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CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 October 2022

Present:

Councillor K Hodson

Councillors C Cooke
H Collinson
S Bennett
D Kenny

S Powell-Wilde
V Wilson
A Wright

Deputies

Councillors M Booth (in place of C Povall)
D Mitchell (in place of C Carubia)
J Walsh (in place of E Gleaves)

24 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

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

25 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Carubia, Povall and Gleaves.

26 **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.

Councillor Sue Powell Wilde declared a personal interest by virtue of her position as a foster carer in Wirral through a private fostering agency.

Councillor Helen Collinson declared a personal interest by virtue of her daughters employment within Wirral's Foster Care Team.

27 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

28 **PUBLIC AND MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that one public question had been received from Sarah Spoor regarding long term outcomes for children leaving education who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). In particular young people who have learning difficulties moving into inclusive apprenticeships.

A response was provided by the Chair ensuring that the council tracks all young people aged 16 to 18 and records their destination and the information is reported to the Department for Education monthly. In a similar way the Council also tracks and records the destinations of young people with an education, health, and care plan (EHCP) up to the age of 25. Data was then provided on employment of young people with an EHCP.

A supplementary question was then asked by the questioner to which she was informed that a response would be provided in writing. The supplemental question raised enquiries about percentages of young people who are Wirral residents and who have an EHCP and learning disability have moved into sustainable employment and inclusive apprenticeships and how that compares to previous years.

29 **WIRRAL YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-23**

A Report by the Director of Children's, Families and Education provided Members with an introduction to Wirral Youth Justice Service (YJS) Strategic Plan 2022-23. Anthony Kirk, Head of Contextual Safeguarding introduced the report.

By way of background, Members were advised how Wirral Youth Justice Service was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in July 2021, received an overall rating of 'Good'. It was explained how the Youth Justice Board sets out 3 national areas of key performance for all YOT's by using national indicators as follows:

- The amount and rate of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System (FTEs);
- the rate of Re-offending; and
- the use of custody (Use of youth custody as opposed to managing young people in the community).

Salient data of note to Members was identified to such as the increase of 5 more young people entering the system than in 2020, equating to a 15% rise. Members were then advised how the use of custody was 0.16 per 100 children, compared to 0.10 per 1000 YOT family average, equating to 3 more young people entering custody in the financial year 2021-22 compared to the previous year.

Furthermore, Members heard how there had been a rise in the reoffending rate of 3.2 percentage points relating to less offenders overall but impacted by a small cohort who committed several offences.

Members were then informed that positive feedback had been received by the YOT following the July 2021 inspection and the team have been nominated for a Howard League award for Penal Reform for recognition of ' Operation Inclusion', an initiative with the overall aim to divert some offending by young people away from Courts.

In response to a question Members heard data displayed within the report was with reference to statistical neighbours with reference to families rather than areas and that Wirral is slightly below average with reference to first time entrants into the criminal justice system.

In response to a further questions Members were informed that early help and intervention support is provided by the local authority by reference to drug and alcohol services. Furthermore, preventative work is undertaken regularly on issues that could cause youths to offend for example poor mental health and the YOT make visits to secondary schools to deliver talks on a regular basis.

Resolved - That

- (1) The Wirral Youth Justice Service's Strategic Plan 2022-23 be endorsed and recommended to Council for approval; and**
- (2) The approach and ongoing development work within the Youth Justice Service and across the Youth Justice Management Board (YJMB) be noted.**

30 CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE 2022-23 BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 1

A Report by the Director of Children, Families and Education, presented by the Senior Finance Business Partner provided a summary of the year-end revenue position for the 2022/23 financial year for Children, Families and Education.

The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance, including progress on the delivery of the 2022-23 saving programme and a summary of reserves to enable the Committee to take ownership of the budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

It was outlined that how, at the end of Quarter 1, there was a forecast favourable position of £0.505m on the Committees net revenue budget of £79.234m. Members were advised how the position is based on activity to

date and projected trends in income and expenditure and potential mitigation to offset areas of adverse/ favourable variance.

Pressures were identified within the service including: Special Educational Needs(SEN) services whereby there is a backlog of production of Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP's), transport to schools services, the prospect of a pay award, inflation and children in care.

Resolved – That

- (1) the forecast revenue position presented at Quarter 1 be noted**
- (2) the progress on delivery of the 2022-23 savings programme at Quarter 1 be noted**
- (3) the forecast level of reserves at Quarter 1 be noted; and**
- (4) the forecast capital position presented at Quarter 1 be noted.**

31 **Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Tricia Thomas, Performance and Improvement Manager introduced the report, which set out a revised performance monitoring and reporting framework for the Committee.

Members were advised that 'real time' data could be obtained through the Power BI – an intelligence software system that identified and demonstrates statistics and trends. Members heard how there would be some training available in due course for those who had not yet received it.

In response to a question members were advised how scrutiny is being undertaken on children in need figures that have increased recently and will be constantly be in review. In response to a further query regarding school attendance for disadvantaged pupils, Members were advised how data could be included regarding this within the performance report going forward.

A discussion then ensued about families who are struggling financially but would not fall under the category of free school meals and Members were advised about early help and prevention contacts who are known to the department . Members were advised how a briefing note would be provided to committee Members surrounding work undertaken to target and support vulnerable families who do not fall under the free school meal category.

Resolved – That the report be noted

SUMMARY OF STANDARDS – PROVISION OUTCOMES FOR EARLY YEARS, KEY STAGE 1 & KEY STAGE 2

A report presented by James Backhouse, Assistant Director for Education set out a Summary of Standards 2022 and gave information about provisional pupil outcomes. A detailed analysis for the pupil outcomes at the age of 5 (Good level of development), age of 6 (Phonics assessment) the age of 7 (Key Stage 1 SATs) and at the age of 11 (Key Stage 2 SATs) were set out within the report and was appended

Members were informed how comparisons had been made with the results nationally wherever possible, however, many of the national results had not been published yet. Members were then advised how the statistical first releases are published in October 2022 and the report will be amended accordingly and shared with Members

The report provided a detailed analysis of pupil outcomes and gave a first indication of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education of young people. Members heard how the standards report and educational outcomes will be linked to the refresh of the priorities in relation to the school improvement strategy and the re-banding of schools across Wirral to identify needing support.

Of particular note to address some of the concerns identified within the report, Members heard how the Local Authority had secured the services of a nationally renowned expert on early years development who will visit schools and early years settings.

It was reported that there has been a decline in children reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths assessments by 12.1% and this is in line with the national gap and experts have been sought to address this. It was then reported that only half of young people are at the expected standard in year 6 before they begin their transition to secondary school and resources would be concentrated to combat this.

Members were then advised how a further key focus has been surrounding mathematics as children obtaining the expected standard had declined significantly against national trend and intensive work is being undertaken with schools

In response to a question by a Member it was reported how methods and approaches of delivering the teaching of mathematics would be reviewed in line with the remit of the national curriculum. In response to a further query it was explained how children who are electively home educated are likely to not have undertaken the assessments referred to within the report and therefore their progress wouldn't be included in the figures provided.

Resolved - That

- (1) the report be noted; and**
- (2) the services' planned refresh of the school improvement strategy based on the outcome outlined be supported.**

33 SEND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION UPDATE

A report presented by Elizabeth Hartley, Assistant Director for Children, Families and Education provided members with an update on progress on the Wirral Statement of Action (WSoA).

Members were reminded how In September 2021, the local area's services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) was inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Members were informed how as a result of the inspection, the local area was required to submit a Written Statement of Action (WSoA) to address the areas of improvement which had been identified.

Members were advised how the WSoA is being delivered via six workstreams, each with an improvement plan with leadership from the local authority (adults and children's services) and the NHS. The Assistant Director provided a summary of each individual workstream. Appended to the report was a detailed analysis of the 102 action points under the 6 workstreams. Members were advised that some actions had been completed but not marked as so until the outcome can be assessed with reference to a longer term impact.

With regards to mental health provision for SEN children, Members were advised how mental health practitioners in school would have training in mental health first aid and there is currently joined up work being undertaken with the NHS to provide early support.

Resolved - That

- (1) the progress made to date on the actions in the Wirral Statement of action be approved; and**
- (2) a further monitoring report be recieved at a future date.**

34 WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal Services outlined the report detailing the work programme for the Children, Young People and Education Committee for the municipal year

A comment was raised regarding the child poverty workshop and asked that this be arranged at the earliest convenience following the recent cancellation.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.

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