

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## CABINET

7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2013

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b><i>THE OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN SCRUTINY REVIEW</i></b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b><i>ALL</i></b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b><i>THE CHAIR OF THE FAMILIES AND WELLBEING POLICY &amp; PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE</i></b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.0 This report provides background information regarding the report of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review, which has been approved by the Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee and referred to Cabinet for further consideration.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012, Members agreed to undertake an in-depth Scrutiny Review regarding the outcomes for Looked After Children in the Borough.
- 2.2 Members agreed that a Task & Finish Group should be formed to undertake the detailed work. The members of that group were:
- Councillor Wendy Clements (Chair)
  - Councillor Walter Smith
  - Councillor Pat Williams
- 2.3 On the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013, a further meeting of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved the Scope for the Review.

### 3.0 EVIDENCE GATHERING AND REPORT

- 3.1 The Task & Finish Group Members commenced by meeting with groups of children in care and with care leavers. Further meetings have been held with foster carers and with a range of officers responsible for service delivery. In addition, two visits to schools were arranged.
- 3.2 The Final Report, 'The Outcomes for Looked After Children' was presented to the meeting of the Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The relevant draft minute from that meeting is:

*The Committee considered the report of the Members of the Looked After Children Task & Finish Group providing background information regarding the Final Report.*

*Members of the Task & Finish Group had met with groups of children in care and with care leavers. Further meetings had also been held with foster carers and with a whole range of officers responsible for service delivery. In addition, two visits to schools were arranged. The Panel members expressed their thanks to all those who had assisted the review by so readily giving their time, experience and suggestions.*

*The Final Report, 'The Outcomes for Looked After Children' was attached as an appendix to the report.*

*The Children's Services Director, Ms Julia Hassall indicated that this review had proved really purposeful and this report would be used within the Department to shape future services for Looked After Children.*

*She further reported that the Children in Care Council was due to meet on the 24 September 2013 and looked after children were speaking to elected members, she extended the invitation to Members of the Committee to attend if they wished to do so.*

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) the contents and recommendations of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review be noted;**
- 2) the Looked After Children Scrutiny Report be referred to the next appropriate Cabinet meeting;**
- 3) an update report regarding the progress being made towards the implementation of the recommendations be presented to this Committee in September 2014.**

#### **4.0 REFERRAL TO CABINET**

- 4.1 As agreed by the Families and Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee, the Scrutiny Report 'The Outcomes for Looked After Children', which is attached as an appendix, has been referred to Cabinet for further consideration.

#### **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) Cabinet is requested to support the contents and recommendations of the Looked After Children Scrutiny Review;
- (2) Cabinet requests Officers to develop and implement an Action Plan to implement the recommendations contained within the report.