

**CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT**

<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Councillor Tony Smith</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR</b>	<b>Children And Family Services</b>
<b>CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER</b>	<b>Julia Hassall, Director Of Children's Services</b>

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

**1. CHILDREN'S SPECIALIST SERVICES**

Following a comprehensive case file audit programme during the summer, Children's Social Care is continuing to prioritise practice improvement. A new quality assurance framework has been launched which gives a clear structure to auditing within the service, and continuous learning. A two day external review of Social Work assessments was undertaken in October. The quality of assessments was examined in detail alongside Managers and learning was taken from this process to help improve key areas.

Children's Social Care is being redesigned and proposals are being consulted upon. The redesign principles include a focus on: the child's journey and voice, the role and function of the manager including their oversight, decision making and accountability, team size, performance and practice and the interface with targeted services. As well as consultation with staff members, consultation with children and families is taking place.

**2. WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

Weekly LSCB bulletins continue to be sent out highlighting key developments and activities relating to safeguarding, to support professionals to enable Wirral's children and young people to feel safe and be safe. Posters illustrating learning from national / local serious case reviews are displayed in a range of settings.

The MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) has been fully operational since September 2014; a workshop in November reviewed progress, and made recommendations for further improvements in practice.

Continuous learning about how to detect, respond to and prevent child sexual exploitation (CSE) is taking place following national inspections and findings from reviews. Four briefings have taken place on Wirral's new practice guidance; the Leaders Board considered practice in October; training on CSE was delivered for members on 18 November and two workshops took place on 24 November with key professionals to challenge practice and further develop the work programme.

### **3. TARGETED SERVICES**

The Early Years Service continues to prioritise and strengthen working arrangements, information sharing and practice improvements between the Council and key partners. Systems are now in place for Children's Centres to receive data on target groups of families, enabling a more focused approach to be taken to service delivery. Target Tracker, a web based system used in a lot of primary schools, has been procured to enable Children's Centres to track children's developmental progress.

A successful partnership with the Registry Office has now been forged. Registry Office staff now register families with Children's Centres when they register the birth of a baby, a pilot is being planned to offer a registry service for the registration of births in Seacombe Children's Centre once a week from 1st April 2015.

Jobcentre Plus and the Children's Centre staff have been working closely with a training provider to increase access to training and support for parents looking to return to the workplace. A successful pilot this summer is now being rolled out across Wirral, and Liverpool and Sefton. The training has also been made available to the existing volunteers, giving them a progression route into employment.

### **4. SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS**

Following submission of a business case to Wirral Cabinet and to Cheshire West and Chester Executive during November, a decision to proceed with the development of a new joint company to deliver schools traded services has been approved. The services to be delivered by the new company include outdoor education, music services, specialist curriculum support and catering and cleaning. The next steps involve establishing a joint implementation team and preparing a plan that sets out the key priorities, timescales and tasks to be carried out.