



COUNCILLOR TONY SMITH

**CABINET**  
**21 MARCH 2016**

**WIRRAL PLAN: A 2020 VISION -  
UNDERPINNING STRATEGIES: CHILDREN,  
YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES**

***Councillor Tony Smith, Cabinet Member - Children and Young People, said:***

“Making sure all of our children and young people are able to set high goals for themselves – and achieve them – is probably the most important responsibility of any Council. This strategy is designed to make sure that we do just that, working with all of our partners to use our resources, expertise and experience to improve the lives and achievements of every child, young person and family in Wirral.

In the Wirral Plan we set out the following pledges:

Children are ready for school:

*We must make sure that every child is equipped with the emotional, social and developmental skills to be ready to start school and to learn. We will achieve this through a range of early interventions, engagement and support for families within our communities.*

Young people are ready for work and adulthood:

*Our children deserve to be educated in ‘good and outstanding’ schools. We want to see continued improvements in literacy and numeracy skills with more of our pupils achieving 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths, closing the gap between the highest and lowest achievement across our schools.*

Vulnerable children reach their full potential:

*We want to see Wirral’s children thrive and be safe in their own families and communities. Today, around 675 young people are living in care in Wirral. This is significantly higher than local authorities with similar needs and context to Wirral. We aim to reduce that number by 100 to bring Wirral in line with similar areas”.*

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

The Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision sets out a shared partnership vision to improve outcomes for Wirral residents. Delivery of the priorities and outcomes described in the Plan are underpinned through the development and implementation of a set of key strategies.

This report provides Cabinet with the Children, Young People and Families strategy; a key strategic document which articulates ambitions related to the Wirral Plan People Priority:

“Wirral is a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, every child gets a good start in life and older residents are respected and valued”.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough and is therefore a key decision.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Cabinet is requested to approve the Children, Young People and Families strategy which is appended to this report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The Children, Young People and Families strategy has been developed to deliver the Wirral Plan pledge for children and young people to lead good and fulfilling lives, where children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The strategy has been developed with children and young people themselves, along with parents, partners and stakeholders to ensure that there has been extensive engagement in the development of the strategy and its priority areas.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 No other options have been considered.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 A five year Wirral Plan received unanimous approval at the meeting of full Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and has been adopted by all strategic partners from the public, private and third sectors.

The plan contains twenty pledges to be achieved by 2020. Under the people theme three pledges aim to enable children, young people and families to live well and thrive in Wirral, and set out the following three commitments:

- Children are ready for school:
- Young people are ready for work and adulthood:

- Vulnerable children reach their full potential:

The Children, Young People and Families strategy sets out the high quality, universal offer we want to be available for all children and families in Wirral. It also describes the whole-system focus on early intervention and prevention that the Council and its partners have committed to develop, so we are better able to spot problems early, intervene purposefully and so prevent the need for costly specialist interventions, including children coming into care.

The strategy has been developed through a partnership that has directly engaged children, young people and families, and includes a set of partnership actions to be delivered over the course of the five year strategy. The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis with regular performance reporting taking place through appropriate governance arrangements.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Wirral has a higher number of children in care compared to similar local authorities, and a higher level of activity across the child protection system. This represents a significant financial burden. We invest ten times more public resource into the support of 675 children in our care than other children. The more children we can keep safe and thriving in their families then the more resources are available to be invested into other areas like prevention.

As projects to deliver the strategy are developed the financial implications will be identified as part of the project plan.

#### **5.0 LEGAL**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. As projects to deliver the strategy are developed the legal implications will be identified as part of the project plan.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 The Children, Young People and Families strategy will be co-ordinated in partnership by existing staff resource. Any additional resource requirements will be identified as a detailed delivery plan is developed.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT**

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

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Children Young People and Families strategy has been developed through a partnership approach and has been subject to wider consultation with residents, partners and other stakeholders through the development of the strategy.

A series of stakeholder events took place in 2015 and the feedback from these has been used to inform the strategy.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The potential impact has been reviewed with regard to equality and the impact assessment can be found at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014/families>

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## **APPENDICES**

*Appendix 1 – Children, Young People and Families Strategy*

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

*All reference material is contained within the strategy appended to this report.*

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Not applicable</b>	