



Children, Young People & Education Committee

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| Date: | Wednesday, 27 October 2021 |
| Time: | 6.00 p.m. |
| Venue: | The Floral Pavillion |

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AGENDA

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 - 12)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held 13 September 2021 and 4 October 2021.

5. PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Public Questions

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Friday 22 Oct to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10

Statements and Petitions

Statements

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Friday 22 October 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. PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES TO ENCOURAGE, ENABLE AND ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING (Pages 13 - 18)

7. EXTENSION OF THE ADOPTION IN MERSEYSIDE (AIM) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT AND REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS (Pages 19 - 28)

SECTION B - BUDGET REPORTS

SECTION C - PERFORMANCE REPORTS

- 8. PERFORMANCE UPDATE - SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE (Pages 29 - 36)**
- 9. REVIEW OF PARTICIPATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16 TO 18 SEPT 2021 (Pages 37 - 42)**

SECTION D - REVIEWS/ REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

- 10. WIRRAL PLAN DELIVERY PLANS (Pages 43 - 56)**
- 11. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 57 - 64)**

3 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

3.1 Composition:

Eleven (11) Members of the Council, subject to proportionality, which may be altered to accommodate the overall political balance calculation, together with:

- (i) one representative of the Church of England Diocesan Board and one representative of the Roman Catholic Diocesan Board, who may only vote on education matters;
- (ii) two Co-opted Parent Governor Representatives (non-voting)

3.2 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

3.3 Methodology

- (a) **Enquiries and Policy Development** -The Committee may undertake enquiries and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development and may appoint advisors and assessors to assist them in this process. They may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations.
- (b) **Overview and Scrutiny** - The Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken by the Authority in so far as they have a direct impact on the role or functions of the committee and the Committee can make recommendations to the relevant Committee on policies, budget and service delivery. Overview and scrutiny of the Council is an important part of the Committee's remit as part of a 'doing and reviewing' approach. Upon conclusion of a scrutiny exercise the Committee will produce a report containing recommendations for decision by the Policy and Resources Committee or other Committee as may be relevant. In doing so, the

Committee shall have regard to the overview and scrutiny means of working set out at Part 4(4) of this Constitution.

- (c) **Stakeholders** - The Committee may invite stakeholders to address the committee on issues of local concern and/or answer questions in so far as it impacts directly or indirectly on the role of functions of the committee

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 13 September 2021

Present:

Councillor W Clements (Chair)

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Councillors | K Cannon | H Collinson |
| | C Cooke | C Povall |
| | C Carubia | P Stuart |
| | M Booth | Y Nolan (In place of S Frost) |
| | D Brennan | S Williams (In place of A Wright) |

18 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed Members, Officers and members of the public to the meeting.

19 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alison Wright and Councillor Sam Frost.

20 **MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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.

No declarations were made.

21 **MINUTES**

The Chair invited members to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2021. It was raised that a member raised a query relating to the number of early years children categorised as having Special Education Needs and Disabilities and officers had undertaken to provide a response. The Assistant Director for Education undertook to provide the response. It was further noted that the Minutes detailed the removal of the Healthy Weight agenda from the work programme and this needed to be actioned.

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2021 be agreed.

22 **PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions, requests to make a statement or petitions submitted.

23 **WIRRAL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-22**

Tony Kirk, Head of Contextual Safeguarding introduced the report of the Director of Children, Families and Education which provided an introduction to the Wirral Youth Justice Service Strategic Plan 2021-22. The statutory requirement to have a Youth Justice Service under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was outlined. This sought to ensure co-operation with statutory partners such as Police and Health, and the requirement included producing an annual plan which was before members for consideration.

The details of the plan were outlined to the Committee, where it was reported that the priorities within the plan included a combination of both locally and nationally set priorities, with issues like Harmful Sexual Behaviour receiving significant national media attention whilst other issues such as Child to Adult Violence had been identified for local development of the service. The governance of the Youth Justice Services was outlined, with the Youth Justice Management Board having an operation plan that supported the overarching strategic plan.

Members welcomed the adoption of a preventative approach and sought further information on the prevalence of anti-social behaviour on the cusp of the criminal system in the context of the Youth Justice Service preventative services. Participation and engagement was discussed as a priority, where it was hoped co-production of plans with young people, parents and victims could be further explored.

Resolved – That

- 1) the Wirral Youth Justice Service’s Strategic Plan 2021-22 be endorsed and Council be recommended to approve it.**
- 2) the approach and ongoing development work within the Youth Justice Service and across the Youth Justice Management Board be noted.**

24 **WIRRAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY 2021-2024**

James Backhouse, Assistant Director for Education introduced the report of the Director for Children, Families and Education which presented to the Committee the School Improvement Strategy 2021-24, which set out the Council’s vision and ambition around school improvement. It forms part of a

wider multi-factorial Education Strategy which will provide a new transformational and holistic approach to education across all areas, including early years, social care, early help and beyond. The report detailed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic to schools and education in Wirral, and the importance of working collaboratively with schools to support children and improve attainment in response to Covid-19 was outlined to the Committee. The strategy focused on five key themes, namely:

- Leadership and Governance
- High Support, High Challenge
- Self-improving School System
- Learning and Innovation
- School Improvement Wirral

It was anticipated that the strategy would take three years to deliver and to allow for new systems and activity to be embedded. To support this, it was reported that the capacity in the School Improvement Service had been increased.

Members welcomed the aspiration of school improvement but sought further detail on how this would be achieved and whether resources would be required to fully recover from Covid. It was reported that significant work had been undertaken with headteachers in Wirral to capture the main challenges and to adopt the quality assurance process detailed within the strategy, but that there was still further work to be done to develop those documents that sit within the strategy which would be reported back to members. Following further comments, officers undertook to report back on performance measurements and benchmarking.

It was moved by Councillor Wendy Clements, seconded by Councillor Steve Williams, that officer recommendation 3 be changed from 12 months to 6 months.

It was then moved by Councillor David Brennan, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, that –

“the School Improvement Strategy is identified in the Council’s Corporate Risk Register as the mitigation of educational under attainment caused by the pandemic, the Committee therefore agrees that alongside the three year strategy, it is necessary to develop an 18-month Covid-19 Education Catch Up Plan, to identify key actions, resources, target groups and key performance indicators to ensure that the adverse impact on our children’s life chances that may be caused by the pandemic are minimised, with the plan being reviewed by this Committee in 2022.”

In response, officers undertook to bring the plan for review in January 2022.

The motion, with the additional recommendation from Councillor David Brennan was then put and agreed by assent. It was therefore –

Resolved – That

- 1) the School Improvement Strategy 2021-2024 be endorsed.**
- 2) the approach taken and ongoing support given to the school system by Wirral Council be noted.**
- 3) an update on progress towards implementation of the strategy be reported back to the Children, Young People and Education Committee in 6 months.**
- 4) the School Improvement Strategy is identified in the Council's Corporate Risk Register as the mitigation of educational under attainment caused by the pandemic, the Committee therefore agrees that alongside the three year strategy, it is necessary to develop an 18-month Covid-19 Education Catch Up Plan, to identify key actions, resources, target groups and key performance indicators to ensure that the adverse impact on our children's life chances that may be caused by the pandemic are minimised, with the plan being reviewed by this Committee in 2022.**

25 BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 1

Nicholas Ajaegbu, Senior Finance Officer introduced the report of the Director of Children, Families and Education which set out the financial monitoring information for the Children, Young People & Education Committee as at quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) of 2021/22, with an overview of budget performance to enable Committee to take ownership of their specific budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

The Committee was advised that as at the end of June 2021 (Quarter 1), the forecast year end position for Children, Families and Education showed a balanced forecast position. It was reported that the service continued to manage demand with financial pressures being mitigated by in-year cost savings and use of specific related reserves. In-year employee cost savings across the service had mitigated contractual cost pressures and contributed to the overall balanced position. Members' attention was brought to the schools core, where there was an adverse variance of £0.223m due to the on-going annual costs that are being incurred in relation to the non-operational status of the Kingsway School building, but that this had been partly mitigated by an underspend in historic teacher's pension costs.

The steps being taken to manage demand for services were queried, where it was reported that demand management was based on a range of preventative strategies, with one example being preventative measures in relation to Children Looked After which meant the numbers requiring care had not increased as in other authorities thus keeping costs down. Following a request, officers undertook to consider whether the profiled and actual expenditure could be included in future reports to provide members greater assurance that the reported forecasts would be reflected in the year-end position.

Resolved – That

- (1) the forecast year-end revenue position balanced forecast, as reported at quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) of 2021/22 be noted.**
- (2) the progress on the achievement of approved savings and the year-end forecast position at quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) of 2021/22 be noted.**
- (3) the reserves allocated to the Committee for future commitments be noted.**
- (4) the forecast year-end capital position of £4.970m favourable as reported at quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) of 2021/22 be noted.**

26 **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Tricia Thomas, Performance & Improvement Manager introduced the report of the Director of Children, Families and Education which provided a summary of progress made to date on the development of a new performance reporting framework for Members of the Children, Young People & Education Committee. The background to performance monitoring was outlined, with the development of a Power BI Dashboard for members as well as the development of a supplementary performance report to Committee. Members were given a summary of the data provided in the performance report, which included data on 8 priority groups as agreed by members, each of which contained a set of performance indicators.

Members sought further information on SEND where it was reported that further work was underway to cleanse the data and develop the SEND reports within PowerBI. In relation to Free School Meals further information was sought on the reasons behind the significant increase in demand in 2018/19. Officers then outlined that the Q2 performance report was due in November 2021, therefore there was scope for a focused performance report for the October Committee meeting and suggestions were sought from Members. It was proposed that reports on children's social work workforce and post-16

participation in employment, education and training following the pandemic be brought to the next meeting.

It was moved by Councillor Kate Cannon, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia, that the recommendations within the report alongside the inclusion of the two additional items for the next scheduled meeting be agreed. The motion was agreed by assent. It was therefore –

Resolved – That

- (1) the progress made to date and the next steps involved in developing and rolling out a new performance monitoring framework be noted.**
- (2) the content of the Performance Report (Appendix A) and highlight any areas requiring further clarification or action be noted.**
- (3) performance reports in relation to children’s social work workforce and post-16 participation in employment, education and training following the pandemic be brought to the next meeting.**

27 **OVERVIEW OF 2019/20 COUNCIL LIFELONG LEARNING SERVICE ADULT EDUCATION DELIVERY**

Paul Smith, Head of Integrated Learning, Skills and Employment introduced the report of the Director for Children, Families and Education which set out the Lifelong Learning Service’s developments, summary of delivery and learner achievements in the 2019/20 academic year as its first full academic year funded by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The service sought to actively engage and support local residents aged 19+ who were furthest from the labour market and provide learners with the confidence to take the next steps back into education and employment.

The report was based on the 2019/20 academic year, and it was anticipated that a report on 2020/21 would be reported back to Committee in early 2022. It was reported that 2019/20 was a challenging year for the service, with a move to online delivery as a result of the pandemic which presented further challenges when engaging with the most vulnerable people in deprived wards, and the work of the team to continue to deliver the service during this period was praised.

It was queried whether the service would work with Syrian refugees, where it was confirmed that notification of the first three families arriving had been received and Liverpool City Region would inform the service if the Lifelong Learning Service was required. Information was sought on the working arrangements with Wirral Met College where members were advised that although there was no formal agreement, the service was closely aligned to

the College and data on referrals could be provided in the future. The results from the Test and Learn Pilots were also sought for at a future date. It was further reported that whilst the service would be returning to face to face, the value of online delivery was recognised and an online learning platform was being developed.

Resolved – That

(1) the report be noted.

(2) the services' planned improvements be supported and the contribution to improving the lives of adults in Wirral's more deprived communities during 2019/20 be recognised.

28 ESENTIAL UPDATE

Simone White, Director for Children, Families and Education introduced the report which provided an update on the work of Edsential, a community interest company (CiC) co-owned by Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council which provided high quality, ethical and innovative services to schools and families across the Northwest. The report detailed Edsential's achievements during 2020-21 including the delivery of the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF), Edsential at home service and free school meal parcels. It also outlined the current challenges being faced specifically the impact of COVID-19 on the organisation's financial position, as well as the strategic business plan priorities for 2021–2022. Mark Parkinson, Chair of Edsential Board and Ian McGrady, Managing Director were in attendance to answer questions from members.

The criteria for eligibility for holiday activity programmes was queried due to residents just over the threshold for eligibility for Free School Meals having to pay full price, where it was noted that the eligibility was set by Department for Education and that because Edsential overachieved on forecast places, demand was high. A further query was raised in relation to the losses the company had incurred and whether it was able to access any covid money for recovery. In response, the Committee was advised that £1.85m had been received in government funding the majority of which had been used for furlough, with rate relief and grants also being received mainly attached to the residential centre in Anglesey. It was reported that there was a robust recovery plan in place and it was expected that income would recover to pre-Pandemic rates.

A further discussion was had around the decision to close the Oaklands residential centre and move existing bookings to the centre in Anglesey. It was felt that the quality of the provision was superior at the Anglesey site, with significantly more activities all of which were accessible on foot, unlike the Oaklands site which required minibus travel and therefore extra cost. It was

reported that rates to attend both sites as well as the travelling time to both were equal. A number of queries were then raised in relation to the status of the company in terms of profit, as well the liability for the loss of income during Covid-19 and the anticipated recovery. The status of the company as a CIC was outlined, as well as the use of any profits where it reported that the £100k of profits were reinvested into 12 Wirral schools through grant funding. It was further reported that to the credit of the staff the company avoided cash flow issues during Covid-19 and the Board was confident that it could comfortably pay back the debt it had incurred whilst running the company efficiently.

It was moved by Councillor Wendy Clements, seconded by Councillor Kate Cannon that the Committee places on record its thanks to Edsential for its work during Covid-19. The motion was unanimously agreed. It was therefore

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Resolved – That

(1) the report be noted.

(2) Edsential be thanked for their work during Covid-19.

29 **THE PROVISION OF FOOD & ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL HOLIDAYS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services, introduced the report of the Director of Children, Families and Education, which provided an update further to the proposal agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee regarding the provision of free school meals (FSM) in school holidays during the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020. The Working Group had met in July 2021 and decided that due to the extension of the funding, it wished to continue to meet and report back to Policy and Resources.

The Chair confirmed that the members of the Committee serving on the Working Group were content with the proposal.

Resolved – That

(1) The progress of the Provision of Food and Activities Working Group for Children in School Holidays during the Covid-19 Pandemic be noted.

(2) a report be presented to Policy and Resources Committee in the new year.

30 **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

Vicki Shaw, Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Governance, which provided the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

It was proposed that the item in relation to learning from Covid could be embedded into the reports for other issues as part of a working agenda, but members felt that it warranted a specific discussion. It was proposed that the Child Poverty Strategy should be timetabled in and the Director of Children, Families and Education undertook to consider the timescales and review the overall timetable of items. It was further proposed that the SEND Strategy Update be brought to the next meeting and that the Pupil Place Planning Strategy be added to the work programme.

The recommendations within the report with the inclusion of the proposals suggested by the Committee were moved by Councillor Wendy Clements, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia. It was therefore –

Resolved – That

- (1) the report be noted.**
- (2) the Child Poverty Strategy be scheduled in for consideration at a future meeting.**
- (3) the SEND Strategy Update be presented to the next scheduled meeting.**
- (4) Pupil Place Planning Strategy be added to the work programme.**

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 4 October 2021

Present: Councillor W Clements (Chair)

Councillors K Cannon C Povall
C Cooke P Stuart
C Carubia A Wright
D Brennan S Williams (In place
H Collinson of M Booth)

Apologies Councillors S Frost

31 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed Members, Officers and members of the public to the meeting, and informed the Committee of the sad passing of Councillor Andy Corkhill and Honorary Alderman Gerry Ellis. A moment of silence was held.

32 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Max Booth and Samantha Frost.

33 **MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest.

No declarations were made.

34 **PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that no questions from either members of the public or Members had been submitted. Nor were there any statements or petitions to receive.

35 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved – That, 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 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

36 **CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

Anne-Marie Carney, Children's Commissioning Manager introduced the report which requested approval for a financial investment of £1,000,000 by way of a commercial loan to support the development of up to four new children's homes in Wirral. Members were informed of the background to the project, alongside an update on the main developments since it was last reported to the Committee in June 2021.

The Committee discussed the report in detail and several members sought clarification on the risks associated with the loan. The Director of Children, Families and Education responded accordingly.

Resolved – That Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to:

- 1) approve the issue of a commercial loan facility to We Are Juno CIC, in terms approved by the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, as set out in section 5 of the report, in the sum of up to £1,000,000.**
- 2) authorise the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, to:**
 - a) settle and perfect such security for the performance of the borrower's obligations under the commercial loan facility as is offered by We Are Juno CIC to the Council; and**
 - b) agree such minor variations in the terms of the commercial loan facility as are necessary to reflect any changes in circumstances arising during the term of any loan agreed, including any security pursuant to recommendation 2(a) above.**



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 27 October 2021

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| REPORT TITLE: | PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES TO ENCOURAGE, ENABLE AND ASSIST YOUNG PEOPLES PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION |

REPORT SUMMARY

Since April 2013 Wirral Council has been part of a joint Liverpool City Region NEET participation service commissioning group. Halton Council has historically led the procurement process and created a Framework Agreement for the service incorporating Liverpool City Region local authorities, including, Liverpool, Knowsley, Halton, and Wirral.

The current service contract, awarded to Career Connect, which came into effect 1st April 2018, is due to finish 31st March 2022 with no options to extend.

Wirral Council and the other partner Liverpool City Region local authorities are again in favour of a joint commissioning exercise to procure a service to encourage, enable and assist young people's participation employment, education and / or training from 1st April 2022.

Halton Council have again agreed to lead on the procurement activity on behalf of the partner local authorities. Local authorities in this new service procurement include Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council and Halton Council.

The joint procurement process would seek to procure a service from April 2022 for a period of four x 12-month periods. This will allow for consistency of service from 2022 to 2026 but with the option to reduce or terminate the service annually should the Council's statutory duties change, or further budget savings require a reduction.

The annual Council revenue funding available for the new service will be equal to that invested for 2021/22 at £500,790. The Wirral service provider costs for a 4-year procured service would therefore have a value of circa £2million (Wirral delivery element only).

Costs associated with this service will be met from the overall ongoing budget provision for 14-19 Team / NEET participation services. The budget for this service in the 2021-22 financial year is currently £1,026,600.

Delivery of participation and NEET services supports two of the key strategic Council themes, as outlined in the Wirral Plan 2025 (note: these are the same themes that will be included in the refreshed Wirral Plan 2021 – 2026, being considered at Full Council in September). These themes include (1) Brighter Futures through the delivery of interventions to engage NEET young people and the provision of careers support, and (2) Safe and Pleasant Communities through targeted engagement of young people aged 16 and 17 (and those with SEND up to the age of 25) and their families in the Borough's most deprived communities / ward areas.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

This is a key decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1) to provided delegated authority to the Director of Children, Families and Education to enter a partnership service delivery contract with Halton Council, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, and an approved service provider, at the end of the procurement process. The procured service provider will deliver a service to support and enable NEET young people to positively participate.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Providing a service to support young people NEET are a vital component and support mechanism to ensure the full discharge of the Council's statutory duty to support full participation. This service will become more important as we enter the post pandemic recovery phase with young people challenged by competition for jobs, the consequences of interrupted education and social isolation.
- 1.2 There is also significant advantage to being involved in a joint procurement process with the other local authorities across the City Region. The proposal to jointly procure a service across the four local authorities will bring economies of scale which will financially benefit Wirral Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council could procure its own service independent of the other Liverpool City Region local authorities; however, in doing so Wirral would fail to benefit from: -
 - a. The financial benefits associated with being part of a much larger commissioning activity where providers can reduce service costs based on economies of scale.
 - b. Reduced issues associated with tracking and providing consistent support for Wirral young people who travel and / or relocate to other Liverpool City Region local authority areas.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The current Liverpool City Region (LCR) local authorities' contract with Career Connect expires on 31st March 2022. A new service is required to be commissioned for delivery from 1st April 2022. Service delivery options will, again, need to be aligned to the post Covid-19 challenges and opportunities whilst also meeting the dynamic complex needs of Wirral NEET young people.
- 3.2 The current service procurement and contracting arrangement has been led by Halton Council procurement services. The service specification was developed and agreed by all Council partners and their representative officers. Each Council in the partnership has its own funding schedule based on the individual services required by that locality. Service performance is also managed at a Council level. This approach works well for Wirral, and it is planned will be retained for the new service from 2022.
- 3.3 The proportion of young people currently not in employment, education and / or training (NEET) is 4.3% (July 2021) or 316 young people. Compared to the same period in 2020 the current NEET rate has reduced by 0.6%. This is a recognised LCR local authority's trend as the nation emerges from the periods of lockdown.
- 3.4 The Department for Education (DfE) published data (March 2021) illustrated Wirral to have a NEET rate lower than the Northwest and England combined measure averages. As a borough Wirral also performs well compared to neighbouring LCR

local authorities but still falls short of Sefton by 1.1% (combined NEET plus not known metric). Table 1 below provides a Liverpool City Region comparison. Table 1. A comparison of NEET rates for 16- and 17-year-olds

| AREA | % 16-17s NEET | % 16-17s Not Known | Combined NEET & Not Known Performance |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| ENGLAND | 3.0% | 2.0% | 5.0% |
| NORTHWEST | 3.6% | 1.5% | 5.1% |
| Halton | 3.3% | 0.7% | 4.0% |
| Knowsley | 7.0% | 0.7% | 7.7% |
| Liverpool | 5.1% | 2.5% | 7.6% |
| Sefton | 3.3% | 0.3% | 3.6% |
| St. Helens | 4.0% | 1.0% | 5.0% |
| Wirral | 3.7% | 1.2% | 4.9% |

(Source: DfE, March 2021)

- 3.5 The specification for this service will maintain some similar features to current but will need to recognise and respond to the challenges and barriers facing young following the national pandemic; these include disruption to compulsory education, social isolation, and other mental health related challenges. Young people in receipt of this support service are often vulnerable with multiple and / or complex needs. These challenges have evolved since the last commission in 2018.
- 3.6 Proposed refinements to the current participation and engagement services for Wirral NEET young people include: -
- i. Build on the successful integration of the service with key Children’s Services team, for example, service staff based with the Youth Offending Team, Leaving Care Services and the 14-19 Team and support for young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND).
 - ii. Development of a Participation Coach role which will support vulnerable young people aged 16-19 NEET and those socially isolated linked to mental health issues.
 - iii. Stronger focus on peripatetic service delivery and use of digital technology – to also include intensive delivery out in the community to include ‘door knocking’.
 - iv. Increased focus on supporting and the re-engagement of young people NEET rather than offering / delivering pure careers guidance.
 - v. Retain a small, fit for purpose, flexible professional careers guidance service for those young people requiring an intensive 1:1 service.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The costs whilst still to be finalised will be met from the overall budget provision for 14-19 Services which is currently £1,026,600 (FY 2021-22). The tender specification

will be designed to give commissioners flexibility at point of procurement with services disaggregated into different investment lots, for example engagement services, coaching services, and careers services.

- 4.2 Break clauses will be legislated for at the end of each contract year to take account of available budget.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Local authorities have a duty to make available to all young people aged 13 to 19 (and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities), support that will encourage, enable, and assist them to participate in education or training. This is a duty under Section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

In addition, the Education and Skills Act 2008 placed two 'Raising the Participation Age' related duties on local authorities regarding 16- and 17-year-olds:

3a. Local authorities must promote the effective participation in education and training of 16- and 17-year-olds in their area with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training. A key element of this is identifying the young people in their area who are covered by the duty to participate and encouraging them to find a suitable education or training place.

3.2b. Local authorities must make arrangements – i.e., maintain a tracking system - to identify 16- and 17-year-olds who are not participating in education or training. Putting in place robust arrangements to identify young people who are not engaged in education or training or who have left provision enables local authorities to offer support as soon as possible.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Council commissioning framework must be fully applied, and an appropriate service provider procured to ensure the Council can continue to meet its statutory duty to support and enable participation of young people.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Career Connect as the current service provider have been duly made aware of the local authority's plans to procure a new service via Halton Council (as the commissioning lead).

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and published and can be found using the link below:

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Consideration has been given to the climate emergency in the redesign and overhaul of services to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate. The service provider will have to demonstrate how they will maximise the efficient use of technology to reduce carbon. This will include reduced community-based visits and the use of greener transport options.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The service provider that wins the opportunity to deliver this service to support and enable young, post-16, to participate in employment, education and / or training (EET) will be required to demonstrate their track record in relation to working alongside Wirral further education providers and employers. Supporting and enabling the participation of young people has a known long term economic benefit to the local area through reduced reliance on public funded services and local spending.

11.2 The appointed service provider will be key in supporting and developing successful careers plans alongside the young people that find themselves NEET. Priority will always be given to local opportunities EET because of the benefits linked to sustainability of placement (minimised travel barrier / environmental impact) and local economic advantage.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Department for Education: Participation of young people in education, employment or training Statutory guidance for local authorities



Participation-of-you
ng-people-in-educat

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|-----------------|------|
| | |



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 27 October 2021

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | EXTENSION OF THE ADOPTION IN MERSEYSIDE (AIM) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT AND REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION |

REPORT SUMMARY

In April 2017, Cabinet gave approval for the creation of a Regional Adoption Service in Merseyside. The requirement of local authorities to establish Regional Adoption Agencies was in response to new legislation, the Education and Adoption Act (2016). At this time it was agreed that Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral would form an agency with Knowsley acting as 'host authority'. It was agreed that the agency would operate in shadow form during 2017/18 and then became fully operational on 1 April 2018. These timescales were in accordance with those outlined by the Department for Education that mandated all local authorities were enter into these arrangements by 2020.

At this time a three-year partnership agreement was entered, and this expired on 31 March 2021. Due to the pandemic it has not been possible to review this arrangement. It is recommended that the existing partnership arrangements are extended until 31 March 2022 whilst a review of the arrangements takes place. A further report will be brought back to consider the future partnership arrangements.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- a) Agree that the current AIM partnership agreement be extended to 31 March 2022.
- b) Note that a review of the existing partnership arrangements will take place and a further report will be brought back on future partnership arrangements for 01 April 2022.
- c) Support the proposal that Wirral will not put itself forward as the host authority at the current time.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

1.1 To ensure that all local authorities agree to the partnership extension until April 2022.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 Do nothing: The current partnership agreement has lapsed and there is currently no formal arrangement in place. The decision is to extend the agreement for 12 months whilst a review of the current arrangements takes place. Doing nothing means that participant authorities do not have the relevant legal arrangements in place.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Adoption in Merseyside (AIM) was formally launched on 1 April 2018 and is the Regional Adoption Agency for Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral. At this time it was agreed that the agency would be a hosted model where one authority (Knowsley) was the Host. Wirral and the other two authorities seconded their staff to Knowsley, as the host. All staff remained on their existing terms and conditions and continue to do so. This arrangement is supported by an overarching partnership agreement which was initially signed up to for three years and expired on 31 March 2021.

3.2 Governance arrangements were put in place which included a strategic board chaired by the Director of Children's Services from Knowsley and the Assistant Directors from the other authorities, including the Assistant Director for Children and Families from Wirral. There is also an operational management group consisting of the Heads of Service responsible for adoption in the respective authorities.

3.3 As the partnership agreement has now lapsed it is recommended that an initial twelve-month extension is put in place whilst a wider review of the service and existing arrangement is undertaken. The Board has previously agreed that the hosted model is the preferred approach and so it is not proposed that this is reviewed further at the current time.

3.4 The areas for review are as follows:

- Review the host arrangements of AIM that will be in place from 01 April 2022 and the related secondment agreement. If there is a change to the hosting arrangements, there will need to be consultation with staff and trade unions on any proposed changes.
- Review of the Governance arrangements, including Terms of Reference and Governance Structure. The existing arrangements will be distributed to Board Members for review.
- Review of support service arrangements. When AIM was created each of the authorities agreed to provide some support service functions. These are

attached as Appendix 1. It is now appropriate to review the support service arrangements to ensure the host can fully support AIM. An officer from Wirral Council will work with Knowsley colleagues to review this arrangement. The support services workstream will also be involved in this work and will bring back any proposals to the Board for consideration. This will also be shared with the relevant Cabinet Members.

- A review will be undertaken of the partnership agreements to ensure they are fit for purpose. This will include a review of the funding model that underpins AIM.

4.0 REVIEW OF HOST ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Wirral has previously expressed interest in becoming the host authority. An evaluation of this has taken place to consider the implications of this and resulting findings presented to the Assistant Director for Children and Families and Director of Children's Services. Key considerations have included:

- a) Timeliness of the review of the partnership model: As highlighted above, a review of the current arrangements will take place over the next 6 months. This will consider whether AiM will continue to operate as a 'hosted' model and look at alternative models of delivery. It is suggested that the outcome of the review needs to be completed before any alternative 'host' is appointed.
- b) Support services: As the current host authority, Knowsley Council provides financial and legal support for the establishment and operation of AiM. It is assumed that any alternative host would need to take on strategic back-office functions such as programme support, legal and finance. Given the current arrangements in Wirral, particularly the capacity within the current Children's Finance and Legal teams, it is considered that any additional requirements would place further pressures on those operational functions.

4.2 Considering this, it is suggested that Wirral will not put itself forward as the host authority from April 2022 at this current time.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant financial resource implications at the current time. The current funding formula is aligned to each authority's four-year average placement orders. For Wirral, this equates to a financial contribution of 36% of the total budget. For 2020/21 financial year, this was £1.2million. It is anticipated that a review of the funding formula might impact on the budget contributions that each authority makes but this will be undertaken in consultation with the relevant finance officers from each authority.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no significant legal implications. The agreement would be extended on the same terms as the existing arrangements and contains appropriate mechanisms to control risks to each authority especially in relation to data protection issues and record keeping requirements.
- 6.2 Wirral has seconded 16 employees to the Host Authority (Knowsley). Those staff remain employees of Wirral Borough Council and their terms and conditions of employment remain those of Wirral Council employees, although their formal location of work is the Host's premises in Halewood. Day to day management and allocation of duties is undertaken by the Host Authority. They remain, however, subject to Wirral Borough Council's policies and procedures in terms of absence management, capability, formal grievance and disciplinary procedures. Should the agreement between the participating authorities be terminated then the secondments would cease and day to day management of the seconded staff would return to Wirral. Each seconded employee is asked to sign a secondment agreement.
- 6.3 In the event that Wirral Borough Council were to become the host, adequate indemnities will be needed (as provided in the agreement) to protect the Council from liabilities which could arise from the arrangement.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 7.1 There are no significant resources issues currently. The current support arrangements will apply until April 2022.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 Operational and strategic risks relating to AiM are captured within its service risk register. The Assistant Director for Children and Families has opportunity to escalate risks related to AiM to the Director through the directorate risk register.
- 8.2 There is a risk of not adhering to our statutory responsibility to establish and maintain a regional adoption agency and ensuring the appropriate legal and governance arrangements are in place to secure effective delivery.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 9.1 At the current time there are no communication issues. Any proposed changes as result of the review will need to be communicated to all participant authorities.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no equality implications arising out of the report.

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no environment and climate implications.

12.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no community wealth issues arising at the current time.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Support Service arrangements

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|-----------------|------|
| | |

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Appendix 1

Support Services Arrangements – Existing arrangements

1. Work stream Officer Leads – Current lead

| Work stream | Lead Officer(s) (Participating Authority) |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Legal | Mike Dearing/Trevor Steele (Knowsley) |
| Finance | Paula Deegan (Knowsley) |
| Operational Delivery | Jenny Ness (Liverpool) |
| Human Resources | Michael Wafer (Wirral) |
| Programme Manager | Sam Worsfold (Knowsley) |
| Learning and Development | Angela Siteo (Sefton) |
| Estates | Dave Turner (Liverpool) |
| Communications | Paul Johnston (Liverpool) |
| Commissioning and Procurement | Alison Taylor (Sefton) |
| Information Technology | Kevin Morgan (Knowsley) |

2. Support Service Arrangements

| Work stream | Participating Authority Lead | Comments |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Legal | Knowsley | <p>General - Knowsley to lead on general partnership arrangements issues but any legal challenge on individual adoption cases will be referred to the legal team of the Participating Authority for the child being placed.</p> <p>Adoption Panel Support – Legal officer attendance is not generally required for the Panel but if legal advice is required this will be directed to the Participating Authority legal team most involved with the case or where the issue is of general application legal advice will be given by Participating Authority legal teams on a rota basis.</p> |
| Finance | Knowsley | <p>General - Participating Authority finance teams will continue to pay for their own staff and existing expenditure incurred from running of the AIM adoption team. A recharge mechanism will be put in place for any AIM shared costs in the proportions set out in the Funding Arrangements (Schedule 4).</p> |

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liverpool to recharge the other Participating Authorities for premises costs and Head of Service for AIM; • Knowsley to recharge the other Participating Authorities for IT costs and additional HUB costs (<i>Note: it is expected that there should not be any significant excess cost and that there is a potential opportunity for efficiencies in this area</i>); • Sefton is the Participating Authority with responsibility for Commissioning and Performance so will need to pay for any AIM related commissions and recharge <p>Any costs shall be recharged in the proportions set out in the Funding Arrangements (Schedule 4).</p> <p>Reporting - Financial reporting on the AIM budget will take place on quarterly basis. A consolidated position will be presented to the AIM Operations Group for consideration and approval.</p> |
| Operational Delivery | Knowsley (as Host Authority) | Jenny Ness has been seconded from Liverpool as Head of Service for AIM and will report to both the AIM Operations Group and the AIM Management Board as required on AIM performance. |
| Human Resources | Wirral | <p>General - All operational HR issues will be referred back to the Participating Authority HR team who is the Seconded's employer for advice, payroll and other HR support.</p> <p>Specific - Wirral to continue to have oversight on any potential cross cutting HR issues arising as AIM develops and any service review.</p> |
| Learning and Development | Sefton | Sefton to continue to review AIM training needs on a regular basis and report to the AIM Operations Group. |
| Estates | Liverpool | <p>Liverpool responsible for any lease issues and payments with due to the landlord of the premises. Unless agreed otherwise the Host Authority shall enter into leases and/or licences for AIM.</p> <p><i>Note: while this will be regularly reviewed the expectation is that this should be minimal.</i></p> |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|--|
| | | |
| Communications | Liverpool | Liverpool will continue to provide support for AIM communication issues. |
| Commissioning and Performance | Sefton | Sefton to take on performance management and commissioning of any new contracts. |
| Information Technology | Knowsley | Knowsley to continue to provide ongoing IT support. The Participating Authority who provides the information technology equipment for use by AIM or its staff shall retain ownership of that equipment unless agreed otherwise. |

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27 OCTOBER 2021

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| REPORT TITLE: | CHILDREN'S SERVICES SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE OVERVIEW POSITION |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a brief overview to the Children, Young People and Education Committee (CYPE) on the current position of the social work workforce in the Council's Children's Services Directorate. The report highlights some key challenges faced by the Service, including the workforce adapting to new ways of working, supporting recruitment and retention, managing staff absence rates, and the use of temporary agency staffing.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

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

1. Note the current position regarding the children's social workforce position;
2. Consider the proposed actions outlined in the report, including the development of a revised Social Work Workforce Strategy.

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 monitor and scrutinise the social work workforce position of the Council's Children's Services Directorate.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Not applicable.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The current challenges faced by the Council's children's social work workforce is likely to be no more acute or challenging than that faced by the majority of Councils across England. A significant number of Councils are reporting challenges with workforce instability in children's social work staffing, a position that has been exacerbated during the Covid pandemic. Establishing a stable, permanent, motivated, and skilled social work workforce is a key factor in delivering effective children's safeguarding services.
- 3.2 Children's Services 'journey of improvement' since 2016 has been characterised by having in place all the factors that contribute to an effective social work workforce strategy. Whilst challenging, Children's Services has been successful in the recruitment of new social workers, albeit the majority were newly qualified. The retention of new and existing social workers has been a key achievement with the offer of Continuous Professional Development, manageable caseloads, and opportunities to move to specialist roles or successful in applying for promotion to management posts. Sickness absence levels, either personal or work-related reasons was relatively low and either in line or below the Council's target of 10.75 days per fte. The period of stability amongst the workforce helped to reduce the necessity to employ temporary agency social workers into either unfilled posts, or where there was a requirement to create additional capacity to meet Service demands.
- 3.3 With the onset of the Covid pandemic in March 2020, there remained a stable workforce for a period of almost 12 months. This was, in part, related to a desire for employment security and familiarisation in the workplace due to the challenges and unpredictability associated with the pandemic. It was also partly due to the successful awarding of grant funding to support a range of different innovative projects such as the 'We can talk about domestic abuse' and the 'Social Worker in Schools' programmes. These projects attracted social workers from across the country and resulted in the recruitment of six experienced social workers into project teams and other service teams. A targeted campaign which sought to encourage agency workers to convert to become permanent employees at this time, also resulted in the successful conversion of eight agency workers to permanent.

3.4 What has emerged amongst the workforce since the easing of Covid-related restrictions is greater challenges, particularly in the areas of recruitment, and to a lesser extent the retention of existing social workers. Coupled with increases in staff absence rates, cited mainly as a consequence of 'Covid fatigue' and the strains of working during a pandemic, this has ultimately placed increased pressures on the workforce.

3.5 Social work 'establishment' position

3.6 On 30 September 2021, there was 191.9 full time equivalent (fte) social work posts in Children's Services. This includes all those staff where there is a requirement in their job description to be a professional registered social worker. These posts would include social workers at various level of experience, including those newly qualify (ASYEs), and advanced social workers, team managers and independent reviewing officers.

3.7 The table below (fig 1) shows there has been an increase of 6.1% in the vacancy rate amongst qualified social work posts during the period December 2020 to August 2021, with an outturn position of 27.9% (vacancy rate), which equates to 53.6 vacant posts. Most of these posts are at social worker level based in the case management teams, notably Assessment and Intervention, and until most recently the Permanence Service. The tally below doesn't account for 11 frozen social work posts, the funding of which has been diverted to invest in family support workers, which assists the teams in alleviating some of the operational pressures caused by running with such vacancy rates. Considering the reported 53 vacant posts these are currently being covered by the employment of family support workers (11 'frozen' posts) and agency social work staffing that is detailed in para. 3.16 of this report. This is enabling the Service to maintain manageable caseloads.

Fig. 1 Establishment Posts

| Social Workers | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| In post | 139.46 | 134.96 | 132.96 | 131.46 | 129.36 | 133.74 | 134.74 | 129.74 | 127.31 |
| Vacancies | 42.06 | 46.56 | 48.56 | 50.06 | 51.56 | 47.18 | 46.18 | 51.18 | 53.6 |
| Established | 192.52 | 192.52 | 192.52 | 192.52 | 191.92 | 191.92 | 191.9 | 191.9 | 191.9 |
| Vacancy Rate | 21.8% | 24.1% | 25.2% | 26.0% | 26.8% | 24.5% | 24.0% | 26.6% | 27.9% |

3.8 Social Work recruitment and retention

3.9 Over a 12-month rolling period up until 30 August 2021 the Council recruited 36 new employees into qualified social work posts. In the same period 39 employees left social work posts in Children's Services. This is the first period in over 12 months when the Service will be reporting a deficit position in analysing recruitment and retention numbers. In the period between January 2020 and December 2020, the Service was successful in recruiting 16 experienced and 11 newly qualified social workers. At the same time, 15 total social work practitioners left the Council bringing with it a period of workforce stability. Much of this was related to the initiatives as outlined in section 3.3 of the report.

3.10 As part of the 'Grow Your Own' Strategy the Service has focused on recruiting newly qualified ASYEs (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment). This has proved successful each year. However, one of the challenges facing the Service in terms of workforce is in recruiting experienced social workers. Whilst this is challenge for all Councils, the increase in recent months of more 'project' style work has proved an attraction for experienced social workers (due to the high pay and time-limited nature) and subsequently thwarted current recruitment drives. The agency social work market has also become a positive career choice for social workers. The average payrate working on an agency basis exceeds that paid to permanent social workers employed by Councils. Also, it offers flexibility to individuals who may not want to commit to long term permanent posts.

Fig.2 New Starters and Leavers

| | Social Workers ASYE | Social Workers | Experienced Social Workers | ASWP | Team Manager | Service Manager | IRO | Total |
|----------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------------|------|--------------|-----------------|-----|-------|
| Starters | 14 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 32 |
| Leavers | 5 | 16 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 36 |
| Total | +9 | -10 | -3 | -3 | +3 | 0 | 0 | -4 |

3.11 To address the challenges in recruitment, the Service has started to implement new approaches. These include:

- Online open evening social work recruitment events;
- Launched an internal social work degree apprenticeship programme, with a cohort of four family support workers set to start the qualification in January 2022. This is a long-term strategy underpinned by the apprenticeship levy with the potential for this cohorts beyond this initial pilot;
- Targeted agency to permanent campaign;
- Rebranding of recruitment adverts and promotional material, moving away from focus on Ofsted and improvement and encouraging social care practitioners to come and help #bethedifference for children and young people in Wirral;
- Social media campaigns;
- Press coverage and newspaper adverts;
- Entering a second year of the Frontline training programme recruiting four social workers per year. In 2022/23 consideration is being given to extending the programme to include training eight new social workers.
- Use of recruitment agencies for permanent worker.

3.12 In moving forward it is anticipated that the recruitment of new permanent social workers will remain a challenge. The likelihood is that most social workers recruited to the Service will be inexperienced or newly qualified. In planning for this, the Council must consider how it can provide additional training and support (particularly in their first year of employment) and ensure caseloads remain manageable for newly qualified social workers without placing additional burdens on the Service. Considering this there will be a need to invest in further training and management capacity. There

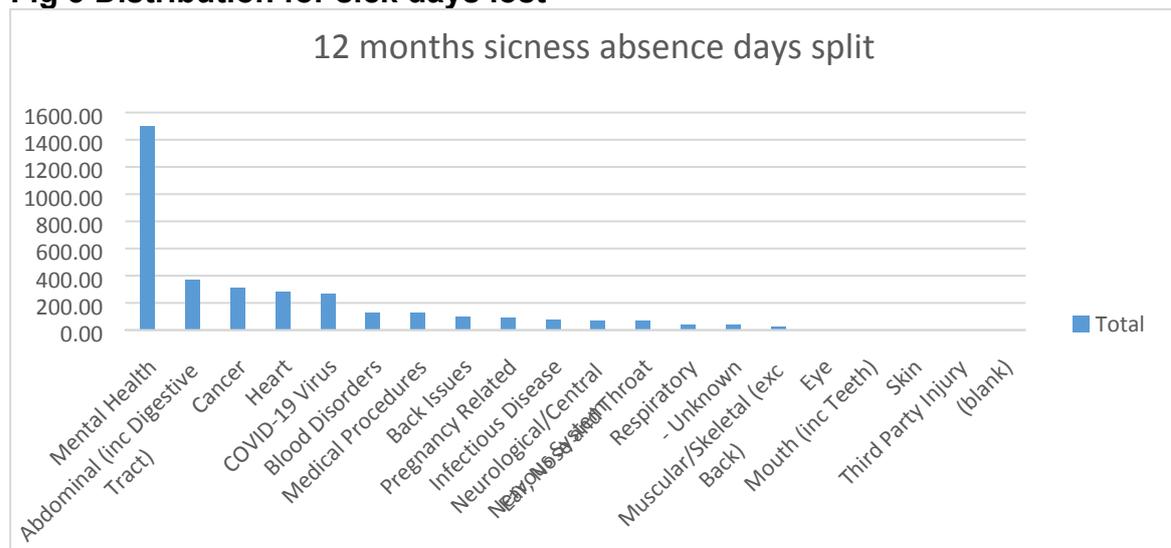
may also be the need to increase the number of overall social worker posts to maintain caseload capacity.

Finally, given that most vacancies are in the safeguarding teams (Assessment and Intervention), it will be important to avoid the risk of having too many inexperienced social workers in teams where the nature of the work is fast moving, challenging, complex and high-risk safeguarding.

3.13 Social work absence management rates

3.14 During a rolling 12-month period ending 30 August 2021 staff absence levels amongst qualified social workers was 15.08 days per fte. This compares to the whole Council target of 10.75 days per fte and the overall Council position of 10.16 days per fte. The percentage of short-term absence represent 27% of the overall number, with long-term showing as a percentage rate of 73%. The cumulative total of days lost for 12 months is outlined as 3,515.64, the split for the reasons is detailed in Fig 3 below. To reduce the sickness levels within the service and particularly reduce mental health absence, we have recently introduced a Wellbeing Manifesto as part of the workforce strategy, which will hopefully see an impact on these levels within the next 12 months.

Fig 3 Distribution for sick days lost



3.15 Social work agency staffing levels

3.16 The use of agency social workers has remained consistent in Children’s Services since December 2020 as illustrated by the table below (Fig 4) averaging between 28 (lowest point) and 45 (highest point).

Fig 4 Agency Social Work Staffing Levels

| | Dec | Jan | Feb | March | April | May | June | July | Aug |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-------|-----|------|------|-----|
| Agency Numbers | 41 | 39 | 39 | 37 | 34 | 30 | 28 | 28 | 45 |

3.17 In the period between December 2020 to June 2021 there was a net reduction of 13 agency social workers. This reduced capacity within the Service to manage in the region of 200 plus children's cases. Given the scale of the change, it was difficult to find suitable agency staff at the pace required. Equally, considering the predicted demand on social care services, primarily as a result of Covid and children returning to education, the Service made the decision to commission a 'managed service' (Innovate) in August 2021 that consisted of employing a team of social workers and a team manager that is based in the Assessment Service where vacancies and absence management was most acute.

3.18 Innovate is due to end its contract in early November after a 12-week period. Officers are currently working on an exit strategy to support this.

3.19 **Workforce Strategy**

3.20 Led by the Children's Principal Social Worker and the Performance and Improvement Manager in Children's Services, a new Social Care Workforce Strategy is being devised. This work is being managed via the governance arrangements provided by the Children's Social Work Workforce Strategy Group. Whilst it would have been necessary to update the workforce strategy to ensure it's aligned to the needs of the Service, and the priorities set out in the Wirral Plan, this has become of greater importance due to the impact of the pandemic and how it's influenced safeguarding services, including demand and delivery an effective social work workforce. The outcome of this work will be completed in January 2022.

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 reported to Committee once refreshed.

8.0 **ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 There will be a process of staff engagement in developing the workforce strategy. The outcome of the work will be reported to this Committee for endorsement, in line with relevant timelines for completion.

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. There are no equality issues arising 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

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Monday, 27 October 2021

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | AN OVERVIEW OF POST 16 PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOLLOWING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION |

REPORT SUMMARY

Historically Wirral has experienced improvements in NEET performance year on year dating back to 2010 and the legacy of the 2009 economic recession. Since 2016, when the NEET counting methodology changed, the Wirral NEET rate has continued to remain low (top 50% statistically) against the backdrop of the Liverpool City Region’s NEET ‘Hotspot’ status.

It is accepted that young people, aged 16 to 18, will often on occasion find themselves NEET and seeking support / advice; however, it is not acceptable for a young person to remain NEET from one month to another ongoing.

The 14-19 Team tracks, supports and reports monthly on a cohort of 7,311 (as of March 2021) Wirral resident young people in academic years 12 and 13 (ages 16 to 18). The service provides validated tracking data to the DfE with data being published quarterly.

Table 1 below illustrates the % change in NEET for the month of March between 2018 and 2021:

| Year | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | % change 2018-21 |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| NEET Rate | 3.6% | 3.5% | 3.7% | 3.7% | 0.1% |
| Not Known (NK) Rate | 2.2% | 2.2% | 1.4% | 1.2% | -1.0% |
| Overall NEET & NK | 5.8% | 5.7% | 5.1% | 4.9% | -0.9% |

(Source, NCCIS, March data reports 2018 to 2021 (years 12 and 13))

To give the NEET percentages some context; in March 2021 the NEET rate of 3.7% equated to 274 young people. The percentage of young people not known in the same period (1.2%) equated to 90 young people.

Table 2 below illustrates the sectors in which Wirral young people have chosen to participate.

| | Yr 12 | Yr 13 | Total Cohort | % (adjustment applied) |
|--|-------|-------|--------------|------------------------|
| Cohort total | 3710 | 3601 | 7311 | |
| EET Total | 3599 | 3347 | 6946 | 95.01% |
| i. of which in education, post Year 11 (includes FE and SSF) | 3384 | 2987 | 6371 | 91.7% |
| ii. of which in Employment | 137 | 308 | 445 | 6.4% |
| a. of which in Apprenticeships | 90 | 167 | 257 | 4.03% |
| iii. Training | 78 | 50 | 128 | 1.84% |
| NEET Group | 86 | 188 | 274 | 3.7% |
| Current situation not known | 24 | 66 | 90 | 1.2% |

(Source NCCIS, March 2021)

Overall participation amongst young people is high (as reported in Table 2) at 95.01% but the pattern of participation is very different to previous years. An illustration of this is the continued reduction in Apprenticeship participation; down from 5.6% in March 2020 to 4.0% in March 2021 or the equivalent of -115 less young apprentices.

Delivery of participation and NEET services supports two of the key strategic Council themes, as outlined in the Wirral Plan 2025 (note: these are the same themes that will be included in the refreshed Wirral Plan 2021 – 2026, being considered at Full Council in September). These themes include (1) Brighter Futures through the delivery of interventions to engage NEET young people and the provision of careers support, and (2) Safe and Pleasant Communities through targeted engagement of young people aged 16 and 17 (and those with SEND up to the age of 25) and their families in the Borough's most deprived communities / ward areas.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

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

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) support the services' continued intervention to support and engage young people NEET and / or at risk of NEET.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Providing a service to support young people NEET is a vital component and support mechanism to ensure the full discharge of the Council's statutory duty to support full participation. This service will become more important as we enter the post pandemic recovery phase with young people challenged by competition for jobs, the consequences of interrupted education and social isolation.
- 1.2 Young people presenting as NEET and seeking support are demonstrating more complex needs and barriers linked to mental health. The employment market is chaotic with national and local interventions for workless adults and young people lacking real synergy. Young people are generally discluded from larger national worklessness support programme, including Kick Start, because of strict eligibility criteria linked to benefits.
- 1.3 Overall, participation remains high with more young people accessing academic courses in school sixth forms / Birkenhead Sixth Form College and / or vocational skills-based provisions at Wirral Met College.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In the last 4 years the 14-19 Team NEET Participation and Engagement Support Service; commissioned as a joint LCR service and delivered by Career Connect, has been charged with reducing the Not Known performance measure. The premise being that if we don't know what all of our young people are up to how can we best support their needs and get them on a pathway to a successful transition into adulthood.
- 2.2 Since the onset of Covid-19, March 2020, and the associated periods of lockdown tracking and support for Wirral post 16 young people has been a challenge. The usual activities including email, written correspondence, social media investigations, telephone calls to young people, parents and carers have provided rich evidence and have continued. What has been a challenge or inconsistent across the service has included face to face meetings and 'door knocking' activity (as part of not known tracking).
- 2.3 As we come out of lockdown 3.0 the team at Career Connect have now opened the Argyle Street office for face-to-face appointments and door knocking activity has re-commenced.
- 2.4 Feedback from NEET young people on the effects of the pandemic on their participation was gathered by Career Connect during the autumn term 2020. The top 10 key themes identified leading to NEET / preventing positive participation included:
 - Parental apathy and inability to influence progress into EET.
 - Poor attendance and absenteeism due to drug use and poor behaviours.
 - Employment is the only desired option – income.
 - Rejection of Employability Programmes, Study Programmes and traineeships

- Too low or no financial incentive.
- Bullying: intimidation; rivalry; related anxiety.
- Travel: education provision too far away from home.
- Self-Exclusion due to mental health; anxiety; deep-rooted isolation.
- Young people dropping out of College or being asked to leave due poor attendance / non-engagement and then unable to return for a period of time.
- Young people unwilling to compromise their vocational ideas and routes in to job role / employment (career destinations).

- 2.5 As illustrated in table 2 above; as at March 2021 the NEET rate of 3.7% equated to 274 young people. The percentage of young people not known in the same period (1.2%) equated to 90 young people.
- 2.6 The profile of NEET (ages 16 to 18) and the average time spent in NEET by Wirral young people (April 2021) can be seen below in table 3:

Table 3. NEET Analysis: time spent NEET by each young person in the age group 16 to 19 as at April 2021

| Time Spent NEET | Active | Inactive | All | % Overall NEET |
|-------------------|--------|----------|-----|----------------|
| Less than 30 Days | 63 | 13 | 76 | 16% |
| 1-3 months | 64 | 31 | 95 | 20% |
| 3-6 Months | 55 | 38 | 93 | 19% |
| 6-12 Months | 86 | 28 | 114 | 24% |
| 1 Year+ | 60 | 41 | 101 | 21% |
| Totals | 328 | 151 | 479 | |

(Source: NCISS, April 2021)

- 2.7 Of concern is the proportion of young people that have been 3 months plus NEET at 64 percent or 308 young people. The 14-19 Team unfortunately do not have any year-on-year comparative data due this being a bespoke report from the live NCCIS database. The intensity of the work required to support a longer-term NEET young person back into some form of EET increases exponentially with every month spent NEET.
- 2.8 An analysis of the active and inactive NEET cohorts though reports no significant long-term change with roughly 23% of the NEET cohort being inactive, i.e. the young person is a carer, has a long term health condition / illness, teen parent / pregnancy, etc...

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report. A report will be received by the Committee, 23rd October 2021, detailing planned approaches for commissioning a service to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

6.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There are no risks to the Council arising from this report.

7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Career Connect have consulted with NEET young people to help inform the contents of this report.

8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and published and can be found using the link below:

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Consideration has been given to the climate emergency in the delivery of services to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|-----------------|------|
| | |

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE **Wednesday, 27 October 2021**

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | THE WIRRAL PLAN 2021-2026 DRAFT DELIVERY PLANS |
| REPORT OF: | CHIEF EXECUTIVE |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report presents The Wirral Plan 2021-26 Draft Delivery Plans. The Plans were approved at Council on 6th September 2021, together with the recommendation that engagement and discussion with relevant Committees would take place to further shape the underpinning delivery plans and work programmes required to implement the Wirral Plan.

For completeness, a full set of the draft Delivery Plans is attached in Appendix 1. Members of the Committee are asked to comment on the specific thematic priorities that fall within the remit of this Committee.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Children, Young People and Education h Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the draft Delivery Plans, as they relate to Children, Young People and Education in Appendix 1 to this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Wirral Plan is a key policy document for the Borough, and drives the high level priorities, ambition, and key deliverables for the organisation. The Plan reflects what people have told us is important to them and will be used to help all staff understand their role in helping to deliver our corporate priorities.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Wirral Plan is a key policy document and is vital for the Council's planning and development in the coming years. Council on 6th September 2021 referred the draft Delivery Plans to Committees for further consideration, hence the report. The Delivery Plans have been developed through engagement and feedback to agree the proposed priorities. Other options could have been to omit these priorities but then the Delivery Plans would not reflect what is seen as important.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Wirral Plan provides the policy framework for Council activity in the coming year. Underpinning the Wirral Plan are a suite of draft Delivery Plans which have been developed to set out in-year actions as well some medium-term aims. Delivery Plans will need to align with the achievement of in-year budget efficiencies, be cognisant of budget planning for 2022/23 and the Council's emerging Change Programme.
- 3.2 Council on 6th September agreed that further consideration of the draft Delivery Plans would take place with relevant Committees to further shape the Delivery Plans and work programmes required to implement the Wirral Plan.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Wirral Plan is designed to align with and inform the budget setting process for the next five years.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Legal implications relating to the actions set out in the Wirral Plan will be addressed by directorates as appropriate.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Wirral Plan is a key strategic document to determine Council business planning and delivery resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

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

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

The Wirral Plan reflects what people have told us is important. Ongoing engagement will continue with staff, residents, businesses and partners as part of a collaborative approach to implementing the Plan.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The fundamental purpose and core of the Wirral Plan is to tackle inequalities and improve equity for all our residents. It will address the existing socio-economic and health inequalities in the Borough, to do things differently and make a fairer, more inclusive Wirral. Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as the priorities within the Plan are implemented.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Wirral Plan reflects the Council's strong commitment to improve the environment, with clear actions to address environment and climate emergency.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Wirral has some stark economic, social and health inequalities. The Wirral Plan is committed to addressing this – by shaping an economy that benefits all of our residents and one which keeps money within Wirral; a prosperous, inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations. With Community Wealth Building at its heart, the Wirral Plan sets out how to tackle this and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: The Wirral Draft Delivery Plans

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Wirral Plan 2021-2026

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Council | 14 th October 2019 |
| Policy and Resources Committee | 28 th July 2021 |
| Council | 6 th September 2021 |

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AIM

A THRIVING AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, CREATING JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

| | Summary | Projects & Initiatives | What we will deliver this year | Timescales | Delivery | How we will demonstrate progress |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------|--|---|
| 1. Local Plan | Delivering the Local Plan and addressing Housing needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Plan Affordable Homes | Publish the Reg 19 for consultation | Autumn 21 | Led by the Regeneration and Place Directorate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reg 19 published Local Plan published Housing schemes in pre-app/in planning/ consented/in construction. Annual monitoring report to ensure 5-year housing land supply on track |
| | | | Submit Local Plan for Examination | Winter 21 | | |
| | | | Establish 5 Year Housing Supply | Autumn 21 | | |
| 2. Economic Strategy | Ensuring the council plays an active and effective role alongside all partners to shape and achieve “good growth” for Wirral; creating great places for people to live, work, learn and enjoy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Economic Strategy 2026 Town Centres/High Streets Employment & Skills Business Support & Inward Investment Social Regeneration & Community Wealth | Consult and finalise the Economic Strategy 2026. | Autumn | Partnership working between the Council, Wirral Chamber of Commerce, and the Liverpool City Region. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish the Economic Strategy 2026 Secure New Contract for Wirral Business Support Service No. of business supported. Value of support (£s) Kickstart placements available and filled. Number engaged in the Ways to Work Programme and number of positive outcomes achieved. <p>Note: Measures will be reviewed on completion of the Economic Strategy.</p> |
| | | | Ensure continuous delivery of a Wirral Business Support Service. | September 2021 | | |
| | | | Support business resilience through the provision of strategic financial support | Ongoing | | |
| | | | Deliver the Kickstart scheme to create 6-month work placements aimed at those aged 16 to 24 on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. | Jan 2022 | | |
| | | | Deliver the Ways to Work Programme to support residents to access employment opportunities. | June 2023 | | |
| | | | Review at finalisation of Economic Strategy point to provide a catch all for other prime and/or new ES projects activities. | October 2021 | | |
| 3. Birkenhead 2040 Framework | Ensuring the Council accesses and secures a range of funding streams to deliver | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Centre Commercial Business District Hind Street Green Corridor Wirral Waters | Approve Birkenhead 2040 and its supporting area-based Neighbourhood Frameworks. | TBA | Regeneration and Place Directorate are leading, collaboration partnership with site owners and developers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of Final Framework Funding secured from public/private sources. schemes in pre-app/ in planning/ consented/in construction |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | projects for Birkenhead's regeneration. | | Develop business cases to secure funding through Town Deal in Birkenhead. | | | SMART measure to be included on adoption of WP |
| | | | Deliver the Future High Streets Programme in Birkenhead and New Ferry. | | | |
| 4. Regeneration Enabling Strategies | Strategies that enable the delivery of regeneration ambitions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture • Heritage • New Homes • Low Carbon • Visitor Economy | Develop a Wirral Culture and Heritage Strategy to enhance and promote our heritage offer and explore ways to embed cultural/visitor economy opportunities into our regeneration programme | Summer 2021 | Regeneration & Place Directorate in partnership with LCR and partners locally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published Wirral Culture and Heritage Strategy (delivery measures to be reviewed on completion of strategy) • New district heating infrastructure – Stage's TBC • Publication of Design Guide • Increase in number and size of Wirral business conferences. • Increased overnight and day visitor numbers to Wirral, from April 2022. |
| | | | Work with strategic partners to secure funding to improve the energy efficiency of buildings | Ongoing | | |
| | | | Develop design codes for key regeneration areas, to ensure that all new development is of a consistently high design standard | Ongoing | | |
| | | | New homes with low carbon/net zero targets planned or in construction | Ongoing | | |
| | | | Visitor Economy Actions: In partnership with LCR, develop a business conferencing strategy, and Funded Destination Marketing plan | October 2021/ January 2022 | | |
| 5. Housing | Increase affordable housing provision within the Borough through enabling and partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing and Shared Ownership Programme • Planning Policy | In 2021/22 700 units to commence on site works with 400 units to be completed | Regeneration and Place in collaboration with Registered Partners | March 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing and Shared Ownership Programme • Planning Policy |
| | Prevent and Relieve Homelessness and Reduce numbers of rough sleepers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Action Plan • Move On Accommodation Plan | Deliver Wirral's agreed Move On Plan with MCHLG for those people who were accommodated into emergency temporary accommodation during the pandemic - Reduction to zero of those living in temporary accommodation during the lockdown period | Regeneration and Place Directorate in collaboration with partners | December 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Action Plan • Move On Accommodation Plan |

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ACTIVE AND HEALTHY LIVES FOR ALL, WITH THE RIGHT CARE, AT THE RIGHT TIME TO ENABLE RESIDENTS TO LIVE LONGER AND HEALTHIER LIVES.

Page 49

| | Summary | Projects & Initiatives | What we will deliver this year | Timescales | Delivery | How we will demonstrate progress |
|--|--|---|---|---------------|--|--|
| 1. Covid Outbreak Prevention and Management | Covid Outbreak Prevention and Management – Informing the Wirral for ‘living with Covid’ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outbreak Management Plan | Lead the strategic and operational Outbreak Management Plan and adapt/respond to Government guidance. | Ongoing | Outbreak Management Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wirral Plan 2025 refresh is set in the context of living with Covid. Enquiries are answered. |
| | | | Inform the refresh of the Wirral Plan 2025 for ‘living with Covid’. | Early 2021 | | |
| 2. Healthy Wirral Key Improvement Programme and drive forward the Health Inequalities Strategy | Tackling health inequalities and improving life chances through... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Inequalities Strategy Leisure Strategy Prevention Programme | Launch the Health Inequalities Strategy | April 2021 | Health and Wellbeing Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced health inequalities and a range of ‘health’ measures (TBC) Savings / efficiencies Customer / Resident feedback and insight |
| | | | Build the ‘early help’ offer to support vulnerable families and communities. | April 2021 | Children’s Partnership Board to lead this work with a range of directorates and partners | |
| 3. Delivery of 5 core projects | Supporting people to live fulfilling lives and have good mental health and emotional wellbeing whilst reducing the cost of care by having better conversations and promoting independence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New adult social care model (Three conversations) Smarter homes, assistive technology and extracare housing. Out of hospital pathways review Online Care and Financial Assessment. Wirral Evolutions review | 1. Care and Support Review-to trial new ways of working with people to provide a more personalised response. | April 2022 | Working with Partners For Change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater independence evidenced by reduced cost of care and reduced residential placements, increased community support. Reduction in care charge arrears (PFU) Increased responsiveness to care enquiries in innovation sites. Positive feedback from service users Improved performance in supporting people home from hospital. Increased number of people living in extracare housing. |
| | | | 2. Assistive Technology Plan-implement a range of technology and digital options to assist people to remain healthy and independent. An increased range of extracare housing. | By April 2022 | Partnership with NHS Community Trust | |
| | | | 3. Review and improve the support offer to people at risk of needing hospital care or who are being discharged from hospital. | Nov 2021 | Partnership with NHS Cheshire and Wirral Partnership | |
| | | | 4. Online Care and Financial Self-Assessments- to encourage more people to adopt the online service offer. | April 2022 | Partnership with Wirral CCG | |
| | | | 5. To work with Wirral Evolutions on an implementation plan for service development. | April 2022 | Delivered through the Change Programme. | |

AIM

BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR ALL REGARDLESS OF THEIR BACKGROUND.

Page 50

| | Summary | Projects & Initiatives | What we will deliver this year | Timescales | Delivery | How we will demonstrate progress |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Transformational Partnership Accommodation Programme | Significantly improving the residential offer for children looked after and care leavers to improve outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership Accommodation Programme Residential homes Care Leavers Hub 'My Space' | Establish a 6-bedded residential home as part of an extension of the Willowtree Short break service for Children Looked After with disabilities. | August/September 2021 | Children's Services in partnership with - directorate with Finance, Major Projects, HR and Assets Delivered through the Change Programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced demand/cost – e.g., looked after children Improved OFSTED rating. Increase in 'in-borough' placements. Reduction in children admission to Tier 4 mental health provision Improved emotional wellbeing and support for Care Leavers. |
| | | | Launch the My Space Care Leaver Hub creating a new and dynamic accessible space for Care Leavers, with access to drop in help and services as and when they need it | October 2021 | | |
| | | | Acquire property through NHS England funding to develop a new three bedded specialist service to support and prevent children going into Tier 4 mental health provision | September 2021 | | |
| 2. Prevention and Early Intervention Programmes | Ensuring all children and families in the borough receive the right help at the right time to enable them and their families to develop resilience to face future life challenges independently. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention Framework and Breaking the Cycle programme Early Help Model Youth Offer | Council adoption of the Prevention Framework and establishment of the Breaking the Cycle programme, encapsulating 8 core projects including: PAUSE, Cradle to Career, DRIVE with outcomes | June 2021 (Council adoption) 3-year programme to 2023 | Children's Services in partnership with Adult's Services and wider corporate partners. Delivered through the Change Programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved outcomes for children and families. Reduced demand/cost Reduction in prevalence of domestic abuse Improved co-ordination and collaboration in tackling perpetrators Reduction in Section 47 enquiries (Child Protection) Prevention of children becoming looked after |
| | | | Implement the Youth Offer redesign in line with the neighbourhood model to ensure equity of access for all children and young people | January 2022 | | |
| | | | Continue to deliver the new early help model through the design of a new self-help digital tool for families. | April 2022 | | |
| | | | Feasibility study on delivering a neighbourhood/place-based model work conterminously with health, adults, schools to maximise effectiveness. | December 2021 | | |
| 3. School Improvement & Sufficiency Strategy | Ensuring that our education provision and offer is fit for purpose, inclusive and enables children to achieve their full potential | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School's review SEND Strategy Pathways - children to adult's services Apprenticeships Strategy Three conversations approach | Complete Phase 1 of the Pupil Place Planning Strategy focussed on Birkenhead to address demand and surplus of school places where this is required. | June 2022 | Children's Services in partnership with Assets and wider corporate partners. Some elements will be delivered through the Change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved educational attainment. Improved outcomes for children with SEND, including increased participation in employment, reduced school exclusions, increase in number of children attending mainstream settings and increased participation in |
| | | | School Improvement Strategy to raise aspirations and improve outcomes for all Wirral children by creating a culture of high support and high challenge. | September 2021 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------|---|
| | | | <p>SEND Inclusion review to look at the ways in which we can maximise the long-term life chances of children with SEND through understanding how they can better be included in local schooling to maximise opportunities and life chances.</p> | <p>September 2021</p> | <p>Programme.</p> | <p>education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in children's needs met at an earlier stage. Improve the percentage of education, health and care plans (EHCP) that are completed within the statutory timeline of 20 weeks. |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------|---|

AIM

A CLEAN-ENERGY, SUSTAINABLE BOROUGH, LEADING THE WAY IN TACKLING THE ENVIRONMENT CRISIS.

Page 52

| | Summary | Projects & Initiatives | What we will deliver this year | Timescales | Delivery | How we will demonstrate progress |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Drive forward the Climate Emergency agenda | Working for a sustainable environment that leads the way in its response to the environment and climate emergency and is environmentally friendly. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cool Wirral2 Climate Change Strategy Environment & Climate Emergency Policy and Action Plan Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy | Plant and establish over 21,000 trees. Delivery of the Pollinators Plan Establish an action plan for the Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy | During 2021 - 2022 | Cool Wirral Partnership Climate Emergency Team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced CO2 from Council operations |
| | | | Secure green sustainable energy for the Council's energy requirements. | During 2021 - 2022 | Environment & Climate Emergency Action Group | |
| | | | Re-establish the Council's carbon budget and reporting process. | During 2021 - 2022 | Delivered through the Change Programme. | |
| 2. Implementation of major capital infrastructure investment which supports Wirral's Highways & Infrastructure (cross-cutting with Safe & Pleasant Communities) | Ensure Wirral's infrastructure is sustainable for the future. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highways Asset Management Strategy & Policy Lifecycle Programmes Street Light Policy Tree Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy Invest to Save Programme Deliver the commitments of the Environment & Climate Emergency Policy | Progress the major LED replacement scheme which will have replaced an additional 26,000 Street Lights with LEDs and around 9,200 lighting columns. | Throughout 2021 – Work to be completed by early 2022 | Neighbourhood and Delivery Directorate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of LED streetlight replacements in Wirral by 2022. Reduction of costs and savings - energy costs and carbon tax when the streetlight upgrade is completed. Number of trees planted and established per year. Number of trees felled for safety purposes. Carbon off set from sequestration. Council's carbon budget Number of Council members and officers trained to gain carbon literacy |
| | | | Tree Woodland & Hedgerow Strategy delivery, planting 21,000 trees per year over the next 10 years. Since March 2020 over 24,000 trees have been planted, exceeding the first-year target. | Ongoing throughout the next 10-year tree planting programme, annual target of planting 21,000 trees. | | |
| | | | Establishment of the Council's environment and climate emergency action plan, driven by an action group of senior officers. | | | |
| | | | Gain carbon literacy organisation status. | | | |
| | | Delivery of the Highways Asset Management strategy and lifecycle programmes | Throughout 2021/2022 | | | |
| 3. Safer, Sustainable Transport | Embedding active travel solutions and local cycling and walking | Active Travel | Support the LCRCA to develop the business case for the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), segregated strategic cycle route between New Brighton to Birkenhead | March 2023 | Neighbourhoods and Regeneration & Place team working with LCR. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of Business Case by LCRCA Publication of Active Travel Strategy (delivery measures to be |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---------------|--|--|
| | infrastructure across all of Wirral | | Deliver an Active Travel Strategy | December 2021 | | reviewed on completion of strategy). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in volume of cycle journeys. • Increase in sustainable journeys to school. • Continuing reduction in Road Traffic Collisions |
| | | | Delivery of a strategic cycle route from Leasowe to Seacombe Ferry | December 2022 | | |
| | | | Implementation of 6 'School Streets' Projects | March 2022 | | |
| | | | Deliver new Road Safety Action Plan | March 2022 | | |

WIRRAL THEME DELIVERY PLAN 2021 – SAFE & PLEASANT COMMUNITIES

AIM

SAFE AND PLEASANT COMMUNITIES THAT OUR RESIDENTS ARE PROUD OF.

| | Summary | Projects & Initiatives | What we will deliver this year | Timescales | Delivery | How we will demonstrate progress |
|---|--|---|--|------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Domestic Abuse Strategy (ADULTS COMMITTEE) | Ensure the right support at the right time and improving outcomes for the most vulnerable by breaking the cycles of poverty and harm through taking a preventative approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic Abuse Prevention programme Three conversations approach. | Invest in large-scale workforce training on trauma informed practice. | | Adults and Children's Services in partnership with Community Safety Partnership and wider stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced cost / demand on a range of Council services – efficiencies. Domestic abuse: Reduction in cases and re-offending, increased reporting, feedback from survivors. |
| | | | Engage with underrepresented groups, such as elderly, LGBTQ, pregnant women, people with learning difficulties and disabilities and people living in more affluent areas, to understand how they are affected by domestic abuse. | | | |
| | | | Begin longer-term media campaigns and engagement with the Criminal Justice System and Family Courts. | | | |
| 2. Community and Leisure strategies | Creating a sustainable model for the delivery of leisure and cultural services in Wirral which celebrate the best of Wirral's assets, environments, and communities. Libraries will become community hubs for learning and family support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports & Physical Activity Strategy | Implement the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy | Within the next 12mths | Neighbourhood Services Directorate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved public health outcomes in areas of need. More integrated services delivered locally. Increase participation in sport and physical activity among Wirral residents. Support reading attainment in areas of identified need Increase in uptake of library online services. Increase in community usage of libraries by local cultural groups. Increase in activities and events that have a health and wellbeing focus in areas of identified need. |
| | | | To provide our residents and stakeholders with outstanding connected, accessible and affordable services through the right blend of facilities, outreach and prevention and intervention activities that make physical and mental health, lifelong learning and cultural enrichment part of everyone's everyday lives. | | | |
| | Neighbourhoods model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood model, workforce modernisation programme | Workforce modelling to support a resident and member first approach to dealing with enquiries and pro-actively deal with issues efficiently. | Throughout 2021/22 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure members and residents are at the heart of delivery of our services. |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access channels for reporting and resolution of customer enquiries. |
| | Wirral Museums Service will contribute to the regeneration of Birkenhead, help improve mental health & wellbeing and celebrate local artists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Deal initiative at Birkenhead Priory Historic Documentation digitisation project Exhibition & Events Programme | <p>Commission new visitor facilities at for Birkenhead Priory</p> <p>Go live with the first phase of an online, searchable database of Wirral's art and museum collections.</p> <p>Deliver a series of events that support business development and access to funder for creatives and creative industries in Wirral.</p> <p>Show the work of local artists and crafts people past and present.</p> | Throughout 2021/2022 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wirral Museums will help improve mental health & wellbeing. Help drive local economy and support local artist to become economically active. Online access to collections |
| 3. Community Safety Strategy | The overarching aim of the Community Safety Strategy is to build safer, stronger, more resilient communities in Wirral and reduce the fear of crime. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch co-produced community safety strategy. 10 Strategic themes Use of CCTV cameras to tackle crime and provide community reassurance | <p>Invest in new CCTV Control room and comprehensive upgrade of public realm CCTV network</p> <p>Design and Co-produce Coastal and Inland Water Safety Plan (Drowning Prevention Strategy)</p> <p>Build on Resilient Communities project by working with our communities to ensure they are prepared for emergencies.</p> | All to be delivered by 31 March 2022. | Community Safety Team and Neighbourhood Engagement along with all partners of the Safer Wirral Partnership Board. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nos of crimes detected through use of CCTV Reduced number of emergency calls for water/coastal rescue. Nos of citizens signed up to Flood Watch. |

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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 27 OCTOBER 21

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILY AND EDUCATION |

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.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are invited to note and comment on the proposed Children, Young People and Education Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year.

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 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 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.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

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

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Committee's ability to undertake it's 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.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable.

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.

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

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

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

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report

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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 |
|------------------------|-------------|
| | |

COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22
**PROPOSED AGENDA FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION
COMMITTEE – 27 October 2021**
ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED
KEY DECISION ITEMS

| Item | Approximate timescale | Lead Departmental Officer |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Early Help Alliance Programme | November 21 | Anna Jones |
| Pupil Place Planning Strategy | February 21 | Hannah Myers |

| Item | Approximate timescale | Lead Departmental Officer |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse No Excuse Annual Report | November 21 | Elizabeth Hartley |
| PFI Update | November 21 | James Backhouse |
| Budget Report | November 21 | Shaer Halewood |
| Budget workshops | August/ Sept 21 | Simone White |
| Child Poverty Strategy | Workshop | Simone White |
| Summary of Standards | From September 22 | James Backhouse |
| Learning from Covid and targeting resources with regards to social inequalities | TBC | Simone White |
| School Improvement Strategy Update | March 2022 (requested in Sept 21 committee) | James Backhouse |
| Lifelong Learning Update | January 2022 | Paul Smith |
| Regional Adoption Agency Decision – KEY DECISION | October 2021 & Nov or Dec | Simone White |

| | | |
|---------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Pupil Place Panning | March 2022 | Hannah Myers/ James Backhouse |
| Capital Programme | TBC | |

STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

| Item | Reporting Frequency | Lead Departmental Officer |
|---|--|----------------------------|
| Performance and Financial Monitoring Report | Each Meeting | Shaer Halewood/Carly Brown |
| Children's Committee Work Programme Update | Each Meeting | Committee Team |
| Summary of Standards | September 22 | James Backhouse |
| Corporate Parenting Panel Update | November/ June | Hannah Myers |
| Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report | Every Jan | David Robbins |
| Public Questions | Each Meeting | |
| Safeguarding Fostering and Adoption | Annually (first meeting of the municipal year) | |
| Lifelong Learning Annual Performance report | Every Sept | Paul Smith |
| Admission Arrangements | Every Jan | Sally Gibbs |

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 | |
| Child Poverty Strategy | Workshop | TBC | Simone White | |
| Youth Justice Review Outcomes | Workshop | November 21 | Elizabeth Hartley | |
| Integrated front door/ Police visits etc | Visit | TBC | Simone White | |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------|------------------------|---|
| School Budget Update – inc traded services | Workshop | TBC | Simone White | |
| PFI Options (Kingsway) – Chair and Spokes | Presentation | TBC | Hannah Myers | |
| Capital Programme – to be integrated within budget workshop | | | | |
| Task and Finish Reviews | | | | |
| - | - | -- | | - |
| Spotlight Sessions and Workshops | | | | |
| County Lines Action Update | Workshop | 2021/22 | Simone White/Tony Kirk | |

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