resolve issues at the earliest point.



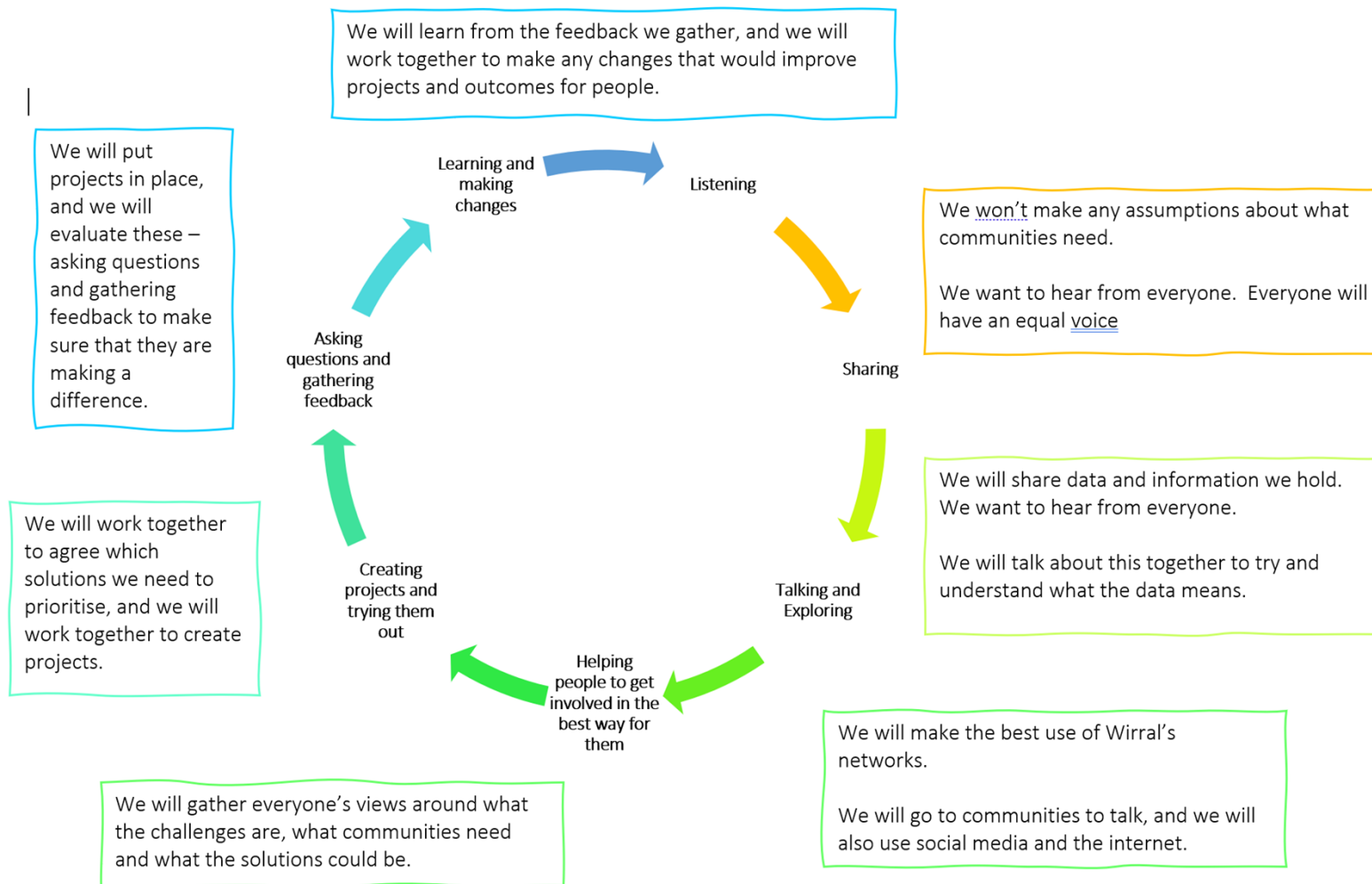
It is to be noted, that the greatest asset for prevention is the people who deliver the services. Creating the conditions where staff can embrace the values of prevention, deliver relationship-based practice, and have opportunity for continuous learning and development, should be a priority for all public services. Relationships can be transformational and mean a lot to people when they face challenges and uncertainty in their daily lives.

6. Co-production

Fundamental to the success of this framework is co-production. Co-production is not consultation, and it is not community engagement. Co-production, quite simply, means:

“Coming together to create something.” (Poppy Cain, Youth Apprentice)

The following diagram provides further detail on how to take a co-production approach.



5. Creating a Suite of Preventative Programmes

Prevention is a broad term, and across public services there are many areas where a preventative approach can, and should, be taken. It is anticipated that this framework provides as an overarching structure from which a range of projects, interventions and services are delivered. To assist with thinking on what this may include, it is helpful to refer to the six domains outlined in *The Marmot Review: Fair Society, Healthy Lives*. These are:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control of their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health provision.

These domains provide categories from which to define preventative programmes.

Specific preventative programmes, which will be aligned to this framework may relate to areas such as:

- Earliest help for children and families.
- Earliest help for people living with frailty.
- Preventing hospital admissions.
- Breaking cycles for people facing multiple disadvantage.
- Promoting independence.

A multi-agency Prevention Steering Group has been established and will provide support to those wishing to apply a preventative approach to services. This group will also promote the need for, and establishment of, wider preventative programmes, such as those suggested above.



Breaking the cycle

A prospectus of preventative programmes for people facing multiple disadvantage

1. Introduction

Jen grew up in Birkenhead, went to local schools and wanted to be a nursery nurse. At 18 she had her first child. Her baby was only 4 months old when the first reported incident of domestic abuse was made to Children's Social Care. Professionals described her as a "nurturing mum" who "loves her baby unconditionally". Having grown up in a home with domestic abuse, Jen was no stranger to violence and was quick to minimise the abuse she experienced.

By age 21, Jen was mum to 3 children, and considered a "warm and loving parent" by those who knew her. But Jen felt she was "letting them down" as she found herself becoming stuck in a cycle of domestic violence and alcohol misuse. As her mental health deteriorated, she turned to pain medication, illegal substances, and alcohol to "get by". Over the coming years, Jen and her children had intermittent contact with Children's Services and other support agencies, but the words "lack of engagement" are repeated throughout the case files.

At age 30, after many months of medical treatment, Jen died of liver failure. Her 3 children were placed in the care of the Local Authority.

There are an estimated 363,000 adults experiencing multiple disadvantage in England - including a combination of homelessness, substance misuse, mental health issues, domestic abuse, and contact with the criminal justice system. Many of these people have been caught in this situation for years, experiencing entrenched disadvantage, trauma, and ill-health. They come into repeated contact with our police, criminal justice, social care, and health services without receiving the support they need to help them break the cycle. The most vulnerable adults in this situation are estimated to cost the state five times more than the average citizen per year. Beyond the finances is the human cost: life without hope; experiencing desperation; lack of options; feeling on the outside of a *normal life*; lost potential.

As Wirral Council sets out its ambitious and inspiring plans to transform the borough through the regeneration of Birkenhead and The Left Bank, it is the right time to be purposeful, collaborative, and work with intention, to enable people in those communities to break out of intergenerational cycles of disadvantage and poor outcomes- to help them find *room to breathe and space to grow*.

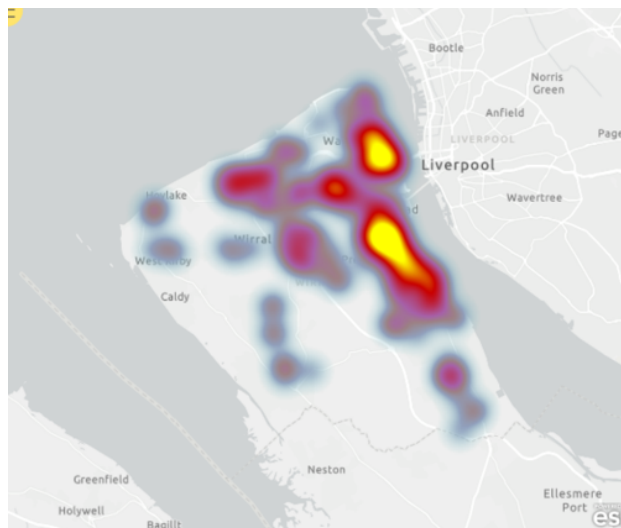
Emerging policy and plans for Wirral Council and its partners seek *equity for people and place and opportunity for all*. To make this a reality, it is time to abandon phrases such as *hard to reach* and *difficult to engage* and accept that perhaps it is not that the responsiveness of the people that is the barrier, but rather the support offer and the public services system that needs to change.

Breaking the cycle requires a more joined-up, person-centred approach to local delivery, with commitment to making long-term and sustainable changes to our local system that will deliver improved outcomes for individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage.

2. Rationale for change

(a) Understanding local need

Wirral, when considered as a whole, is a *fairly average* borough in terms of outcomes for its people. But the average masks a picture of disparity between the east and west sides of the borough. The heat map below shows referrals to social care services because of alcohol and substance misuse, domestic abuse, mental health issues, risk of homelessness and involvement with the criminal justice service.



Inequity has rightly become a priority for several strategic groups including Wirral's Health and Wellbeing Board, Wirral Health and Care Commissioning and Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership. They highlight:

- Difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived wards in Wirral is 12.1 years for men and 10.7 years for women (2016-18 data, Wirral Intelligence Service).
- Wirral has become more deprived between 2015 and 2019 and has 35% of its population living in deprivation (2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation).

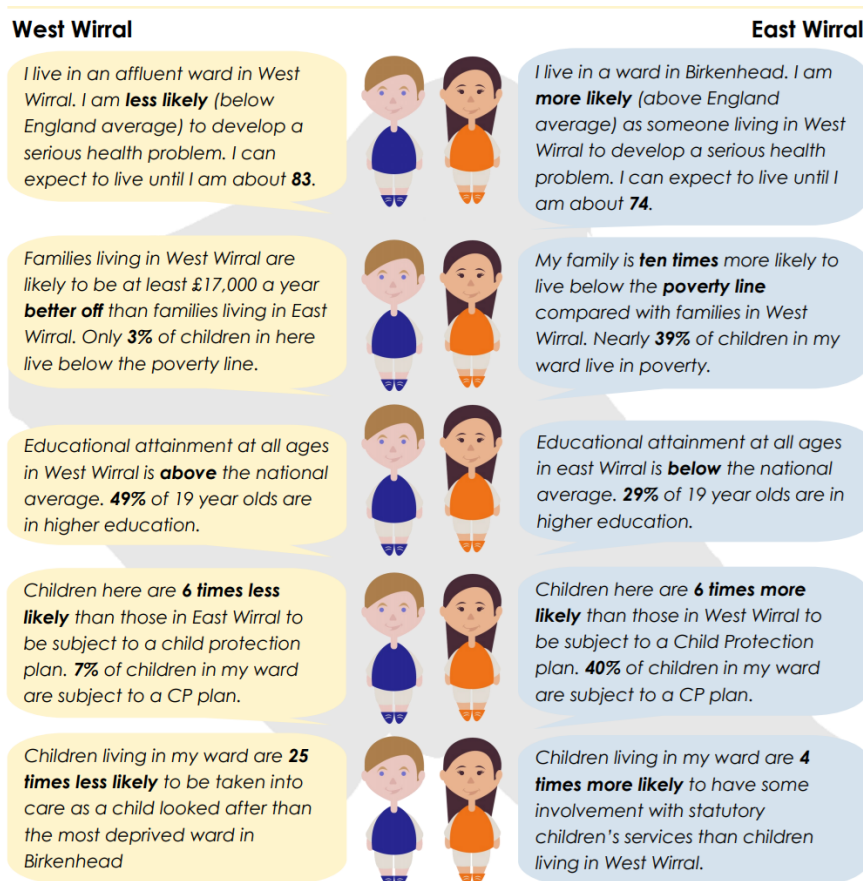
Wirral Intelligence Service's collection of statistics and insight, *This Is Wirral*, provides key messages relating to multiple disadvantage categories:

- The Wards of Birkenhead & Tranmere, Rock Ferry, Bidston & St James and Seacombe, consistently featuring in the bottom performing wards for "No Qualifications", "Participation in Higher Education", "Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth", "Out of Work Benefit Claimants and "Net Household Income".
- In Wirral (2018), the economic costs of alcohol were estimated to cost the borough £131 million.
- People living in lower income households were more likely to have requested, but not received mental health treatment.

- Over half (55%) of all social care users report having anxiety and depression in Wirral.
- The health of people experiencing homeless is significantly worse than that of the general population, with the cost of homelessness experienced by single people to the NHS and social care being considerable. 41% of homeless people report a long-term physical health problem and 45% had a diagnosed mental health problem compared to 28% and 25% respectively in the general population.
- The majority of local YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) residents are in contact with drug and/or alcohol services. Wirral had over double the national rate of benefits claimants for 'alcoholism'.
- In 2015/16, 22% of all crime costs in Wirral were estimated to be related to alcohol. Anti-social behaviour incidents related to alcohol were most common in the more deprived areas, with peaks in domestic violence associated with periods of increased alcohol consumption.

(b) Looking to future need

Whilst the Breaking the Cycle programme will work with adults, with and without children, now to support them to make sustainable change, it is important to give particular attention to the experiences of children and young people in the borough, our future adult population. Breaking the cycle means creating a different, *brighter future* for them. Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership's Annual Report for 2019-20 focused on disparity of experience and outcomes for children, producing the following insightful infographic:



3. Ambition for our people

(a) Change for individuals, services, and systems

The Breaking the Cycle approach aims to improve outcomes for those experiencing multiple disadvantage and placing a high demand on local response services, but for whom current systems of support are not working. By improving the way our local system and services work we seek to re-energise local people, their support workers, and our organisations.

Local people experiencing intergenerational cycles of disadvantage need, and deserve, more from public services and their local community so that ambitions for *brighter futures for children and young people, safe and pleasant communities* and *living an active and healthy life* are within their reach. This is what their support workers and our organisations want for them. Breaking the Cycle means change at individual, service, and system levels.

Change for the individual:

- ✓ improved wellbeing
- ✓ reduced offending
- ✓ reduced substance misuse
- ✓ better physical and mental health
- ✓ secure housing
- ✓ increased financial security
- ✓ increased levels of education, employment, and training
- ✓ increased safety
- ✓ experiencing purpose, belonging and security
- ✓ improved experience of services through co-production

Change for professionals and services:

- ✓ person-centred focus
- ✓ greater integration
- ✓ greater collaboration
- ✓ more effective delivery of service
- ✓ reduce demand on reactive services
- ✓ improved information sharing
- ✓ improved experience of work through co-production

Change for organisations and systems:

- ✓ stronger multi-agency partnerships
- ✓ improved governance
- ✓ data shapes commissioning
- ✓ achieving common goals
- ✓ better value for money
- ✓ joint commissioning approaches
- ✓ improved system of practice through co-production

(b) People who need help to break the cycle

This programme of preventative approaches is for people facing the following multiple disadvantage categories:

- domestic abuse
- mental health issues
- substance and alcohol misuse
- experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- involvement with criminal justice system

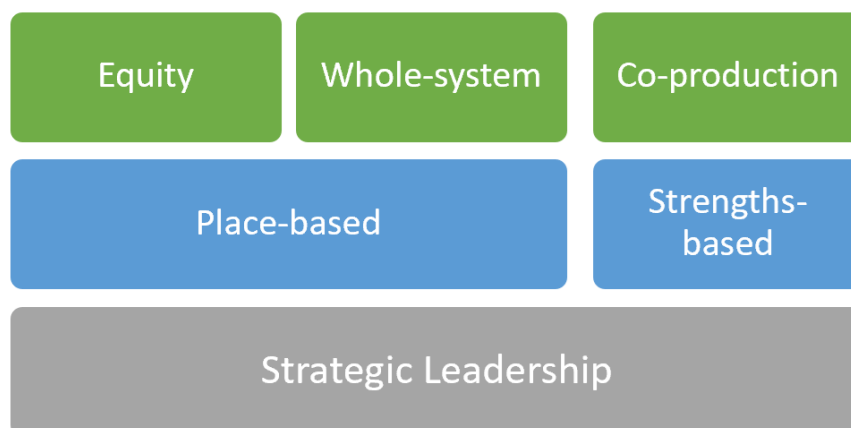
Priority will be given to people facing the above categories who also live in wards identified as having the highest levels of need which are creating the greatest levels of demand:

- Birkenhead and Tranmere
- Bidston and St. James
- Seacombe
- Rock Ferry
- Liscard
- Leasowe and Moreton East

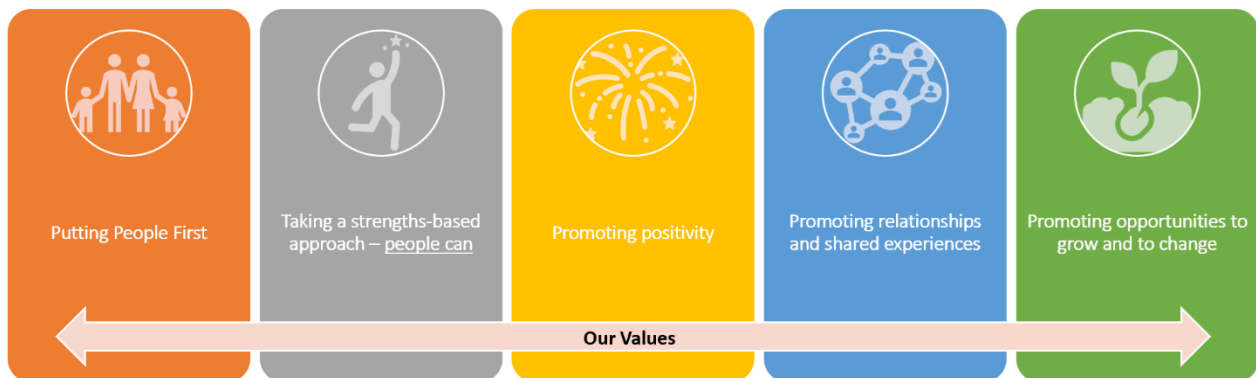
The programme will work with individuals and families. Where adults are parents, or likely to become parents, the impact on their children and future cycles of disadvantage will be given significant consideration. Breaking the cycle for both the present and the future.

(c) Delivery Principles and Values

The co-produced Prevention Framework outlines the values and delivery principles which underpin the Breaking the Cycle programme. The figure below outlines the core set of building blocks to set the foundations for preventative approaches.



Local organisations and workers collaborated to agree a set a value base for prevention as follows:



With regard to the Breaking the Cycle programme, there is a further *ask* to workers, supporters, leaders, services and organisations and that is, for people facing multiple disadvantage and intergenerational cycles we need to be prepared to give ***a bit more***.

- ✓ a bit more understanding
- ✓ a bit more time
- ✓ a bit more empathy
- ✓ a bit more support
- ✓ a bit more one-to-one help
- ✓ a bit more encouragement
- ✓ a bit more patience
- ✓ a bit more compassion
- ✓ a bit more choice

Giving *a bit more* will be achieved through the notion of *adapted practice* described in section 4 on delivery model and approach.

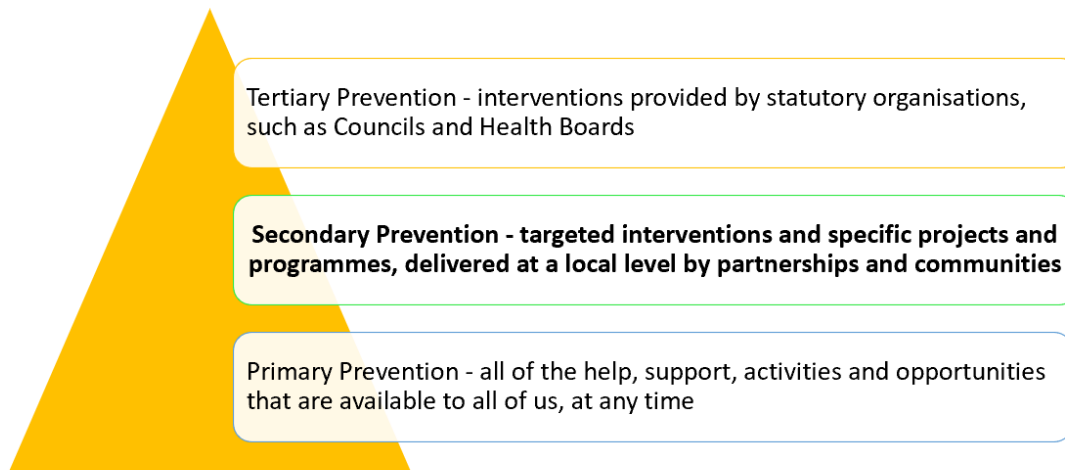
(d) Strategic Fit

The Breaking the Cycle prospectus is aligned with the following:

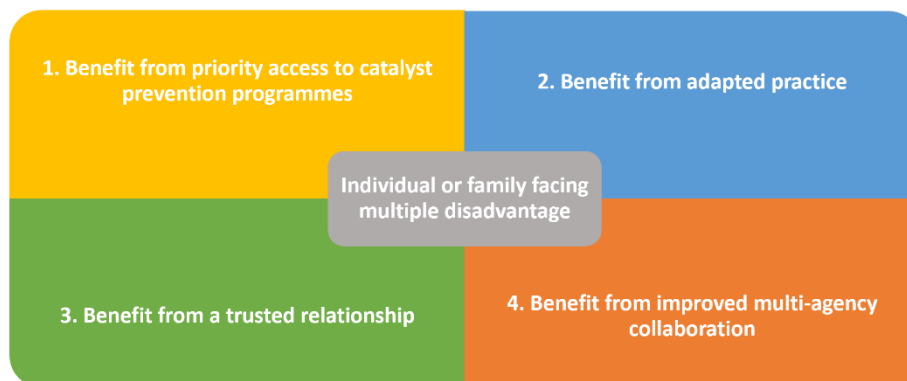
National Legislation & Policy	Local Strategic Plans and Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Care Act 2014 ✓ The Equality Act 2010 ✓ The Children Act 2004 ✓ The NHS Long-Term Plan ✓ The 5-Year Forward Plan for Mental Health, Primary Care and NHS ✓ The Public Health England Strategy 2020-25 ✓ Domestic Abuse Act 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Wirral Plan 2021-26 ✓ Climate Emergency Plan ✓ Community Wealth Building Strategy ✓ Neighbourhoods Strategy ✓ Domestic Abuse- No Excuse ✓ Safer Adolescence Strategy ✓ Health Inequalities Strategy ✓ Healthy Wirral Plan ✓ Digital Strategy ✓ Community Safety Strategy

4. Delivery model and approach

The Breaking the Cycle programme can be described as *secondary prevention*, with specific projects delivered to benefit particular groups. It is designed to offer more intensive support, beyond that which is available from more universal, early help services.



The delivery model features 4 aspects, to be delivered simultaneously, in collaboration with the individual and/or family.



1. Benefit from priority access to catalyst prevention programmes

There are 8 catalyst prevention programmes:

Pause- a programme for women who have had multiple children removed from their care aiming to give a pause from pregnancy to provide treatment and recovery from trauma.

Drive- a programme which aims to prevent harm to victims of domestic abuse, and their children, by working with high-risk, high-harm perpetrators to challenge and change their behaviour.

We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse- an additional provision of subject expertise and advocacy to work alongside Social Workers to improve the experience of families affected by domestic abuse.

Cradle to Career- a place-based, collective impact project which aims to improve the life chances of people within the North Birkenhead community, with a specific focus on educational aspiration and attainment.

Family Nurse Partnership- a home-visiting programme for first-time young mums to support a healthy pregnancy, improve child development and health outcomes, and increase family aspiration.

ADDER- a programme which seeks to reduce drug-related crime, drug-related deaths and the prevalence of illicit drugs through multi-agency collaborations.

Get Real Programme- a specialist employability programme for care leavers and children looked after who are not in education, employment or training providing tailored, individual support to improve life chances.

Ways to Work- tailored help for people aged 16+ who are struggling to secure long-term employment, building confidence to become *job ready*, with access to mentoring and traditional work preparation activity.

Priority access to the catalyst prevention programmes will be given to those people requiring help to break the cycle, and there may be instances where individuals and/or families access a combination of programmes. Further details on each programme is contained within Appendix 1.

2. Benefit from adapted practice

The catalyst prevention programmes, many of which have well-established evidence-bases, are designed to provide specialist expertise for particular issues, but we are reminded that they operate within a much wider system of public services and communities. Those delivering preventative programmes need the commitment and support of the wider system to optimise their chance of success. To break the cycle, the wider system, services, and workers need to adapt practice and offer that bit more, for those facing multiple disadvantage.

Whilst a significant proportion of the catalyst prevention programmes are delivered by children's and adult services, the role of wider Council departments such as Neighbourhood Services, Libraries, Museums and Galleries, Leisure Services, Housing, and Transactional Management is equally important as they provide vital services, support and advice which is part of everyday life for our residents. So too, the services and support provided by partners such as Police, probation services, hospitals, health care professionals and education can make a significant difference in whether an individual will be successful in making a positive change. Adapting practice will allow us to go further, faster with our ambition to break cycles and improve outcomes for Wirral residents.

What adapted practice may involve:

- ✓ rather than send a leaflet or letter, take time to have a conversation.

- ✓ rather than expect the individual to come to you, go to them.
- ✓ open up venues, offering a welcome to individuals and their support workers to use the space as an alternative to more traditional or clinical venues.
- ✓ offer induction sessions on a one-to-one basis to allow individuals to gain confidence in attending facilities or taking part in activities.
- ✓ rather than expecting an individual, who is already overwhelmed, to join a queue or fit in with your appointment schedule, try to fit in with them.
- ✓ rather than signpost, make the contact together.
- ✓ adapt your pace, chunk it up, do less but more frequently to complete the task.
- ✓ try to provide choice.
- ✓ be inclusive, consider literacy or language barriers, and promote advocacy services.

On a case-by case basis, support workers will partner with colleagues to consider how practice needs to be adapted to ensure that individuals and families can access and engage with wider services. Whilst this may give rise to concerns for capacity of services and time constraints, it should not be forgotten that our current collective experience of *revolving doors*, repeat referrals, poor outcomes, frequency of *DNA- Did Not Attend* notices, and unsatisfactory contacts, means that together we must try a different approach.

3. Benefit from a trusted relationship

All individuals and families engaged in a catalyst prevention programme will have a designated key worker whose role it is to form a trusted relationship.

We have learned a lot from initiatives such as the Troubled Families Programme and Trauma Informed Practice to understand the value of a key worker with whom an individual and family can build a trusted relationship. Having a dedicated worker, who is dedicated to the family is a key part of breaking the cycle. It is the key worker's role to:

- ✓ Be honest, clear, assertive, and persistent.
- ✓ Understand the daily lived experience of each individual.
- ✓ Understand the dynamics within the family and wider networks.
- ✓ To be solution-focused, flexible, and creative in their approach.
- ✓ To act with authenticity, congruence and show unconditional positive regard.
- ✓ To co-ordinate support plans, collaborating and negotiate with partners.
- ✓ To help individuals and families recognise positive change in their lives.

The relationship between the worker and the individual is often the most transformational aspect. As noted by the Director of Dissemination for the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF):

“In early intervention services, the trust that develops between a skilled practitioner and a parent, child or young person can motivate and equip people to change their lives. The evidence shows that positive relationships can support the development of skills, coping strategies, confidence, and behaviour change for children and young people.”

Whether their job title is Social Worker, Case Manager, Intervention Worker, Support Worker or Advocate, is no matter so long as the worker is enabled through support, supervision, training, and collaboration to establish and maintain a meaningful relationship with those whom they work with.

4. Benefit from improved multi-agency collaboration

The catalyst prevention programmes are multi-agency in their formation. This combined with adapted practice from those agencies on the periphery of the support plan, brings immediate improvement to multi-agency collaboration. What this Breaking the Cycle programme will actively seek to improve is information and data sharing across agencies.

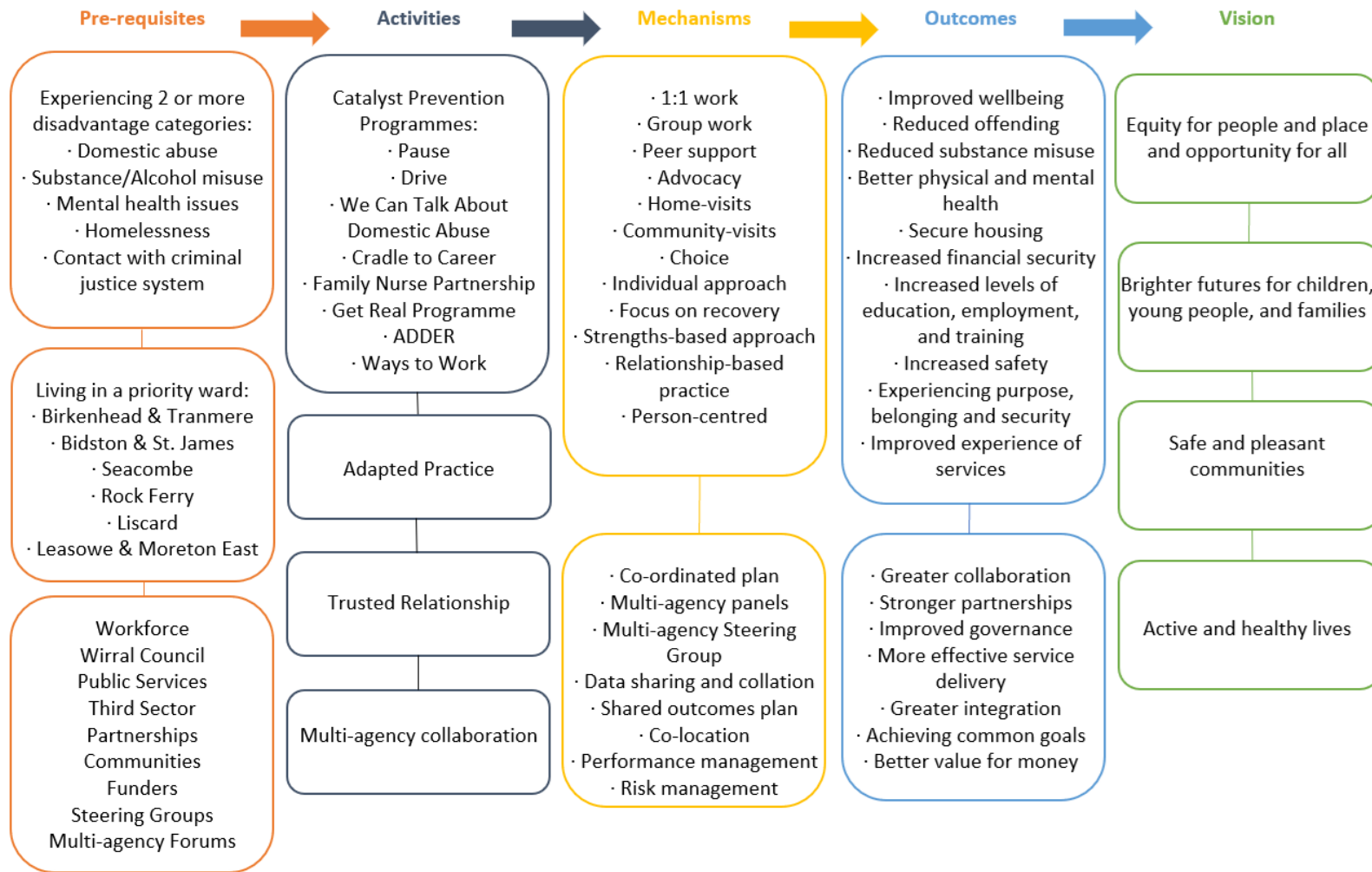
Individuals and families facing multiple disadvantage will be interacting with many different public services at once, including schools, health services, the police and social care services. As we operate on different data systems, often the information available to workers is limited and means that they do not have a complete picture of the presenting issues. Sharing and matching data, in accordance with GDPR, means bringing together data from different services to get a combined view of the multi-faceted needs of individuals, families and different communities.

Previous data collection practices from the Troubled Families Programme will be extended to provide means to collect, match, and analyse data for families engaged in the Breaking the Cycle programme. The resource to extend this approach is available to the programme. This will enable:

- ✓ Better information for workers: whilst data does not replace professional judgement or decision-making, good access to information can support decision-making and holistic practice.
- ✓ Better understanding of how the catalyst programmes and wider services operate: data analysis will help us understand how well our services are working and to ensure optimum performance. This will support benchmarking costs and performance, make reporting easier, enable more sophisticated cost benefit analysis.
- ✓ Better evaluation of what works: improved data collection will enable an evidence-based assessment to be undertaken on how well each project, or combinations of projects, work to break the cycle for people facing multiple disadvantage and inform future programmes.

5. Achieving change

(a) Breaking the Cycle- Theory of Change Model



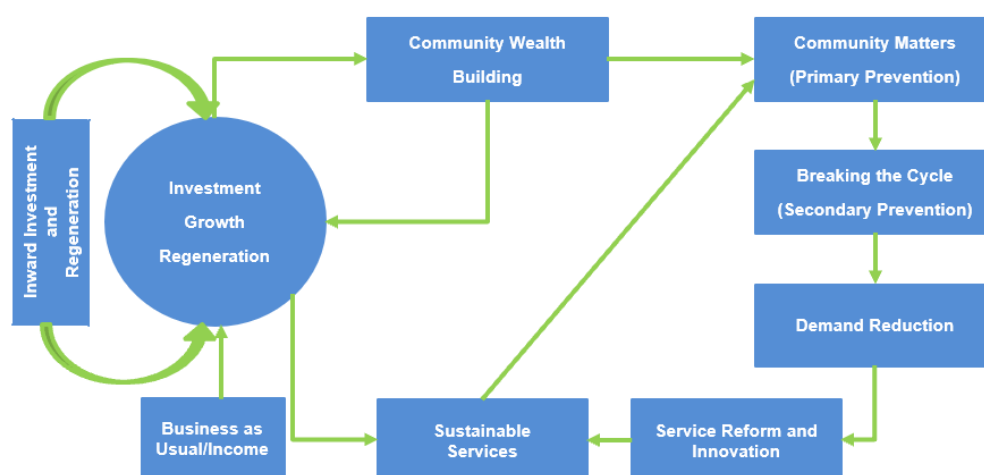
(b) Breaking the Cycle Outcomes Plan

Issue	Breaking the Cycle Success Target	Sustainment Period	Cohort Target
1. Individuals involved in crime and anti-social behaviour	Individuals have stopped offending with a realistic expectation that this will continue	12 months	60% of families no longer offend – have not offended during sustainment period
	Individuals have ceased involvement with ASB with a realistic expectation that this will continue	12 months	50% of families have no involvement in ASB during the sustainment period
2. Children and young people who have not been attending education regularly	All children in the family are attending school at or above 90% for the most recent consecutive terms. Alternatively, where attendance issues are severe, substantial improvement may be deemed acceptable where: (i) Overall attendance is over 50% for the most recent consecutive terms (ii) Overall attendance has improved by 40% or more during the same period (iii) this decision is consistent with the views of the Attendance Service	Three consecutive Terms	60% of families achieve the 90% attendance threshold, 65% reduction in the number of families affected by fixed term exclusion, and 75% reduction in the proportion of families with a 16- to 24-year-old NEET throughout the sustainment period
3. Children who need help	The aim is for the needs to be met and children to de-escalate through the threshold of need. Evidence should indicate that needs have been met and it is safe for all children in the family to de-escalate by at least 1 level of need	12 months	De-escalation in level of need, by at least one level, for 75% of the cohort
4. Worklessness	Evidence should indicate that all workless individuals have engaged with employment support and made identifiable progress to work such as training, voluntary work, employment coaching etc	12 months	20% of workless individuals have worked for a minimum period (6 months) within the sustainment period
5. Violence within families	Domestic Abuse Outcomes Matrix evidences low/no risk which has been maintained for 3 months. If the matrix score is unavailable, evidence from an assessment where lead professional is satisfied that no further risk of domestic violence or abuse is present will be sufficient	12 months	70% of individuals affected by domestic abuse have reduced their levels of risk to 'low' within the sustainment period
6. Individuals with a range of health problems	Engagement with an appropriate health service or the completion of a health programme and a reduction in score for Alcohol and Drugs Misuse / Mental Health assessment in an appropriate Distance Travelled Tool. If the Distance Travelled Tool is not available, evidence from an assessment where lead professional is satisfied that health issues have been addressed and there has been a significant improvement in the individual's health	At case closure	95% of families have engaged in appropriate treatment services
7. The Individual or Family Journey	All individuals/families recognised and benefit from progress in a number of relevant areas such as parenting capacity, confidence, relationships, problem solving evidenced through the distance travelled tool	At case closure	85% of individuals/families report improvement in relevant areas

(c) Breaking the Cycle Investment Plan

Project	Wirral Contribution	Other Contribution	Total Investment	Annual Cost	Unit cost for 12-month activity
Pause	£200k	£224k from Department for Education	£424K	£283k	£11,778
Drive	£285K	£225k from the Community Safety Partnership £330k from the National Lottery	£840k	£336k	£5,600
We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse	Nil	£350k from What Works for Children's Social Care	£350k	£350k	£1,620
Cradle to Career	Nil	£2.6m from a collaboration of the Steve Morgan Foundation, Shine and Right to Succeed	£2.6m	£867k	£1,040
Family Nurse Partnership	Nil	£470k from the Public Health Grant	£470k	£470k	
ADDER	Nil	£1.4m from the Home Office and Public Health England	£1.4m	£1.4m	Tbc
Get Real Programme	£25k	Nil	£25k	£25k	£1,042
Ways to Work	£172k	£259k from European Social Fund	£431k	£216k	£859
Total	£682k	£5.858m	£6.540m	£3.947m	

Whilst the key driver for the Breaking the Cycle programme is to improve outcomes for people facing multiple disadvantage, the programme can make an important contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Further work is being undertaken to calculate potential savings and/or cost avoidance. The role of prevention in the MTFS can be illustrated as follows:



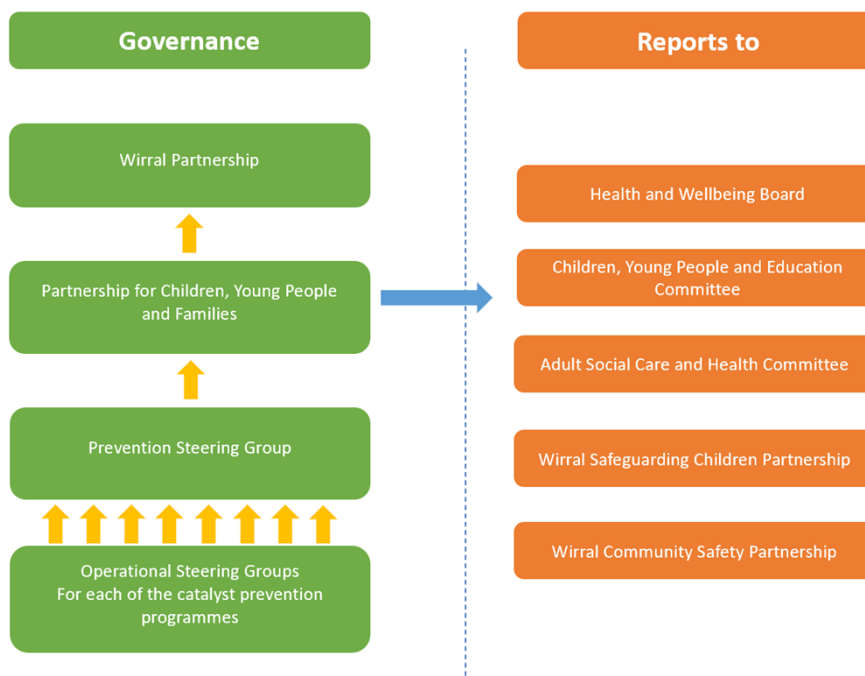
(d) Breaking the Cycle Risk Management Overview

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Catalyst prevention programmes do not meet their contractual requirements and are ceased.	Capability of the Breaking the Cycle programme is reduced.	Robust arrangements are in place for contract management of all catalyst prevention programmes, with clear milestones, deliverables and outcomes identified. The Prevention Steering Group will provide oversight of contract performance, reporting to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families and the Council's Project management Office.
Catalyst prevention programmes do not apply consistent practice in accordance with the prevention framework and Breaking the Cycle prospectus.	Likelihood of achieving long-term change for individuals and families is compromised.	Responsibility for the delivery of the programmes is held by a single senior officer, who Chairs the Prevention Steering Group and reports directly to the Chair of the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, and to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health. Quality assurance activity will be used to routinely test the consistency of practice across programmes.
Ability to share quality data across agencies would prevent full implementation of integrated information.	Failure to capture and share relevant data will reduce the capacity to understand and measure change, cost-benefits, and create an evidence base for preventative intervention.	The programme is endorsed by the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, and benefits from a multi-agency steering group. Escalation routes are established through the partnership. Objectives and intention to share data is supported by GDPR and legislation related to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
Inability to engage the wider organisation and partners to adapt practice for individuals within the cohort.	Likelihood of achieving long-term change for individuals and families is compromised.	The programme is endorsed by the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, and benefits from a multi-agency steering group. Escalation routes are established through the partnership. Wirral Council's Senior Leadership Team support for a prevention programme
Lack of engagement for individuals and families.	Lack of take-up would lead to continued high demand of acute services. Individuals would continue to face cycles of poor outcomes.	Known cohort of individuals and families experiencing multiple disadvantage is high, with the majority already engaged with public services. Information leaflets are available for each catalyst prevention programme, with explicit consent obtained for all participation. Partnership workforce informed and able to inform individuals and support engagement where in their best interest. A communications plan will be implemented for Breaking the Cycle.
Too many individuals and families wanting to engage on catalyst prevention programmes.	Individuals and families would continue to face cycles of poor outcomes.	The Breaking the Cycle prospectus clearly outlines the priority categories for access. Each programme has a clear eligibility criteria linked to its funding arrangements which supports the priority categories.
Capability of data management system to collate, present and provide analysis of information.	Manual collection of information would lead to missed opportunities and less efficient and effective responses at individual, service and system level.	There is capability within the Liquid Logic system and Power BI tool which can be developed to meet needs. Further support available from IT and providers if required.

(e) Local Partnerships and Governance

All aspects of the Breaking the Cycle programme are multi-agency in nature. Each of the catalyst prevention programmes have arrangements in place to oversee operational delivery and strategic co-ordination.

It has been agreed by the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families, that a multi-agency Prevention Steering Group, with representation across public services, third sector organisations and involving young people and adult as lay members is established. This Prevention Steering Group will be Co-Chaired by the Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention and a nominated third sector representative. It will meet on a 6-weekly basis and report to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families. Governance and wider reporting are illustrated in the diagram below:



The Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention will lead on the programme, with the Director of Adults, Health and Strategic Commissioning as the Senior Responsible Officer.

The Project Management Office (PMO) will provide oversight of project deliverables, plans, milestones and Key Performance Indicators, ensuring that the Senior Leadership Team are kept updated on progress.

Where external evaluations are in place, commissioned by external funders, participants and beneficiaries will be supported to engage. Interim and final evaluations will be shared through governance and reporting arrangements. Wirral Safeguarding Children Partnership is committed to sharing all multi-agency learning, audits, reports, via their website.

Appendix 1- Further Detail on Catalyst Prevention Programmes

Pause	
Summary	The programme will work with women who have experienced repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. This will involve the Local Authority and other partners working together to implement an integrated, intensive and systemic model of support tailored to meet women's needs.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Lynn Campbell, Head of Service Children's Social Care
Funding Arrangements	£0.2m contribution from Wirral Council £0.2m contribution from Liverpool City Council £0.448m from Department for Education (split between Wirral and Liverpool)
Target Cohort	24 women (Wirral cohort) who have experienced repeat pregnancies that result in children being removed from their care
Timeline	18-month programme, commencing April 2021.
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Estimated net cost savings for Wirral £0.3m per year, for 6 years, from 2022. · Reduction in pregnancies · Reduced referral rates to Children's Social Care · Reduced number of Section 17 (Child in Need) or Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection) · Reduced number of children in care · Positive service-used feedback
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · This will prevent the damaging consequences of children being taken into care every year. · Positive and significant impact on women engaging on the programme including progress towards learning and employment, improvement in mental health, reduction in domestic abuse, stability of housing, quality contact with removed children, reduction in substance misuse, support from specialist agencies.

Drive	
Summary	Drive will improve the lives of victims/survivors by working with high-risk, high-harm perpetrators of domestic abuse to challenge and change their behaviour. This will involve a multi-agency panel having oversight of all cases and working together to apply disruption tactics whilst the Case Manager undertakes an intensive behaviour change programme.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Anna Jones, Performance and Improvement Manager
Funding Arrangements	£0.33m contribution from the National Lottery £0.225m contribution from the Community Safety Partnership £0.285m from Wirral Council
Target Cohort	125 high-risk, high harm perpetrators of domestic abuse
Timeline	30-month programme, commencing March 2021
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduced number of serial perpetrators of domestic abuse · reduced number of repeat and new victims · Reduced harm to victims and children · Reduced referral rates to Children's Social Care · Reduced number of Section 17 (Child in Need) and Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection)
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduction in prevalence of domestic abuse · Improved co-ordination and collaboration in tackling perpetrators · Significant contribution to key priorities of the Domestic Abuse- No Excuse strategy to <i>increase safety without adding to trauma and reduce opportunities for perpetrators to abuse</i>

We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse	
Summary	An additional provision of subject expertise and advocacy to work alongside Social Workers to improve the experience of families affected by domestic abuse. Team includes 3.0 FTE Domestic Abuse Practice Professionals, 3.0 FTE Domestic Abuse Family Advocates, 1.0 FTE Team Manager and 1.0 FTE Project Officer. The project is being evaluated by Manchester Metropolitan University.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Alex Kaittell, Head of Service Children's Social Care
Funding Arrangements	£0.35m contribution from What Works for Children's Social Care Fund
Target Cohort	216 families affected by domestic abuse with cases open to Children's Social Care
Timescale	12-month delivery, commencing in January 2021
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 54 families receiving support in 3 months · 108 families receiving support in 6 months · 162 families receiving support in 9 months · 216 families receiving support in 12 months · Quarterly audits completed plus Learning Report published and Learning Event held
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduction in Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection) · Prevention of children becoming looked after · Improved relationships between families affected by domestic violence and their Social Worker · Social Worker understanding and experience of working with people affected by domestic abuse improves · Contribution to the priorities for Domestic Abuse- No Excuse strategy to <i>increase safety without adding to trauma</i>

Cradle to Career	
Summary	A place-based, collective impact project which aims to improve the life chances of people within the North Birkenhead community, with a specific focus on educational aspiration and attainment.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention Project Lead: Kerry Mehta, Head of Service Family Matters
Funding Arrangements	£2.6m contribution from The Steve Morgan Foundation, Shine, Right to Succeed. Realignment of Local Authority and Public Service staff resource.
Target Cohort	2,500 children and young people living in North Birkenhead and their families.
Timeline	3-year pilot commencing in September 2020.
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased uptake in universal services, related to the Childhood Offer (take up of 2, 3 and 4-year old funding, school attendance, school attainment) · Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour · Increased levels of education, employment and training · Increased participation in health services- substance and alcohol treatment, mental health support, physical health support
Anticipated Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increased community cohesion · Collective impact achieved with partners, residents and community organisations · Positive service user feedback

Family Nurse Partnership	
Summary	A home-visiting programme for first-time young mums to support a healthy pregnancy, improve child development and health outcomes, and increase family aspiration. Women are recruited onto the programme early in pregnancy and support can be provided until the child is two years of age.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Jane Harvey, Consultant in Public Health Project Lead: Julie Graham, Senior Public Health Manager
Funding Arrangements	£0.47m Wirral Council (Public Health grant)
Target Cohort	First time young mothers and their families (predominantly teenage parents, but support can be provided for mother aged up to 22 years if they have additional needs)
Timeline	The programme is a longstanding element of the Healthy Child Programme for 0-19 years.
Key Performance Indicators	FNP is licenced under a National Unit with a requirement to complete a reporting framework which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Client attrition fidelity goal, · Recruitment before 16 weeks gestation, · Programme uptake, · Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), · Behaviour change impacting on maternal health · The 'New Mum's star' to identify personal goals and progress.
Anticipated Impact	To improve vulnerable children's development, their readiness to learn at school, and their early educational attainment: factors which are known to influence improved health, wellbeing and economic outcomes for people in the long term.

ADDER	
Summary	Pilot project to test an intensive, whole-system approach, led by local police and drug treatment and recovery services, to tackle drug misuse and drug-related crime.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Elspeth Anwar, Consultant in Public Health Project Lead: Gary Rickwood, Senior Public Health Manager
Funding Arrangements	£1.4m contribution from the Home Office, Department for Health and Social Care, Public Health England
Target Cohort	Problematic drug users, particularly those who are also offenders. Cohort number to be confirmed.
Timeline	15-month programme commencing in April 2021
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduction of drug-related deaths; · Reduction in drug-related offending; · Reduction in the prevalence of drug use; · Sustained and major disruption of high-harm criminals and networks involved in middle market drug and firearms supply. <p>These are to be delivered by the combined and co-ordinated efforts of drug treatment services (and their local health and social care partners), and Merseyside Police.</p>
Anticipated Impact	To reduce the number of Drug Related Deaths/Deaths in Treatment by strengthening the health and care partnership work around the specialist treatment service. Increased diversion from problematic drug use, for younger people before they begin, or at the very beginning of their experimentation, and for those young people and adults who have got into difficulty and who are offending as a consequence, increasing the diversion away from a prolonged journey along a criminal justice pathway. Increase the engagement of drug using offenders with specialist treatment and reduce their level of criminal activity as a consequence of that engagement.

Get Real Programme	
Summary	A bespoke, intensive employability programme for care leavers aspiring to access employment and overcome their personal barriers. The programme is delivered by a Wirral based education provider, Eutopia Project, alongside officers from the Council 14-19 Team.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Paul Smith, Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment Project Lead: Gareth Jones, 14-19 Learning, Skills and Employment Manager
Funding Arrangements	£25,000 per annum contribution from Wirral Council
Target Cohort	24 Care Leavers aged 17 to 21 not in employment, education and / or training (NEET)
Timeline	2 courses commissioned (12x care leavers per course) - January 2021 to July 2021 and January 2022 to July 2022
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Minimum of 60 percent of programme participants to access and sustain employment post internship phase. · Significant cost savings to the public pursue (up to £20k / annum / successful outcome) from no further benefit payments, housing support, reduced requirement for health services, reduced incidences of anti-social behaviour, as a positive consequence of sustained employment. · Increase in the percentage of care leavers in employment, education and / or training (EET).
Anticipated Impact	This programme seeks to break the cycle of worklessness and a poverty of aspirations often exhibited by care leavers. All participants in the programme will get to undertake experiences that take them of their comfort zone and help to identify their strengths and build confidence / resilience. A paid internship element of the programme will give the participants an opportunity to shine, develop positive routines, gain valuable real-world experience and employment.

Ways to Work	
Summary	Supports young people and adults who are unemployed and have multiple barriers to positive participation. Each participant is supported by a designated coach who will undertake an initially assessment and provide a tailored package of support leading towards employment, education and / or training.
Leads	Project Sponsor: Paul Smith, Head of Integrated Skills, Learning and Employment Project Lead: Joanne Smith, ESIF Programme Manager
Funding Arrangements	£172,340 contribution from Wirral Council £258,510 contribution from European Social Fund (ESF)
Target Cohort	251 enrolments of which 160 long term unemployed, 91 young people not looking for immediate employment (active enrolments are a challenge to remove barriers and promote participation), 38 young people from the BAME community and 78 young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities and 25 enrolments from lone parents with a dependent child.
Timeline	2-year programme commencing December 2020
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Improvement in basic skills · Reduction in NEET for 16- to 18-year-olds · Assisting inactive young people to overcome barriers to positive participation · Participation in local volunteering opportunities · As a minimum, 43 percent of all participants to successfully access employment, education and / or training
Anticipated Impact	The anticipated impact on young people and families will include a reduction in reliance on and access Universal Credit and benefits. Young people and families will also benefit from improvements in wellbeing including mental health and self-esteem. In our most deprived communities, the project will tackle multi-generational unemployment and worklessness presenting positive role models and raising aspirations.

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Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit (January 2021)

Section 1: Your details

EIA lead Officer: Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention

Email address: elizabethhartley@wirral.gov.uk

Head of Section: Simone White, Director of children's Services

Chief Officer: Simone White, Director of Children's Services

Directorate: Children, Families and Education

Date: 10 May 2021

Section 2: What Council proposal is being assessed?

Prevention Framework- Breaking the Cycle programme

Section 2a: Will this EIA be submitted to a Committee meeting?

Yes

Meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 15 June 2021

Hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published on the Council's website

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

Section 3: Does the proposal have the potential to affect..... (please tick relevant boxes)

- ✓ **Services**
- The workforce**
- ✓ **Communities**
- ✓ **Other- voluntary and community sector**

If you have ticked one or more of above, please go to section 4.

- None** (please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 4:

Could the proposal have a positive or negative impact on any protected groups (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)?

You may also want to consider socio-economic status of individuals.

Please list in the table below and include actions required to mitigate any potential negative impact.

Which group(s) of people could be affected	Potential positive or negative impact	Action required to mitigate any potential negative impact	Lead person	Timescale	Resource implications
All	It is recognise that this strategy and the associated actions may be needed in other languages and formats.	Negative	Assistant Director Early Help & Prevention	As requested	Procurement of language translation services
Disability	SEND factors would be identified by professionals and signposted as per the SEND Strategy.	Positive impact	Key Worker	As per professional involvement	Partnership working and SEND services
Gender reassignment	Where identified in the context of this strategy, young people are able to receive support through signposting to support networks. Gender neutral language will be used. It is the intention that young people will be supported according to their specific needs as per the principles set out in the Prevention Framework.	Positive	Key Worker	As per professional involvement	Partnership working

Pregnancy	<p>Within the Breaking the Cycle programme there are 2 specific programmes related to Pregnancy. The Family Nurse Partnership is a therapeutic intervention for first-time young parents, providing evidence-based support until the child is 2 years old.</p> <p>The Pause programme works with women who have had multiple children removed from their care. It seeks to help women take a 'pause' from pregnancy to address the issues in their life which are preventing them from parenting. For women who opt out of the Pause programme we have established a Women's Worker post to ensure that all women have a choice and access to support.</p>	Positive	Programme Leads	As per identification of individuals	Partnership working Availability of Pause and Family Nurse Partnership programmes
Race	All participants will be assessed and considered on an individual basis. As per the Prevention Framework, inclusion and equity are inherent in the approach. This would include considerations for lead professionals around language and cultural background. This would include work within a family setting.	Positive	Key Worker	As per professional involvement	Partnership working
Religion or belief	All participants will be assessed and considered on an individual basis. As per the Prevention Framework, inclusion and equity are inherent in the approach. Community organisations including religious and faith groups are partners in the Breaking the Cycle programme.	Positive	Key Worker	As per professional involvement	Partnership working and strong links to community organisations
Sex	In 2 of the 8 catalyst prevention programmes women are the primary intended cohort. Both programme will offer wider support to any person having a direct and significant relationship with those women, regardless of	Positive	Key Worker	As per professional involvement	Partnership working

	<p>sex.</p> <p>The other 6 catalyst prevention programmes do not differentiate between women and men. Some categories of harm are more prevalent within one sex, however the other sex is not precluded from the identification or support set out within the context of the strategy.</p>				
Sexual orientation	<p>The Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle programme does not differentiate between sexual orientation. The underlying principles and values promote the understanding of individual who partners are engaging or working with. Services are able to provide approaches that respect confidentiality and privacy in line with an individual's choice.</p>	Positive	Key Worker	As per professional involvement	Partnership working
Socio-economic status	<p>The Breaking the Cycle programme is focused on the 6 wards in Wirral with the highest level of need and demand for services. These wards have been identified from datasets which correlate with the deprivation index.</p>	<p>A Prevention Steering Group has been established, reporting to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families to ensure that programmes reach those in the most deprived communities. An Officer with expertise in equality has been identified for the steering group.</p>	Chairs of the Prevention Steering Group	Throughout the duration of the programme	Partnership working

Section 4a: Where and how will the above actions be monitored?

A multi-agency, Prevention Steering Group has been established and will report to the Partnership for Children, Young People and Families.

Section 4b: If you think there is no negative impact, what is your reasoning behind this?

The Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle programme seek to tackle vulnerability and promote inclusive practice for those facing multiple disadvantage in the most deprived wards.

Section 5: What research / data / information have you used in support of this process?

Desktop research including: literature review of Health Inequalities reports, Joint Strategic Needs Analysis reports for each of the multiple disadvantage categories; This is Wirral report by Wirral Intelligence Service, appraisal of preventative programmes across England and Wales, consideration of key national guidance and reviews such as the Marmot Review: 10 Years On, Making a Difference in Tough Times, Childhood in the Time of Covid.

Data analysis of need and demand taken from Children and Adult Services via Liquid Logic, Power BI and Wirral Intelligence Service. This included demand related to each of the 5 disadvantage categories.

Section 6: Are you intending to carry out any consultation with regard to this Council proposal?

No.

A programme of engagement and coproduction activity has been completed as part of the work to produce the Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle programme. This has included workshops, group sessions, 1:1 conversations and use of online surveys and message boards. Groups involved in these activities include: Council departments, Public Health, public services partners, third sector organisations and local young people.

Co-production is part of the Prevention Framework. Lay Members representing young people and adults will be in the membership of the Prevention Steering Group. The co-production approach is detailed within the framework.

This work builds upon learning and findings from previous engagement exercises such as the Youth Offer consultation, Why Community Matters evaluation and the co-produced domestic abuse strategy.

(please stop here and email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing)

Section 7: How will consultation take place and by when?

No consultation planned.

Before you complete your consultation, please email your preliminary EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer in order for the Council to ensure it is meeting it's legal publishing requirements. The EIA will need to be published with a note saying we are awaiting outcomes from a consultation exercise.

Once you have completed your consultation, please review your actions in section 4. Then email this form to your Chief Officer who needs to email it to engage@wirral.gov.uk for publishing.

Section 8: Have you remembered to:

- a) **Select appropriate directorate hyperlink to where your EIA is/will be published** (section 2a)
- b) **Include any potential positive impacts as well as negative impacts?** (section 4)
- c) **Send this EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer?**
- d) **Review section 4 once consultation has taken place and sent your updated EIA to engage@wirral.gov.uk via your Chief Officer for re-publishing?**

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	YOUTH OFFER
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an overview of proposals to implement an equitable, consistent, branded, neighbourhood youth offer for universal, open access provision. It is the final element of the Youth Offer Review to be actioned, following the consultation which took place in summer 2019 and the report to Cabinet in February 2020. The neighbourhood model responds to the views and wishes of local young people and outlines the contribution of the Local Authority, The Hive Youth Zone and other partners within the developing Wirral Youth Collective.

The report and strategy are aligned to priorities of Wirral Council's Plan 2025:

- Working for brighter futures for our children, young people and their families by breaking the cycle of poor outcomes and raising the aspirations of every child in Wirral.
- Working for safe and pleasant communities where our residents feel safe, and where they want to live and raise their families.
- Working for happy, active and healthy lives where people are supported, protected and inspired to live independently.

This matter affects residents across the borough.

This is a key decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is recommended to give delegated authority to the Director of Children's Services to carry out actions for the delivery of a universal, open access youth provision as set out in Paragraph 3.6, 3.16, 3.18 and Appendix 2 to the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Provision for universal, open-access youth activity is the final part of the Youth Offer review to be implemented. In February 2020, Cabinet requested further exploration of options which have been completed and presented in detail via a workshop for Elected Members on 12 April 2021. Feedback from Elected Members during the workshop session has been considered and amendments made to the model as appropriate.
- 1.2 Officers and Elected Members alike understand the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on young people. There have been many informative reports and surveys published, both nationally and locally, highlighting how important local youth services are in supporting young people to recovery from the effects of missed schooling, missed opportunities for social and emotional development, and responding to the impact of hidden harm. It is our duty to ensure that youth services adequately support recovery for young people and implementing a localised, youth offer is a key task in enabling that to be achieved.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Continuing with the existing provision for universal, open-access youth provision is not an option. Known as the 'youth services duty', the Council has a statutory duty to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient provision of educational and recreational leisure-time activities for young people. It is the duty of the Local Authority to consult with young people as to how they would like that provision to be delivered. The Youth Offer consultation clearly outlined that the existing provision did not adequately meet young people's needs for local, equitable, high-quality activity.
- 2.2 The opportunity to commission all universal youth provision has been considered however, this option was not supported. The benefits of the Local Authority retaining the lead role in delivery of youth provision are significant, particularly in terms of maintaining quality assurance and strengthening joint working with wider Children's Services and safeguarding teams. A mixed economy of Local Authority and third sector delivery is preferable.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In the summer of 2019 we commenced a review of youth provision in Wirral. To enhance our needs analysis we undertook a consultation with young people. Asking them *how we could make Wirral an amazing place for young people* provided not only a wealth of brilliant ideas, but also an extraordinary insight into their day-to-day experience of being a young Wirral resident. Approximately 3,000 young people took part in the consultation, sharing their experiences, views and outlining what they would like from their youth offer.
- 3.2 Throughout the Youth Offer review we aimed to understand what young people in Wirral need to support their development and help them to achieve the best possible outcomes. With insight from the consultation, we worked collaboratively to develop a

Youth Offer which is accessible and beneficial to all young people in the borough. To develop the offer, five proposals were presented to Cabinet on 24 February 2020. They were:

- We will design, develop and launch a digital platform(s) for young people in Wirral.
- We will negotiate on behalf of young people with internal and external partners who can contribute to/improve the youth offer.
- We will work with Public Health, schools and further education providers to develop a curriculum for life.
- We will give young people a voice and real stake in the future of the borough.
- We will revise arrangements for delivery of youth clubs to create a consistent, equitable, branded, local offer.

3.3 The first four proposals were approved by Cabinet in February 2020, and significant progress has been made in those areas. The fifth proposal, relating to the delivery of youth clubs, was deferred so that further development of the proposal could be undertaken. Considerable work has been completed since the Cabinet meeting, and this report presents the revised arrangements for youth clubs for approval.

3.4 **The Current Offer**

The current offer is provided using the 4 localities model: Birkenhead, Wallasey, West Wirral and South Wirral. Each locality has a designated 'hub' which operates 4 evenings per week and a 'club' offer of 3 evenings per week. The current costings of running the hubs range from £35,939 to £85,787 per annum, and club costs from £26,162 to £51,132. The staffing hours available to deliver the hubs range from 36 to 100 hours per week, and club staffing hours from 28 to 44. The variation in resource has led to the offer being inconsistent across areas.

3.5 Analysis of the current offer has been undertaken to identify strengths and weaknesses. Strengths include:

- Mixed economy of provision.
- Co-location with other services.
- Qualified and experienced workforce.
- New ways of engaging with young people through a 'blended offer'- during lockdown digital delivery has been welcomed by many young people.

These strengths are retained within the proposed model. Weakness to overcome in the new model are:

- Offer across areas is not equitable.
- Any staff absence impacts on delivery.
- Lack of consistent Youth Offer brand and quality assurance.
- Membership and footfall varies considerably across areas, and this does not correlate with spend on the offer.
- Limited career pathways for youth workers.

3.6 **The Proposed, New Offer**

The proposed model for universal, open-access youth provision seeks to provide a consistent, equitable, branded, local offer, by:

- Using the neighbourhood model to provide a consistent offer.
- Developing, with young people, a service brand and set of standards.
- Using a quality assurance framework to ensure consistency.
- Introducing a set of key performance indicators for collective impact.

3.7 The neighbourhood model, introduced by Adult Social Care and Health Services in 2018, divides Wirral into 9 areas of relatively equal population size. It was introduced in response to the King's Fund report on place-based systems of care as a way to enhance partnership working, transform the way services are delivered and improve the focus on population health and wellbeing. The neighborhoods are detailed in Appendix 1- Wirral Neighbourhoods.

3.8 The youth offer for each neighbourhood will consist of:

- A designated venue for delivery and coordination of the youth offer;
- A fulltime, qualified, Neighbourhood Youth Worker;
- 3 x weekly youth club sessions, each for 3 hours;
- Coordinated access to and support from the Detached Youth Work Team;
- 6 x hours (weekly) of counselling provision;
- A monthly, Wirral Youth Weekenders event.

3.9 The designated venue for delivery and coordination of the youth offer in each neighbourhood is identified in Appendix 2- Youth Offer Overview. Co-location with partners and other services has been identified as a strength within the current model and this will continue wherever possible. In the Youth Offer consultation young people told us that they wanted to be included in the wider community and benefit from strengthened relationships with other community groups, which co-location can facilitate.

3.10 The Neighbourhood Youth Worker will be a great asset to the offer. Working closely with all schools, community groups, public service providers and local residents in their area, the Neighbourhood Youth Worker will ensure that the youth offer is well-supported, linked to the wider system and able to respond to emerging local need. The Neighbourhood Youth Worker will act as a single point of contact for local leaders and Ward Councillors on matters regarding young people in their area.

3.11 As described in Appendix 2- Youth Offer Overview, The Hive Youth Zone, will provide the Neighbourhood Youth Worker posts for both Birkenhead A and Birkenhead B as part of their Service Level Agreement with the Council. The Service Level Agreement will ensure that there is consistency across the Neighbourhood Youth Worker role and that those delivered by the Hive Youth Zone will be part of the Youth Offer Delivery Team, attending Team Meetings, Performance Reviews and training sessions.

- 3.12 The weekly youth club sessions in each neighbourhood will be managed by the Neighbourhood Youth Worker. A pool of staff able to cover any absences or leave will be facilitated through the wider Children's Services staff resource, ensuring a robust, reliable offer for young people across Wirral.
- 3.13 As described in Appendix 2- Youth Offer Overview, the weekly youth club sessions in Birkenhead A and Birkenhead B will be delivered by the Hive Youth Zone as part of their Service Level Agreement with the Council. The Service Level Agreement will ensure that this provision, for young people in the two Birkenhead Neighbourhoods, is delivered as a specific local offer rather than subsumed into the wider Hive activity.
- 3.14 Each neighbourhood will benefit from continued support and joint working with the Detached Youth Work Team. Liaison between the Neighbourhood Youth Worker and Detached Youth Team Manager will seek to ensure deployment of resource to hot spots across Wirral using intelligence from Merseyside Police, Anti-Social Behaviour Team, resident and partner feedback, and notifications from Ward Councillors. The Kontactabus and Life Cycle projects will continue to be used to engage with young people in the community and specific parks and open spaces.
- 3.15 Building on the success of the counselling offer which was made available to young people in South Wirral through funding allocated by Ward Councillors, the new youth offer will replicate this across all 9 neighbourhoods. This will provide 6 hours per week of counselling in each neighbourhood which is easily accessible for young people and provided in a non-clinical, comfortable setting.
- 3.16 The proposed model will introduce a new initiative, Wirral Youth Weekenders. Building on the growing capacity and strengthening relationships of the Wirral Youth Collective, community groups will be funded to deliver this element of the Youth Offer. In each of the 9 neighbourhoods, on the last weekend of each month, an event for young people which is fun and promotes personal development, will be delivered by community organisations. Funding of £1,000 will be provided for each event, at an annual cost of £108,000 (12 events per neighbourhood, across 9 neighbourhoods).
- 3.17 Wirral Youth Weekenders will be implemented using the existing process to deliver the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF). Arrangements to report on uptake, provide case studies and feedback from events will be incorporated into the Service Level Agreements with providers. The new website for young people, Zillo, will advertise, promote engagement across Wirral and be used to showcase the Wirral Youth Weekender events. Residents, young people, community organisations and Ward Councillors will be able to find information on the events via Zillo and the Council website.
- 3.18 In addition to providing resource for Birkenhead A and Birkenhead B, the Hive Youth Zone, as part of their Service Level Agreement with the Council, will provide a further 3 elements of delivery for Wirral young people as part of the youth offer. These are:
- **Enabling inclusion in youth activity for young people with SEND-** the Hive will deliver a fixed-term project which trains mentors/supporters to support young people with SEND in accessing mainstream youth activities. This project will aim to create a sustainable approach to improving inclusion in youth activity across Wirral.

- **Increasing the reach of Hive activity across Wirral-** targets to extend the reach of Hive activity across the Wirral youth population will be explicit in the Service Level Agreement. This will include (i) outreach which takes Hive activity into the other neighbourhoods and (ii) in-reach activity which brings young people from other neighbourhoods into Birkenhead to experience the excellent Hive facilities.
- **A programme to support young people adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic-** the Hive will lead on a fixed-term, borough-wide programme helping young people to *reset* following the disruption to their lives and negative impact on their health and wellbeing. The programme will address a number of key areas for young people including mental health, confidence, future plans, friendships, and safely getting *out and about*.

3.19 The proposed Youth Offer seeks to strengthen the Local Authority resource as well as improve existing partnerships. The model promotes a consistent offer which will be delivered by the Local Authority Youth Service, the Hive Youth Zone, and third sector partners. Together these groups are part of the developing Wirral Youth Collective.

3.20 The proposed Youth Offer provides a strong response to the findings of the consultation initiated in 2019. On implementation, it is recommended that that the Young People's Action Group leads on a *You Said-We Did* communications campaign for young people and residents across Wirral.

3.21 **Measuring Impact of the Youth Offer**

Performance reporting on the current youth offer focuses mainly on the number of activities delivered, types of sessions delivered, and number of beneficiaries. Whilst these figures will continue to be collected, monitored and reported, the new model will introduce a set of impact measures for the youth offer. This set of indicators has been taken from the broader suite of performance measures for the Children, Young People and Education Committee, and includes those which the Youth Offer should have a positive impact on. They are:

- % of secondary pupils attending school
- % of secondary pupils with persistent absence from school
- The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at Key Stage 4
- % of young people aged 16-17 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) or categorized as 'not known'
- Number of young people currently missing from home or missing from care
- Number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system
- Rate of re-offending
- Number of anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people

3.22 These performance datasets will be reported on a neighbourhood basis as well as borough wide. The Neighbourhood Youth Worker will use performance to inform their priorities for partnership working and support for young people.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The current universal, open-access youth offer costs £474,500 per year. The proposed model is £566,140 per year, an increase of £91,640. On 01 March 2021 at the Council Budget Setting Meeting, it was agreed to increase investment in the youth service by £200,000. The increased cost of £91,640 will be met through this additional investment.
- 4.2 The remaining £108,360 additional funding will be invested in the Wirral Youth Weekenders initiative.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A Service Level Agreement between The Hive Youth Zone and Wirral Council will be established in accordance with current Council procedure.
- 5.2 Commissioning of the Wirral Youth Weekenders will be undertaken in accordance with current Council procedure.
- 5.3 Robust contract monitoring arrangements will be in place for all funded activity, with performance reported to the Children's Services Senior Leadership Team.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Implementing the neighbourhood model will require a restructure of Council staffing. This will be undertaken in partnership with Human Resources and Finance colleagues, with Trade Unions being kept informed and available to support the workforce. The restructure will be delivered in accordance with existing Wirral Council practice and procedure. The proposed model is realistic and achievable against our existing staff establishment and will create a clear pathway for professional development. There are no anticipated negative effects for staff.
- 6.2 There are no ICT implications arising from this report. Existing work to improve performance reporting and data collection will continue as planned through Liquid Logic and Power BI systems.
- 6.3 There are ongoing developments to assets which are aligned with the proposed model. Existing work at Moreton Library to develop a multi-function, community hub, from which to deliver youth activity corresponds with the Youth Offer which seeks to strengthen connectivity between young people and their communities. The new facility at the St. Anselmian's Rugby Club, another positive example of co-location, will officially launch in July 2021.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The most significant risk would be not taking action on the findings of the consultation or responding to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people. Young people have asked for a local, equitable, branded youth offer, which these proposals can deliver.

- 7.2 It is noted that capacity within the Youth Service has in previous years been stretched, and a risk in moving to a model where seven neighbourhoods are delivered by Local Authority Youth Workers, is that any annual leave or absence may impact on the ability to deliver the offer. This risk is mitigated by establishing a pool of Local Authority cover which can be called upon to deliver sessional work. The pool will include professionals from across Children's Services from a range of teams with current, relevant experience of working with young people.
- 7.2 With considerable efforts and resource being invested in the Youth Offer, it is important to ensure adequate *future-proofing*. While developing the model appropriate research has been undertaken on best-practice models in other local authority areas, advice and expertise has been sought from Youth Focus North West and the changes in the national context have been considered. It is anticipated that the Government are considering the rollout of *Youth Partnerships*, which hold responsibility for commissioning a local youth offer. Our model and Wirral Youth Collective would align very well to such arrangements, readying Wirral for a future youth offer.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Extensive consultation has been undertaken with young people in Wirral via a survey on the Youth Offer. The survey was designed in partnership with members of the Youth Voice Group and Children In Care Council to elicit views on the support and services needed for them *to be all that they can be*. The consultation was completed between June to September 2019 with almost 3,000 young people taking part. Surveys were received from 2,736 young people and several groups took part in the consultation events, forums, and workshops. Events for young people and the public were expertly facilitated by members of the Youth Voice Group.
- 8.2 Analysis of the returned surveys confirmed that the sample was representative of the population, that all groups considered had been engaged and that the response levels were statistically valid.
- 8.3 Communication and consultation with young people and stakeholders has been continuous throughout the development and implementation of the Youth Offer. The Young People's Action Group, Youth Voice Group and Children in Care Council continue to be involved and updated on the progress of the review. Bespoke engagement work has taken place with young people in areas, such as Moreton and South Wirral, where significant changes to venues are taking place.
- 8.4 Young people have contributed to a number of surveys and focus groups in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and their experiences over the past year. Learning from those engagements has been incorporated into the neighbourhood youth model to ensure there are strong links with schools and access to mental health support.
- 8.5 On 12 April 2021, a workshop for Elected Members was held to facilitate a detailed presentation on the proposed youth offer model. Feedback from the workshop has informed final amendments to the model.
- 8.6 Youth Workers and partners of Wirral Youth Collective have participated in workshops and engagement sessions as part of the development of this model. The

neighbourhood approach and strengthening of the collective approach to youth provision is welcomed.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Youth Offer and neighbourhood youth model and can be found via this link:

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The environment and climate change are becoming increasingly important to our young people. Enabling our younger residents to have a stronger voice and increased engagement in democracy through their local youth offer, we anticipate that their determination to reduce carbon emissions will positively influence our decision-making and that they will play a worthwhile role in holding residents, officers, and leaders to account.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Wirral Neighbourhoods

Appendix 2- Youth Offer Overview

BACKGROUND PAPERS

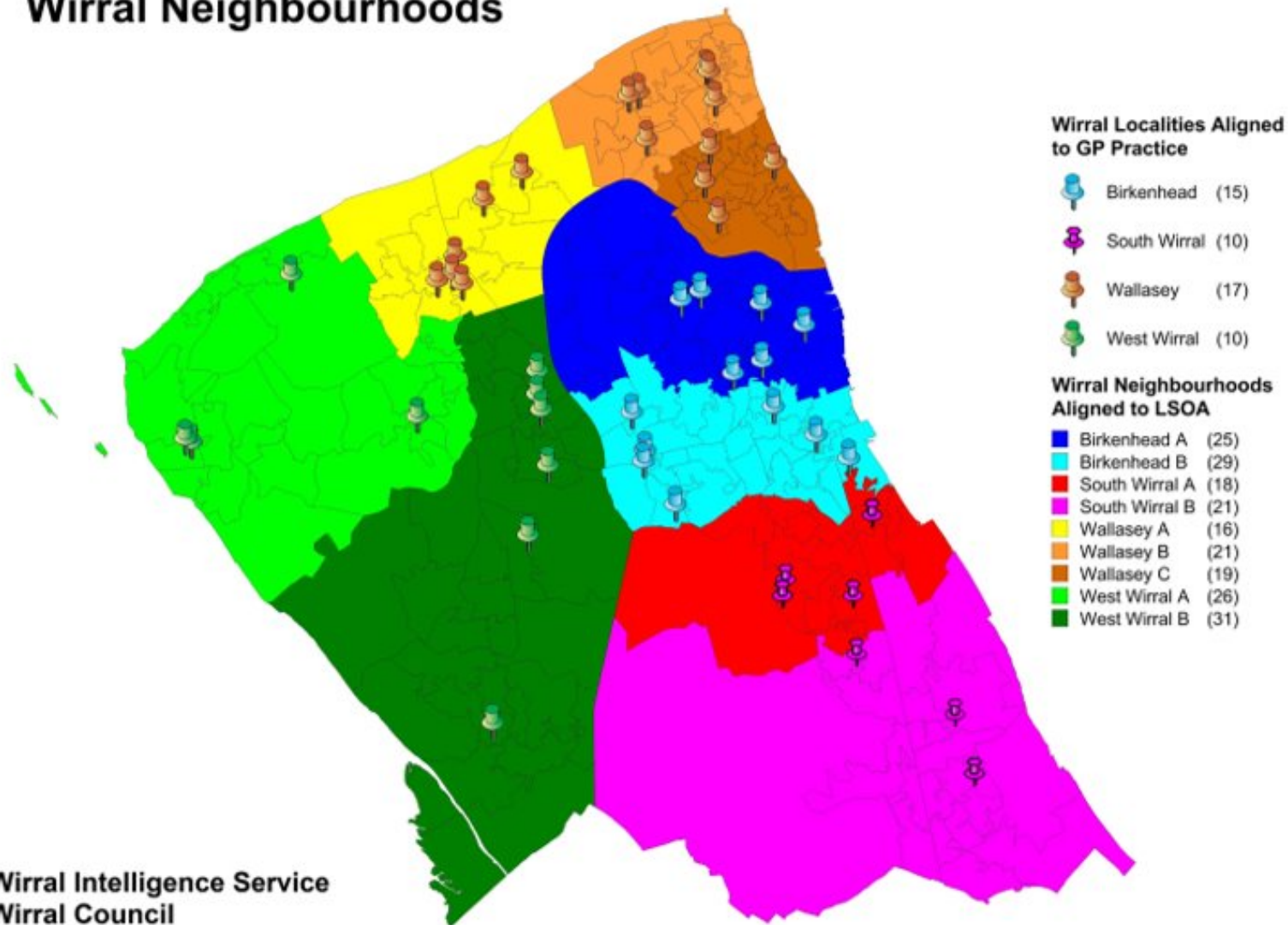
Care More About Us report and Youth Offer papers to Cabinet February 2020
[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 24/02/2020 10:00 \(wirral.gov.uk\)](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	24 February 2020
Elected Member Workshop	12 April 2021

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Wirral Neighbourhoods



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Appendix 2- Youth Offer Overview

Neighbourhood	Wallasey A	Wallasey B	Wallasey C	B'head A	B'head B	South Wirral A	South Wirral B	West Wirral A	West Wirral B
Delivery Agent	Wirral Council	Wirral Council	Wirral Council	Hive Youth Zone	Hive Youth Zone	Wirral Council	Wirral Council	Wirral Council	Wirral Council
Delivery venue	Moreton Youth Club (Library)	Wallasey Youth Club (Fire Station)	TBC	The Hive	The Hive	Bebington Youth Club	St. Anselmian Rugby Club	Fender Youth Club	West Kirby Youth Club
Neighbourhood Youth Worker FTE	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)	1.0 FTE (36 hours)
Neighbourhood Youth Worker Cost	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437	£26,437
Neighbourhood Weekly Sessions	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours	3 x 3 hours
Total Cost of sessions	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694	£17,694
Weekly counselling hours	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	CHILDREN’S RESIDENTIAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

The report seeks approval from the Children, Young People and Education Committee to agree in principle to invest up to £1,000,000 by way of a loan to the organisation identified in the exempt Appendix 1 to this report to develop children’s residential accommodation in Wirral.

In March 2019, the Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy (“the Strategy”) was approved by Cabinet. The Strategy set out priorities to strengthen and increase current placement provision within Wirral, including children’s residential accommodation. In accordance with the Strategy, a 6 -bed facility for children with disabilities has been established along with the commissioning of an external organisation to provide Tier 3 respite and short breaks support.

Following approval of the Strategy, collaborative work took place at a Liverpool City Region level to further develop and define a Market Reform Programme which would not only increase placement choice and quality but also seek to strengthen the voluntary/non-profit making position within the children’s care market.

A high level business proposal has been formulated with a view to providing a new, ethical, sustainable network of residential care homes that could significantly improve the life chances of children living in care. For Wirral, this plan involves the establishment of four children’s homes over two phases focussed on supporting the social, emotional and mental health needs of children and young people.

To provide the kickstart funding required to set up the homes in Wirral, the Committee is requested to support a loan on commercial terms in the sum of £1,000,000 for the building allocation, refurbishment and initial employee costs to enable a facility to be provided by an identified organisation in accordance with the relevant regulatory and commissioning requirements. The facility will then be enabled to gain accreditation as a registered facility for a residential care home and to seek admission to an established procurement framework (the North West Flexible Purchasing Scheme) to enable the Council and other local authorities to place children at the facility.

The proposal aims to support the strategic aims and objectives of the Wirral Plan 2025 ‘Brighter Futures’

The Wirral Plan articulates a clear priority to secure Brighter Futures for all, regardless of their background. The proposals within this report are aimed at improving the local offer and availability of options of high-quality provision that meets the need of children looked after.

This matter affects all wards.

This is a key decision.

Appendix 1 of this report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of an organisation. Accordingly, Appendix 1 is deemed to be exempt from disclosure under paragraph 3, Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is recommended to:

1. agree in principle to invest up to £1,000,000 by way of a loan on commercial terms to the organisation named in Appendix 1 to this report, to enable the development of children's homes within Wirral for children looked after;
2. request that the Director of Children, Families and Education brings a further report after due diligence has been completed in respect of the proposals set out in the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 **Rising numbers of Children Looked After :** The number of Children Looked After across the Liverpool City Region has increased by 18% since April 2016. Wirral has implemented a rigorous programme to reduce these numbers, however, the current number of children in care is 820, which is still high. With 11% fewer independent foster carers than in 2016 and with in-house foster carers reducing across the region, the number of carers is failing to grow in line with increases in Children Looked After.
- 1.2 **Increasing financial pressures and escalating growth trend:** With demand outstripping supply, there is no incentive for providers to be competitive in their pricing resulting in costs escalating which show little sign of slowing. The current average weekly cost of a residential placement in the North West is £4,196 per week with some placements for more complex children costing over £6,000 per week.
- 1.3 **Mixed quality of current provision:** Whilst the Council tries to ensure that Wirral children are placed in provision rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, the mixed position of quality in the market means that this is not always possible. To mitigate this, the Council has put measures in place to ensure regular quality monitoring and review of placements. There remains a need to drive up quality so that children have holistic environments which support emotional well-being and education outcomes.
- 1.4 **Inward-facing market reducing the council's ability to procure local placements:** Currently residential placements for Children Looked After are commissioned via an established procurement framework - the North West Flexible Purchasing Scheme. This framework operates competitive placement rates compared with other frameworks across the country. Many local authorities seek to reduce placement costs by commissioning via the North West Flexible Purchasing Scheme reducing the number of local placements available in Wirral. This results in the Council having to place children in out of borough homes away from their families and local communities. It also has a significant financial impact on the Council, given that out of borough placement unit costs are higher and require additional resources to support the child e.g. travel and time required by key workers such as social workers, Independent Reviewing Officers and support workers.
- 1.5 **Lack of sufficiency within current market:** The Council has an average of 8% in externally commissioned residential placements. As at the end of April 2021, 61 residential placements were commissioned with 26 children (42.6%) living in-borough and 35 children placed out of borough. Of the 35 children living out of borough, 27 live more than 20 miles away from the Wirral, as far away as Scotland, Cumbria and Durham rupturing ties with their local community, peers, schools and at times family. These 'at a distance' placements hinder the Council's ability to monitor value for money, quality standards and most importantly the progress and outcomes of the young person. Whilst in some circumstances it is in the child's best interest to be out of area, for safeguarding reasons and/or matching reasons, a proportion of out of area placements relate to lack of current local options.

- 1.6 **Increase in private provision within the market and use of growth acquisition models across children's care sector:** A large proportion of the children's residential market is owned by small number of private companies. Within the North West, five private providers provide 30% of all residential placements.
- 1.7 There is also risk that the Competition and Markets Authority may investigate the influence on the market that the large private providers of accommodation for Children Looked After. This could lead to the large private providers needing to de merge into a larger number of smaller providers, leading to the removal of economies of scale and potentially higher charges for local authorities. The consequence of this would be that future profitability would potentially need to be gained through higher prices and lower service investment.
- 1.8 It is considered that steps need to be carried out to create alternative means of meeting the demand for accommodation for Children Looked After in order to decrease reliance on the main 5 private providers.

2.0 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 **Do nothing.** This option has been considered and discounted given that the current situation is unsustainable. As outlined above, rising costs in the placement market, the increasing needs of children and young people to live in good quality homes and a proportion of private ownership within the market, means that there is not a sufficient supply of suitable accommodation for Wirral children.
- 2.2 Given the current level of demand and level of need within Wirral, doing nothing would over time result in an increase in commissioning pressures with children being placed in potentially lower quality accommodation, associated with increase budgetary pressures.
- 2.3 **Operate a single in-house model for Wirral children only.** This option is being implemented within the Accommodation Programme and plans are in place to build a 6-bed in-house residential facility for Children Looked After with disabilities through the refurbishment of Willowtree Short Breaks Service.
- 2.4 For the proposal outlined in this report, this option has been considered and discounted for several reasons:
- **Meeting the needs of children and young people:** Previous in-house delivery models were ceased because of the challenge in ensuring that children were suitably matched to accommodation which met their needs. The fundamental need which determines a child's placement in residential provision is how the home will best support the needs of the child or young person. There is a rigorous process of matching which ensures that children can be suitably accommodated where their needs are best met. This process is integral to securing a placement.
 - **Financial:** Where appropriate matching is not possible, homes can accrue voids which increases costs, and which can put them under financial pressure. Current large-scale providers mitigate this risk through economies of scale and through

wide reaching market presence. Any in-house provision would need to have a sufficient risk mitigation strategy which would manage the financial impact of voids. Placing children in homes which does not meet their need to prevent voids, runs the risk of challenge by Ofsted and potential closure.

- **Resources:** Any in-house provision is fully managed and resourced by the Council. Employees are directly employed under Local Authority statutory terms and conditions, including access to the Local Authority Pension Scheme. Attracting employees to roles in residential settings can also be a challenge and Councils often do not have the support functions to intensively recruit staff. Significant back-office support would be required for a large-scale in-house model including senior management oversight, Information Technology infrastructure, building and asset regulatory work, finance and Human Resources functions. All of this would add a significant resource burden onto the Council's own core support functions.
- **Reputation:** For in-house provision, responsibility for the registration, compliance and support for children and young people would lie solely with the Council. Failing to meet the rigorous requirements as set out with Ofsted resulting in poor inspection judgements could have detrimental impact on the reputation of the Council. Local community challenges, neighbourhood disturbances and failing to improve outcomes and meet the needs of children and young people could lead to further reputational damage.

2.5 **Commissioning an external provider to provide the Services in Council owned property:** This option is being progressed following agreement from the Children Young People and Education Committee to support the NHS England proposal to develop a new three bedded specialist service to support and prevent children going into Tier 4 mental health provision.

2.6 The option of using current Council assets has been considered and discounted given that no appropriate buildings have been found. Work has been undertaken by officers to ensure that all avenues for local suitable housing options have been explored. The purchase of a building or land remains an option and will be considered as part of the £1,000,000 investment. The challenge with owning and maintaining a property are the costs associated with the development and maintenance of the provision, meeting the requirements of Ofsted for the building and the potential lack of interest from providers to deliver a service without the associated asset.

2.7 **Use of flexible lot on North West Purchasing Framework to block contract:** This option is to enter block contract with providers to purchase a set number of beds at a fixed price, via the North West Flexible Purchasing Scheme. Whilst this option provides control over provision and matching of beds available it is likely (from market insight) that there would be a lack of provider interest in this option as demand is higher than supply so there is no reason for providers to offer single local authorities block contracts at a fixed price. This option has also been discounted, given the lack of available provision within the current market.

2.8 **Enter into a Joint venture with a service provider:** The Council could enter a Joint Venture with a corporate partner (public or private) to establish and run the

children's homes as a formal partnership. The Council and its Joint Venture partner would need to decide whether to establish a separate legal entity as a vehicle for the joint venture. The four basic legal forms are:

1. Limited liability company.
2. Limited liability partnership.
3. Partnership (or limited partnership).
4. A purely contractual co-operation agreement.

- 2.9 The Council would need to provide a business case to support the decision to enter the Joint Venture and be quite clear on the scope and purpose of the Joint Venture and the relative bargaining strengths of the parties to the Joint Venture. The main documents required to establish a corporate joint venture will be the joint venture agreement or shareholders' agreement and the company's articles of association. These documents should cover, between them, several constitutional aspects of the joint venture company and its day-to-day operations.
- 2.10 This is a very technical and time-consuming option, which is not warranted, given the level of investment proposed. The proposal outlined in this report does not require the Council to be involved in the direct delivery of services for children. The agreement is to support a loan on commercial terms to allow the initial infrastructure to be established.
- 2.11 **Inter-Local Authority option [Collaboration/contractual Agreement]:** The option of entering into a formal contractual agreement with local authorities, such as the Regional Adoption Agency model has been discounted given there is no current commitment to enter an inter-agency arrangement of this nature. The preferred option recommended in this report offers the possibility in future phases of scalability and inter- local authority commissioning as the new homes are rolled out.
- 2.12 **Local Authority Trading Company (LATC).** If the Council wanted to set up children's homes and trade services to third parties on the open market, it would be required under s.4 of the Localism Act 2011 and under the provisions of s95 of the Local Government Act 2003 to set up a corporate vehicle. The type of vehicle which may be used includes:
- Company limited by shares or guarantee;
 - Social Enterprise;
 - Unlimited company;
 - Community Interest Company.
- 2.13 Before setting up a corporate vehicle the Council must be able to provide a strong business case to support the proposal. This option has not been pursued given the potential long run-in time for delivery and the overly technical nature of the approach, which is not required for the loan investment.
- 2.14 The Teckal exemption applies where a contracting authority contracts with a legally distinct entity, usually a company that the authority has set up (either on its own or in concert with others) to provide services to the Council. The conditions for the exemption are that:

- The service provider carries out the principal part of its activities with the authority;
- The authority exercises the same kind of control over the service provider as it does over its own departments; and
- There is no private sector ownership of the service provider nor any intention that there should be any.

2.15 The Teckal exemption allows public authorities to enter service contracts with wholly owned companies without having to conduct a competitive tender exercise under the relevant procurement regulations. This option has been ruled out on the basis that as the Council would not wish to maintain control of the management arrangements for the service provider.

2.16 **Innovation Partnership:** The Council could consider procuring a “partner” under an innovative partnership to provide the Services but if this option was pursued, the following would need to apply:

- the Council must seek innovative ideas, where solutions are not already available on the market. This “need” must be expressly stated in the contract notice alongside the minimum requirements, performance levels and maximum costs; and
- there must also be an intention to include both the development of the outcome and its subsequent purchase (subject to meeting agreed performance levels and maximum costs) in the procurement;
- the procedure selects partners on a competitive basis and have them develop an innovative solution tailored to their requirements. The competitive phase will take place at the very beginning of the procedure, when the most suitable partner(s) are selected on the basis of their skills, abilities and price;
- the partner(s) will develop the new solution, as required, in collaboration with the Council. This research and development phase can be divided into several stages, during which the number of partners may be gradually reduced, depending on whether they meet certain pre-determined criteria;
- the partner will then provide the final solution (commercial phase);
- the outcome of the procedure may not deliver a partner or solution that differs from the organisation / solution that has already been identified.

2.17 An Innovation Partnership is not appropriate for the current scenario, given that the Council has already identified a partner which (subject to a finalised business case) it can enter into a commercial loan arrangement.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Wirral’s Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy

In March 2019, the Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy (“the Strategy”) was approved by Cabinet. The Strategy set out the local authority’s priorities to respond to the current challenges around sufficiency of high-quality placements. This included plans to ensure good quality, local homes for Children Looked After through the development and exploration of alternative options for residential placements for Children Looked After.

- 3.2 Following approval of the Strategy a working group was established to develop an initial options appraisal, understand the potential costings and savings, and consider wider Liverpool City Region and internal opportunities. This has resulted in a proposal for a mixed model solution to affect sustainable market change and reduce over reliance on any sector. Following this, an internal Accommodation Programme was established to bring together and drive forward a range of projects which would deliver the outcomes identified in the Strategy and align with the Liverpool City Region Reform Programme developments.
- 3.3 **Liverpool City Region Market Reform Programme**
In 2019, the Liverpool City Region Directors of Children’s Services agreed to collaborate with a view to establishing a Market Reform Programme aim of the Programme was to explore how commissioning across the Liverpool City Region’s local authorities would need to change from its current focus from describing demand and developing frameworks, to better managing supply and intervening and reforming local markets. The Programme’s purpose was to consider the development of local authority services and the expansion of a local market of community-based enterprises which could include co-operatives, mutual and community interest companies.
- 3.4 The ‘Childrens Market Reform Programme - Blueprint for Change’ document published in October 2019 set out a whole-system approach to reform and a series of interdependent projects working simultaneously on placement finding improvements, in-house foster care offer, the independent fostering marketplace and risk mitigation. One of the successes of the Programme has been the development of a new commissioning vehicle, the Liverpool City Region Partner Provider Arrangement, launched in 2020, to become the primary interface with local providers committed to delivering quality and value to local authorities and Children Looked After.
- 3.5 In 2019, Liverpool City Region Children’s Commissioners approached the organisation identified in the exempt Appendix 1 to this report with a mandate for wider market reform from the Directors of Children’s Services to help design a new approach that could meet significant local challenges in the residential market. The organisation has a good track record in service design, used by local authorities, funders and providers from across the North West to interrogate long-standing challenges in communities, bringing people and partners to work collaboratively and creating impactful solutions using evidence-based approaches, and actively implementing new ideas.
- 3.6 **THE PROPOSAL**
The organisation identified in the exempt Appendix 1 to this report has set out an ambitious proposal to set up a new social enterprise that will create a new ethical, sustainable network of residential care homes that significantly improve the life chances of children living in care. Their aim is not to simply replicate existing children’s homes models but to develop a network of homes that deliver greater quality, with more comprehensive support to transform opportunities for children and young people.

- 3.7 Their overarching plan is to establish 10 homes to be operational across the Liverpool City Region, in a two-phased approach. Phase 1 will see the set-up of four 4-bed homes across the region with a further six homes established in phase 2, learning from the previous phase and linked to surplus reinvestment. Phase 2 would only commence if several conditions were met from the first phase. This plan will see the voluntary/social enterprise sector of the market increase from 4% to around 14%, whilst simultaneously improve outcomes for young people.
- 3.8 The organisation is seeking financial assistance from social investors plus local authorities for funding for phase 1. The Council is being requested to provide a £1,000,000 loan for this initial investment, on commercial terms. This will be used to support the social enterprise organisation to:
- Provide initial rental allocation or purchase new properties and accounts for the need to expend capital to refurbish/renovate properties prior to opening;
 - Take account of a predicted time-lag (void costs) of approximately 4 -6 months prior to young people living in the home for building renovations, staff recruitment, Ofsted registration etc;
 - Enable recruitment, selection and training of employees as well as start-up salaries prior to full functioning of the homes; and
 - Secure access onto the North West Flexible Purchasing Scheme.
- 3.9 **Wirral homes**
Phase one of this project will see two 4-bed residential homes built in Wirral and a further two 4-bed homes would be built in phase 2. In phase one, the focus of the homes will be:
- Social Emotional Mental Health residential care provision;
 - Mixed gender and caring predominantly for young people aged 12-16 years but with a strong focus on support towards independence;
 - Comprehensive staffing model up to 1:1 support during peak hours and based on need;
 - A Child Psychologist on the team to support the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people in each of the homes;
 - Centralised training and development support to upskill staff and create a sustainable workforce capable of producing the registered managers of the future;
 - A service delivery model based on international evidence and best practice;
 - Values-based recruitment assessing behavioural and technical competencies,
 - an offer of intensive training and Continuous Professional Development setting a new standard in the sector;
 - A cost model that is fixed for a minimum 3 years;
 - Employment and training local partnerships developed with employers;
 - Services rooted in their local communities enabling stronger links to wider local offer e.g. sports, mental health, lower-level youth service provisions, other local providers delivering creative arts, music etc.
- 3.10 In phase two, the focus will be all the above plus the potential to create models of care for young people looked after where currently on the Wirral it is difficult to meet their needs, such as:
- step-down residential care for children and young people leaving secure accommodation;

- provision for children returning to Wirral from out of borough placements;
- a defined local offer for young people exposed to criminal exploitation where it is safe for them to stay on the Wirral;

3.11 The timescales for Phase 1 from commencement to implementation is August 2021 to March 2022 and Phase 2, January 2023 to September 2023.

3.12 Once the homes are established the Council would commission placements through a Framework, assuming the identified organisation has achieved OFSTED registration and admission to the North West Flexible Purchasing Scheme.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The request for £1,000,000 financial assistance from the Council is to secure the necessary start up funding required to establish children’s homes in Wirral.

4.2 The report proposes that a £1m loan is approved in principle to allow the phased release of funds to support the organisation identified in the exempt Appendix 1 to this report.

4.3 Conditions would apply to the overdraft/loan and may include:

- That the organisation would need to evidence backing or support through, for example, a letter of comfort from organisational backers/investors;
- To seek to have the value of the construction works as security;
- To only release the funds as and when required ensuring that the organisation can evidence planned expenditure as well as proof of defrayment to release funds. This would allow the Council to prevent the full £1m being fully at risk should any material issues arise;
- To review the loan facility regularly. This is to allow alternative solutions to be explored to replace the loan facility with a potentially different offer that would be lower risk without causing a delay in the project. This could include use of other funders, Council ownership of the properties through the capital programme.

4.4 A full loan agreement will be drafted detailing the specific terms of the loan and the risk mitigation factors following a due diligence exercise to be carried out by the Council’s Finance department. In order to ensure that the loan facility is compliant with rules relating to subsidy control it will have to be on commercial terms that would be acceptable to an investor on the open market. For that reason it is not possible to indicate at this stage the precise terms of any loan. Further due diligence work needs to be done and reported back to this Committee.

4.5 This investment is anticipated to deliver future financial savings as the re-payments made under the proposed loan arrangement should provide an income stream for the Council.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A formal loan agreement will be drawn up between the Council and the recipient of the loan, setting out the conditions which govern the terms of the loan.
- 5.2 The loan contemplated as part of the proposal set out in this report is likely to fall under the category of a public subsidy under the 'UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement' (UK-EU TCA), which has replaced the previous State Aid regime post-Brexit. A subsidy can be summarised as a financial contribution provided by a public authority, including the Council, which confers a benefit on the recipient. A financial contribution includes but is not limited to measures such as a direct transfer of funds, such as a loan as described here but also potential transfers of funds, for example a guarantee or foregone revenue.
- 5.3 To avoid breaching the subsidy regime the Council will need to show that the decision to grant the loan is based on an economic evaluation comparable to that which a rational market operator would have carried out in the same circumstances. This is known as the Market Economy Operator Principle (or MEOP) test. Whilst the Council would be afforded a margin of discretion by the Courts when taking an investment decision of this sort, the economic evaluation undertaken should be based on objective criteria and is to be carried out by an expert with the appropriate skill and expertise. This will form a key part of the due diligence exercise and will require a detailed business case to enable that to happen.
- 5.4 Commissioning of any placements in any residential care facility would need to be undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations and the Council's contract procedure rules.
- 5.5 A formal legal agreement would be entered into which would set out the terms and conditions of the loan to mitigate against any adverse financial or reputational impact on the Council.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no significant Information Technology issues arising out of the report.
- 6.2 There are no significant staffing issues arising out of the report. However, officers from across several departments across the council have been involved in discussions with the organisation and will continue to be involved through overseeing various outcomes of the project from a Council perspective.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Risks to the Council include:
- Failure of the organisation to pay the loan back due to accrued 'bad debt': Any loan needs to be assessed under Accounting Standards for its potential bad debt provision. This would mean that the Council would have to set aside revenue or reserves to cover this risk assessment. The benefit of this model is that the organisation appointed will have access to social investment mitigating the risk of 'bad debt'.

- Failure of the organisation to pay the loan back due to voids/other financial challenges. Any capital loan made by the Council in connection with this Project must be on commercial terms and at or above commercial interest rates to ensure compliance with subsidy law. However the commercial interest rates may not be affordable to the organisation as it has no income or assets and may not achieve a turnover for a significant period. A provision would be placed in the loan agreement for a redemption of the loan should the partner provider cease to be able to meet re- payment terms.
- Failing to deliver the programme outlined and the children’s homes on Wirral: The loan agreement will include conditions for repayment of the capital plus interest by the organisation if the construction / refurbishment of the children’s homes is not completed, albeit there is always a risk that the organisation may not be able to repay all or some of the outstanding loan amount.
- The Project will not address the immediate requirements of looked after children in Wirral to be housed within the borough and may not achieve this for a considerable period of time: A further report to this Committee will, amongst other matters, set out the detailed milestones for the delivery for the Project.
- Reputational damage should the homes fail to obtain registration or are do not deliver on the quality of provision promised: The loan will be released in tranches and information as to the various milestones will be sought by the Council as a condition of the release of staged payments.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Fundamental to the development of new residential models has been understanding what young people want and need. Their views and aspirations have been integral to shaping and designing the models outlined. They have said:

*“Good quality homes and accommodation for us are what we want **you** to make **your** priority”*

“We want to be supported by people who care”

“We want to be near our family, school and friends’

- 8.2 The Chair and Spokespersons of the Children, Young People and Education Committee have been briefed on the proposal and regular progress updates have been presented to Corporate Parenting Board. Further regular detailed briefings will be provided to the Chair and Spokespersons. As this is an in-principle decision a further report will need to be brought back to this Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. There are no equality implications arising from the proposals within this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There is the opportunity during any purchase, lease or refurbishment of property to ensure that a low carbon footprint design is undertaken.
- 10.2 The recommendations contained in this report are expected to have a neutral effect on emissions and greenhouse gases.

REPORT AUTHOR: Anne-Marie Carney
Childrens Commissioning Manager

APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Details of the organisation which is the subject of the recommended loan arrangements.

Appendix 1 of this report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of an organisation and is deemed to be exempt from disclosure under paragraph 3, Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Children's Market Reform Programme - Blueprint for Change' document published in October 2019

[LCR Market Reform Programme.pdf \(wirral.gov.uk\)](#)

- *Social Pedagogy and the Children's Workforce:*
<https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2007/08/08/social-pedagogy-and-the-childrens-workforce/>
- *Pedagogy – a holistic, personal approach to work with children and young people, across services European models for practice, training, education and qualification 2009*
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/82095.pdf>
- *Introducing Social Pedagogy into Residential Child Care in England 2008 report*
http://www.sppa-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/introducing_sp_into_rcc_in_england_feb08.pdf
- *The Relevance of Social Pedagogy in Working with Young People in Residential Care 2011*
<http://thempra.org.uk/downloads/Essex%20Social%20Pedagogy.pdf>
- *2019 Social Pedagogy-informed Residential Child Care*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330766123_Social_pedagogy-informed_residential_child_care

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet - Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy	March 2019

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Date 14/06/2021

REPORT TITLE:	SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY SERVICE UPDATE
REPORT OF:	JAMES BACKHOUSE – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an update on the Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services that support young people in education.

This update links to the SEND Improvement Plan which underpins the SEND Strategy 2020-2024, agreed by the Committee in December 2020.

The current breakdown of children with SEND on Wirral:

- 18.5% pupils with SEND, this is an increase from 17.9% at Q3 in 2020/2021.
- The number of Early Years children with SEND is 7.5%, this is an increase from 6.0% in Q3 in 2020/2021.

The current breakdown of children with an EHCP on Wirral:

- Compared to the national average of 2.1%, Wirral’s total 0-25 population with an EHCP remains unchanged at 3.3% at the end of 2020/2021.
- In relation to Children Looked After, the number of children with an EHCP is 8.7% which is an increase from 7.6% in Q3 2020/2021.
- In relation to young people under Child Protection, the number with an EHCP is 5.9% which is an increase from 4.2% in Q3 2020/2021

In relation to referrals for EHCP’s and completion within the statutory 20-week timeline:

- In comparing the first 4 months to previous years for EHCP assessments, in 2021, 256 EHCP assessments have been requested, compared with 278 in 2020 and 189 in 2019.
- The percentage issued on Wirral within the statutory 20 week timeline continues to drop from 91% in Q2 , 25% in Q3 and now 21% in Q4 2021, compared to the most recent figure of 60.1% nationally.

In relation to the statutory services that support the EHCP process:

- Speech and Language Therapy EHCP Advice response compliance for February to April was 99.0%, with only one late response.
- Educational Psychological Advice submitted within 6-week statutory timescale for the Spring Term 2021 is at 33%. When this figure is adjusted in line with local practice, to account for exceptional circumstances, the percentage rises to 35%.
- When comparing Educational Psychological Advice to previous years for the Spring Term, in 2020 the percentage within the 6-week timeline was 52% and in 2019 the percentage was 56%.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is recommended to:

1. Note of the current position of the SEND Service and performance outcomes for the Directorate in relation to SEND.
2. Agree to receive a further update in three months on progress towards completing EHCP assessments within the statutory timeframe.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Children, Young People and Education Committee has a role to play in ensuring that the local authority and partners are working collectively to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The SEND service update provides an opportunity for Committee to understand the actions being taken to address the current performance outcomes and seeks endorsement for the actions being taken.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The SEND service update articulates the processes that have been put in place to provide direction and accountability for improvement.
- 3.2 Benchmarking comparisons of other local authorities have taken place in relations to the number of officers employed in relation to workload.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 At its meeting of the 28th January, the Children, Young People and Education Committee endorsed the progress made in relation to the SEND improvement plan.

This SEND service update articulates the current performance in relation to the SEND improvement plan.

- 3.2 The SEND improvement plan is aligned to the SEND Strategic Plan. At its meeting of the 1st December, the Children, Young People and Education Committee agreed the SEND Strategy 2020-2024. The Strategy sets out the local area's priorities over the next four years for improving services, support and outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The Strategy is aligned to Wirral's aim to secure brighter futures for young people and families and deliver services which help people live happy, healthy, independent lives.
- 3.3 In response to the current challenges faced in relation to compliance and completion of EHCP assessments the following actions are taking place:
- A review of the SEND assessment team has taken place. Current vacancies will be filled with permanent staff to address the challenge of capacity in completing EHCP assessments within the statutory 20-week timeframe.
 - A review of provision for young people requiring Special School places for September 2021 has taken place, additional capacity has been agreed, to sustain the additional demand the LA is currently facing.
 - A review of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is currently underway, this will have a focus on evaluating the spend of the High Needs Block. A DSG management plan will be produced, allowing for a longer-term approach for SEND provision on Wirral. This will be in-line with the SEND Strategy agreed by members in December 2020.
 - In relation to the challenges faced by the Educational Psychology (EP) service to deliver assessments within the relevant time frame, the service has struggled to recruit to vacant positions within the team. Previous recruitment processes have taken place with no success and a short-term solution to address the current capacity challenge is being implemented.
 - Concerns in relation to EP recruitment have been shared with the DFE, who have confirmed this is a national challenge.
 - A further recruitment process to address EP vacancies will take place during the summer term.

Monitoring and review processes in place to address the challenges in relation to compliance and completion of EHCP assessments:

- SEND operational group meet monthly to review progress against key performance measures.
- Monthly data reports to identify changes in relation to key performance indicators.
- Weekly meeting between key LA officers to address completion of EHCP assessments within statutory timeframes.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising out of the report. However, if the outcomes of the SEND service do not achieve expected standards within an appropriate time frame, this may result in there being financial implications for the Council and/or wider financial implications in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant. Members of the committee will be

informed of any financial implications at the next update in relation to the SEND improvement plan.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The report recognises and responds to the requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the statutory responsibilities on local authorities regarding how services and support are delivered for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities.
- 5.2 We are likely to face legal challenges if we do not meet our statutory duty.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no resource implications arising out of the report. Delivery of the action plan is carried out using existing resources. The Committee will be informed should there be any resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The local authority and partners are committed to driving improvements across the local area to support improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Failure to do so will mean that children and young people may not be provided with the right support and intervention to enable them to achieve their aspirations both now and in the longer-term.
- 7.2 The local authority and partners are inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission in relation to how the local area effectively identifies, meets the need, and improves outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Improvement which is aligned to statutory requirements and responds to the needs of the local area, is essential to demonstrate to regulators that Wirral has effectively delivered on the SEND Reforms as set out in 2014 Children and Families Act.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation in relation to the performance of the SEND has taken place with Primary, Secondary and Special School Headteacher groups during the summer term. They have outlined their view of the current situation in relation to SEND and are keen to support improvement in this area.
- 8.2 Discussion with parents and young people in relation to SEND have taken place to capture their experiences on Wirral.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

(c) No because the quality impact assessment has already been completed for the SEND Strategy and can be found here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and->

[neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments](https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments) The EIA has been reviewed since its completion six months ago and remains valid.

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO2.

REPORT AUTHOR: Name James Backhouse
Title Assistant Director: Education
email: jamesbackhouse@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[SEND Strategy 2020-2024](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children, Young People and Education Committee	28 th January 2021
Children, Young People and Education Committee	1 st December 2020
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	28 th January 2020

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	APPOINTMENT OF PANELS, STATUTORY / ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES 2021/2022
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to enable the Children, Young People and Education Committee to review the continuing need for various panels, statutory / advisory committees and working parties, and to appoint members and named deputies to serve on those (including the statutory committees and panels) that are to be retained in 2021/2022.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Committee is requested to:

- (1) authorise the Monitoring Officer as proper officer to carry out the wishes of the Group Leaders in allocating Members to membership of the Statutory and Advisory Committees listed in the report and to appoint those Members with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members.
- (2) note the current constitution and membership of the School Appeals Panel.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Committee is required to appoint the membership of various panels, statutory / advisory committees and working parties, which fall under its remit at the start of each Municipal Year.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other options considered include appointing a different number of members to the statutory and advisory bodies.

3.0 STATUTORY COMMITTEES AND PANELS

- 3.1 The following statutory committees and panels, all of which have full delegated authority, were retained during 2020/2021.

(i). School Appeals Panel

To consider, as part of a statutory review process, appeals against decisions by the Local Authority (or the Governors of voluntary or aided schools) concerning the allocation of places in primary and secondary schools, and decisions by governing bodies concerning the exclusion of pupils.

The School Appeals Panel is drawn from a “pool” of lay members or members with experience in education. However, Councillors are ineligible to serve on the Appeals Panels for schools under local authority control.

(ii). Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE)

SACRE is responsible for advising the local authority on matters concerning the teaching of religious education and collective acts of worship; it decides on applications for determination of cases in which requirements for Christian collective worship are not to apply; and may require the local authority to review its agreed syllabus. The membership should be politically proportionate, with 6 members being 3 Labour, 2 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrats.

(iii). Wirral Schools Forum (Funding Consultative Group)

The Forum makes recommendations in respect of the allocation of funding to schools and academies from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) received from the DfE. The Forum must be consulted on any changes to Schools and Early Years funding formulae, arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs and funding to meet statutory duties or other agreed commitments. In the composition of the Forum, the Council’s three representatives act only as observers. The membership should be politically proportionate, with 3 members being 2 Labour and 1 Conservative.

4.0 ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

4.1 The following is a list of advisory and consultative bodies that were retained or created in 2020/2021 to assist the Committee in its work.

(i). Young People's Advisory Group

To act as a forum for young people to raise their issues and concerns with local elected members, showcasing youth work delivery across the four constituencies of Wirral.

(ii). Corporate Parenting Panel

Under its Terms of Reference, the Children, Young People and Education Committee is responsible for the appointment of a Sub-Committee and Working Group of five (5) or more members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee. The membership should be politically proportionate, with 5 members being 2 Labour, 2 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrats. Furthermore [two] non-voting co-opted young people with recent (within the last five years) direct experience of being looked after by or receiving services as a care leaver from the Council should be appointed. The Panel has delegated authority to exercise responsibility for the Council's functions relating to the delivery by or on behalf of the Council, of Corporate Parenting functions with the exception to policy decisions which will remain with the Children and Young People's Committee.

(iii). Schools' JCC (formerly Headteachers and Teachers JCC)

To meet with teachers and school representatives to discuss educational issues.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There is a requirement under the Council's Constitution to appoint Members to various panels, advisory committees and working parties.

6.2 There is a requirement under the Admission Appeals Code 2012 to appoint an Independent Appeal Panel to consider Admission Appeals and Exclusion Reviews.

6.3 There is a requirement under the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012 for Local Authorities to constitute a Schools Forum.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT; STAFFING AND ASSETS

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 There is a requirement under the Council's Constitution to appoint Members to various panels, advisory committees and working parties.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

9.1 It is for political groups to decide how they wish to allocate their committee places.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Dan Sharples
Principal Democratic and Member Services Officer
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APPENDICES

A. Statutory and Advisory Committee membership for the last municipal year, 2020/21.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous reports on the appointment of panels, statutory / advisory committees and working parties and amendments made during the year and the Council's Constitution.

Local Government Association Corporate Parenting Resource Park
Admission Appeals Code 2012

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council	28 September 2020
Council	14 May 2019
Council	15 May 2018

STATUTORY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS – MEMBERSHIP FOR 2020/21

(1) STATUTORY COMMITTEES AND PANELS

(i). School Appeals Panel

Richard Agar, Phil Alcock, John Butler, Hayley Brown, Helen Brennan, David Buckley, Holly Burnett, Clare Calkin, Jenny Chapman-Brown, Penny Croft, Robin Duffield, Diane Darker, Paula Dixon, Barbara Egan, Jessica English, Lyn Eaton, Marion Flanagan, Julie Griffiths, Alison Gollins, Rosaleen Grant, Peter Haworth, Ravi Halebeedu Narayana, Colin Harwood, Jane Hunter, Joanne Henharen, Lynn Ireland, Michael Jones, Robert Jones, Gwendoline Kokborg, Steve Kell, Matthew Lloyd Evans, Val Maher, Isobel McDonald Davies, Peter Mawdsley, Terry McKeown, Keryn Malthouse, Neil Orme, Catherine Oakes, Wendy Pullin, Sally Reynolds, Ruth Rogers, Sue Stratton Symes, Keith Shannon, Phil Sheridan David Spencer, Margaret Smith, Angela Stowell-Smith, Vicki Shaw, Brenda Taylor, Brenda Thompson, Christine Taylor, Jack Thomas, Robert Thomas, Jenny Turner, Danielle Vernon, Ann Wells, Moira Whelligan-Fell, Barbara Weir, Andrew Welsh, Ruth Winterton, Hilary Welsh, Kathleen Wylde and Jenny Young

(ii). Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE)

Councillors	George Davies Elizabeth Grey Julie McManus	Deputy – Councillor Tony Jones
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Councillors	Wendy Clements Alison Wright	Deputy – Councillor Paul Hayes
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Councillor	Allan Brame	Deputy – Councillor Dave Mitchell
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(iii). Wirral Schools Forum (Funding Consultative Group)

Observers

Councillors Kate Cannon, Tom Usher
Councillor Wendy Clements

(2) ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

(i). Young People's Advisory Group

Councillors	Kate Cannon Sarah Spoor Tom Usher	Deputy – Councillor Jean Robinson
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Councillors	Wendy Clements Cherry Povall	Deputy – Alison Wright
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Councillor Chris Carubia Deputy – Andy Corkhill

Councillor Chris Cooke Deputy – Pat Cleary

Councillor Moira McLaughlin Deputy – Mike Sullivan

(ii). Corporate Parenting Panel

Councillors Kate Cannon, Tom Usher - Deputy -
Councillors Wendy Clements, Alison Wright - Deputy – Cherry Povall
Councillor Chris Carubia - Deputy -

(iii). Schools’ Joint Consultative Committee

Councillors Kate Cannon Deputies – Sarah Spoor
George Davies Jean Robinson
Tom Usher

Councillors Wendy Clements Deputy - Councillor Alison Wright
Cherry Povall

Councillors Chris Carubia Deputies – Councillors Allan Brame
Andy Corkhill Dave Mitchell



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	2021/22 BUDGET MONITORING AND 22/23 BUDGET PROCESS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

REPORT SUMMARY

On 17 March 2021, the Committee approved the process for monitoring the 2021/22 budget and for commencing the budget setting process for 2022/23. This report highlights these processes and includes further supporting information to ensure they can be followed.

The Committee is aware that the Ministry for Housing, Local Government and Communities have provided a conditional offer of exceptional financial support (capitalisation directive) for 2021/22 of up to £10.7m. One of the conditions of that offer is that the Council will need to provide evidence from the assurance review of the authority’s financial position and its ability to meet any or all of the identified budget gap without any additional borrowing.

Therefore, it is vitally important that the Council has robust processes in place to manage and monitor the in-year financial position, to ensure it is reporting a forecast balanced position to the end of the year and that the process for 22/23 budget setting is underway early so that an agreed budget can be agreed by Full Council in March.

2021/22 Budget Monitoring

The report updates on the position for the 2021/22 budget and the role of the Committees in monitoring the budget during the year. This enables Committees to take ownership of their specific budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets. Supporting information is provided to the Committee in order for this to happen as part of the appendices. The Committee is accountable for ensuring that the committee budget remains within the relevant envelope and will take collective responsibility via the Policy and Resources Committee to ensure that the whole Council budget remains in balance at all times, by agreeing mitigating actions to bring the budget back in line, should a deficit be forecast.

To enable committees to manage and monitor budgets effectively in year, a suite of detailed information will be provided on a quarterly basis:

- Full revenue budget monitoring report for the preceding quarter
- Full list of budget savings proposals and the progress for their achievement
- Full list of reserves allocated to the Committee for future on-off commitments
- Full capital budget monitoring report for the preceding quarter

- Other specific information relevant to the individual committee

In addition, committees who have requested it, will be provided with an exception report on a monthly basis, outside of the quarterly monitoring process. This will be a summary report and will highlight any known significant changes from the previous quarterly forecast that require the committees attention

2022/23 Budget Process

Members will note that one of the key documents required to enable the Council to receive approval for exceptional financial support was a balanced five-year medium term financial plan (MTFP). A summary of this was provided in the budget report to the Committee on 17 March 2021. This document was prepared by Officers and now requires committee oversight and approval. The Committees will consider whether the proposals included in the MTFP for the 2022/23 budget, and beyond, are to be taken forward or whether they are to be replaced by alternative proposals that the committee recommend.

Officers have prepared a suite of documents included within the appendices to support the Committee in its role of contributing to the budget setting process.

Each committee, supported by the officers, is accountable for identifying, developing and agreeing savings proposals during the summer to ensure a draft balanced budget can be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee in October 2021, to enable budget consultation to start in a timely manner in November 2021.

To enable the officer budget proposals to be scrutinised by the Committee, it is recommended that a budget working group be established to consider the content of the MTFP and make recommendations into the committee on the viability of the proposals, the robustness of the pressures/growth items and to recommend any additional proposals that the Committee require officers to prepare.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough and is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Children, Young People and Education committee is recommended to :

1. Note the content of the report and the current forecast position of savings for 2021/22 and the ongoing work being undertaken to mitigate any under-achievement.
2. Agree to include the current proposals within this report from the Medium Term Financial Plan from 2022/23 – 2025/26 and the Director of Children, Families and Education to develop them into full business cases, where appropriate, for inclusion in the 2022/23 budget proposals to Policy and Resources Committee at its October meeting for approval.
3. Convenes a series of budget workshops to identify any alternative savings/income/reductions in pressures to ensure that a full suite of costed and deliverable proposals can be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee at its October meeting for approval.

4. Commence the Zero Based Budgeting project within the budget workshops to contribute to the overall savings target of £170k in 2021/22

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The 2021/22 Budget was agreed at Full Council on 1 March 2021. This budget was made up of savings proposals, pressures/growth items and funding that were based on either actual known figures or best estimates available at the time. At any point during the year, these estimated figures could change and need to be monitored closely to ensure, if adverse, mitigating actions can be taken immediately to ensure a balanced forecast budget can be reported to the end of the year.
- 1.2 The 2022/23 budget is required to be agreed by full Council no later than 11 March each year. Members should be engaged as early as possible in this process to have time to consider and recommend proposals to be able to present a balanced budget to full Council and to allow sufficient time for a meaningful public consultation exercise.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Committee could choose to not engage in the budget monitoring process for 2021/22 which could result in an overspend position for 2021/22 being reported.
- 2.2 The Committee could choose to not engage in the budget setting process for 2022/23 which could result in the inability to recommend a balanced budget to full Council in March 2022.
- 2.3 Both of these options would result in an unbalanced budget which is unlawful. Under these circumstances, the Section 151 Officer would be required to issue a section 114 notice and report this to all Members of Full Council. The outcome of which would result in intervention by Government
- 2.4 The Committee can decide to establish their own process for monitoring the 2021/22 in-year budget and setting the 2022/23 budget. This would need to be agreed at the 29 June Policy and Resources Committee which reduces the time available to implement mitigating actions, where an adverse 2021/22 forecast maybe found.
- 2.5 This also reduces the time available for the identification and agreement of proposals to be included in the 2022/23 budget. Either of these delays could put the ability to present a balanced 21/22 and 22/23 budget at risk and increase the risk.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 At its Committee in March, the Policy and Resources Committee agreed the process for managing and monitoring the 2021/22 budget. This process is as follows:

2021/22 Budget Monitoring

- 3.2 Committee's will be accountable for ensuring that the budget remains within the relevant envelope for each committee and will take collective responsibility via the Policy and Resources Committee to ensure that the whole Council budget remains in

balance at all times or provides mitigating actions to bring the budget back in line, should a year end deficit be forecast.

- 3.3 To enable committees to manage and monitor budgets effectively in year, a suite of detailed information will be provided on a quarterly basis:
- Full revenue budget monitoring report for the preceding quarter (available at the end of Quarter 1)
 - Committee Budget Book (to be provided at the budget workshops)
 - Full list of budget savings proposals and the progress for their achievement (Appendix 1)
 - Full list of reserves allocated to the Committee for future one-off commitments (Appendix 2)
 - Full capital budget monitoring report for the preceding quarter (available at the end of Quarter 1)
 - Other specific information relevant to the individual committee
- 3.4 Committees had previously requested a budget book that detailed the individual budgets for each committee. The full budget are extremely detailed and could contain hundreds of separate lines and would be more conducive to a workshop where these can be scrutinised and discussed in detail. It is recommended that a budget working group is established by the Committee, convened immediately, that would meet throughout the summer to:
- Oversee the monitoring of the 2021/22 in-year budget
 - Review the detailed budgets for the committee
 - Undertake the Zero Based Budgeting exercise (paragraph 3.13)
 - Identify proposals/scrutinise pressures to be included for the 2022/23 budget (paragraphs 3.19)
- 3.5 Committees have the autonomy to vire (transfer) budgets from one function to another within their overall committee budget envelope. Virements will be also agreed by the Section 151 Officer as there are certain conditions where budgets are not allowed to be vired for the purposes of gaining a specific benefit e.g. where budgets from supplies budget headings are vired to employees budget headings to take advantage of an uplift for pay inflation.
- 3.6 Each committee will be responsible for remaining within its overall budget envelope and not overspending. Where an adverse variance is forecast, each committee will be required to take remedial action to bring the budget back in line and ensure that overspends are mitigated.
- 3.7 Where a committee has taken all possible steps for remedial action and is unable to mitigate an overspend, this must be reported to the P&R Committee who will take an organisational view of how this adverse variance will be managed. There must be immediate action agreed to ensure a forecast balanced budget can be reported, and this will be monitored by the P&R Committee.
- 3.8 Whilst each committee is required to remain within its annual budget envelope, there maybe reasons for committees to report a favourable variance in-year. Committees

wishing to use any forecast underspend must have approval from the P&R Committee to do this. The council cannot be in a situation where one committee is forecasting an overspend that it is unable to mitigate, and another committee is forecasting an underspend and utilises this for its own purposes.

- 3.9 The P&R Committee has overall responsibility for taking any necessary steps required to ensure a whole Council budget can report a balanced budget throughout the year.

2021/22 Interim Budget Forecast

- 3.10 As at June 2021, the majority of the approved 2021/22 savings are on target to be achieved. One saving is at risk of not being fully achieved relating to the Pause Programme. This saving is predicated on reducing the number of babies going immediately into care after birth by supporting potential would be mothers with family planning matters.
- 3.11 There is a natural delay in being able to measure the number of babies being taken into care as the placement would not have happened until after birth. Therefore, it is unlikely that this saving will not be achieved in-year. The saving is part of a two year saving that was originally anticipated to realise £567k in 2021/22 and £128k in 2022/23. As a result of the delay, both savings have been pushed back a year and will now be achieved in 2022/23 and 2023/24.
- 3.12 It is anticipated at this stage that alternative mitigating savings could be found to offset the gap and an update will be provided on this at the end of June monitoring report (Quarter 1).

Zero Based Budgeting

- 3.13 As part of the 2021/22 budget, a savings proposal of £170k to carry out a zero based budgeting exercise was agreed. Zero basing is a method of budgeting in which all expenditure must be justified before it is agreed. The process starts from a 'zero base' i.e. a zero budget and every function within the area is analysed for its needs and costs. Budgets are then built around what is needed for the following period, regardless of whether each budget is higher or lower than the previous one.
- 3.14 The process can be time-consuming and is usually undertaken in advance of the following years budget setting. The proposal for £170k saving recognises that this is a part year saving and should provide an indication of further savings that could be achieved in 2022/23.
- 3.15 In order for this saving to be achieved in-year, it is recommended that Members of the budget workshops, supported by Officers, start the zero basing in July. Officers will shortly be undertaking a 'spring-clean' of budgets to ensure that the current activity is correctly reflected in the budgets in order for the zero-basing to be undertaken effectively.

2022/23 Budget Setting

- 3.16 The process for setting the 2022/23 will commence immediately. Officers, to satisfy the requirement of MHCLG for exceptional financial support, have compiled a five-year medium term financial plan (MTFP). Committees will consider whether the proposals included in the MTFP for the 2022/23 budget, and beyond, are to be taken forward or whether they are to be replaced by alternative proposals that the committees recommend.
- 3.17 The budget gap for the Council for 2022/23 currently stand at £19.5m. At the Policy and Resources Committee on 17 March, a full list of proposals were included in the budget report that balanced this gap. Since then, as Officers have been reviewing these proposals, some of these values are currently at risk and there now remains a forecast unmitigated budget gap, of around £5m.
- 3.18 In readiness for the first committees of the new municipal year, Officers have prepared a suite of documents for the committees. These are:
- List of future years savings and pressures included within the MTFP (Appendix 3)
 - Summary business cases for each of the savings' proposals in the MTFP for 2022/23 and whether any specific consultation is required for each one (to be includes as part of the budget workshops)
 - Summary business cases for each of the perceived pressures/growth items in the MTFP with supporting evidence as to how they have been estimated (To be included as part of the budget workshops)
 - Oversight of all savings proposals and growth/pressures over the medium term for Members to ensure no duplication or contradiction across Committees (To be included as part of the budget workshops)
- 3.19 Included within the MTFP for 2022/23 are the following proposals:
- 3.19.1 Cessation of Post-16 non-statutory Home to School transport. This forms part of a £1m saving that cuts across the whole organisation for Transport
- 3.19.2 Containing demand pressure for Children's Services – Demand within the Directorate is forecast to increase, and a pressure is included within the MTFP to reflect the anticipated increase. The Directorate have a number of preventative services that are currently in place to mitigate an increase in demand e.g. the recent paper to the Committee on the establishment of a property for children with autism supported by the NHS. This preventative work is currently being mapped and business cases being developed to be presented at the budget workshops
- 3.19.3 Looked After Children Residential Homes – subject to a separate report on the Committee agenda
- 3.19.4 Youth Offending Service – removal of a post
- 3.19.5 Supporting Families Grant exit strategy – the Council is currently in receipt of a grant to support families (previously called Troubles Families). This grant was due to end in 2021/22 but was extended for

a further 12 months. An assumption has been made that the grant will terminate in 2022/23 therefore an exit strategy is required to ensure the Council is not left with a unfunded liability next year. This will be brought to the budget workshops.

- 3.19.6 All Age Disability – the Council have been supported by the Local Government Association in identifying the activity for this saving and the findings of that report will be presented to the budget workshops.
- 3.20 Each committee, via the budget working groups, will be accountable for identifying, developing and agreeing savings proposals during the summer to meet the 2022/23 budget gap and ensure a draft balanced budget can be considered by the P&R Committee in October 2021, to enable budget consultation to start in a timely manner in November 2021.
- 3.21 It is recommended that the budget workshops not only identify additional savings proposals to meet the gap but to scrutinise and challenge the pressures and growth items included in the MTFP for 2022/23 to see if these can be reduced.

Exceptional Financial Support

- 3.22 Members will be aware that in March, MHCLG provided a conditional offer of Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) to the Council of up to £10.7m to support the indirect pressures forecast as an ongoing impact of Covid-19 in the 2022/23 budget. One of the conditions of that offer was that an external assurance review would be commissioned by MHCLG.
- 3.23 In preparedness for this review, the Council has been working with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to carry out an interim assessment of MTFP and a high level review of the cost of the services the Council provides. Further information regarding EFS can be found at Appendix 4.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report describes the process for 2021/22 budget monitoring and 2022/23 budget setting. Included within it are the current financial forecasts for both years. Therefore, all the financial implications are included within the body of the report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The role of the Policy and Resources Committee, in consultation with the respective Policy and Service Committees, has been charged by Council to formulate a draft Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and budget to recommend to the Council.
- 5.2 The Council must set the budget in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and approval of a balanced budget each year is a statutory responsibility of the Council. Sections 25 to 29 of the Local Government Act 2003 impose duties on the Council in relation to how it sets and monitors its budget. These provisions require the Council to make prudent allowance for the risk and uncertainties in its budget and regularly monitor its finances during the year. The

legislation leaves discretion to the Council about the allowances to be made and action to be taken.

- 5.3 Section 30(6) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides that the Council has to set its budget before 11th March in the financial year preceding the one in respect of which the budget is set.
- 5.4 The provisions of section 25, Local Government Act 2003 require that, when the Council is making the calculation of its budget requirement, it must have regard to the report of the chief finance (s.151) officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
- 5.5 Consultation must take place in accordance with the Council's duties under section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The detailed summary of responses provided are attached in the appendix to this report. It must be borne in mind that this is consultation on the budget proposals, not on the decision to take whatever decision is implied by the adoption of that budget. The consultation process, including the Council's consideration of the responses, is required to comply with the following overarching obligations (unless detailed statutory rules supplant these):
 - (a) Consultation must be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage.
 - (b) The proposer must give sufficient reasons for its proposals to allow consultees to understand them and respond to them properly.
 - (c) Consulters must give sufficient time for responses to be made and considered.
 - (d) Responses must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the decision. This is the same whether or not a public body was required to consult or chooses to do so. This is because all of those rules are aspects of an overriding requirement for 'fairness'. The process must be substantively fair and have the appearance of fairness. The setting of the budget and council tax by Members involves their consideration of choices.
- 5.6 When considering options, Members must bear in mind their fiduciary duty to the council taxpayers of Wirral. Members must have adequate evidence on which to base their decisions on the level of quality at which services should be provided.
- 5.7 Where a service is provided pursuant to a statutory duty, it would not be lawful to fail to discharge it properly or abandon it, and where there is discretion as to how it is to be discharged, that discretion should be exercised reasonably.
- 5.8 The report sets out the relevant considerations for Members to consider during their deliberations and Members are reminded of the need to ignore irrelevant considerations. Members have a duty to seek to ensure that the Council acts lawfully. Members must not come to a decision which no reasonable authority could come to; balancing the nature, quality and level of services which they consider should be provided, against the costs of providing such services.
- 5.9 There is a particular requirement to take into consideration the Council's fiduciary duty and the public sector equality duty in coming to its decision.

- 5.10 The public sector equality duty is that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- 5.11 Any decision made in the exercise of any function is potentially open to challenge if the duty has been disregarded. The duty applies both to Full Council when setting the budget and to the Policy and Services Committees when considering decisions.
- 5.12 Once a budget is in place, Council has delegated responsibility to the Policy and Services Committees to implement it. The Committees may not act contrary to the Budget without consent of Council other than in accordance with the Procedure Rules set out at Part 4(3) of the Constitution.
- 5.13 It is essential, as a matter of prudence that the financial position continues to be closely monitored. In particular, Members must satisfy themselves that sufficient mechanisms are in place to ensure both that savings are delivered and that new expenditure is contained within the available resources. Accordingly, any proposals put forward must identify the realistic measures and mechanisms to produce those savings.
- 5.14 Members are also individually reminded that Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to this meeting. Members who are two months or more in arrears with their Council Tax must declare this to the meeting and must not vote on budget recommendations, as to do otherwise can be a criminal offence.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 At this time, there are no additional resource implications as these have already been identified for the proposals agreed and submitted. However, where the budget is unbalanced and further proposals are required, then there will be resource implications, and these will be addressed within the relevant business cases presented to the Committee.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Council's ability to maintain a balanced budget for 2021/22 is dependent on a static financial position. This is an impossible scenario due to estimated figures being provided in the calculation for the 2021/22 budget, albeit the best estimates that were available at the time, plus any amount of internal and external factors that could impact on the budget position in year. Examples of which are new legislation, increased demand, loss of income, increased funding, decreased funding, inability to recruit to posts, ongoing impact of the pandemic etc
- 7.2 A robust monitoring and management process for the 2021/22 budget must be agreed and in place as soon as possible. If at any time during the year an adverse position is forecast, remedial action must be agreed and implemented immediately to ensure the budget can be brought back to balanced position.

- 7.3 The risk of this not being able to be achieved could mean that the Council does not have enough funding to offset its expenditure commitments for the year and therefore not be able report a balanced budget at the end of the year. This could result in the Section 151 Officer issuing a Section 114 notice.
- 7.4 The budget agreed by full Council on 1 March 2021 for 2021/22 was underpinned by an offer of a maximum of £10.7m exceptional financial support provided by MHCLG. This offer was conditional and is described in paragraph 3.21. If the Council does not accept recommendations made from the external assurance review, this may put the offer of the exceptional financial support at risk. If the Council is not able to report a balanced budget without some or all of the exceptional financial support, this may also result in the Section 151 Officer issuing a Section 114 notice in year.
- 7.5 A key risk to the Council's financial plans is that funding and demand assumptions in particular can change as more information becomes available. As such, the MTFP is regularly reviewed and updated as part of routine financial management.
- 7.6 Under the system of retained Business Rates, Authorities benefit from a share of any increased revenues but are liable for at least a share of any falls in income (subject to safety net triggers) and any non-collection. This includes reductions arising from appeals relating to past years which partially fall on the Authority. These risks are mitigated through a combination of the operation of the Collection Fund, General Fund Balances and a Business Rates Equalisation Reserve.
- 7.7 The MTFP currently presents a balanced budget over a five-year period. If the committees are not minded to accept the proposals included by officers in the MTFP, especially for the 2022/23 budget, alternative proposals need to be identified and agreed as soon as possible. A delay in agreeing these may put the timetable for setting the 2022/23 at risk and may result in a balanced budget not being identified in time for the deadline of 11 March 2022.
- 7.8 The five-year MTFP is based on current estimated information available. A four-year comprehensive spending review (CSR) is anticipated from Government from 2022/23. Assumptions have been made in the current MTFP for income and funding from business rates and council tax and social care grants as the main sources of funding. If there is an adverse change to these assumptions as a result of the CSR, additional savings proposals or reduced expenditure would need to be identified as soon as possible to ensure a balanced five-year MTFP can be achieved. Committees will be kept updated with any announcements regarding the CSR through the year.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in arriving at the governance process for the 2021/22 budget monitoring process and the 2022/23 budget setting process. SLT have compiled the MTFP.
- 8.2 Since the budget was agreed at Full Council on 1 March, some proposals may have been the subject of further consultation with Members, Customer and Residents.

The details of these are included within the individual business cases or are the subject of separate reports to the Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2 At this time, there are no further equality implications as these have already been identified for the proposals agreed and submitted. However, where the budget is unbalanced and further proposals are required, then there may be equality implications associated with these, and these will be addressed within the relevant business cases presented to the Committee.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 At this time, there are no additional environmental and climate implications as these have already been identified for the proposals agreed and submitted. However, where the budget is unbalanced and further proposals are required, then there may be environment and climate implications associated with these that will be addressed within the relevant business cases presented to the Committee.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Achievement of 2021/22 approved savings
Appendix 2 Committee Reserves
Appendix 3 Future years savings proposals and Growth/Pressures
Appendix 4 Exceptional Financial Support

BACKGROUND PAPERS

MHCLG Exceptional Financial Support Offer Letter

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	17 March 2021
Full Council	1 March 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	7 October 2020

APPENDIX 1

Progress on the achievement of approved 2021/22 Budget Savings

Saving Title	Agreed Value	Forecast Value	RAG Rating	Comments
Semi-Independent Living	£0.5m	£0.5m	Green	On target to be achieved
Pause Programme	£0.57m	£0m	Red	Will not be achieved due to the delay in the ability for the saving to be made as a result of the specific cohort of people affected
Modernisation and Social Care Staff Efficiencies	£0.102m	£0.102m	Green	On target to be achieved
Containing Demand pressures	£1.0m	£1.0m	Green	On target to the achieved
Explore reduction in Youth provision (reduction to Hive funding)	£0.2m	£0.2m	Green	On target to be achieved
Youth Offending Service	£0.025m	£0.025m	Green	On target to be achieved
TOTAL	£2.397M	£1.827M		

APPENDIX 2

List of Reserves as at 1 April 2021

	£	£
Schools		
School Balances	-13,480,524	
Statutory Duties & Services to Schools Improvement	-300,000	-13,780,524
Schools Capital:		
Pensby Sports Complex Sinking Fund	-41,262	
Meadowside Pool Refurbishment Works	-60,465	
Pensby Primary / Stanley Kitchen Equipment	-11,510	
Somerville	-5,000	-118,237
Children and Families		
Intensive Family Intervention Project	-505,297	
School Improvement Monitoring & Brokerage	-422,619	
SEND OFSTED Inspection Support	-105,000	
Birkenhead & Tranmere Children's Centre – Outdoor Play	-28,816	
Seacombe Children's Centre - Outdoor Play	-50,931	
Help for Young People	-35,925	
Looked After Children Education Services	-107,086	
Local Safeguarding Children's Board	-23,387	
CWDC	-1,718	
Pensby Children's Centre - Outdoor Play	-20,000	
SEND - High Needs	-246,300	-1,547,079
Children and Families Capital		
PFI	-137,823	-137,823
Children, Families and Education Total:		-15,583,663

APPENDIX 3

Future years budget proposals and Pressures/Growth Items

Savings Proposals	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Children Looked After Residential Accommodation	1.0			
Pause Programme		0.28		
All Age Disability	1.0			
Containing demand pressure	1.0	1.50	1.50	
Supporting Families Grant Exit Strategy	1.1			
Youth Offending Service	0.03	0.05		
Total	4.13	1.83	1.50	0
Pressures/Growth Items				
Residential Placements price inflation	0.52	0.54	0.56	0.57
Independent Foster Care price inflation	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.14
Allowances Inflation	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.29
PFI inflation	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.08
Additional demand from referrals	1.20	1.30	1.20	0.85
Supporting families grant ending	1.10			
Total	3.29	2.33	2.25	1.93
Net Pressures	-0.84	-0.63	0.75	1.93

APPENDIX 4

Exceptional Financial Support

In March, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) made an offer of £10.7m to the Council for exceptional financial support, sometimes called a capitalisation direction of capitalisation directive. This means that MHCLG approved the Council, in principle, to borrow £10.7m of funds to help ensure a balanced budget could be agreed by Full Council on 1 March. Borrowing to fund revenue (day to day) expenditure is not normally allowed under law, but on this occasion, a special case was put to HM Treasury and approved.

The Council had not been able to identify sufficient savings to balance the budget, due to additional financial pressures present as a result the outcome of Covid-19. Such pressures include Adults and Childrens Social Care increases, SEN transport increases and Homelessness increases. Ordinarily, a Council would use its reserves and balances to help balance its budget in times of crisis and would not have to apply for exceptional financial support, however the Council does not have the level of reserves and balances to be able to do this.

The borrowing has to be paid back over a 20 year timeframe and costs the Council an additional 1% in interest over and above what it would it normally expect to pay, so it is prudent for the Council to identify any further proposals to reduce the level of exceptional financial support that it requires, so that the interest payments can also reduce.

The offer of exceptional finance support from MHCLG came with conditions which included an external assurance review that would review the authority's financial position and its ability to meet any or all of the identified budget gap without any additional borrowing. Therefore, as part of the external assurance review, MHCLG will be looking for areas that the Council can reduce it's expenditure so that it may not have to provide all or any of the exceptional financial support offered.

This means that a further £10.7m proposals could be recommended to be implemented in year. If the Council fails to comply with MHCLG recommendations, the exceptional financial support may not be provided and a balanced budget could not be forecast to the end of the year.

In this circumstance, the Section 151 Officer would have to issue a Section 114 notice which states that the Councils' expenditure exceeds its funding and this would be reported to Full Council. The outcome of this would result in Government intervention and Commissioners appointed to manage the financial affairs of the Council. During the period of issuing a Section 114 notice, only statutory and contracted expenditure is allowed to take place, all other expenditure must stop.



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 15 June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 4 (APRIL - MARCH 2021)
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the financial monitoring information for the Children, Young People & Education Committee. The report provides Members with an overview of budget performance for the area of activity which falls under the remit of the Committee. The financial information details the projected year-end revenue position, as reported at quarter 4 (April-March) 2020/21.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People & Education Committee are requested to note the projected year-end revenue forecast position of £1.476m favourable and the capital position of £2.8m favourable, as reported at quarter 4 (April-March) of 2020-21.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Regular monitoring and reporting of the Revenue Budgets, savings achievements and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) position enables decisions to be taken faster, which may produce revenue benefits and will improve financial control of Wirral Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other reporting frequencies could be considered, but quarterly reporting is standard practice.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The overall financial forecast of Children, Families and Education shows a full year favourable position of £1.476m. This is a positive change to the forecast position at quarter 3, December 2020 (favourable £0.433m). There are several reasons for this as set out below.
- 3.2 There were a number of one-off implications of Covid actions and funding in 2020/21 which have impacted on the service and financial outturn in a positive way. Grants have been provided outside of the council's budget for crisis management and providing food during school holidays and during school's closures. The humanitarian service has been funding community services that have benefited the families that would normally use many of the service that are provided by Children Services. Also due to the Covid-19 response and the other council initiatives the service has seen a decrease in some budgets that are normally significantly overspent in previous years. An example of this is the children in need budgets which often go to help families in significant poverty by providing food and other essentials. This cost has been picked up by Covid-19 spend from winter pressures and the various tranches of covid grant throughout the year. This saving is not repeatable.
- 3.3 An increase in universal credit of £20 per week reduces some of the pressure on family incomes and therefore it is suspected that a reduction in family breakdowns/family poverty has impacted favourably on the demand for the service. As at quarter 3, national assumptions for the additional demand for Children's Social Care were noted, and Wirral's forecast reflected that, however, the demand has not materialised at this high rate, and therefore the forecast has been reduced. Early indication suggest that demand was only deferred, and a rise is expected still in 2021/22
- 3.4 The service continues to manage the high placement costs but have a favourable forecast variance at quarter 4 of £0.775m for Looked After Children's Placements and allowances. Also there are favourable variances in Early Help and Prevention and Modernisation and Support of £0.929m and £0.529m due to staff being budgeted for higher costs and some projects and contracts being delayed due to the

current government restrictions. The use of £0.721m reserves to fund project and salary costs also contribute to the position.

TABLE 1 2020/21 Children, Families and Education – Service Budget & Forecast

	Budget	Outturn	Variance (+ Fav, - Adv)		Adv/Fav
	£000	£000	£000	%	
Children and Families	48,490	47,715	775	1%	Favourable
Early Help and Prevention	11,770	10,840	929	8%	Favourable
Modernisation and Support	5,032	4,502	529	11%	Favourable
Schools - Core	11,552	11,589	-36	0%	Adverse
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	76,844	74,646	2,197	4%	Favourable
Support / Admin Building Overhead	6,388	6,388	0	0%	
Movement on Reserves	0	721	-721	0%	
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	83,232	81,756	1,476	1%	Favourable

- 3.5 **Children and Families:** Favourable variance of £0.775m (-£0.676m in Quarter 3). Throughout the year placements and allowances have been forecasting a contingency for a 5% increase in demand due to Covid-19. This demand has not arisen in 20/21 due to extra help and funding for families on the edge of care due to the Covid -19 pandemic. Some of the initiatives around residential care during Covid-19 have helped keep costs significantly lower than would be anticipated. Also, the in year establishment of the semi-independent living units which have produced a saving in advance of the planned budget saving next year.
- 3.6 Placements are £0.252m overspent but this was lower than previously forecast due to the in year average price being lower than the regional average. The 20-21 demand for looked after children has been lower than forecast due to the impact of Covid-19 and the interventions from Covid-19 related monies as well as activities in the community including monies and services that have target vulnerable families.
- 3.7 The service has underspent in staffing due to unfilled vacancies of approximately £1m. some are filled by agency, but some posts are not filled due to difficulties in recruiting permanent staff and this includes a pension adjustment surplus of £0.34m in several areas staffing is reporting as underspending because there is a

number of externally funded projects. The service has drawn in additional external funding but where it is possible also held vacancies in the core structure. This is to ensure that when this short-term funding stops these staff can be slotted back into our internal structure.

- 3.8 **Early help & Prevention:** Favourable variance forecast of £0.929m (£0.384m in Quarter 3). This surplus is in part due to various employee budget variances. There was a delay in the implementation of the PAUSE program resulting in a surplus of £0.193m. The PAUSE program has been implemented to help vulnerable women and is a voluntary programme for women who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeat removals of children from their care.
- 3.9 **Modernisation and Support:** The full-year favourable forecast variance of £0.529m (£0.425m in Quarter 3). This relates to favourable variances on employee budgets and delays in establishing contracts to modernise services due to the impact of Covid-19.
- 3.10 **Schools – core** is an adverse position of £0.036m against a budget of £11.6m. The Schools core service budget includes Private Financing Initiative (PFI) which overspent by £1.5m against a budget of £1.4m which is due to the recognition of both in-year and future liabilities to reflect the 'closed' status of Kingsway School. The PFI position includes the final instalment (£0.16m) of £1.2m of additional funding and the continuation of the annual grant of £0.941m both of which have been secured from Department of Education to reflect the closed status of Kingsway School. The Council must meet the annual PFI costs whilst the building is non-operational, and it is not expected that this status will change during the coming year. Under advice from the Council's auditors, the full value of the potential liability has been recognised in the financial year 2020/21 and this accounts for £1.3m of the of the £1.5m PFI overspend.

TABLE 2 2020/21 Children, Families and Education – Subjective Budget & Forecast

	Budget	Outturn	Variance (+ Fav, - Adv)		Adv/Fav
	£000	£000	£000	%	
Income	18,760	-21,972	3,211	17%	Favourable
Expenditure					
Employee	39,321	36,613	2,708	7%	Favourable
Non Pay	31,394	35,053	-3,659	-10%	Adverse
Cost of Care	24,888	24,952	-64	0%	Adverse
Total Expenditure	95,604	96,618	-1,014	-1%	Adverse
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	76,844	74,646	2,197	4%	Favourable
Support / Admin Building Overhead	6,388	6,388	0	0%	
Movement on Reserves	0	721	-721	0%	
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	83,232	81,756	1,476	2%	Favourable

3.12 **Income:** Favourable forecast variance of £3.211m. Children's services have received grant during the year that were not included in the base budget as they were contingent on expenditure activity in the financial year, this favourable income variance is off set by the expenditure incurred and has no impact on the bottom-line position.

3.13 Income on Children and Families (£1.484m) is forecast to overachieve mainly due to holding no budget for Adoption Support Fund against in-year activity (£0.323m), Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children grant income (£0.228m), Step up to Social Work (£0.857m) additional grant income (£0.076m), which mostly relates to Early Help and Prevention grants from the National Lottery, funding voluntary organisations, Community Coaches, additional Troubled Families projects and Holiday Activities and Food Programme grant. School's core is forecast to overachieve on income £0.789m

due to the receipt of additional grants in the year which were not originally expected.

- 3.14 **Employees:** Favourable forecast variance of £2.708m. There are surpluses in all areas due to vacancies, staff not at the top of their pay scales although the budget is set assuming that this is the case. Also, the amount of pension the council is required to contribute into the pension scheme reducing the Council's contribution to the pension scheme. Teachers historic pension costs is less than expected. These costs reduce on an annual basis and the reduction in 2020-21 was more than expected. In addition, this budget attracts one-off pension costs and the value of these can fluctuate significantly year on year. In several areas there are vacancies due to there is a number of externally funded projects utilising the employees and where the service has drawn in additional external funding where it is possible also held vacancies in the core structure. This is to ensure that when this short-term funding stops these staff can be slotted back into our internal structure.
- 3.15 **Non pay:** Adverse forecast variance of £3.659m. Children and Families have an adverse variance on Non pay costs of £0.5m. This is due to expenditure for grant funded activities that is offset by grant income of £1.3m. This adverse position is due in the main to the expense incurred from the Adoption Support Fund £0.323m (netted off with Income) and Step up to Social Work £0.874m (grant funded), Private Placements £0.135m overspent due to high fees from providers in year. This is offset by underspend on Leaving Care Grant £0.147m due to demand being less than forecast and a one off in year underspend on the Active8 Contract of £0.153m, £0.190m underspend on Car Leasing costs and Adoption in Merseyside Recharges, which were subject to a previous year one off adjustment.
- 3.16 **Cost of Care:** Cost of care illustrates a forecast adverse variance of £0.064m.
- 3.17 **Reserves:** Variance of £0.721m. Reserve movement during the year include
- A £0.169m call on reserves is predicted to fund a Capacity Project, encompassing an overhaul of the early help branding, language, partner engagement, communications, digital platforms (website and apps development), online self-assessment for early help and reflection tool for own early help plan:
 - A reserve of £0.193m has been created to help catch up with the delay to the pause programme due to Covid 19 pandemic in 21-22;
 - a contribution to capitalisation works for Birkenhead Children's Centre of £0.067m plus a call on £0.056m for troubled family's income.
 - A contribution of £0.246m to support SEND High Needs in 21-22.
 - School Improvement underspend £0.3m due to slippage of activity into 2021-22,
 - School Improvement Monitoring & Brokerage Grant for academic year 2020-21 of £0.214m.

	Budget	Outturn	Variance		Adv/Fav
			(+ Fav, - Adv)		
	£000	£000	£000	%	
Schools Block	108,514	108,514	0	0%	
Schools de-delegated	1,744	1,691	53	3%	Favourable
Central School Costs	2,139	2,100	39	2%	Favourable
High Needs	40,073	41,446	-1,374	-3%	Adverse
Early Years	21,208	20,645	563	3%	Favourable
Total	173,678	174,397	-719	0%	Adverse
DSG Grant Income	-174,321	-173,982	-339	0%	Adverse
Movement on DSG Reserves	644	-414	1,058	164	Adverse
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	0	0	0	0%	

3.18 Schools Block:

Individual school balances have been carried forward to 2021/22 in the designated schools reserve thus delivering an in-year balanced position. The cumulative schools reserves brought forward were £7.9m and this increased by £5.6m to £13.5m by the end of the financial year.

3.19 **De-delegated funds:** No significant variances. Small favourable variance due to business rates differentials being less than expected.

3.20 **Central Schools Costs:** relate to central functions carried out on behalf of maintained schools and academies e.g., School Admissions and has a small favourable variance due to staff vacancies.

3.21 High Needs Block:

Adverse variances of £1.373m due to additional demand in both volume and complexity. In particular:

- specialist/individual educational needs are overspent by £0.679m due to an increase in demand particularly in latter half of the year

- top-ups to school budgets for post-16 SEN pupils is overspent by £0.326m due to an increase in school places
- exceptional needs support is overspent by £0.405m due to the growth in applications since September 2020
- the cost of independent school places have exceeded budget by £1.033m due to places being 31 more than planned. It is expected that the increased demand will continue into 2021/22 thus the relevant budgets have been increased to reflect this.

3.22 Adverse variances are partially offset by special school places where the additional 40 places agreed for 2021/22 had not been fully allocated in 2020/21 (£0.301m), additional demand for Alternative Provision top-ups being less than expected (£0.191m). In addition, savings due to staff vacancies and additional recharges/contributions from other budgets underspent by £0.487m. This is a priority area for the service and although it is difficult to recruit to a number of posts due to the current employment market the service plan is to staff this service fully.

3.23 The **Early Years** budget is used to provide Early Education to those 2 yrs. old and 3/4-year-old children who are entitled to receive it free of charge. Local authorities have been required to maintain funding to providers at pre-COVID levels and it is expected that this will be reflected in the funding from Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), although the final grant allocation will not be confirmed until summer 2021. The 20-21 underspend mainly reflects the reduction in attendance due to COVID-19. The underspend is partially offset with the shortfall of DSG income.

3.24 **DSG income:** Shortfall due to adjustment to reflect expected final grant for Early Years. The final grant income will be confirmed in July.

3.25 **DSG reserves:** The planned transfer to reserve of £0.644m reflects the expected underspend on High Needs. The actual outcome reflects a total net overspend of £0.414m resulting in a use of reserve rather than a contribution to reserve. The opening DSG reserve balance reflected a deficit of £1.264m which, after including the in-year deficit of £0.414m, gives a closing deficit position of £1.678m.

3.26 Capital Budget

Table 4: Capital Budget and Forecast Position

Programme	Approved Budget £m	Actual spend £m	Variance £m	Variance %
Children Families and Education	5.5	2.7	2.8	51%

3.27 Table 4 provides an update on the 2020/21 capital Programme. Several variations have arisen since the programme was agreed in March 2020. The School Condition Allocation [SCA] programme has slipped due to Covid-19 and therefore, the SCA capital programme is 9 months behind programme. An accelerated programme is being drawn up for 2021-22 to catch up with the works not completed in 2020/21 and this will be added to the planned programme for 2021-22.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This is the revenue budget monitoring report that provides information on the forecast outturn for the Children's ,Young People and Education Directorate for 2020/21. The Council has robust methods for reporting and forecasting budgets in place and alongside formal Quarterly reporting to the Policy & Resources Committee, the financial position is routinely reported at Directorate Management Team meetings and corporately at the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). In the event of any early warning highlighting pressures and potential overspends, the SLT take collective responsibility to identify solutions to resolve these to ensure a balanced budget can be reported at the end of the year.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The provisions of section 25, Local Government Act 2003 require that, when the Council is making the calculation of its budget requirement, it must have regard to the report of the chief finance (s.151) officer as to the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. This is in addition to the personal duty on the Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer to make a report, if it appears to them that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

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

1. Senior Leadership / Directorate Teams regularly reviewing the financial position.
2. Availability of General Fund Balances.
3. Review of existing services and service provision.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The priorities in the Council Plan 2025 were informed by stakeholder engagement carried out in 2019.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 There are no equality implications arising specifically from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The refreshed Wirral Plan 2021-2026 includes a set of goals and objectives to create a sustainable environment which urgently tackles the environment emergency. These are based on developing and delivering plans that improve the environment for Wirral residents.

10.2 No direct implications. The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of Greenhouse Gases.

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2020/21 Revenue Budget Monitor for Quarter Two (Apr - Sep)
- 2020/21 Revenue Budget Monitor for Quarter Three (Apr- Mar)
- Revenue Budget 2020/21 and Medium-Term Financial Plan (2021/22 to 2024/25)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday 15th June 2021

REPORT TITLE:	CHILDREN’S SERVICES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

The report sets out a revised performance monitoring and reporting framework for the Children, Young People & Education Committee.

This new approach has been designed in consultation with the Committee Chair and party spokes and aims to deliver an open, honest and transparent performance framework that will allow Committee Members to effectively challenge performance and support decision making.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People & Education Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the content of the report, acknowledge the work completed to date and the next steps involved in developing a robust performance monitoring framework that encompasses all aspects of Children’s Services.
2. Review and agree the proposed clusters of performance indicators that can be found in Appendix A of this report.
3. Agree to the delivery of Performance Management Workshops during the summer where elected Members will receive training on the Council’s business intelligence system including how to access and navigate around real-time data reports.
4. Review the content of the Databook that can be found in Appendix C of this report, highlighting any areas requiring further clarification or action.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Children, Young People & Education Committee have the opportunity to monitor, review and challenge performance of the Council's Children's Services Directorate.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This report and the approach outlined below has been developed in conjunction with the Chair of the Children, Young People & Education Committee, and party spokes. As such, no other options were considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 It had become apparent that the Children, Young People & Education Committee had received very little performance information over the past twelve months. The Wirral Intelligence Service (WIS) had previously produced performance reports for the Committee, aligned to the delivery of the Wirral Plan 2020, but these stopped in March 2020.

In addition to the WIS report, Children's Services had their own performance report known as the Databook. The Databook was developed several years ago in response to an inadequate Ofsted inspection. The Databook continues to be produced every month and the most recent copy can be found in Appendix C of this report. However, this only gives Members sight of children's social care. Our new proposed reporting framework will give much wider and greater scrutiny.

- 3.2 On the 4th of March 2021, the Director for Children, Families and Education and the Performance Manager from Children's Services hosted a Performance Monitoring Session with the Chair of the Children, Young People & Education Committee, and party spokes to develop a new performance reporting model.

The aim of the session was to recognise the importance of accurate, timely and reliable performance data and to develop an open and transparent performance framework for the Children, Young People & Education Committee which would allow Members to effectively challenge performance and support decision making so as to deliver improved services and outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

- 3.3 It was recognised that as a Directorate, there is a vast amount of data available but there is also a skill to monitoring the right information, at the right time alongside other similar indicators. As such, the group explored the idea of creating indicator clusters.

- 3.4 The group identified eight performance indicator clusters:
- 1) Demand
 - 2) Keeping children safe
 - 3) Looking after children well

- 4) Schools
- 5) Education
- 6) SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)
- 7) Workforce
- 8) Budgets

Each cluster contains a handful of indicators (see Appendix A)

- 3.5 The group discussed the benefits of using the Council's business intelligence system (Power BI) to monitor the data contained in each of the clusters. Power BI provides users with access to real-time data whenever they want to see it. It is an interactive tool that allows users to view data across Wirral or drill down to Ward level.
- 3.6 It was agreed that the Children's Services Insight Team would develop a suite of reports in Power BI specifically for the Children, Young People & Education Committee so that Members can monitor performance against the defined list of indicators within each cluster. These reports are currently under development. The first suite of reports focusing on Demand and Workforce will be available from June.
- 3.7 Throughout July and August we would like to invite Committee Members to attend a Performance Management Workshop where we will deliver training on Power BI showing how to access the system and navigate around it. Once Members have attended the training, we will provide them with a direct link to Power BI so performance information can be accessed whenever they like.
- 3.8 In addition to real-time data in Power BI, a supplementary performance report will also be produced and circulated to Members in advance of future Committee meetings. This will contain trend data as well as comparative information (where available) for each of the indicator clusters. It will also contain a narrative section which will explain any significant changes in performance and actions identified to address areas of underperformance.
- 3.9 It was also agreed that each Committee meeting would have a particular focus on just two of the indicator clusters at appropriate intervals throughout the year. (This reporting cycle can be found in Appendix B)
- 3.10 Whilst the new PI clusters and reports are under development, we have provided Committee Members with the Children's Services Databook (Appendix C). Members are recommended to review this data and highlight any areas requiring further clarification or action.

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: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Council's Corporate and Directorate Risks Registers are currently under review to reflect the thematic priorities of the Council's new Corporate Plan including the impact and recovery from Covid-19. Information on the key risks faced by the organisation and the associated mitigations and planned actions will be report to Committee once refreshed.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 A Performance Monitoring session was held with the chair of the Children, Young People & Education Committee, and party spokes on 4th March 2021 to review current performance monitoring arrangements and to define a new, improved approach.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There is no impact for equality implications arising directly from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental or climate implications generated by the recommendations in this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Performance Indicator Clusters

Appendix B: Future Reporting Cycle

Appendix C: Wirral Children's Services Databook

BACKGROUND PAPERS

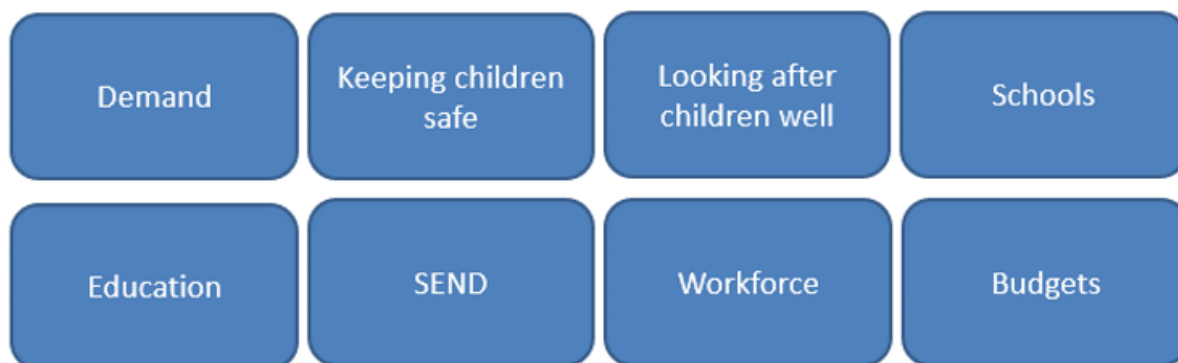
Budget & Performance Monitoring: Paul Boyce, Director of Children's Services
(Children, Young People & Education Committee – 20th October 2020)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2019/20 Q3 Wirral Plan Performance	17/03/2020
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2019/20 Q2 Wirral Plan Performance	11/11/2019
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2019/20 Q1 Wirral Plan Performance	25/09/2019
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1) 2019/19 Q4 and year-end Wirral Plan Performance 2) Wirral Improvement Board Databook	03/07/2019
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2018/19 Q3 Wirral Plan Performance	27/02/2019
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2018/19 Q2 Wirral Plan Performance	13/11/2018
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2018/19 Q1 Wirral Plan Performance	25/09/2018
Children & Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2017/18 Q4 and year-end Wirral Plan Performance	03/07/2018

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APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE INDICATOR CLUSTERS



Demand
Social care contacts
Early Help contacts
Referrals
% of DA referrals to children's social care
CIN rate per 10,000 population
CP rate per 10,000 population
CLA rate per 10,000 population
Quality assurance reports - audits on thresholds
MASA - audit work around section 11 (MASA has themes)

Keeping children safe (safeguarding)
% of Early Help cases closed with outcomes met
Repeat referrals within 12 months period
Assessments completed within timescale
% of children who were subject to a section 47 enquiry
% of children who were subject to a section 47 enquiry that led to an ICPC
% of single assessments that were complete within timescale (45 days)
% ICPC taking place in the month and within timescales
% of CIN seen in last four weeks
% of CPP seen in last four weeks
% of CPP ceased
% of children on second or subsequent CPP
Audit - quality of CP plans
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - CIN
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - CP
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - CLA
Reduce First time entrants into the criminal justice system
Reduce young people re-offending
Reduce the use of Custody

Looking after children well

CLA - social worker stability
CLA with no school placement moves in past 12 months
CLA visits completed within timescale
Completed health assessment reviews
Completed dental checks
Completed Strengths % Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
Completed CLA care plans
% of CLA adopted in year
% of CLA placed with Foster carers
Timeliness of Adoption process (426 days national target)
Care leavers in suitable accommodation
Care leavers in Education , Employment or Training (EET)
Children currently missing
% of CIN who are open to CAMHs service
% of CP who are open to CAMHs service
% of CLA who are open to CAMHs service
Average waiting time for CAMHs service

Schools

% of school age pupils eligible for FSM
% of under 5's who are engaged with the Early Years Service
% of under 5's who have sustained engagement the Early Years Service (3 of more)
% of 2 year olds eligible for funding
% take up of 2 year old funding
% take up of 3 year old funding
% take up of 4 year old funding
School capacity - school places available vs pupil numbers (early years)
School capacity - places available vs pupil numbers (school)
% of pupils attending school
Unauthorised absence
Persistent absence
Exclusions - fixed term
Exclusions - permanent
Pupils Electively Home Educated
Pupils who are missing more than 25hrs of education a week (CME25)

Education (attainment)

% achieving expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2
Progress 8 Score for Wirral
% of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted
% of children in good or better schools as rated by Ofsted
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
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
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at Key Stage 4
Foundation Stage - % achieving a good level of development
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development
% of young people aged 16 and 17 who are not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or categorised as 'not known'
% off early years settings good or better
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peer in early years

SEND

EHCPs issued within 20 week timescale
% of requests that went to tribunal
% of mediations that were followed by tribunal
EHCPs - quality audits
% of CLA with EHCP
% of CIN with EHCP
% of CP with EHCP
% of Early Help Episodes with SEND
KS2 RWM EHCP - % at Expected Level
KS4 Overall Progress 8 Score - ECHP
% of pupils with EHCP attending school
Persistent absence - pupils with EHCP
% of pupils with EHCP who are electively home educated
% of CLA with SEN support
% of CIN with SEN support
% of CP with SEN support
KS2 RWM SEN Support - % at Expected Level
KS4 Overall Progress 8 Score - SEN Support
% of pupils with SEN support attending school
Persistent absence - pupils with SEN support
% of pupils with SEN support who are electively home educated

Workforce

Vacancy rate – number of posts currently vacant / total no of posts

Agency rate – positions filled by agency staff

Retention of staff – number of leavers (particular focus on social workers)

New starters

Average FTE days lost to sickness absence – broken down LTA/STA, team, mental health

Average caseload for social worker

Social worker caseload - how long case holding

Supervisions completed - social workers

Quality audits of supervisions

Staff survey results

Budgets

Forecast spend against budget

Savings achieved

Under development

APPENDIX B: REPORTING CYCLE

Performance data for all indicators will be available through Power BI. At each Children, Young People & Education Committee meeting, we will focus on just two of the indicator clusters to look at in more detail.

15 th June 2021	13 th Sept 2021	27 th Oct 2021	23 rd Nov 2021	31st Jan 2022	10 th Mar 2022
Demand	Keeping children safe	Looking after children well	Schools	Demand	Year-end review across all themes
Workforce	SEND	Budgets	Education	Workforce	Planning for 2022/23

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Wirral Children's Services

Improvement Board

Data Tracker

Reporting Period April 2021 - March 2022

Data Extract : May 2021 for April 2021 Reporting

As this is a new fiscal year, RAG ratings will start afresh and there no comparable changes as such, however below are some insights from this month:

Number of contacts has fallen in the last month (893 to 798 – 11%), although this is not unusual for this period, due to schools closing for Easter break, resulting in fewer contacts coming through the Integrated Front Door. April 2021 contact numbers are very similar to this time last year, but 40% down compared to previous years, when there was no pandemic.

With contacts falling, referrals have fallen too. They have fallen by a third since March and is much more in line with the numbers received in April last year. Referrals are down 12% compared to the same period last year and 40% compared to the previous year pre-Covid.

Following similar pattern from last month, repeat referrals have remained low in April (18.4%) and is at a similar level to this time last year, before % of re-referrals rose during the Summer and Autumn 2020.

Assessments completed in time has slightly increased by 3% points to 73%. However, this % is well below stat neighbours (87%), North West (81%) and national (84%). Wirral's figure was 83% in 2019/20 and 78% in 2020/21. RAG rated Red.

Work is on-going at the moment to remedy this, looking at the progress of assessments in the Assessment & Intervention Team. Some of the decrease in performance relates to increased levels of long-term sickness in the Assessment & Intervention teams. Work is underway with HR to look at how best these teams can be best supported to reduce sickness and absence.

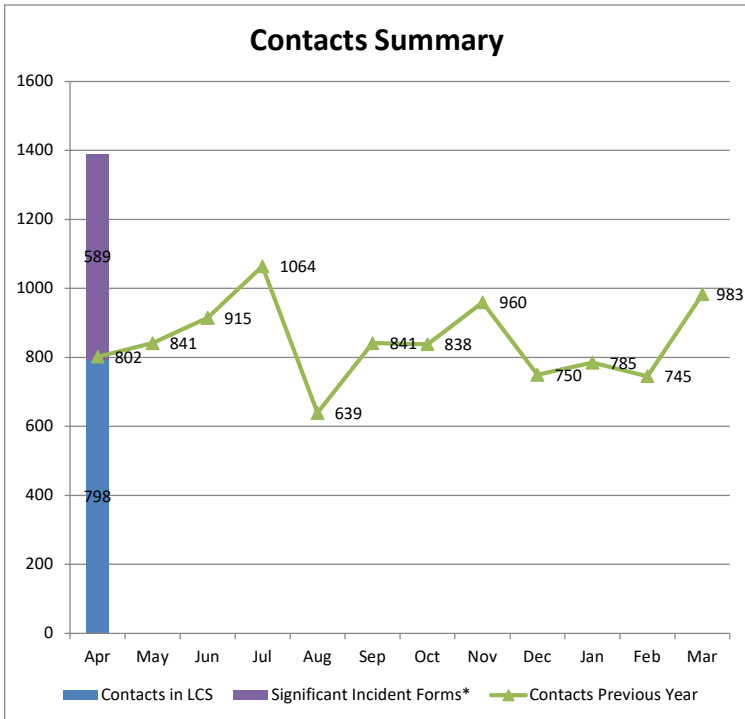
Number of CIN has fallen by 91, resulting in 2173 under 18s with an open referral – 2480 including care leavers 18+. Rate of children in need is 367.4 per 10k children, compared to 381.6 at the end of last reporting year.

There has been fluctuation in CP numbers, as numbers have gone from 344 > 361 > 318 > 337 since the turn of the year. Of the 43 children to become CP in April, 14 children (32.6%) are on a second or subsequent CP plan, 5 (11.6%) of those in the last two years. CP rate per 10k, is 49.9 – lower than stat neighbours (54.0), North West (50.4) and slightly above national (42.8). Wirral provisional figure 2020/21 is 47.1. This is reflective of the greater pressures we've seen on children & their families during lockdown coming into the system at a higher level of need.

CLA numbers have gone up from 810 to 821 to 826 in recent months. Rate per 10k is 122.4 – above stat neighbours (101), North West (97) and national (67). However, this count includes some recent large families including one family with nine children.

After a long sustained period of relative lower numbers of missing episodes supported by lockdown measures we have seen an increase. This months number of 124 has returned to figures last seen in Feb 2020.

Demand for Early Help has gone down slightly from last month (8%), however 50% greater than this time last year.



RAG

2020 - Integrated front door

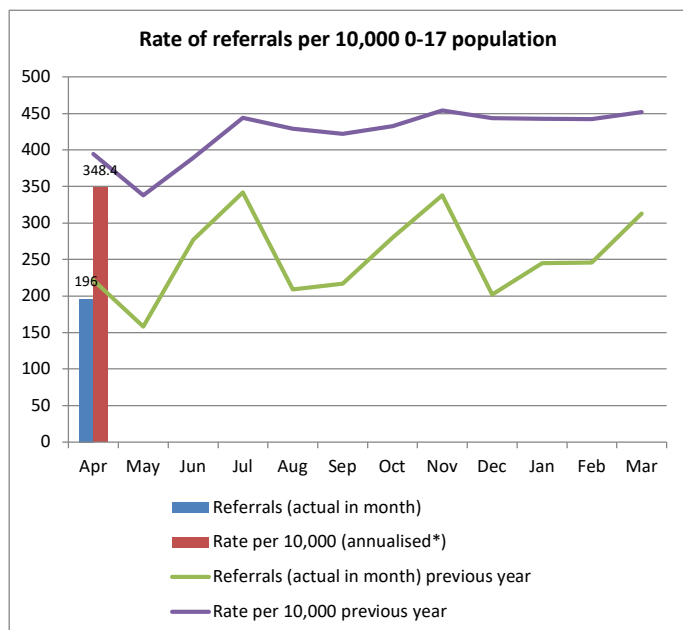
Summary of Contacts*	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Contacts in LCS	802	841	915	1064	639	841	838	960	750	785	745	983
Total Contacts YTD	802	1643	2558	3622	4261	5102	5940	6900	7650	8435	9180	10163
Children with multiple Contacts (≥2 in the month)	49	67	65	84	29	59	66	71	56	60	49	55
Significant Incident Forms*	480	421	533	479	487	488	473	561	511	616	475	582

2021 - Integrated front door

Summary of Contacts*	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Contacts in LCS	798											
Total Contacts YTD	798											
Children with multiple Contacts (≥2 in the month)	59											
Significant Incident Forms*	589											

Total no. of Contacts	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Contacts (ALL)				
% of Contacts / MASH Assessments completed in timescales				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The total number of Contacts created, whether or not following a MASH assessment. Up to December 2016 the Contact count included Contacts on both open and closed cases. Contact timescales are as follows: MASH Red: 4 hours, MASH Amber: 24 hours, MASH Green and Threshold Review: 72 hours. Contacts loaded in LCS either directly into LCS or from a MASH Red, should be processed well within 1 working day.	Liquidlogic	No	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door



RAG

Rate of referrals per 10,000	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	479.0	479.7	626.1	592.1	451.7	348.4
Target Range*	528.2 - 599.2					BELOW
Stat Neighbours	582.1	511.9	532.8	607.2		
North West	593.0	598.5	584.3	553.2		
England	548.2	552.5	544.5	534.8		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

Summary of Referrals	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Referrals (actual in month)	222	158	277	342	209	217	280	338	202	245	246	313
Referrals (year to date)	222	380	657	999	1208	1425	1705	2043	2245	2490	2736	3049
Rate per 10,000 (annualised*)	394.6	337.7	389.3	443.9	429.5	422.2	433.0	453.9	443.4	442.6	442.1	451.7

*Annualised is the estimated year end referral rate based on the average referrals per month received so far

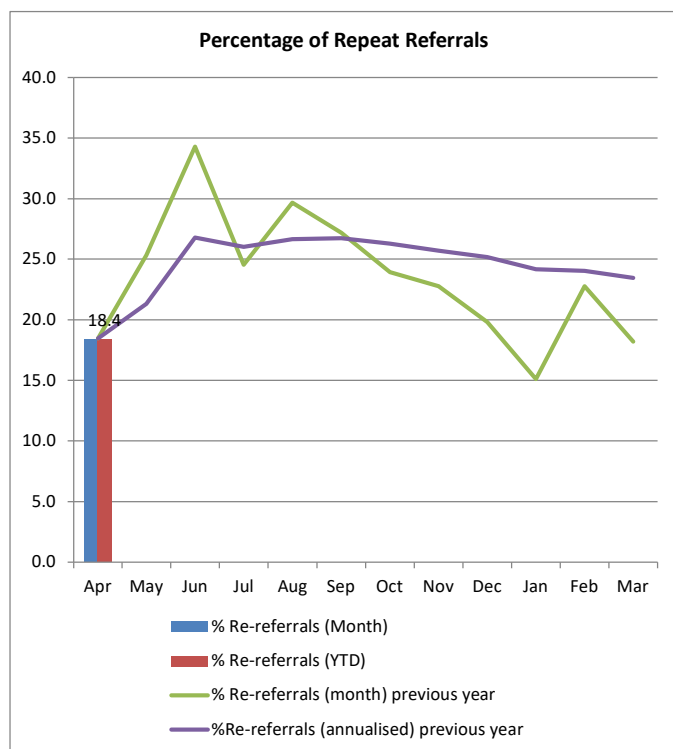
2021-22

Summary of Referrals	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Referrals (actual in month)	196											
Referrals (year to date)	196											
Rate per 10,000 (annualised*)	348.4											

*Annualised is the estimated year end referral rate based on the average referrals per month received so far

Total no. of Referrals	End of Quarter 1 YTD	End of Quarter 2 YTD	End of Quarter 3 YTD	End of Quarter 4 YTD
Referrals (year to date)				
Referral rate per 10,000				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The total number of referrals to Children's Social Care in the period. Referrals are converted into a rate per 10,000 which can be used to compare local referral numbers with regional and national data.	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door



RAG

Percentage of Repeat referrals	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	21.0	18.6	24.6	27.6	23.5	18.4
Target Range*	19.2 - 20.9					BELOW
Stat Neighbours	21.5	19.4	19.3	20.5		
North West	21.8	22.3	22.6	22.0		
England	21.9	21.9	22.6	22.6		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

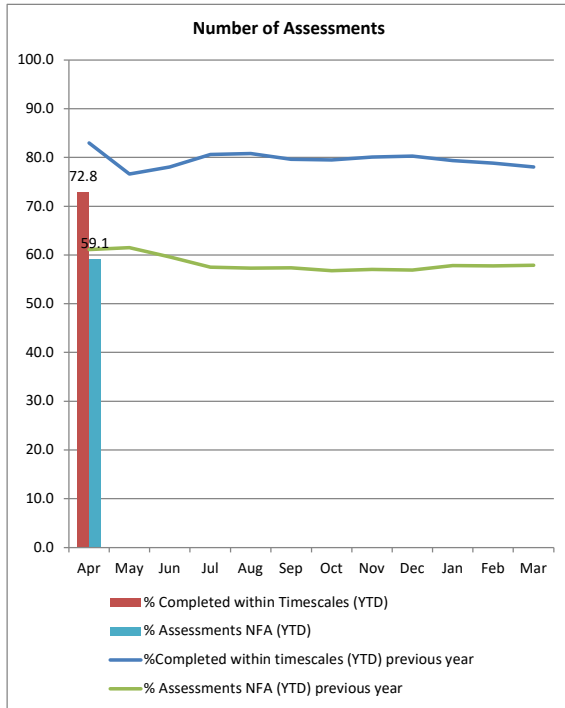
Repeat Referrals (year to date)	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Repeat Referrals (YTD)	41	81	176	260	322	381	448	525	565	602	658	715
Referrals (YTD)	222	380	657	999	1208	1425	1705	2043	2245	2490	2736	3049
Repeat Referrals (Month)	41	40	95	84	62	59	67	77	40	37	56	57
Referrals (Month)	222	158	277	342	209	217	280	338	202	245	246	313
% Re-referrals (Month)	18.5	25.3	34.3	24.6	29.7	27.2	23.9	22.8	19.8	15.1	22.8	18.2
% Re-referrals (YTD)	18.5	21.3	26.8	26.0	26.7	26.7	26.3	25.7	25.2	24.2	24.0	23.5

2021-22

Repeat Referrals (year to date)	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Repeat Referrals (YTD)	36											
Referrals (YTD)	196											
Repeat Referrals (Month)	36											
Referrals (Month)	196											
% Re-referrals (Month)	18.4											
% Re-referrals (YTD)	18.4											

Total No. Repeat Referrals	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Repeat Referrals				
Referrals				
% Repeat Referrals				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The percentage of referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals.	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door



RAG

% of Assessments Completed in Timescale	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	83.5	81.6	87.3	82.6	78.1	72.8
Target Range	84 - 87.1					BELOW
Stat Neighbours	84.1	85.5	83.8	86.6		
North West	80.9	83.7	84.0	80.7		
England	82.9	82.7	83.1	83.8		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

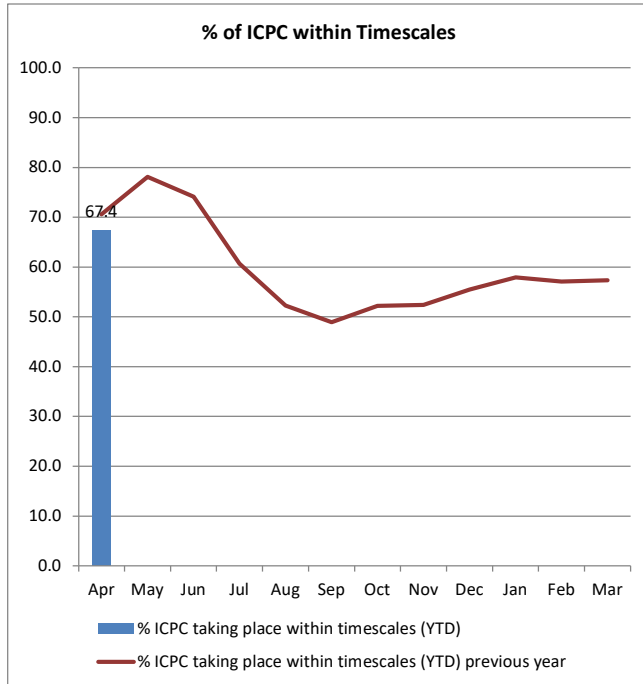
Summary of Assessments	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Assessments Completed (YTD)	370	714	1067	1441	1727	2121	2464	2803	3113	3472	3751	4118
Assessments Completed (In month)	370	344	353	374	286	394	343	339	310	359	279	367
Rate of completion per 10,000 (annualised)	657.7	634.6	632.2	640.4	614.0	628.4	625.7	622.8	614.8	617.2	606.2	610.0
Completed within Timescales (YTD)	307	547	833	1161	1396	1689	1958	2244	2499	2756	2958	3215
% Completed within Timescales (YTD)	83.0	76.6	78.1	80.6	80.8	79.6	79.5	80.1	80.3	79.4	78.9	78.1
Completed within Timescales (In month)	307	240	286	328	235	293	269	286	255	257	202	257
% Completed within Timescales (In month)	83.0	69.8	81.0	87.7	82.2	74.4	78.4	84.4	82.3	71.6	72.4	70.0
Assessments NFA (YTD)	226	439	636	828	989	1216	1398	1599	1772	2008	2166	2384
% Assessments NFA	61.1	61.5	59.6	57.5	57.3	57.3	56.7	57.0	56.9	57.8	57.7	57.9

2021-22

Summary of Assessments	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Assessments Completed (YTD)	386											
Assessments Completed (In month)	386											
Rate of completion per 10,000 (annualised)	686.1											
Completed within Timescales (YTD)	281											
% Completed within Timescales (YTD)	72.8											
Completed within Timescales (In month)	281											
% Completed within Timescales (In month)	72.8											
Assessments NFA (YTD)	228											
% Assessments NFA (YTD)	59.1											

Total no. of Completed Assessments	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Assessments Completed				
% Completed within Timescales				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The number of Single Assessments that have been completed in the period. The percentage in timescales are those that were completed and authorised within 45 working days	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection



RAG

% of ICPC within Timescales	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	89.6	86.3	70.5	76.4	57.3	67.4
Target Range*	80.8 - 85					BELOW
Stat Neighbours	85.7	84.0	81.0	80.0		
North West	74.6	77.9	75.7	73.1		
England	77.2	76.9	78.7	77.6		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

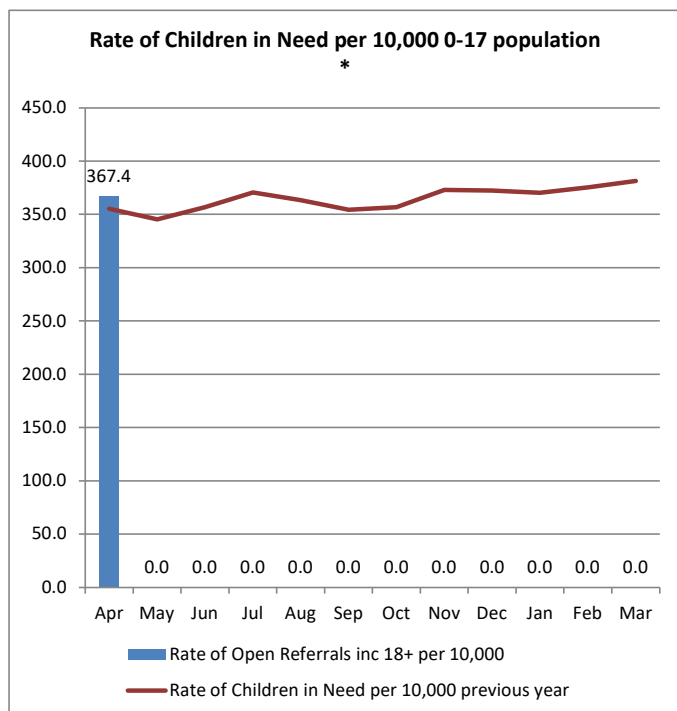
Summary of ICPC within Timescales	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
All ICPC taking place (YTD)	17	32	58	112	155	184	249	290	317	349	380	410
ICPC taking place within timescales (YTD)	12	25	43	68	81	90	130	152	176	202	217	235
% ICPC taking place within timescales (YTD)	70.6	78.1	74.1	60.7	52.3	48.9	52.2	52.4	55.5	57.9	57.1	57.3
ICPC taking place in the month	17	15	26	54	43	29	65	41	27	32	31	30
ICPC taking place in the month and in timescales	12	13	18	25	13	9	40	22	24	26	15	18
% ICPC taking place in the month and within timescales	70.6	86.7	69.2	46.3	30.2	31.0	61.5	53.7	88.9	81.3	48.4	60.0

2021-22

Summary of ICPC within Timescales	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
All ICPC taking place (YTD)	46											
ICPC taking place within timescales (YTD)	31											
% ICPC taking place within timescales (YTD)	67.4											
ICPC taking place in the month	46											
ICPC taking place in the month and in timescales	31											
% ICPC taking place in the month and within timescales	67.4											

Total no. of ICPC within Timescales	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
No. ICPC within Timescales				
% ICPC within Timescales				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
Number and percentage of children who were subject to section 47 enquiries that led to an initial child protection conference	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager –
The number of Child Protection Conference Papers provided to families should be done 2 working days prior to the conference. Options for reporting this from Liquidlogic are being investigated	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door



RAG



Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 *	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	422.7	430.2	418.8	369.0	381.6	367.4
Target Range*	379 - 413.3					BELOW
Stat Neighbours	385.6	380.1	396.5	428.7		
North West	371.8	379.0	389.3	371.5		
England	330.1	341.0	334.2	323.7		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

Table above is Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 up to age 25

Tables below are Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 up to age 18

2020-21

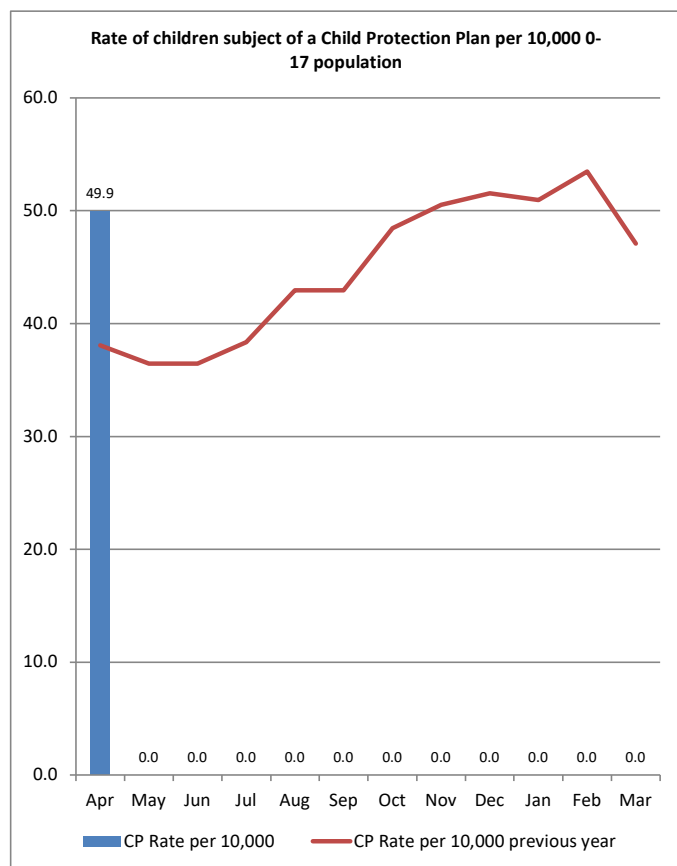
Summary of Open Cases to Social Care	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
All open referrals inc 18+	2399	2332	2409	2502	2453	2391	2410	2518	2513	2500	2534	2576
Children In Need under 18 (as at period end)	2122	2050	2125	2212	2156	2089	2111	2225	2217	2195	2225	2264
Children In Need under 18 Month end increase / decrease	2122	-72	75	87	-56	-67	22	114	-8	-22	30	39
Rate of Open Referrals inc 18+ per 10,000	355.4	345.4	356.8	370.6	363.4	354.2	357.0	373.0	372.3	370.3	375.4	381.6
Rate of Children In Need under 18 (as at period end)	314.3	303.7	314.8	327.7	319.4	309.4	312.7	329.6	328.4	325.1	329.6	335.4

2021-22

Summary of Open Cases to Social Care	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
All open referrals inc 18+	2480											
Children In Need under 18 (as at period end)	2173											
Children In Need under 18 Month end increase / decrease	-91											
Rate of Open Referrals inc 18+ per 10,000	367.4											
Rate of Children In Need under 18 (as at period end)	321.9											

Total No. of Open Cases to Social Care	End of Quarter 1	End of Quarter 2	End of Quarter 3	End of Quarter 4
Children In Need (as at period end)				
Rate of Children in Need per 10,000				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The number of children who have an open referral to Children's Social Care as at the end of the period. This is converted into	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Children



RAG

Rate of Child Protection Plans per 10,000	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	55.7	37.4	62.9	41.9	47.1	49.9
Target Range*	47.6 - 53.5					INLINE
Stat Neighbours	51.8	45.7	48.9	54.0		
North West	54.0	53.7	56.5	50.4		
England	43.3	45.3	43.7	42.8		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

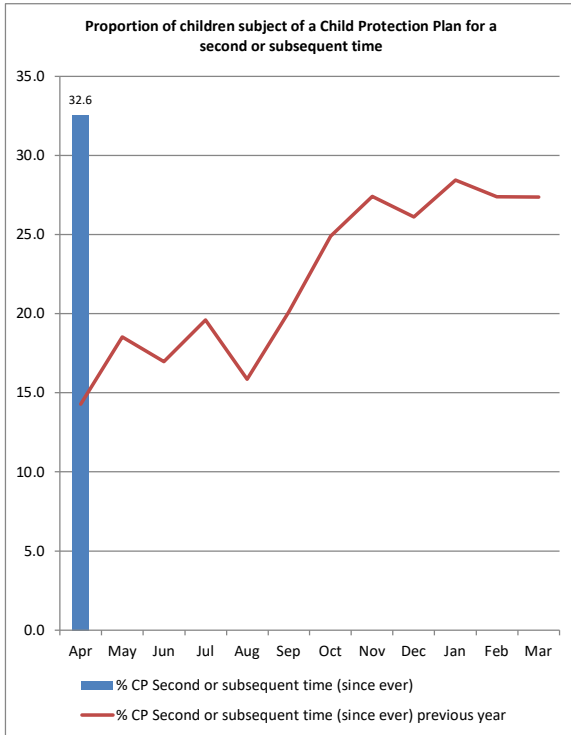
Summary of CP Plans	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
CP Plans starting	14	13	26	49	43	29	59	37	25	32	31	22
CP Plans (as at period end)	257	246	246	259	290	290	327	341	348	344	361	318
CP Rate per 10,000	38.1	36.4	36.4	38.4	43.0	43.0	48.4	50.5	51.5	51.0	53.5	47.1

2021-22

Summary of CP Plans	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
CP Plans starting	43											
CP Plans (as at period end)	337											
CP Rate per 10,000	49.9											

Total no. CP Plans	End of Quarter 1	End of Quarter 2	End of Quarter 3	End of Quarter 4
CP Plans (as at period end)				
Rate of CP Plans per 10,000				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The number of children subject to a child protection plan at the end of the period. This is converted into a rate per 10,000 to enable comparison of child protection plan numbers with regional and national data.	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection



RAG

Percentage of Second or Subsequent CP Plans	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	22.8	20.9	28.3	19.4	27.4	32.6
Target Range*	17.9 - 22.1					ABOVE
Stat Neighbours	17.2	21.3	20.9	22.8		
North West	18.4	20.7	22.0	22.8		
England	18.7	20.2	20.8	21.9		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

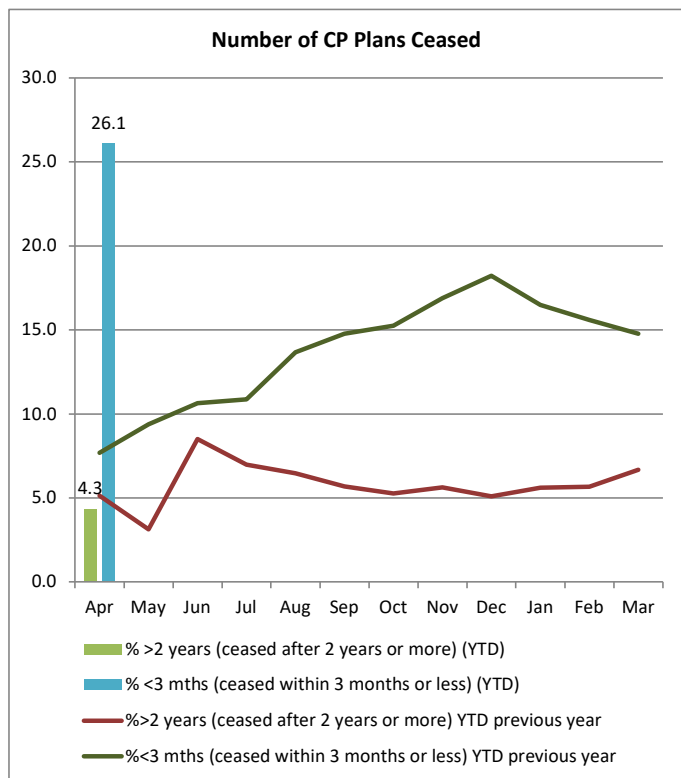
Summary of repeat Child Protection Plans	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of children previously subject to CP Plan	2	3	4	11	3	12	23	16	3	16	5	6
Number of children previously subject to CP Plan (in last two years)	1	3	1	4	1	9	10	11	3	6	5	2
Number of children who have become subject to a CP Plan	14	13	26	49	43	29	59	37	25	32	31	22
% CP Second or subsequent time (since ever)	14.3	23.1	15.4	22.4	7.0	41.4	39.0	43.2	12.0	50.0	16.1	27.3
% CP Second or subsequent time (since ever) YTD	14.3	18.5	17.0	19.6	15.9	20.1	24.9	27.4	26.1	28.4	27.4	27.4
% CP Second or subsequent time (in last two years)	7.1	23.1	3.8	8.2	2.3	31.0	16.9	29.7	12.0	18.8	16.1	9.1

2021-22

Summary of repeat Child Protection Plans	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of children previously subject to CP Plan	14											
Number of children previously subject to CP Plan (in last two years)	5											
Number of children who have become subject to a CP Plan	43											
% CP Second or subsequent time (since ever)	32.6											
% CP Second or subsequent time (since ever) YTD	32.6											
% CP Second or subsequent time (in last two years)	11.6											

Total no. of Repeat CP Plans	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
% CP Second or subsequent time (YTD)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
This data shows the activity of children subject to a second or subsequent Child Protection Plan. Good performance is indicated by a low percentage of children subject to repeat CP plans. However, it is important that the context for a repeat plan for an individual child is understood. Repeat plans can be appropriate if there has been a substantial change to the child's circumstances that have led to a new plan of protection.	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection



RAG



% >2 years (ceased after 2 years or more)	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	0.8	3.0	1.1	2.1	6.7	4.3
Target Range*	2.7 - 3.8					ABOVE
Stat Neighbours	2.7	3.8	3.0	2.8		
North West	3.1	3.8	3.6	3.5		
England	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.6		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

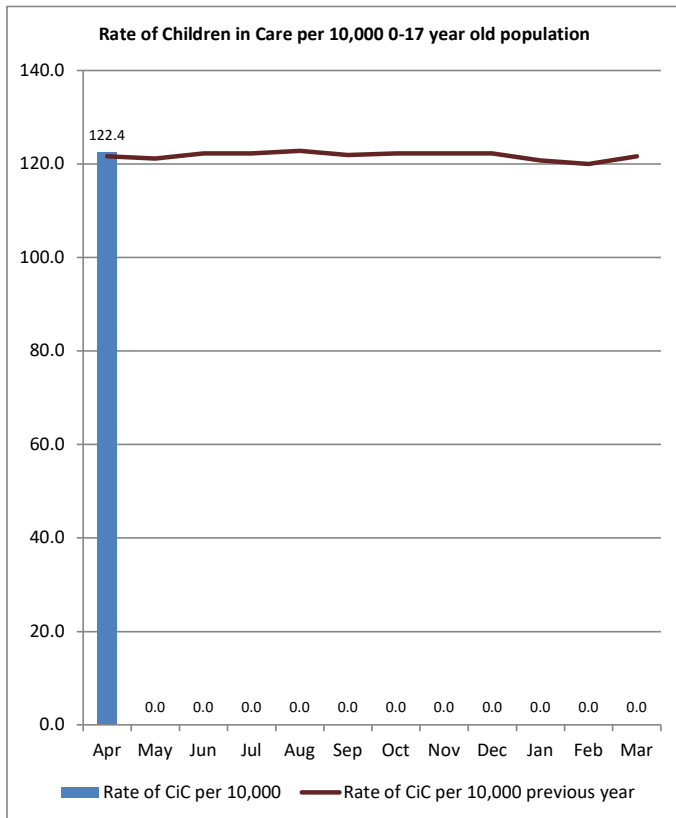
2020-21

Summary of CP Plans Ceased	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
CP Plans Ceased (YTD)	39	64	94	129	139	176	190	213	236	267	282	345
CP Plans Ceased	39	25	30	35	10	37	14	23	23	31	15	63
>2 years (ceased after 2 years or more) (YTD)	2	2	8	9	9	10	10	12	12	15	16	23
% >2 years (ceased after 2 years or more) (YTD)	5.1	3.1	8.5	7.0	6.5	5.7	5.3	5.6	5.1	5.6	5.7	6.7
<3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less) (YTD)	3	6	10	14	19	26	29	36	43	44	44	51
% <3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less) (YTD)	7.7	9.4	10.6	10.9	13.7	14.8	15.3	16.9	18.2	16.5	15.6	14.8

2021-22

Summary of CP Plans Ceased	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
CP Plans Ceased (YTD)	23											
CP Plans Ceased	23											
>2 years (ceased after 2 years or more) (YTD)	1											
% >2 years (ceased after 2 years or more) (YTD)	4.3											
<3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less) (YTD)	6											
% <3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less) (YTD)	26.1											

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
Number of children who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan at the end of the period and length of time as the subject of a plan	Liquidlogic	CIN Census	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection



RAG

Rate of Children in Care per 10,000	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	113.0	123.0	123.0	120.0	121.6	122.4
Target Range*	82.1 - 97.2					ABOVE
Stat Neighbours	85.0	87.9	94.8	101.0		
North West	86.0	91.0	94.0	97.0		
England	62.0	64.0	65.0	67.0		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

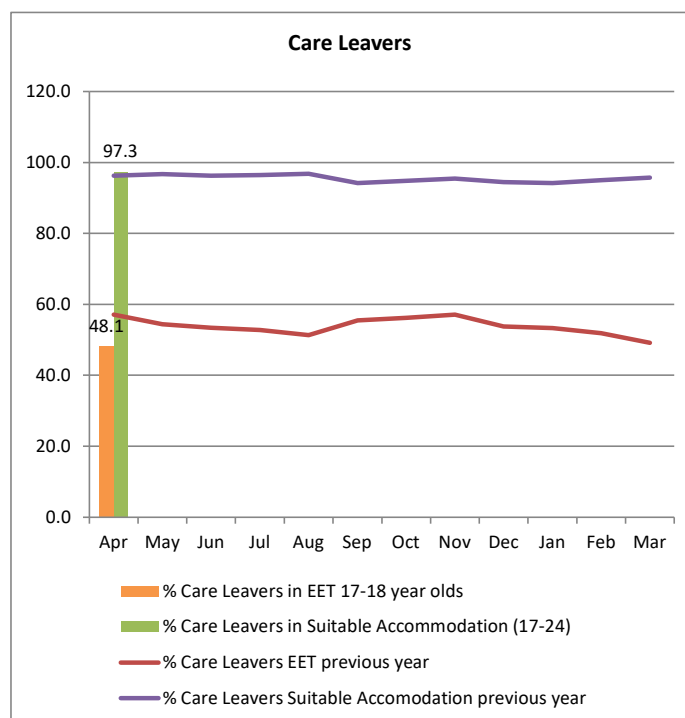
2020-21

Summary of Children in Care as at the end of the period	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Children becoming Looked after	21	15	12	12	20	6	8	19	14	17	17	8
Children ceasing to be Looked after**	16	15	6	11	17	13	16	17	10	21	12	8
Number of Children in Care (month end)	821	818	825	825	829	823	825	825	825	815	810	821
Rate of CiC per 10,000	121.6	121.2	122.2	122.2	122.8	121.9	122.2	122.2	122.2	120.7	120.0	121.6

2021-22

Summary of Children in Care as at the end of the period	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Children becoming Looked after	7											
Children ceasing to be Looked after	12											
Number of Children in Care (month end)	826											
Rate of CiC per 10,000	122.4											

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The number of children in care at the end of the period. This is converted into a rate per 10,000 to enable comparison of children in care numbers with regional and national data. Please note that the 'Number of Children in Care (month end)' is a snapshot at the end of the month and remains static for reporting purposes. 'Children becoming Looked After' and 'Children ceasing to be looked after' is updated each month and retrospectively to accommodate for late recording on Liquidlogic. Therefore, 'Number of Children in Care (month end)' cannot be reconciled from the above figures.	Liquidlogic	SSDA903 Children Looked After	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers



RAG

19/20 Breakdown figures for each age group are provided in the underlying data, but has not been added to the benchmark

Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	YTD 20/21	YTD 21/22
Wirral	89.0	92.0	97.0	95.0	95.7	97.3
Target Range*	88.6 - 92.1					ABOVE
EET Target Range*	48.1 - 53.9					INLINE
Stat Neighbours	92.5	89.8	90.6	91.4		
North West	87.0	87.0	88.0	89.0		
England	84.0	84.0	85.0	85.0		

* Based on +/- 1 SD from the SN group for the last five years

2020-21

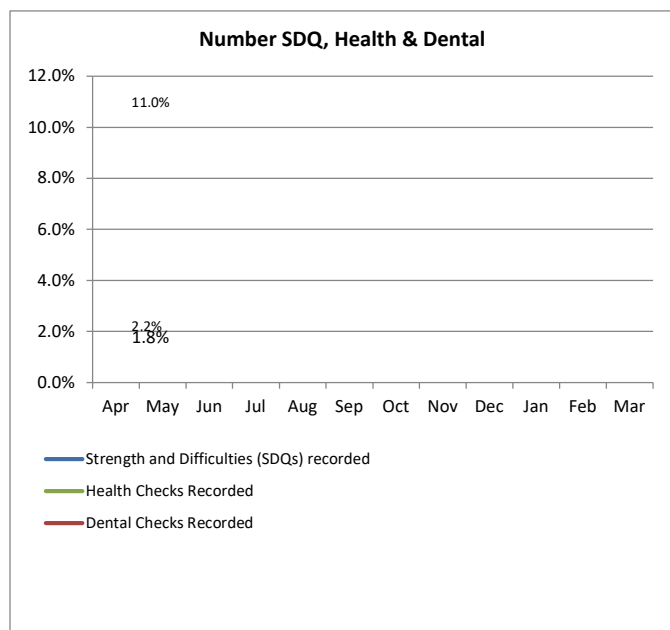
Summary of Care Leavers

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
No. of Care Leavers receiving LA Services	272	276	275	280	282	290	290	285	286	298	304	310
% Percentage of Care Leavers in Touch Every 8 Weeks	100	100	100	100	99.03	99	100	98.2	99.5	100	99.6	99.1
% Care Leavers in EET 17-18 year olds	53.5	58.8	60.0	64.6	68.3	70.1	65.2	62.1	53.2	49.3	45.5	45.5
% Care Leavers in EET 19-21 year olds	57.1	54.4	53.4	52.8	51.4	55.5	56.2	57.1	53.8	53.3	51.9	49.2
% Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation	96.3	96.7	96.3	96.4	96.8	94.2	94.8	95.4	94.4	94.2	95.0	95.7
Pathway Plans Completed	201	210	151	133	170	162	206	205	112	131	179	171

2021-22

Summary of Care Leavers	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
No. of Care Leavers receiving LA Services (17-24)	306											
% Percentage of Care Leavers in Touch Every 8 Weeks (17-21)	98.6											
% Care Leavers in EET 17-18 year olds	48.1											
% Care Leavers in EET 19-21 year olds	50.6											
% Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation (17-24)	97.3											
Pathway Plans Completed	191											

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
All 'Relevant' and 'Former Relevant' care leavers aged 16 to 20 years old and young people aged 21 and above who have an active Pathway Plan. Activity and Accommodation data is based upon what is recorded at their latest 'In Touch' contact.	Liquidlogic	SSDA903 Children Looked After	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers



Average SDQ scores	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Wirral	11.0	12.5	12.2	12.9		
Target range*	13.8 - 14.1					BELOW
Stat Neighbours	13.9	14.1	14.0	13.7		
North West	13.1	13.2	13.2	13.1		
England	14.1	14.2	14.2	14.1		

2020-21

Summary of SDQ, Health & Dental checks recorded	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Strength and Difficulties (SDQs) recorded (YTD)	72	155	236	283	335	384	437	495	536	602	681	730
Health Checks Recorded (YTD)	82	137	220	279	320	354	396	407	457	495	610	674
Dental Checks Recorded (YTD)	8	13	18	25	32	44	62	68	76	108	143	183

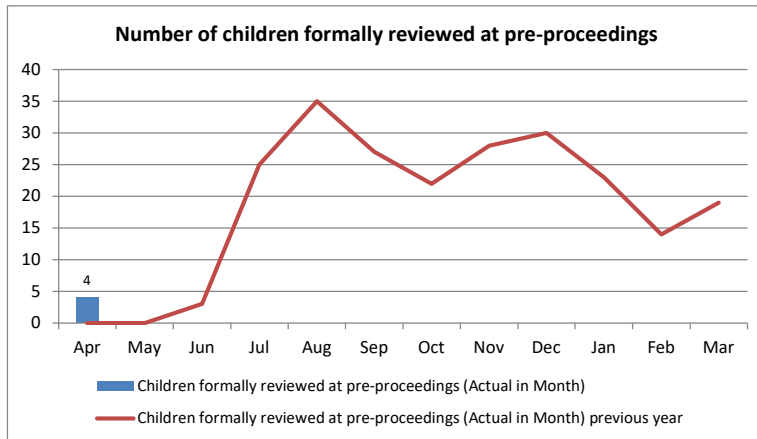
2021-22

Please note that the indicator below is new and is not comparable to the above historical data

% of CLA for 12 months or more who have had an SDQ, Health & Dental Recorded	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Cohort Age 4-16 CLA 12 months+	534											
Strength and Difficulties (SDQs) recorded	11.0%											
Cohort CLA 12 months+	683											
Health Checks Recorded	1.8%											
Dental Checks Recorded	2.2%											

% of CLA for 12 months or more who have had an SDQ, Health & Dental Recorded	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Strength and Difficulties (SDQs) recorded				
Health Checks Recorded				
Dental Checks Recorded				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
Emotional and behavioural health of children looked after continuously for 12 months at 31 March for whom a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was carried out.	Liquidlogic	SSDA903 Children Looked After	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
Health checks - this is the number of children looked after(CLA) for 12 months or more who have had an health assessment from a doctor or other suitably qualified professional during the year. This is a snapshot at the end of each month.			
Dental checks - this is the number of children looked after(CLA) for 12 months or more who have had a dental check from a doctor or other suitably qualified professional during the year. This is a snapshot at the end of each month.			



2020-21

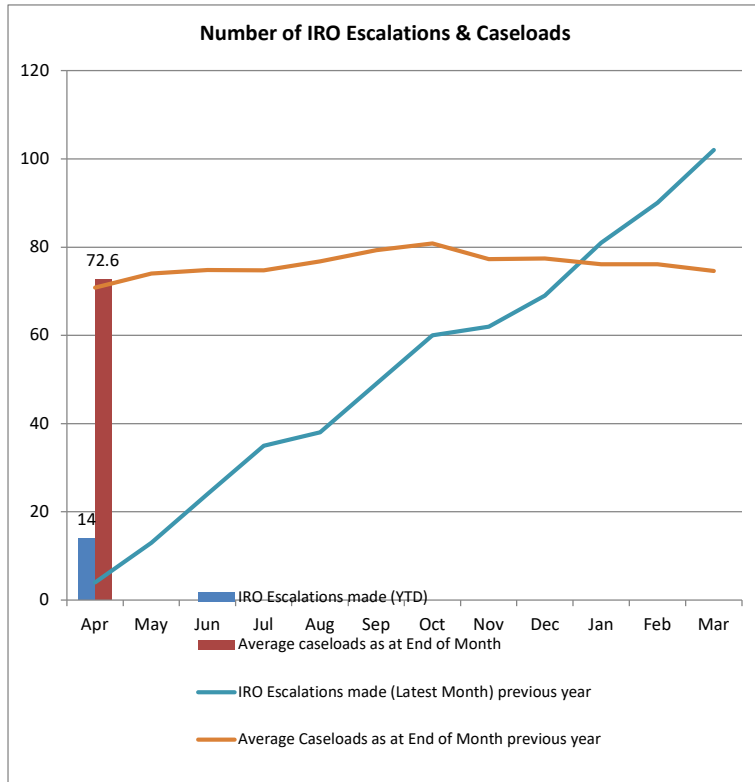
Summary of children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings (Actual in Month)	Nil	Nil	3	25	35	27	22	28	30	23	14	19

2021-22

Summary of children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings (Actual in Month)	4											

Total no. of children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings	4			

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
		No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection



2020-21

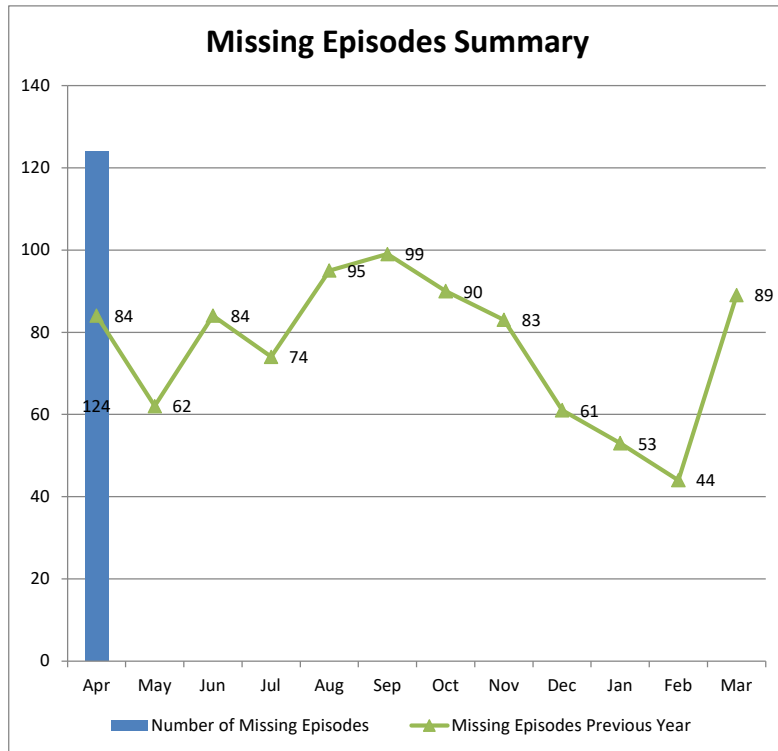
Summary of IRO Escalations & Caseloads	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
IRO Escalations made (YTD)	4	13	24	35	38	49	60	62	69	81	90	102
Average caseloads as at End of Month	70.8	74.0	74.8	74.7	76.8	79.3	80.8	77.3	77.4	76.1	76.1	74.6

2021-22

Summary of IRO Escalations & Caseloads	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
IRO Escalations made (YTD)	14											
Average caseloads as at End of Month	72.6											

Total no. of IRO Escalations & Caseloads	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
IRO Escalations made (YTD)				
Average caseloads as at End of Month				

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
Considerable work has been undertaken to enhance reporting in this area. This has included ensuring IRO involvements are accurately recorded in Liquidlogic and also to account for the caseloads of both full time and part time IROs. *200 escalation old form and 91 escalation new form	Liquidlogic	No	Corporate Safeguarding Manager



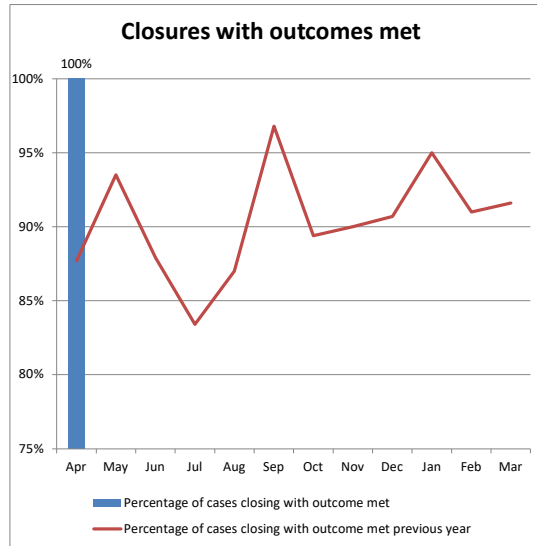
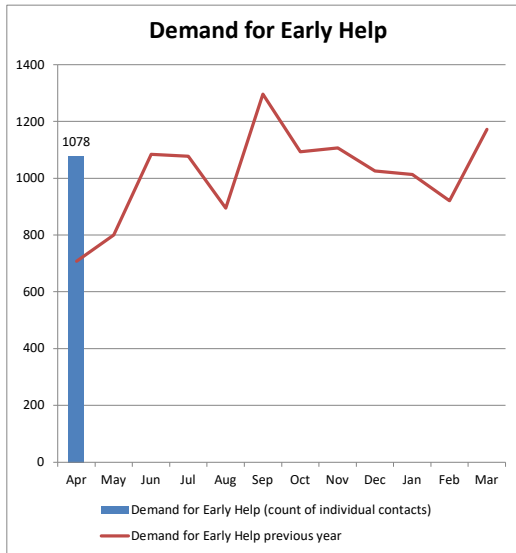
2020-21

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of Missing Episodes	84	62	84	74	95	99	90	83	61	53	44	89

2021-22

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of Missing Episodes	124											

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The total number of missing episodes with a start date in that particular month. Children can have more than one missing episode and each one is counted for this measure. Children under 18 years old are counted in this measure.	Liquidlogic		



Please note that Early Help outcomes framework is currently under review

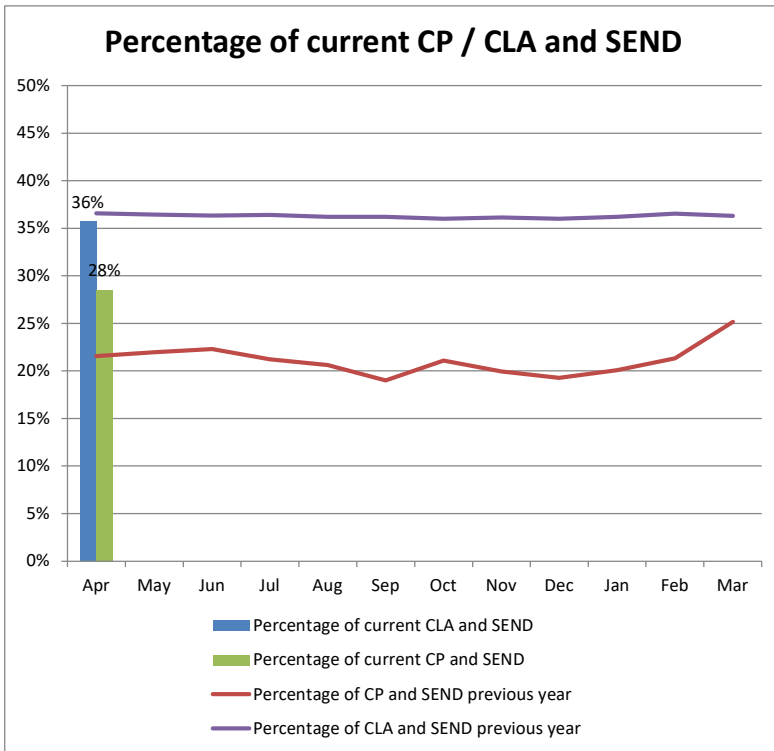
2020-21

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Demand for Early Help (count of individual contacts)	708	800	1085	1077	895	1296	1093	1107	1026	1014	921	1172
Early help assessment completed	125	86	116	153	122	120	111	153	80	97	97	94
Early Help Plan completed	657	272	626	463	408	423	472	445	348	344	226	373
Open Early Help episodes (at month end)	2069	2014	1885	1657	1582	1895	2023	2042	2122	2075	2155	2245
Percentage of cases closing with outcome met	88%	94%	88%	83%	87%	97%	89%	90%	91%	95%	91%	92%

2021-22

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Demand for Early Help (count of individual contacts)	1078											
Early help assessment completed	80											
Early Help Plan completed	299											
Open Early Help episodes (at month end)	2250											
Percentage of cases closing with outcome met	100%											

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
	Liquidlogic		Assistant Director: Early Help & Prevention



2019-20

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of current CP	260	246	242	259	291	279	327	341	348	344	361	318
Number of current CP and SEND	56	54	54	55	60	53	69	68	67	69	77	80
Percentage of current CP and SEND	22%	22%	22%	21%	21%	19%	21%	20%	19%	20%	21%	25%
Number of current CLA	818	815	826	824	823	829	825	825	825	815	810	821
Number of current CLA and SEND	299	297	300	300	298	300	297	298	297	295	296	298
Percentage of current CLA and SEND	37%	36%	36%	36%	36%	36%	36%	36%	36%	36%	37%	36%

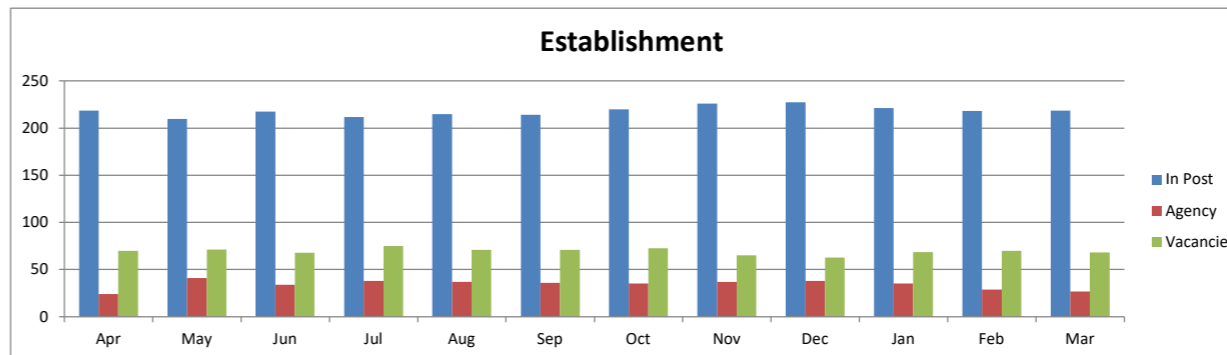
2020-21

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of current CP	337											
Number of current CP and SEND	96											
Percentage of current CP and SEND	28%											
Number of current CLA	826											
Number of current CLA and SEND	295											
Percentage of current CLA and SEND	36%											

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
The total number of children who are currently on a child protection plan or looked after, who are also recorded as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). SEND is taken from either Liquidlogic or the latest January School Census. This count is a snapshot at the end of each month.	Liquidlogic, January School Census		

Total all posts	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In Post	218.63	209.9	217.6	211.7	214.8	214.3	219.8	226.23	227.2	221.2	218.2	218.7
Vacancies	69.65	71.24	67.9	74.96	71.03	71.03	72.53	65.15	62.7	68.65	69.7	68.2
Agency	24	41	34	38	37	36	35	37	38.0	35.0	29.0	27.0
Established	288.28	281.1	285.5	286.66	285.9	285.4	292.4	291.38	289.9	289.9	287.9	286.9

Social Worker In Post breakdown	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Social Worker ASYE	25.5	29.6	29.6	27.6	29.6	27.6	31.6	31.5	29.5	29	27.5	26.5
Social Worker	40.79	44.62	45.62	45.79	45.79	47.79	48.79	45.29	48.29	45.29	43.79	44.29
Social Worker Experienced	63.07	51.45	54.28	54.04	56.67	57.67	58.17	61.67	61.67	60.67	61.67	60.67
Agency	18	34	29	34	33	29	28	28	29	27	21	20



Establishment

Independent Reviewing Officer	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In post	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Vacancies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agency	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Established	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Team Support Officer	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In post	25.27	21.2	25.07	23.27	21.77	20.27	19.27	23.77	23.77	23.27	22.27	23.27
Vacancies	3.09	8.1	8.6	10.39	10.09	11.59	12.59	8.09	6.59	7.09	6.09	5.09
Agency	0	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1
Established	28.36	29.3	33.66	33.6	31.86	31.86	31.86	31.86	30.36	30.36	28.36	28.36

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Social Workers	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In post	129.36	125.7	124.5	127.44	132.1	133.1	138.6	138.46	139.46	134.96	132.96	131.46
Vacancies	62.56	60.14	56.31	59.57	56.94	55.44	54.94	54.06	53.06	57.56	59.56	61.06
Agency	18	34	29	34	33	29	28	28	29	27	21	20
Established	191.92	185.8	185.8	187	189	188.5	194.5	192.52	192.52	192.52	192.52	192.52

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Advanced Social Worker/Snr Practitioner	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In post	23	21	21	19	20.89	21	19	22	24	23	23	21
Vacancies	1	1	1	6	8.11	0	4	2	-2	-1	-1	1
Agency	3	2	1	5	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Established	23	22	22	16	29	21	23	24	22	22	22	22

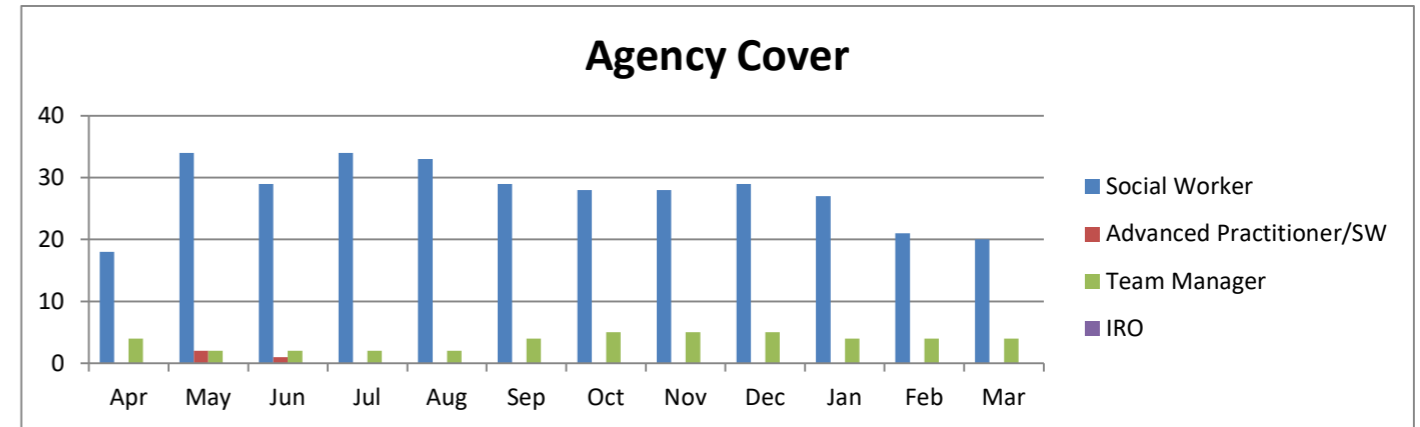
Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Team Manager	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
In post	22	22	22	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	22
Vacancies	4	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
Agency	4	2	2	2	2	4	5	5	5	4	1	4
Established	26	24	24	24	24	24	25	25	30.36	25	25	25

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
	Corporate HR System	No	Deputy Director Children's Services

Change from Previous Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Social Worker	-2	16	2	5	-1	-4	-1		1	-2	-6	-1
Advanced Practitioner/SW	0	2	-1	-1								
Team Manager	0	-2	-1			2	1			-1		
IRO	0		2									
Total	-2	16	2	6	-3	-2			1	-3	-6	-1

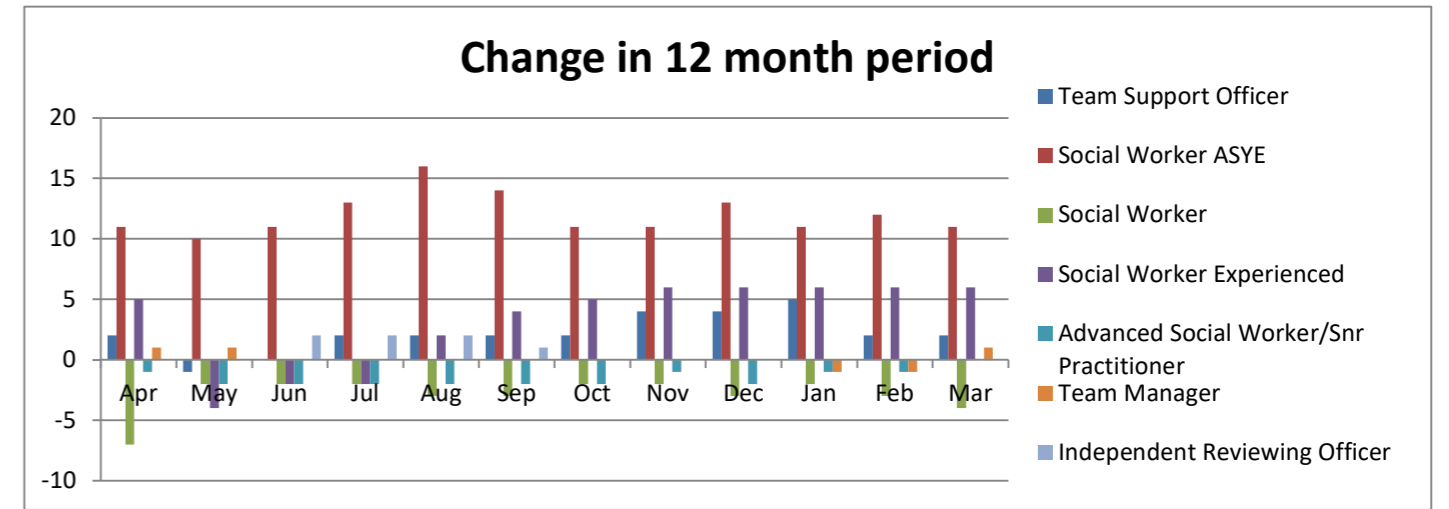


Agency Cover												
Post	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Social Worker	18	34	29	34	33	29	28	28	29	27	21	20
Advanced Practitioner/SW	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Team Manager	4	2	2	2	2	4	5	5	5	4	4	4
IRO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	22	38	32	38	35	33	33	33	34	31	25	24

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
57	Corporate HR system	No	Deputy Director Children's Services

Change in 12 month period	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Team Support Officer	2	-1		2	2	2	2	4	4	5	2	2
Social Worker ASYE	11	10	11	13	16	14	11	11	13	11	12	11
Social Worker	-7	-2	-2	-2	-3	-3	-2	-2	-3	-2	-3	-4
Social Worker Experienced	5	-4	-2	-2	2	4	5	6	6	6	6	6
Advanced Social Worker/Snr Practitioner	-1	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-1	-2	-1	-1	
Team Manager	1	1								-1	-1	1
Independent Reviewing Officer	0		2	2	2	1						
Total	11	2	7	11	17	16	14	18	18	18	15	16

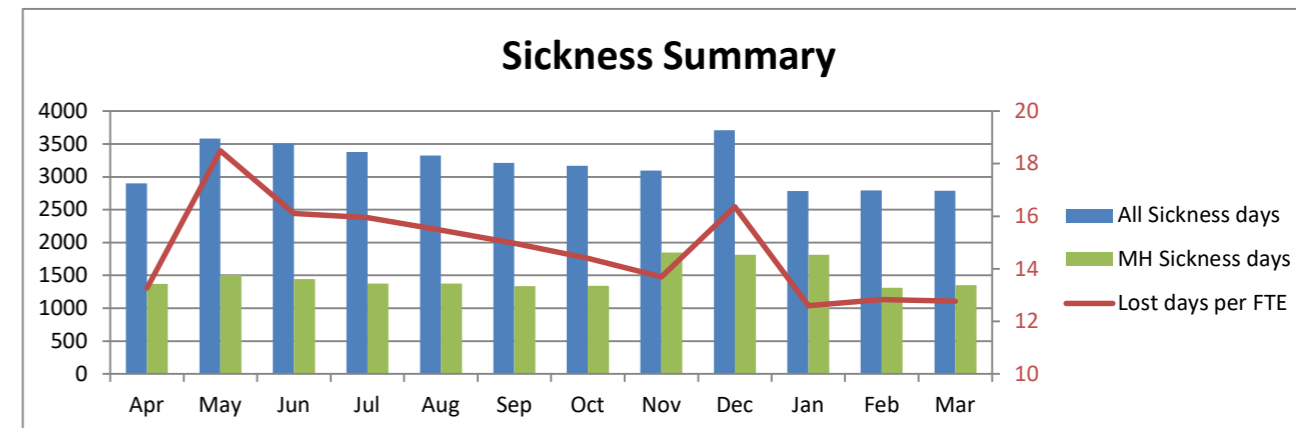


Turnover												
Starters (rolling 12 mths)	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Team Support Officer	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	5	3	3
Social Worker ASYE	13	15	16	16	17	16	13	13	15	13	13	12
Social Worker	6	3	4	5	5	5	6	7	8	7	7	8
Social Worker Experienced	9	3	5	6	9	10	10	10	11	9	9	9
Advanced Social Worker/Snr Practitioner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Team Manager	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3
Independent Reviewing Officer	0	0	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	35	25	31	33	37	36	34	37	41	36	34	35
Leavers (rolling 12 mths)	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Team Support Officer	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Social Worker ASYE	2	5	5	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Social Worker	13	5	6	7	8	8	8	9	11	9	10	12
Social Worker Experienced	4	7	7	8	7	6	5	4	5	3	3	3
Advanced Social Worker/Snr Practitioner	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	0
Team Manager	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2
Independent Reviewing Officer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	24	23	24	22	20	20	20	19	23	18	19	19

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
	Corporate HR system	No	Deputy Director Children's Services

Sickness Summary	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
All Sickness days	2899.7	3585	3504.7	3374	3323.19	3209.24	3167.44	3093.56	3707.3	2781.8	2792.9	2791.63
Lost days per FTE	13.26	18.49	16.11	15.94	15.47	14.97	14.41	13.70	16.36	12.60	12.83	12.76
MH Sickness days	1372.7	1508.9	1441.2	1375.7	1376	1336.06	1339.6	1846.34	1812.8	1813	1307.97	1350.02
Mental Health % of Total	47%	42%	41%	41%	41%	42%	42%	54%	53%	53%	47%	48%
Long Term % of Total	71%	82%	78%	77%	75%	74%	73%	73%	71%	69%	68%	68%



Sickness												
Rolling 12 mths	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Team Support Officer	98.5	230.3	253.8	246.1	238.9	225.7	208.8	158.8	226.7	113.0	124.8	116.0
Social Worker ASYE	207.5	228.9	201.9	198.3	209.4	209.4	209.4	239.5	277.3	197.3	199.50	229.5
Social Worker	985.2	1047.3	950.7	921.0	927.8	918.9	918.4	959.8	1111.9	1018.1	1028.5	1009.9
Social Worker Experienced	1062.7	1149.5	1118.7	1089.3	1085.6	1032.8	1056.1	1092.5	1259.6	981.5	1035.2	1018.3
Advanced Social Worker/Snr Practitioner	177.9	601.0	512.0	442.0	385.0	333.0	285.0	233.0	292.0	165.0	111.0	66.0
Team Manager	98.0	311.0	268.0	248.0	226.0	217.0	208.0	157.0	215.0	62.0	24.0	75.0
Independent Reviewing Officer	268.0	133.5	17.0	212.5	233.5	255.5	270.7	253.0	324.7	244.9	270.0	275.0
Total	2897.7	3701.5	3322.2	3425.1	3440.0	3192.3	3156.4	3093.6	3707.3	2781.8	2792.9	2789.6

Performance Commentary	Supporting Actions	RAG

Performance Indicator:	Data Source	Statutory Report	PI Owner
	Corporate HR system	No	Deputy Director Children's Services

Wirral Score Card Improvement Tracker

Mar-21

Rec. No.	Measure	January	February	March	April	Direction of Travel Last Month	Direction of Travel last 3 Months	Current Desired Direction
1	Number of Contacts (Latest Month) ALL	785	745	983	798	↓	↑	
2	MASH assessments in EHM (Latest month)							
3	Rate of Referrals per 10,000 (annualised~)	442.6	442.1	451.7	348.4	↓	↓	↓
4	Number Of Referrals (YTD~)	2490	2736	3049	196	n/a	n/a	
5	Number Of Referrals (Latest Month)	245	246	313	196	↓	↓	↑
6	Number of Re-referrals (Latest month)	37	56	57	36	↓	↓	↓
7	% of Re-referrals (Repeat YTD)	24.2%	24.0%	23.5%	18.4%	↓	↓	↓
8	Number Of Assessments (YTD)	3472	3751	4118	386	n/a	n/a	
9	Number Of Assessments NFA (YTD)	2008	2166	2384	228	n/a	n/a	
10	Percentage of Assessments in 45 days (Latest month)	71.6%	72.4%	70.0%	72.8%	↑	↑	↑
11	Number of Children CPP as at End of Month	344	361	318	337	↑	↓	↓
12	Rate of Children CPP per 10,000	51.0	53.5	47.1	49.9	↑	↓	↓
13	Number of Children CiC as at End of Month	815	810	821	826	↑	↑	↓
14	Number of Children CiC per 10,000	120.7	120.0	121.6	122.4	↑	↑	↓
15	Number of Children CiN as at End of Month	2500	2534	2576	2480	↓	↓	
16	Rate of Children CiN per 10,000	370.3	375.4	381.6	367.4	↓	↓	
17	Number of Referral Closures (Latest Month)	253	210	273	270	↓	↑	
18	Number of Completed Step Downs from Social Care (Latest Month)	9	19	23	8	↓	↓	
19	Number of Children becoming subject to a second or subsequent Child Protection (CP) plan (Latest month)	16	5	6	14	↑	↓	↓
20	% of Children subject to a second or subsequent Child Protection (CP) plan (ever) YTD	28.4%	27.4%	27.4%	32.6%	↑	↑	↓
21	Number of Care Leavers (17-24)	298	304	310	306	↓	↑	↑
22	Percentage of Care Leavers in Touch Every 8 Weeks (17-21)	100.0%	99.6%	99.1%	98.6%	↓	↓	↑
23	Percentage of Care Leavers in EET (19-21)	53.3%	51.9%	49.2%	50.6%	↑	↓	↑
24	Percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation (17-24)	94.2%	95.0%	95.7%	97.3%	↑	↑	↑
25	Average caseloads as at End of Month	13.6	14.1	14.2	13.8	↓	↑	↓
26	Percentage of ICPCs within timescales (latest month)	57.0%	57.1%	57.3%	43.5%	↓	↓	↑
27	Number of Pathway Plans Completed	131	179	171	191	↑	↑	↑
28	Number of plans (CP) <3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less) (YTD)	44	44	51	6	n/a	n/a	
29	Number of plans (CP) >2 years (ceased after 2 years or more) (YTD)	15	16	23	1	n/a	n/a	
30	Number of IRO Escalations made (YTD)	81	90	102	14	n/a	n/a	
31	Average IRO Caseload as at End of Month **	76.1	76.1	74.6	72.6	↓	↓	↓
32	Percentage of Strength and Difficulties (SDQs) recorded 2021/22 (Snapshot)	602	681	730 (YTD)	11.0%	n/a	n/a	↑
33	Percentage of Health Checks Recorded 2021/22 (Snapshot)	495	610	674 (YTD)	1.8%	n/a	n/a	↑
34	Percentage of Dental Checks Recorded 2021/22 (Snapshot)	108	143	183 (YTD)	2.2%	n/a	n/a	↑
35	Number of privately fostered children	3	2	3	2	↓	↓	
36	Number of Missing Episodes	53	44	89	124	↑	↑	↓

- ↑ ≥ 5% increasing against performance target range
- ↑ ≥ 5% increasing towards performance target range
- ↑ < 5% increase
- ↓ ≥ 5% decreasing towards performance target range
- ↓ ≥ 5% decreasing against performance target range
- ↓ < 5% decrease

* Benchmarking data updated, which has resulted in changes to RAG. Methodology to CiN rate changed to include 18+ to match DfE methodology

** Service reported data whilst system is being updated and calculation verified. Considerable work has been undertaken to enhance reporting in this area. This has included

~ Rate from April 2017 based on rolling previous 12 months

Data Book Definitions

Tab	Name of indicator	Reporting Period	Is this the main indicator on tab?	Definition	Formula / Methodology	Format	National benchmarking data available?	PI Owner
Contacts	Contacts in LCS	Monthly, Year To Date (YTD) & Quarterly	Yes	The number of contacts received at the Integrated Front Door (IFD)	Count of contacts	Number	No	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Contacts	Number with multiple contacts	Monthly	No	The number of children with more than one contact in the reporting month	Count of children with ≥ 2 contacts in the month	Number	No	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Contacts	Significant Incident Forms	Monthly	No	The number of contacts received at the Integrated Front Door (IFD), where there is currently an open referral for the child.	Count of forms	Number	No	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Referrals	Referrals	Monthly & YTD	No	The total number of referrals to Children's Social Care in the period.	Count of referrals	Number	Yes	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Referrals	Rate per 10,000	Annualised	Yes	Referrals are converted into a rate per 10,000 children. Annualised is the estimated year end referral rate based on the average referrals per month received so far.	$((\text{Ref YTD}/\text{Month number}) * 12) / \text{Population} * 10000$	Number	Yes	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Repeat Referrals	Repeat Referrals	Monthly, YTD & Quarterly	No	The number of referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals.	Count of referrals that were within 12 months of the start date of a previous referral for the same child	Number	No	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Repeat Referrals	% Repeat Referrals	Monthly & YTD	Yes	The percentage of referrals to Children's Social Care that are within 12 months of one or more previous referrals.	$\text{Repeat Referrals (as above)} / \text{Referrals} * 100$	Percentage	Yes	Senior Manager – Integrated Front Door
Assessments	Assessments Completed	Monthly, YTD & Quarterly	No	All single assessments, including those that started prior to the start of the period, that were completed within the period.	Count of assessments completed	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
Assessments	Rate of completion per 10,000	Annualised	No	The number of assessments completed is converted into a rate per 10,000 children. Annualised is the estimated year end based on the average per month so far.	$((\text{Assessments Completed YTD}/\text{Month number}) * 12) / \text{Population} * 10000$	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
Assessments	Completed within Timescales	Monthly & YTD	No	The number of assessments completed during the period within 45 working days of the start date of the assessment	Count of assessments completed within 45 days	Percentage	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
Assessments	% Completed within Timescales	Monthly & YTD	Yes	The percentage of assessments completed during the period within 45 working days of the start date of the assessment	$(\text{Completed in Timescales within 45 days} / \text{Assessments completed}) * 100$	Percentage	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
Assessments	Assessments NFA	YTD	No	The number of cases closed after assessment, no further action	If the referral has only an assessment, and the referral has a closure reason of "RC8 – case closed after assessment, no further action", then count as a child assessed not to be in need at assessment.	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
Assessments	% Assessments NFA	YTD	No	The percentage of cases closed after assessment, no further action	$(\text{Assessments NFA} / \text{Assessments completed}) * 100$	Percentage	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CIN Rate	Children in Need	Monthly & Quarterly	No	The number of children who have an open referral to Children's Social Care as at the end of the period.	Count of open referrals	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CIN Rate	Month end increase/decrease	Compared to previous month	No	The number difference between this month compared to last month	$\text{CIN count current month} - \text{CIN count previous month}$	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CIN Rate	Rate per 10,000	Monthly & Quarterly	Yes	The number of children with an open referral is converted into a rate per 10,000 children. Annualised is the estimated year end based on the average per month so far.	$\text{CIN count} / \text{Population} * 10000$	Number	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
ICPC	All ICPC taking place	Monthly & YTD	No	Number of children who were subject to section 47 enquiries that led to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) within 15 working days. Meeting took place in reporting month	Count of ICPC	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
ICPC	ICPC taking place within timescales	Monthly, YTD & Quarterly	No	Number of ICPCs completed within 15 working days. This information is taken from the Safeguarding Unit QA Tracker.	Count of ICPCs completed within 15 working days (within timescale)	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
ICPC	% ICPC taking place within timescales	Monthly, YTD & Quarterly	Yes	Percentage of ICPCs completed within 15 working days	$\text{ICPC in timescales} / \text{ICPC taken place} * 100$	Percentage	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection

Tab	Name of indicator	Reporting Period	Is this the main indicator on tab?	Definition	Formula / Methodology	Format	National benchmarking data available?	PI Owner
CPP Rate	CP Plans starting	Monthly	No	The number of children who started to be the subject of a child protection plan during the period	Count of CP plans starting	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Rate	CP Plans	Monthly & Quarterly	No	The number of children who were the subject of a child protection plan at the end of the period	Count of CP Plans	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Rate	CP Rate per 10,000	Monthly & Quarterly	Yes	The number of children subject to CP is converted into a rate per 10,000 children. Annualised is the estimated year end based on the average per month so far.	CP Plans/Population*10000	Number	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP 2+	Number of children previously subject to CP Plan	Monthly	No	The number of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan at any time during the period, who had previously been the subject of a Child Protection Plan ever.	Count of children	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP 2+	Number of children previously subject to CP Plan (in last two years)	Monthly	No	The number of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan at any time during the period, who had previously been the subject of a Child Protection Plan, in the last two years.	Count of children (for RIG)	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP 2+	Number of children who have become subject to a CP Plan	Monthly	No	The number of children who started to be the subject of a child protection plan during the period	Count of children/CP Plans	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP 2+	% CP Second or subsequent time (since ever)	Monthly, YTD & Quarterly	Yes	The percentage of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan at any time during the period, who had previously been the subject of a Child Protection Plan ever.	Previously subject to a CP Plan/Become subject to a CP Plan*100	Percentage	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP 2+	% CP Second or subsequent time (in last two years)	Monthly	No	The percentage of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan at any time during the period, who had previously been the subject of a Child Protection Plan, in the last two years.	(Previously subject to a CP Plan in last 2 years/Become subject to a CP Plan) *100	Percentage	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Ceased	CPP Ceased	Monthly & YTD	No	The number of children who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan for the reporting month	Count of CP plans ceased	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Ceased	>2 years (ceased after 2 years or more)	YTD	No	The number of children who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan for the year to date, who had been on a plan for more than 2 years	Count ceased after 2 years or more	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Ceased	% >2 years (ceased after 2 years or more)	YTD	Yes	The percentage of children who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan for year to date, who had been on a plan for more than 2 years	Ceased after 2 years or more/CP Plans ceased*100	Percentage	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Ceased	<3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less)	YTD	No	The number of children who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan for the year to date, who had been on a plan for less than 3 months	Count ceased within 3 months or less	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CPP Ceased	% <3 mths (ceased within 3 months or less)	YTD	No	The percentage of children who ceased to be the subject of a child protection plan for year to date, who had been on a plan for less than 3 months	Ceased within 3 months or less/CP Plans ceased*100	Percentage	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
CIC Rate	CIC Rate	Monthly	No	The number of children in care at the end of the period.	Count of children in care	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
CIC Rate	Rate of CIC per 10,000	Monthly	Yes	The number of children in care is converted into a rate per 10,000 children. Annualised is the estimated year end based on the average per month so far.	Children in Care/Population*10000	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
CIC Rate	Children becoming Looked after	Monthly	No	The number of children who started to be looked after during the period (excluding children Looked After under an agreed series of short-term breaks)	Count of children who started to be looked after	Number	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
CIC Rate	Children ceasing to be Looked after	Monthly	No	The number of children who ceased to be 'looked after' during the period (excluding children Looked After under an agreed series of short-term breaks)	Count of children who ceased to be looked after	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
Care Leavers	Care Leavers	Monthly	No	All 'Relevant' and 'Former Relevant' care leavers aged 16 to 20 years old and young people aged 21 and above who have an active Pathway Plan.	Count of care leavers	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
Care Leavers	% Percentage of Care Leavers in Touch Every 8 Weeks	Monthly	No	Percentage of Care Leavers who have had a contact/visit within the last 8 weeks	Percentage of care leavers	Percentage	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
Care Leavers	% Care Leavers in EET	Monthly	No	Percentage of Care Leavers in education, employment or in training	Percentage of care leavers	Percentage	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers

Tab	Name of indicator	Reporting Period	Is this the main indicator on tab?	Definition	Formula / Methodology	Format	National benchmarking data available?	PI Owner
Care Leavers	% Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation	Monthly	Yes	Percentage of Care Leavers in accommodation assessed as being suitable	Percentage of care leavers	Percentage	Yes	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
Care Leavers	Pathway Plans Completed	Monthly	No	Number of Pathway Plans completed for care leavers	Count of plans	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
SDQ, Health & Dental	Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQs) recorded	YTD & Quarterly	Yes	The number of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) completed for all children (and young people) who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months on 31 March 2018 and who were aged between 4 years old and 16 years old (inclusive) on the date of the last assessment	Count of children with SDQs recorded	Number	Average Score	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
SDQ, Health & Dental	Health Checks Recorded	YTD & Quarterly	Yes	The number of children looked after (CLA) for 12 months or more who have had a health assessment from a doctor or other suitably qualified professional during the year. This is a year to date snapshot at the end of each month.	Count of children with assessments recorded	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
SDQ, Health & Dental	Dental Checks Recorded	YTD & Quarterly	Yes	Dental checks - this is the number of children looked after (CLA) for 12 months or more who have had a dental check from a doctor or other suitably qualified professional during the year. This is a year to date snapshot at the end of each month.	Count of children with dental checks recorded	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Care & Care Leavers
IRO Escalation & Caseloads	IRO Escalations made	YTD	Yes	Escalations produced from Independent Review Officers (IRO) where social care tasks have not been completed	Count of escalation forms created - includes draft	Number	No	Corporate Safeguarding Manager
IRO Escalation & Caseloads	Average IRO caseloads as at End of Month	Monthly	Yes	The average number of caseloads held by an Independent Review Officer	Total cases open to IRO/Number of FTE IRO	Number	No	
LAAM	LAAM	Monthly & Quarterly	Yes	The number of children formally reviewed at pre-proceedings	Count of children reviewed in month	Number	No	Senior Manager – Children in Need and Child Protection
Missing Episodes	Missing Episodes	Monthly	Yes	The total number of missing episodes with a start date in that particular month. Children can have more than one missing episode and each one is counted for this measure. Children under 18 years old are counted in this measure.	Count of missing episodes	Number	No	
SEND	Percentage of current CP and SEND	Monthly	Yes	The number of children currently on a child protection plan at the end of the month and who recorded as SEND	Count of children recorded as SEND in Liquidlogic or January School Census / Count of CP children	Percentage	No	
SEND	Percentage of current CLA and SEND	Monthly	Yes	The number of children currently looked after at the end of the month and who recorded as SEND	Count of children recorded as SEND in Liquidlogic or January School Census / Count of children looked after	Percentage	No	
Early Help	Demand for Early Help	Monthly	Yes	The total number of referrals into the Early Help service - includes Community Matters, Family Matters and Family Group Conferencing	Count of referrals	Number	No	Assistant Director: Early Help & Prevention
Early Help	Sustained Engagement for Early Help	Monthly	Yes	Not available			No	
Early Help	Early Help assessments completed	Monthly	Yes	The total number of assessments completed by the Early Help service	Count of assessments	Number	No	
Early Help	Early Help plans completed	Monthly	Yes	The total number of plans completed by the Early Help service	Count of plans	Number	No	
Early Help	Open Early Help episodes	Monthly	Yes	The total number of open cases to Early Help	Count of cases open at the end of the reporting month	Number	No	
Early Help	Percentage of cases closing with outcomes met	Monthly	Yes	The percentage of cases with outcomes met.	Count of closures with outcomes met / (Count of closures with outcomes met + Count of closures with outcomes not met) Please note that the denominator does not include closures for the following reasons; moved out of area, family disengaged, family refused consent	Percentage	No	

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REPORT AUTHOR SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, 25 May 2021

REPORT TITLE:	FOSTERING AND ADOPTION ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT. REPORTING PERIOD 1 APRIL 2020 – 31ST MARCH 2021
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

REPORT SUMMARY

The report provides members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee with an overview of fostering and adoption performance during the financial year of 2020 – 2021 and how this links to the Council’s children looked after ‘sufficiency duties’¹.

A key priority for Children’s Services is for children looked after to be living in family-based settings, most notably foster placements. At the end of the reporting period (31st March 2021) 59% of children were living in local authority ‘in-house’ foster placements. Overall, 71% of children are living in foster placements taking into account 12% of those in placed with private fostering agencies (IFA). Despite the challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic during the last 12 months, the number of Wirral children living in foster care has remained stable. Wirral has a similar profile in comparison with statistical neighbours and the national picture for children living in foster care.

In accordance with the Children Looked After Plan, key priorities relating to fostering have been to support the recruitment of new carers, managing retention, developing the skills of foster carers, and finally to support placement stability. While there remains challenges to ensuring there is sufficient numbers and types of foster placements to meet the increase in children looked after and also to respond to the complexity of needs, there have been notable successes, including the recruitment of 11 new fostering households.

The re-launch of the marketing campaign late last year (2020) resulted in significant increase in the number of enquiries resulting in approvals of new foster carers.

The development of an action plan for the Fostering Service will continue to drive improvements such as continuing to increase recruitment and developing new performance and monitoring tools to ensure the offer and quality of support remains consistently good.

¹ Local Authority Sufficiency Duty – places a responsibility on local authorities to have in place arrangements to meet the placement needs of children looked after.

During the reporting period 25 children have been adopted, with a further 23 children currently placed with their prospective adoptive families. However, performance in adoption has been impacted because of COVID-19 that is reflected at a regional and national level. Pre-COVID-19, Adoption in Merseyside (AiM), the regional adoption agency which Wirral is part of, was performing in line with statistical neighbours and national timescales. Work is ongoing to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on adoption timeliness with evidence of improvements in performance emerging.

Work to support fostering and adoption remain key elements of the council's overall strategic aim to secure 'Brighter Future's' for Wirral's children and young people.

This report does not relate to a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is requested to note the fostering and adoption performance information contained within this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To provide a briefing to the members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee on performance for fostering and adoption.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options have been considered as this is a performance report for members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 **The Fostering Service:** The Service aims to provide a range of high-quality and safe foster placements that meet the needs of our children looked after in line with the council's sufficiency duties and fostering standards. The main responsibilities of the Service are:
- Recruitment and assessment of new foster carers
 - Support, supervision, and training of foster carers including family and friends' carers (connected carers)
 - Ensuring provision of local safe and supportive foster placements in accordance with Fostering National Minimum Standards
 - Promoting placement stability and permanence planning for children looked after.
- 3.2 Following a re-organisation which concluded in October 2020, the Service is shaped around three key areas (1) Recruitment and Assessment; (2) Mainstream Support; and (3) Connected Support. Feedback from staff in the Service and foster carers is that the revised arrangements are proving to be more effective. The Service structure is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.4 Currently the Fostering Service manages a total of 383 mainstream foster carer and connected carer households. This is broken down to 160 mainstream households and 135 connected households. The remaining are being supported through the recruitment stage.
- 3.5 **Adoption Service:** Wirral is part of a regional adoption agency, Adoption in Merseyside (AiM). AiM consists of Wirral, Knowsley, Liverpool and Sefton local authorities. Knowsley is the host local authority for the project.
- 3.6 Wirral's performance for adoption is measured by The Adoption Scorecard. This is published by the Government and gives a national picture of how well local authority adoption services are performing. The three indicators discussed later in this paper (A2, A10 and A20) are used to measure and monitor local authority performance.

4.0 FOSTERING

4.1 Placements

4.2 As of 31 March 2021 there were 826 children looked after (provisional data) for whom the Council is the child's legal guardian often referred to as the Corporate Parent. 492 of these children are living with in-house foster carers (59%) with a further 97 (12%) with independent carers. Data on placement profile is attached as Appendix B.

4.3 The number of children placed in foster care has been maintained when reviewed in line with the previous year's performance (58% on 31st March 2020). Statistical benchmarking indicates that Wirral has a greater percentage of children placed in local authority foster carer compared to statistical neighbours, (56%) national average, (49%) and north west average (50%).

4.4 There is a continued high demand for foster placements for specific children and young people. These include:

- Parent and child placements: Currently Wirral has two carers who are approved to take a parent and child placements
- Teenagers and children with complex needs, particularly those who have suffered trauma and present with emotional and behavioural needs.

4.5 The Fostering Service is working closely with the Commissioning team to help step down children from IFA and residential placements. During the 2020-2021 financial year, there have been four children (two children from residential placements and two children from IFA) stepped down into mainstream placements. Despite these being relatively small numbers there is a significant saving to the council for each child that can be placed with in-house foster carers.

4.6 Foster Carer Recruitment

4.7 Wirral's Marketing Plan 2020/2021 focussed on the 'Big Heart' messaging developed in 2019/20. The key messaging throughout the year focussed on:

- Anyone can foster – Big Heart campaign
- Need for foster carers for teenagers
- Continued need for fostering throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.8 These messages were consistently applied across all advertising formats including the use of social media, digital and radio campaigns and features in resident's newsletters.

4.9 A review of the marketing campaign was undertaken in autumn 2020 and a new look campaign refreshed for a dedicated recruitment drive from December 2020 to March 2021. The key change to the marketing campaign was to ensure fostering was promoted as "open to anyone; Foster Carers come from all walks of life".

4.10 This, and subsequent campaigns, have been supported by current foster carers who play an active part in the recruitment of new foster carers as they can help to portray a realistic and positive view. The Service is also making increased use of digital

channels and the 2021/22 campaign will build on the existing 'Home is where the heart is' branding but focus on recruitment. This campaign push was planned to coincide with Foster Carer Fortnight in May 2021. Key recruitment areas for 2021/22 will focus on parent and child placements, along with foster carers for adolescents.

4.11 The marketing campaign is reviewed quarterly to ensure it is robust enough to deliver its objectives. The priority will continue to be to increase the number of fostering enquiries and subsequently foster carers to provide placements for all children.

4.12 Evaluation of Recruitment Activity – Mainstream Foster Carers

4.13 In total, 124 enquiries were received for 2020-2021. The new marketing campaign was launched in December 2020 and that this has led to an increase in enquiries receiving a total of 45 in Quarter 4. This figure is over a third of all enquiries for the whole year and evidences the impact of the marketing campaign in December. Data on enquiries received per quarter during April 2020 – March 2021 is attached as Appendix B.

4.14 Following initial enquiries, the service responds within one working day and where applicants cannot be contacted, response will continue with a maximum of three follow up contacts. The outcome of the 124 enquiries is attached as Appendix B.

4.15 Of the 124 household enquiries to fostering, 25 applicants have been progressed to full assessment. Of these 25 applicants, 11 were approved indicating a conversion rate of 1 in 10. Following the outcome of 14 assessments underway it is possible that the service will achieve a conversion rate of 1 in 5, reflecting the national average.

4.16 Assessment – Foster Carers

4.17 The National Minimum Standards for Fostering state that a mainstream assessment should be presented to Fostering Panel within 8 months of the application to be assessed. This timescale was met for all 11 cases identified above. Of the 14 mainstream assessments underway, some of these carers are having an assessment as parent and child carers and a number as potential for teenage and sibling groups. This is already meeting the demand target groups identified.

4.18 Training and Support

4.19 During the current COVID pandemic, the Fostering Service continued to provide bi-weekly drop-in training and support group to all foster carers virtually and the feedback received has been extremely positive.

4.20 The Service has also recognised the need to undertake further work with all carers around the completion of training, diary sheets, Personal Development Plans and Training, Support and Development Standards (TSDS).

4.21 Feedback from Foster Carers

4.22 A survey was completed during this reporting period and 83% of foster carers reported feeling satisfied with the Fostering Service. Some quotes from foster carers are detailed below;

‘Thank you so much you are always here to support me straight away. It’s been lovely to have you as my social worker it really has the support from you is amazing.’

‘We would like to say thank you, thank you for the support that you give us, our family is on this journey with social care involvement and new challenges seem to appear. You don’t have a magic looking glass but you take the time to explain the situation to us, which we really appreciate, and we both feel grateful for this.’

‘Thank you for your letter to foster carers I just want to say Thank you to all our Social Workers and Supervising Social workers I know it has been difficult through this pandemic, but I have had a first class service from you all and as a result been able to support the young person in our care. The training has been better than ever and I have enjoyed taking part even the drop ins have been very good varied and interesting. All I can say is A BIG THANKYOU TO YOU ALL. I have not seen any reduction in support you are only a phone call away and I believe the communication has improved during the pandemic. Give yourselves a big pat on the back and please know you are all Appreciated.

4.23 Summary of fostering key achievements and priorities

4.24 The key achievements during 2020 – 21 for the Fostering Service were:

- Service re-organisation which allowed for the development of three distinct teams enabling an enhanced focus on assessment, mainstream support and connected support.
- Successfully recruited three permanent Team Managers.
- Increased administrative support by 50%.
- Reviewed the Fostering Panel processes and appointment of a new Panel Chair and Panel Advisor.
- The development of key performance indicators which has resulted in improved compliance.
- Reviewed and developed foster carer support groups to include a specific group for connected carers.
- Increased fostering enquiries in Quarter 4 following a new marketing campaign.

4.25 In order to ensure that there is a continued drive to improve outcomes for children an action plan has been developed. The key priorities for development during 2021- 22 are:

- To review the existing foster carer group to ensure they have the appropriate skills and abilities to meet the complex needs of children looked after. This will include making key decisions where foster carers do not meet the expected standards.

- Improve retention through understanding, reviewing and improving the benefits package available to carers.
- Foster carers to be supported to demonstrate improved compliance on completion of training, diary sheets and personal development plans.
- To ensure personal development plans are based on needs of the child/ren placed.
- Focus on improving pathways to support data reporting/ extraction.
- Introducing new templates/ forms to improve recording and compliance with National Minimum Standards and recording in a way that puts the child/ren at the centre.
- Increasing the number of carers approved in line with the sufficiency strategy and build on work undertaken so far.

5. ADOPTION

5.1 Adoption Indicators

5.2 The following indicators are used to monitor performance of adoption:

A2 Indicator 2016-2019

The average time between a Placement Order being made and a match being approved by the Agency Decision Maker – the target set by Government is 122 days.

A10 Indicator 2016-2019

The average time a child spent in care before living with adopters – the target set by Government is 426 days.

A20 Indicator 2016-2019

The average time between a Wirral child entering care and the Local Authority being granted a Placement Order from the Court - the Government target is 257 days.

5.3 Performance: 2016 -2019

5.4 Wirral's adoption performance during the period 2016-2019 was positive and broadly in line with targets. The Adoption Scorecards for 2016-2019 were released in August 2020. Data published for this period demonstrates that Wirral is performing better than statistical neighbours and more favourably against the Government timescales, except for the A2 indicator.

Scorecard 3-year Average – Published Data 2016-19 – 69 Children Adopted					
A2		A10		A20	
167	166	367	373	250	272
Wirral	Stat Neighbours	Wirral	Stat Neighbours	Wirral	Stat Neighbours

- 5.5 Between 2016 and 2019, 69 children were adopted. As indicated in the table above, for those 69 children, the average time from placement order and ADM decision (A2) was 167 days which is 45 days more than the Government target of 122 days. This was slightly higher than statistical neighbours at 166.
- 5.6 Within this period, the average time a child spent in care before beginning to live with their adopters (A10) was 367 days which compares favourably against the target set by government of 426 days.
- 5.7 The average time between a Wirral child entering care and the local authority being granted a Placement Order from the court was 250 days which compares favourably against the Government target of 257 days.

5.8 Performance 2019-2021

- 5.9 Wirral currently have 19 children who were made subject to a Placement Order in 2018 or 2019. Of these children 10 are currently in their adoptive placement progressing towards an Adoption Order. Of the remaining children, 7 children have a change of plan being proposed through revoking the Placement Order and 2 children remain with their carers who are considering adoption. These cases have impacted our A2 and A10 performance as we have been unable to secure permanence through an Adoption Order these children from this period. Due to this and the impact of the pandemic on court capacity, the subsequent reporting period (2019-2022), the Adoption Scorecard shows a more variable performance.

2019-2020 & 2020-2021 Average

Wirral Year Average					
2019-2020			2020-2021		
A2	A10	A20	A2	A10	A20
228	492	288	245	356	230

- 5.10 In the reporting period above, there were 61 adoptions completed. The table illustrates a decrease in timeliness in all three areas in 2019-2020. There are several reasons for this:
- There were children with Placement Orders from previous years, where children had plans for adoption approved but it was difficult to match these children to adopters.
 - There was a higher proportion of sibling groups and older children being placed for adoption which resulted in the challenges identified above.
 - There was a lack of available adopters from AiM and although the Recruitment, Assessment and Family Finding Team within AiM was restructured in 2019 to address adopter sufficiency, there continues to be a national shortage of adopters particularly for sibling groups or older children.

- d) The COVID-19 pandemic created delays for court hearings. In most cases, there has been at least 3-4 months delay which has reduced the numbers of Placement Orders issued and Final Adoption Orders granted. The timeliness of Adoption Orders being granted has been impacted by parents exercising their legal right to contest Adoption Hearings.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 **Adoption:** Wirral's 2020/2021 financial contribution share towards AiM is 36.41% and this equates to £1,200,000. This has been agreed as part of the financial model for the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). In 2020/2021 there was an overspend which was mainly due to inter-agency fees. During the reporting period £200,000 was spent on inter-agency fees which is a 50% reduction in comparison to the previous year.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Service is operating in accordance with the council's statutory duties and responsibilities.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 8.1 There are sufficient staffing resources at present within the Fostering Service and within AiM to cover the demand. Within AiM, all staff from the four local authorities are allocated Knowsley IT equipment in line with the regional information sharing agreement. Wirral Adoption staff are seconded to Knowsley who are the host LA. The secondment agreement is in its 3rd year. The service is 98% staffed and sickness is managed by the current staff unless it is long term sick and has an impact on service delivery and capacity.

9.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 9.1 **Fostering:** the main risks is ensuring that there is a sufficient number of foster placements to meet the needs of children looked after. During the 12 month period the number of fostering placement capacity has remained static taking into account recruitment and retention. Recruitment of new foster carers will continue to be a challenge for the foreseeable future. However, this can be managed unless there is a significant increase in the numbers of children looked after.
- 9.2 **Adoption:** If AiM fails to recruit appropriate adopters for children subject to a Placement Order, it is likely to result in delays in finding a forever home for a child. This is likely to impact on older children or those with complex needs. As noted in paragraph 6.2 there is also a risk regarding the number of inter-agency placements that are commissioned and the associated costs.
- 9.3 If plans for permanence through adoption are not progressed timely it is likely to have a negative impact upon the long-term stability of that child. However, it may also result in local authority revoking the Placement Order and changing their care plan to long-term fostering. This will result in increased number of children in care where the local authority will have parental responsibility until the child reaches 18 years old.

10.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Recruitment campaigns are supported by our current foster carers who play an active part in the recruitment of new carers as they can help to portray a realistic and positive view of fostering. Several foster carers work with the communications team and feature in the advertising campaign on radio and online videos to support recruitment campaigns.
- 10.2 The Fostering Service undertakes annual review of foster carers which allows for an opportunity to reflect over the previous year, consult others, acknowledge what has gone well and consider challenges as well as exploring support needs. The Service consults with social workers and agencies involved with the child as part of the assessment process. The Service engages with the independent Fostering Panel.
- 10.3 All foster carers have the ongoing support of a social worker; the child will also have their own social worker. They also have the support of other foster carers, the option for a peer mentor. Regular e-newsletters are sent to foster carers to keep them up to date with advice, guidance, events and experiences of other foster carers.

11.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Children looked after are a marginalised group and we actively seek the most diverse carers to meet the needs of our children. This is reflected in our recruitment campaigns for both fostering and adoption.

12.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no environment or climate implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Service Structure
Appendix B – Placement Data

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Fostering services: National Minimum Standards – GOV.UK
- Adoption Scorecards – GOV.UK
- Chat report March 2021
- AIM Annual Report 2019-2020
- AIM 6 Monthly Panel Activity Report April 2020 – September 2020
- Wirral Council Plan 2025

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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Appendix A

HEAD OF SERVICE			
ASSESSMENT & RECRUITMENT TEAM TEAM MANAGER	MAINSTREAM SUPPORT TEAM TEAM MANAGER	CONNECTED SUPPORT TEAM TEAM MANAGER	FOSTERING ADMIN TEAM ADMIN MANAGER
1 x ASWP 8 x SSW 1 x FSW	9 x SSW 1 x FSW	1 x ASWP 7 x SSW 1 x FSW	2 x SAO 2 x SBSO

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Appendix B

Data on placement profile as of 31st March 2021

CLA Breakdown for placement type				
Other = 21%	Connected = 25%	Mainstream = 34%	IFA = 12%	Residential = 8%

Table showing number of Children Looked After against placement type.	
CONNECTED	208
MAINSTREAM	284
IFA	97
RESIDENTIAL	63
OTHER	174
TOTAL	826

Overview of the 124 enquiries received to be a foster carer per quarter April 2020 – March 2021

Number of mainstream fostering enquiries	
Quarter 1	35
Quarter 2	19
Quarter 3	25
Quarter 4	45

Breakdown of the outcome of the 124 enquiries received April 2020 – March 2021	
Number of enquiries	124
No response from enquirer	24
Enquirer only wanted information	18
Initial visits completed	50
Withdrawn during fostering assessment	10
Approved at fostering panel	11
Current active mainstream fostering assessments	14



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 15 JUNE 2021

REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

The Children, Young People and Education Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Children, Young People and Education Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The report also seeks the Committees view on the re-establishing of the working group for the provision of food and activities in school holidays during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is recommended to:

- (1) note and comment on the proposed Children, Young People and Education Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year.**
- (2) Re-establish and appoint members to the working group for the provision of food and activities in school holidays during the Covid -19 pandemic.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 A number of workplan formats were explored, with the current framework open to amendment to match the requirements of the Committee.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- The Council Plan
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Council

Terms of Reference

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is responsible for services which help keep children and young people safe and fulfil their potential. It incorporates schools and attainment, and social care for children and families. It has a particular focus on those children who are in care, and for whom the Council has corporate parenting responsibility.

The Committee is charged by full Council to undertake responsibility for:

(a) exercising management, oversight and delivery of services to children and young people in relation to their care, wellbeing, education or health, with the exception of any powers reserved to full Council;

(b) the functions and powers conferred on or exercisable by the Council as Local Authority in relation to the provision of education;

(c) working with all schools (including academies) in relation to raising standards of attainment and developing opportunities;

(d) leading for the Council and its partners in the discharge the Council's functions as Corporate Parent for its children in care and care leavers;

(e) any other functions comprised in partnership arrangements with other bodies connected with the delivery of services for children, young people and families;

(f) providing a view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management in relation to the Committee's functions;

(g) undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to:

- child protection;
- children's centres;
- education, schools and settings;
- looked after children;
- mental health services;
- safeguarding;
- special educational needs and disability (SEND);
- youth offending services;
- youth services; and
- social and education transport

4.0 APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUP

4.1 A Working Group was established during the previous Municipal Year as recommended by Policy and Resources Committee to work alongside key partners to explore options in relation to supporting children with free school meals in the medium to longer term with the view to report back to Policy and Services Committee in September 2021. As the work undertaken by this group is still ongoing, the Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to re-establish the working group for the 2021/22 Municipal Year. The Membership as appointed by this Committee was:

Councillor Moira McLaughlin
Councillor Chris Carubia
Councillor Cherry Povall
Councillor Jean Robinson

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information and planning purposes only, therefore there are no direct financial implication arising. However, there may be financial implications arising as a result of work programme items.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, there may be legal implications arising as a result of work programme items.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

7.1 There are no direct implications to Staffing, ICT or Assets.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 The Committee's ability to undertake its responsibility to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, make decisions on policies, co-ordinate spend, and maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets may be compromised if it does not have the opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 Not applicable.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This report is for information to Members and there are no direct environment and climate implications.

REPORT AUTHOR: Victoria Simpson
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Children, Young People and Education Committee Work Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Constitution
Forward Plan
The Council's Transformation Programme

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22
**PROPOSED AGENDA FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION
COMMITTEE – 15 JUNE 2021**

Item	Key Decision Yes/No	Lead Departmental Officer
Prevention Strategy	Yes	Elizabeth Hartley
The Youth Offer	Yes	Elizabeth Hartley
Residential Accommodation Developments	Yes	Anne Marie Carney
SEND service update	No	James Backhouse
Safeguarding Report – Fostering and Adoption	No	Nabeel Chaudhry
Budget Monitoring Report	No	Steve Prytherch
Performance Monitoring Report	No	Carly Brown
Work Programme	No	Victoria Simpson

Item	Key Decision	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer	Wirral Plan Priority
Youth Justice Annual Plan		September	Elizabeth Hartley	
Summary of Standards	No	September	James Backhouse	
Edsential progress report	No	TBC	Simon White	
School Improvement Strategy Report	September 2021	James Backhouse		

Youth Committee	September 2021	Hannah Myers		
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ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Approximate timescale	Lead Departmental Officer
Healthy Weight	TBC	Simone White
Child Poverty Strategy	TBC	Simone White
Summary of Standards	September	James Backhouse
SEND Strategy Update	September	Hannah Myers
Learning from Covid and targeting resources with regards to social inequalities	TBC	Simone White
Integrated Front Door workshop	TBC	Simone White
School Budget follow up(to include info re: Traded Services) workshop	TBC	Simone White
School Improvement Strategy Report	September 2021	James Backhouse
Youth Committee	September 2021	Hannah Myers

STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

Item	Reporting Frequency	Lead Departmental Officer
Performance and Financial Monitoring Report	Each Meeting	Shaer Halewood/Carly Brown
Childrens Committee Work Programme Update	Each Meeting	Committee Team
Summary of Standards	Twice Annually	James Backhouse
Corporate Parenting Panel Update	Twice Annually	Hannah Myers
Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report	Annually	David Robbins
Public Questions	Each Meeting	
Safeguarding Fostering and Adoption	Annually (first meeting of the municipal year)	
Lifelong Learning Annual Performance report	Sept	Paul Smith

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Working Groups/ Sub Committees				
Corporate Parenting Panel	committee	Ongoing	Hannah Myers	
Working Group: Food and Activities during school holidays	Working group	Due to commence Sept 2021	Mark Camborne	
Workshop – Statutory Duties (School Budget)	Workshop	29 March	Simone White	
Task and Finish Reviews				
-	-	--		-
Spotlight Sessions and Workshops				
County Lines Action Update	Workshop	2021/22	Simone White/Tony Kirk	

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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