

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Update on the Outcomes for Children in Care and Scrutiny Review</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
<b>KEY DECISION</b>	<b>No</b>

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a progress update on the implementation of the Recommendations made in August 2013 relating to the Scrutiny Review of Outcomes for Looked After Children. The Review obtained evidence directly from children in care and care leavers, Council officers and partners. The Review focused on raising aspirations, the role of foster carers, the social care process, post-16 support, education, 16+ employability and housing. 21 Recommendations were made in total.
- 1.2 The 21 Recommendations have formed the central part of the work of the Corporate Parenting Group throughout 2014 and have been formulated into the Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan.
- 1.3 The Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan has been incorporated into this report so that committee members can see progress against each recommendation.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012, members discussed the prospect of commencing an in-depth Scrutiny Review on the Outcomes of Looked After Children. An in-depth Scrutiny Review had previously been undertaken regarding outcomes for children in foster care and a report was produced in April 2008. Subsequent progress reports were presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2008 and January 2010.
- 2.2 By November 2012, it was considered appropriate to undertake a follow-up review on this related issue and a task and finish group was established to undertake the Review. The scoping document was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013, with this latest Review

focusing on the steps the Council and its partners are already taking to improve outcomes and consider further actions.

2.3 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the Local Authority and its partner's duties and responsibilities to children and young people who are looked after. The central principle is that the local authority and its partners should parent looked after children much as they would parent their own child or children in their family. This means:

i. Being aware of the Corporate Parenting role and the shared responsibility for ensuring that the needs of children in care and care leavers are met.

ii. Understanding the impact on children in care of all Council decisions and making their needs a priority.

iii. Ensuring action is taken to address any shortcomings in services and to constantly improve outcomes for children in care.

iv. Accepting responsibility for all children in the Council's care and making their needs a priority.

2.4 In view of the focus Corporate Parenting has on outcomes for children in care, it was determined that the Corporate Parenting Group would take a lead on implementing the Recommendations from the Scrutiny Review and would incorporate them into the Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan. To facilitate this, the Senior Manager for Children in Care worked with partners to identify lead officers for each Recommendation and facilitated meetings in order to agree actions, timescales and importantly, outcome measures for each Recommendation. A draft action plan was then presented to the Corporate Parenting Group in early 2014 which was subsequently agreed by the Group in April 2014. The lead officers and partners report on actions for their areas to the Corporate Parenting Group as per the timescale in the action plan.

2.5 The Corporate Parenting Action Plan within this report shows the Scrutiny Review Recommendations in the 'objective' column. For each objective key actions are highlighted, along with the nominated lead officer/partner and any progress to date. Timescale and outcome measures are also noted. The action plan runs until March 2016 and includes other areas of work in addition to the Scrutiny Review Recommendations.

2.6 The action plan shows that progress is being made in implementing the Recommendations and in further improving outcomes for children in care: -

## Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan

Listen to Children and Young People and Demonstrate that we Have Taken Action to Respond					
Objective	Responsibility	Timescale	Action	Outcome	Progress To Date
Ensure that raising the aspirations of looked after children is at the heart of the Group's decision making principles  <b>*(Recommendation 1)</b>	Children in Care Services	June 2014 and annually	Refresh and raise the profile of the 'Promise' within the strategic planning of services	Services are developed in consultation with children in care, which reflect their wishes and feelings and improve the services to them.	CICC (Children in Care Council) refreshed the Promise and the Corporate Parenting Group signed up to the Promise in September 2014.
	Children in Care Services	August 2014	Members of the Children In Care Council to undertake Recruitment and Selection Training		Recruitment and Selection Training was given to members of the CICC in July. 80% of CICC

	Children in Care Services	March 2015	Recruitment and Selection Training to be offered to an additional 15-20 children in care		members now trained.  Members of CICC to be identified to undertake the training
	Children in Care Services	November 2014	Arrange a 'Take Over Day' so children get the opportunity to see decisions being made which will help to raise their aspirations.		Currently asking for Professionals to be involved in the Take Over Day. This will now take place in Spring 2015.
	14-19 Team	April 2015	Continue to develop the programme for looked after children to visit higher education facilities to raise their aspirations about continued learning	Obtain feedback and measure how many young people go on to attend	14-19 team working with Liverpool University. Good links already in place with John Moore's.
	Pathway Team/ Service Manager, Looked After Children	October 2014	Evaluate the impact of the Care Leavers Charter.	Evaluate against an outcomes framework i.e. NEET going onto courses. Young people are aware of it.	Number of care leavers who are in EET (Education Employment and Training)

	<p>Senior Manager, Children in Care</p>	<p>July 2014</p>	<p>Support and establish the 'New Belongings' project</p> <p>Members of the Corporate Parenting Group invited to meet with the Children In Care Council to speak to young people about their experiences in care, listen to their views and act upon them</p>	<p>Provide regular updates</p> <p>Obtain feedback from the Children in Care Council</p>	<p>continues to increase year on year due to close working between the pathway team and 14-19 team. Updates on the project have been provided to the Corporate Parenting Group.</p> <p>In addition, Accommodation Services for Homeless 16-17 year olds and care leavers has been reconfigured using New Belongings (National pilot scheme to improve outcomes for care leavers) as a driver. Further actions from this project will be implemented in</p>
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					<p>January 2015 reflecting feedback and learning from other Pilot areas. Wirral is still part of the North West cluster taking the learning forward on a regional basis.</p> <p>CICC met with the Corporate Parenting Group for afternoon tea in June 2014</p>
<p>To improve communication with looked after children by updating the 'Right side of Care' website and greater use of other technology (i.e. apps &amp; texts)</p> <p><b>* (Recommendation 8)</b></p>	<p>Children in Care Services</p>	<p>March 2015</p>	<p>Corporate Parenting Group regularly updated on the progress of the project</p> <p>Greater monitoring and evaluation of the information looked after children are actually receiving</p>	<p>Increased mediums for sharing information with children in care and obtaining feedback on children's wishes and feelings on the services we provide</p>	<p>Work is currently being completed to update the "Right Side of Care" website</p>

<b>Actions To Support Corporate Parents in Carrying Out Their Responsibilities</b>					
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress To Date</b>
Corporate parents are actively engaged in identifying their training needs and participate in training	All	July 2014	Regular training to be identified for Corporate Parenting Group members.	Members are equipped to undertake their role effectively and hold Officers to account	Training programme to be agreed at the Corporate Parenting Group in January 2015.
Corporate Parenting Group briefed on the work plan of the Children In Care Council over the next 12 months	Children in Care Services	July 2014	Quarterly updates provided to the group	Services reflect the views of children in care and better support them	The Corporate Parenting Group were briefed on the CICC work plan for the next 12 months in September 2014
Elected Members and Officers work together to ensure that the Corporate Parenting Group members are supported	All	Ongoing	The group meets regularly and is prioritised.  Reports are provided in advance of meetings.	The Corporate Parenting Support Plan leads to evidence of improved services and therefore, improved outcomes for looked after children	Group currently meets on a quarterly basis and agenda and Reports are circulated in advance of meetings
Corporate Parenting Group to appropriately	All	Ongoing	Identify Officers to present reports to the	Officers are held to account and must	Officers are identified and

challenge officers in relation to performance outcomes			Corporate Parenting Group to feedback performance in specific service areas	demonstrate how services improve outcomes.	notified in advance of the meetings that they will be required to present reports and give feedback on performance within their service area
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#### **Actions To Engage the Rest of the Council In Corporate Parenting**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress To Date</b>
Raise awareness and keep Elected Members and Council staff aware of their Corporate Parenting responsibilities	Lead Member, Director & Heads of Service	September 2015	A Corporate Parenting Conference to be held for Council staff, Professionals and Elected Members	Increased understanding will enable services across the Council to be more joined up and increase the support available to care leavers.	Date/content of conference to be confirmed at the Corporate Parenting Group in January 2015.
Council staff to be made more aware of their Corporate Parenting Responsibilities	Director & Heads of Service	March 2015	Training opportunities to be identified (including the possibility of having a mandatory e learning module put on the	Increased understanding will enable services across the Council to be more joined up and increase the support available to	A Task and Finish group to be established to look at the draft E- Learning Module on



			e-nable website)	care leavers	Corporate Parenting, which has been briefed to the Corporate Parenting Group
Use every opportunity to raise the profile of looked after children and care leavers – set targets to regularly share positive messages about good practice	Director and Heads of Service	October 2014	Information is included in the Families and Wellbeing newsletter and One Council magazine.	Increased understanding will enable services across the Council to be more joined up, raise awareness of the challenges facing care leavers and increase the support available to care leavers.	Updated Promise included in Autumn “Connect” magazine.
<b>Being Healthy</b>					
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress To Date</b>
Improve early identification and support for children in care with medical, developmental and/or emotional difficulties	Designated Doctor and Nurse for Looked After Children	Ongoing	Ensure initial and review health assessments are completed within a timely manner in keeping with statutory	Continued improvement in proportion of health assessments completed within statutory timescales	Initial improvements in timescales. Procedures between local authority and

<p>*(Recommendation 22)</p>		<p>timescales</p>	<p>Quality Assessment of Initial and Review Health Assessments</p>	<p>Improvement in identifying and meeting health, development and wellbeing needs of children</p>	<p>health being reviewed and developed. Strong joint working arrangements are now in place. Quality Assurance of initial and review health assessments commenced and on-going.</p>
<p>To improve the health outcomes for looked after children</p>	<p>LAC Service Manager</p>	<p>April 2015</p>	<p>Review and develop use of SDQ questionnaire including introducing use after 6 months of being in care</p>	<p>Improved early identification and support for children in care with emotional and behavioural difficulties</p>	<p>Discussions with Partnership CAMHS team and Local Authority in initial phases.</p>
		<p>October 2015</p>	<p>Extend the success of the Healthier Homes initiative beyond the Independent residential homes sector by supporting and training Foster Carers to implement the Healthier Homes</p>	<p>Health outcomes for looked after children are further improved with clear standards in place for children in foster care. Care leavers between 18-21 are provided with additional support</p>	<p>Training programme for foster carers is currently being devised.</p>

			<p>Fostering Standards</p> <p>Foster Carers are briefed on the programme</p> <p>Training programme for Foster Carers is developed and implemented</p> <p>Clear standards are in place which can be assessed at Foster Carer Reviews</p> <p>Consider jointly with health how best to support young people age 18-21 who have left care in managing their health needs</p>	<p>Care leavers provided with lifestyle advice</p> <p>More health support is available</p>	<p>Discussions are taking place with health including the development of practice standards. This will be completed for implementation in January 2015</p>
Ensure that health information for looked after children is shared	Senior Manager, Children in Care and designated	April 2015	Designated Nurses for LAC to have access to CYPD's new IT	Health Assessments are completed in statutory timescales	Currently working on getting the Health

<p>in a timely manner to ensure their health needs are met</p>	<p>health professionals</p>		<p>system to improve the timeliness of referrals for Initial Health Assessments</p> <p>Designated Nurses to complete an annual report on the health of Looked After Children, identifying any gaps in the system/services and make proposals for addressing them</p>	<p>and are quality assured to allow services to be accessed at the right time</p> <p>The overall health needs and outcomes for Looked after children will be assessed annually.</p>	<p>Assessment process correct on the recently implemented Liquid Logic IT system.</p> <p>Annual Health Report has been completed.</p>
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**Staying Safe**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress To Date</b>
<p>Additional Support for young people who have been in care after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday</p> <p>*(Recommendation 10)</p>	<p>Pathways Team Leader and Children in Care Services</p>	<p>December 2014</p> <p>July 2014 and ongoing</p>	<p>Complete a 12 month 'Staying Put' Pilot</p> <p>Introduce more one to one support sessions and 'drop in'</p>	<p>More young people are able to stay on with their Foster Carers post 18.</p>	<p>Staying Put Policy and Procedure currently being updated. An updated Delegated Report will be presented in January 2015. 19 young people have benefited from the scheme to date.</p>

			facilities for care leavers		Drop in sessions for care leavers are now taking place twice a month. Take up is slow, so we are now considering ways to improve attendance.
Ensure there are sufficient and appropriate placements to meet the diverse needs of Wirral children	Senior Manager, Children in Care	September 2014	Sufficiency Strategy is revised  Needs assessment refreshed and any gaps in provision identified	Children and young people's needs are met by a range of placements/ accommodation based on an assessment of the needs of the looked after population	Sufficiency strategy has been updated. The fostering service has been working with Impower (consultancy specialising in public sector improvement work) to consider ways of improving the recruitment and retention of foster carers. A targeted approach to recruitment is being implemented in January 2015 linked to the findings of the Impower Family Values project. Currently there is a need to recruit more

					foster carers to meet the needs of teenagers.
<p>Ensure foster carers are supported, trained and skilled to meet the needs of all looked after children in foster care as set out in Regulations and national standards.</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 2)</b></p>	Fostering Service Team Leader	<p>March 2015</p> <p>March 2015</p> <p>March 2015</p>	<p>Engage with foster carers to amend the guide to Foster Carers Payments so that the payment of fees will be linked to meeting training requirements.</p> <p>Identify ways to further encourage Foster Carers to attend training (i.e. childcare facilities, venue, times, etc). Actively involve Foster Carers.</p> <p>Existing training is reviewed and a revised training strategy is developed to enhance the skills of Foster Carers. Consult with Foster Carers.</p>	<p>Ensuring the continuous professional development of Foster Carers will ensure Foster Carers are equipped to meet the diverse needs of looked after children and given the best possible opportunities to achieve their potential.</p> <p>The number of foster carers attending training is measured.</p>	<p>Guide to Foster Carers Payments has been revised linking payment to training requirements and ongoing professional development. A delegated Report to be finalised to endorse the changes within the Guide. To be completed in January 2015.</p> <p>Audits of foster carer supervision including attendance at training are taking place between December 2014 and January 2015</p>

<p>Ensure foster carers have access to meaningful support systems</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 4)</b></p>	<p>Fostering Service Team Leader</p>	<p>March 2015</p>	<p>Review and evaluate the current support groups/ processes available to Foster Carers.</p> <p>Consult with Foster Carers on what they want and think will work best. Develop a scheme whereby higher banded Foster Carers provide mentoring to other Foster Carers</p> <p>Re-design the support groups if required and also consider on-line forums</p>	<p>Improved access to and quality of support will have a positive impact on placement stability.</p>	<p>Impower have made recommendations for improving peer support within the service and using foster carers in targeted recruitment activity. These will be implemented in January 2015.</p> <p>Impower undertook telephone interviews and group sessions with foster carers as part of the project between July and September 2014 and which has informed their recommendations.</p>

<p>Care placements for looked after children with special educational needs and behavioural needs have appropriate training and support</p> <p><b>* (Recommendation 5)</b></p>	Fostering Service Team Leader	March 2015	Review current training available to Foster Carers and Social Workers in relation to supporting the special educational needs and behavioural needs of looked after children in foster care	Children and young people will be placed with Foster Carer's who have the appropriate skills to support them with their special needs or behavioural needs	Current training is being reviewed along with the identification of children and young people in foster placements with special educational needs and behavioural needs. More foster carers to manage the behaviour of challenging teenagers are required. This is reflected in an updated foster carer recruitment strategy.
		January 2016	Devise and implement new training if required.	An enhanced training strategy and workforce development plan is in place	
	Fostering Service Team Leader	March 2015	Identify children in foster care with special education needs and ensure the respective foster carer is aware of how to support and promote their learning. Provide		



	Fostering Service Team Leader	March 2015	training as appropriate  Strategy to be further developed to increase the number and range of Foster Carers in Wirral based on unmet need		Foster Carer Recruit Strategy recently written.
	Fostering Service Team Leader and Adolescent Support Team Manager	February 2015	Further develop and evaluate the Placement Stability Model to prevent placement breakdown		This is currently in the process of being undertaken and will be considered at November 2014 Commissioned Placement Panel, which considers and reviews all requests for independent placements. We need to ensure internal placement support mechanisms are robust.
Ensure the organisational structures within children's social care	Head of Specialist Services	March 2015	Future Council and service re-design to be implemented to raise the profile of	Improved focus on outcomes for looked after children and better trained social	Subject to Future Council. Re-structure proposals currently at the

<p>prioritise the needs of looked after children, keeping transfers to a minimum and contribute to a stable workforce.</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 6)</b></p>			<p>looked after children, implement new social worker progression policy and implement the new social worker supervision policy</p> <p>Explore multi-functional teams to reduce case transfers</p>	<p>workers who are able to spend more time with children and families.</p>	<p>consultation stage, which concludes on the 5<sup>th</sup> December.</p>
<p>Advice for looked after children in relation to financial entitlements to be made available, consistent and timely</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 7)</b></p>	<p>Senior Manager, Children in Care</p> <p>Children in Care Services</p>	<p>August 2014</p> <p>August 2014</p>	<p>Information is provided to social work staff, foster carers and professionals to provide greater clarity regarding the financial entitlements for children in care and care leavers</p> <p>Information is provided to children</p>	<p>Looked after children know what they are entitled to, which means they are able to request services and support themselves, which will help to promote their independence skills.</p>	<p>Care Leavers Financial Policy &amp; Guide to Foster Carers Payments have been revised.</p> <p>Young people are currently issued with a 'Right Side of Care' welcome pack when they first come into care. Child friendly versions of financial</p>

			<p>when they enter care and they are also kept up to date of any changes through greater use of IT i.e. website and apps</p> <p>Benefit and financial support entitlements are clearly set out and are available in young people friendly versions</p> <p>Children In Care Council to be consulted on their views</p>		<p>support/policy have been produced and briefed to the Corporate Parenting Group.</p> <p>CICC have been involved in the consultation process and their views taken into consideration.</p>
<p>Ensure transition to the Pathway Team is timely and based on individual need.</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 9)</b></p>	<p>Senior Manager, Children In Care</p>	<p>December 2014</p>	<p>Analysis to be undertaken to understand the resource implications of the service taking young people prior to age 16 and how this could be resourced.</p>	<p>Greater flexibility around the timing of transition to the Pathway Team based on each young persons individual needs. Fewer disruptions enabling young people to focus on</p>	<p>Realignment of the Pathway service proposed. If the proposal is agreed, there will be a seamless transition from being looked after to becoming an adult and no longer a need for a case to</p>

				their GCSE's etc. A report is produced and shared	transfer.
Raise the profile of the Independent Visitors Service  <b>*(Recommendation 11)</b>	Inclusion Team	July 2014	Identify additional methods and forums in which information about the Independent Visiting Service can be communicated to children, Social Workers, Foster Carers and Professionals	A report is provided on the number of young people accessing the service and overall effectiveness of the service	A report was presented to the Corporate Parenting Group Meeting in September 2014.
Ensure young people understand their Pathway Plan and are given every opportunity to engage in the process  <b>*(Recommendation 12)</b>	Senior Manager, Children In Care	March 2015	Social Workers and the Pathways Team to work together to identify ways to ensure that young people are more involved and take ownership of their Pathway Plan.  Care leavers to be consulted on what would increase their ownership of the	Increased ownership will result in increased engagement and therefore a better chance of the targets in the plan being achieved.  Report provided on the quality of plans following implementation of	This action is in the process of being undertaken. An audit of needs assessments and Pathways Plans was recently undertaken and is informing this work.  Care leavers views sought via the CICC and drop-in group.

			Pathway Plan.	the Liquid Logic IT system Feedback from young people is collated and responded to, with the support of the Inclusion Service	
<p>Ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and their own tenancies</p> <p><b>*(Recommendations 23, 24, 25)</b></p>	<p>Sheila Jacobs (Regeneration) and Pathway Team Manager</p>	<p>July 2014</p>	<p>Housing Division &amp; CYPD to work collaboratively to undertake an analysis of Care Leavers currently accommodated in supported housing and to develop and implement an accommodation pathway for LAC</p>	<p>To improve access to accommodation and to ensure that there is sufficient quantity of good quality accommodation that meets the needs of Care Leavers</p>	<p>Proposal and Terms of Reference drafted</p> <p>Initial process map developed. Monthly strategic Housing Group established in July 2014</p>
		<p>April 2015</p>	<p>Housing Division &amp; CYPD to work collaboratively to develop arrangements for the quality monitoring of</p>	<p>To develop an standardised approach to accommodation placements for Care Leavers that</p>	<p>Report drafted analysing and comparing current quality framework for spot-purchased accommodation with</p>

			<p>organisations providing accommodation &amp; support.</p> <p>Introduce a forum on the updated 'Right Side of Care' website for placing online advertisements for sharing accommodation</p>	<p>makes best use of existing provision and minimises the usage of high-cost spot-purchased accommodation</p>	<p>Supported Housing Quality Assessment Framework. Progress update provided to the Corporate Parenting Group in September 2014, showing financial savings but also better quality provision i.e. staffed 24hrs and smaller provision.</p>
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**Enjoying and Achieving Economic Wellbeing**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Progress To Date</b>
<p>Increase employment opportunities for care leavers (vocational and academic)</p> <p>*(Recommendation 21)</p>	14-19 team	March 2015	<p>Pathway Team to work with the 14-19 Employment Team and Connexions to increase the range of opportunities available for individual care leavers.</p> <p>Performance</p>	<p>More care leavers access vocational and academic courses, which results in employment.</p> <p>Number of care</p>	<p>Ongoing work taking place between the two service areas. The number of care leavers at age 19 in EET is increasing year on year. In March 2014, the figure was 68%, a significant rise from the previous year.</p>

			<p>systems capture this information</p> <p>Links between the Pathway Team and Wirral apprenticeship programme are further strengthened</p>	<p>leavers accessing EET is increased and which includes more apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Awaiting the latest performance figures.</p>
<p>Ensure looked after children's reviews and personal education plans are undertaken in accordance with Regulations</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 15)</b></p>	<p>Corporate Safeguarding Manager</p>	<p>December 2014</p>	<p>Where appropriate Independent Reviewing Officers and social workers should combine the LAC Review and PEP Meetings to make more effective use of professionals time</p> <p>Identify ways of sharing data more effectively in relation to looked after children between schools and</p>	<p>Reviews will have greater oversight of educational achievement and professionals will spend less time in meetings</p>	<p>This has recently been implemented to avoid duplication.</p> <p>LACES (Looked After Children Education Support) team now spends time in each social care district, which has improved communication between the service and locality social work teams.</p>

			<p>specialist services</p> <p>Analysis of PEP's is undertaken at the Practice improvement Meetings Chaired by the Head of Service</p>		<p>Completed and actions set for district social work teams.</p>
<p>Ensure the Personal Education Allowance meets the identified needs of looked after children</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 17)</b></p>	<p>Virtual Head Teacher</p>	<p>June 2015</p>	<p>Schools to ensure that the Personal Education Allowance is being used as effectively as possible to improve the outcomes for looked after children</p>	<p>This will ensure the money is being spent appropriately and attainment levels will increase, thereby improving further education and employment opportunities.</p>	<p>The Virtual Head will provide an update mid 2015</p>
	<p>LACES Team</p>	<p>June 2015</p>	<p>The LACES Team to ensure that all children who are entitled to a Personal Education Allowance have access to the</p>		



			<p>funding.</p> <p>The LACES Team to analyse the effectiveness of the Personal Education Allowance and the benefits it is having on looked after children</p>		
<p>Introduce and implement a system to allocate Pupil Premium to all schools</p>	<p>Virtual Head Teachers</p>	<p>December 2014</p>	<p>Allocate the funds to each school</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of the funds</p>	<p>Schools receive the relevant funding and results in improved attainment as a result of the changes made in the way the Premium is used</p>	<p>Funds have been allocated. Progress report on impact will be provided to the Corporate Parenting Group in January 2015.</p>
<p>Ensure all placements promote Independent living skills and employment and training opportunities</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 3)</b></p>	<p>Fostering Service Team Manager</p>	<p>March 2015</p>	<p>Fostering Service to develop closer links with the Employability Team so that Foster Carers are more aware of the employment and</p>	<p>Foster Carers play a more active role in supporting children in placement to be better equipped for adulthood. This will result in increased</p>	<p>This work is ongoing and will be reported to the Corporate Parenting Group in March 2015.</p>

			<p>training opportunities for looked after children.</p> <p>Foster Carers receive relevant training and support from their supervising social worker on how to support young people to develop their independent living skills to the children in their care. Foster carer reviews will routinely assess this</p>	<p>attainment levels in schools and more young people accessing further education/training and going on to gain employment.</p>	
<p>To ensure the education needs of looked after children are prioritised via high quality personal education plans.</p> <p><b>*(Recommendation 14 &amp;</b></p>	<p>Senior Manager, Children in Care and Virtual Head Teacher</p>	<p>December 2014</p>	<p>Audits undertaken to identify missing Personal Education Plans and assess quality. Workshops subsequently delivered to Social Workers to raise the</p>	<p>Better quality Personal Education Plans will result in increased educational attainment for looked after children</p>	<p>Audits have been undertaken.</p> <p>A progress report will be presented to the Corporate Parenting Group in January 2015 on all</p>

16)	Senior Manager, Children in Care and Virtual Head Teacher	December 2014	<p>profile, importance and quality of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Performance systems strengthened to identify missing plans, ensure plans are reviewed and are of good quality. A selection of plans will be audited twice yearly to monitor the quality.</p> <p>All Personal Education Plans, Individual Placement Agreements and Placement Plans to identify who will be responsible for</p>	<p>Closer relationships between schools and the Fostering Service, which will make it clearer to Foster Carers their role in improving educational attainments for children in their care.</p> <p>LACES RAG rate the quality of plans twice yearly and is fed in to the Social Care Practice Improvement meeting.</p> <p>Systems capture who is attending parents evenings</p>	<p>of the actions linked to these two recommendations (14 and 16)</p> <p>LACES workers now spend time working alongside social work teams in locality offices.</p> <p>In place and is a regular feature of the PIM (Practice Improvement Meetings), which the Virtual Heads regularly attend. Progress report will be provided in January 2014.</p> <p>Work is ongoing on this action.</p>
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	Virtual Head Teacher	December 2014	attending the parents' evenings of looked after children.  Performance systems strengthened to track foster carer and residential staff attendance at parents evenings		
Create closer working relationships and understanding of respective roles for professionals involved in supporting the educational attainment of looked after children	Virtual Head Teacher	Ongoing	Designated Teachers continue to receive looked after children training on an individual basis linked to the existing training programme	Professionals are more aware of the barriers impacting on looked after children achieving and are better equipped to help them overcome them.	
	Fostering Service Team Leader and Residential Team Manager	March 2015	Foster Carers and residential staff to receive training on attending parents'		

			evenings.		
The education needs of looked after children placed outside the borough are equally prioritised	Senior Manager, Children in Care	December 2014	The North West Regional Protocol for supporting the education of children placed out of authority is reviewed, updated and briefed out.	The educational attainment of children placed outside the Borough is closely monitored and support is provided to ensure these children achieve their potential.	Attendance figures are received via Welfare Call so that managers are aware of attendance and can intervene where appropriate.
Ensure all school governors recognise and prioritise the needs of looked after children in schools	Virtual Head Teacher	December 2014	Governors receive training in relation to looked after children, which is targeted at those schools who have not received it and where possible involving input from the Children In Care Council.	Schools will have a better understanding of the needs of looked after children and be better equipped to meet their needs. Figures of how many attend are provided to the group.	
The development of stronger working relationships between schools and Social Workers  *(Recommendation 13)	Senior Manager, Children in Care and Virtual Head Teacher	December 2014	Consider the most appropriate ways to develop these relationships and engage schools in this process.	Better communication will result in schools being kept informed of the changes affecting children	

			<p>Consider how to implement multi-agency practice training involving health, education and social care.</p> <p>Promote more multi-agency working and Improve protocols for sharing information between Schools, Specialist Services, Health and other professionals</p>	and enable them to respond to their needs more effectively.	
<p>Ensure looked after children are ready for further education, training and employment when they leave care  <b>*(Recommendation 18, 19 and 20)</b></p>	<p>14-19 Team and Senior Manager Children in Care</p>	<p>March 2015</p>	<p>An additional peer mentor and apprentice to be recruited to increase the capacity of the employability team (care leavers)</p> <p>Further Identify and promote opportunities for internships and work</p>	<p>More young people will be able to access work experience, which will increase their employability and raise their aspirations. More young people will go on to gain employment</p>	<p>Linked to (Recommendation 21). As indicated, there are strong working relationships between the 14-19 team and Pathway team, evidenced by an increase in care leavers aged 19 in EET. Update report will be provided to</p>

	Pathway Team	March 2015	<p>experience for looked after children and care leavers</p> <p>Explore further opportunities to engage private companies to offer work experience, internships and apprenticeships to care leavers</p> <p>Review how the Department can review the Pathway Plans for Former Relevant Children</p>	<p>A clear strategy is in place to increase the number of care leavers who attend higher University and gain employment</p>	<p>the Group in March 2015.</p>
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### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 3.1 Improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers is a key responsibility of the Council and in fulfilling its corporate parenting responsibilities. A focus on outcomes is also a central part of Ofsted inspection frameworks with specific outcome measures for children in care and care leavers.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 None. As indicated above, this report provides an update on a Review previously undertaken by this Committee.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Children in care, care leavers and Council officers were consulted during the initial review by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2013. Children and young people have subsequently been consulted as part of the work of the Corporate Parenting Group in setting actions and outcome measures in order to meet the Recommendations made by the Committee.

### **6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS**

- 6.1 None.

### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 7.1 Voluntary, Community and Faith Groups are partners, working with the Council and assist in helping the Council to undertake its obligations including in relation to Corporate Parenting.

### **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

- 8.1 None.

### **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council has obligations as a Corporate Parent and which are reported on and measured internally and also by external bodies such as Ofsted, and the LGO.

### **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?



Yes an Impact Review has been undertaken and can be found via the following link.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-april-2014/eias-families-wellbeing>

## **11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None.

## **12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 None.

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

13.1 That this Committee considers the Corporate Parenting Strategy Action Plan and the progress being made through the Corporate Parenting Group in implementing the Recommendations previously made by this Committee, to further improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

## **14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

14.1 To enable the Committee to comment on the progress made and make further recommendations if required.

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### **APPENDICES**

None

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL**

None

### **BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY**

Briefing Note	Date
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<b>See Above.</b>	
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**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> November 2012</b>
<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> January 2013</b>