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WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BNon **WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2022** AT **7.00 PM**

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 30 August 2022

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to provide independent “critical friend” challenge and to work with the Council’s Executive and other public service providers for the benefit of the public. The Committee considers submissions from a range of sources and reaches conclusions based on the weight of evidence – not on party political grounds.

Note: Non-Committee Members and members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in line with the Council’s Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams please contact Democratic Services. The meeting can also be watched live using the following link: https://youtu.be/WJVcp2OCVI4

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Our Vision

A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business

Enriching Lives

- Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.
- Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone.
- Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of.
- Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.

Providing Safe and Strong Communities

- Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people.
- Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care.
- Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish.
- Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.

Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough

- Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future.
- Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy.
- Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity.
- Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.

Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places

- Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future.
- Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow.
- Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment.
- Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.

Keeping the Borough Moving

- Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways.
- Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions.
- Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure.
- Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.

Changing the Way We Work for You

- Be relentlessly customer focussed.
- Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers.
- Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough.
- Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.

Be the Best We Can Be

- Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice.
- Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working.
- Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business.
- Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient.
- Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough.
- Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

Appendix Acronyms

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EYFS	Early Years Foundations Stage
FGB	Full Governing Body
KS1	Key Stage 1
KS2	Key Stage 2
MAT	Multi Academy Trust
NLE	National Leader of Education
NLG	National Leader of Governance
RI	Requires Improvement
RSC	Regional Schools Commissioner
SDP	School Development Plan
SEF	Self Evaluation Form
SIB	School Improvement Board
SIO	School Improvement Officer
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
TSA	Teaching School Alliance
WLP	Wokingham Learning Partnership

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillors

Andrew Mickleburgh (Chairman)	Shirley Boyt (Vice-Chairman)	Morag Malvern
Beth Rowland	Anne Chadwick	Graham Howe
Pauline Helliar-Symons		

Substitutes

Alistair Neal	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	Gary Cowan
Chris Johnson	Alison Swaddle	Laura Blumenthal
Rebecca Margetts		

Parent Governor Representatives
Vacancy, Parent Governor Representative
Vacancy, Parent Governor Representative

Diocesan Representatives
Vacancy, Roman Catholic Representative
Vacancy, C of E Representative

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
13.		**APOLOGIES** To receive any apologies for absence.	
14.		**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 June 2022.	7 - 16
15.		**DECLARATION OF INTEREST** To receive any declarations of interest.	
16.		**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	

17.		**MEMBER QUESTION TIME** To answer any member questions	
18.		**UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES** To receive a verbal update from the Executive Member for Children's Services on the work of Children's Services.	**Verbal Report**
19.	None Specific	**UPDATE ON CHILDREN'S STRATEGY DELIVERY** To receive and consider a report outlining details of the Children's Services Strategy.	**17 - 28**
20.	None Specific	**SEND INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (SEND IIP) UPDATE** To receive and consider a report containing an update on the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme.	**29 - 54**
21.	None Specific	**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** To receive and consider the Key Performance Indicators report.	**55 - 68**
22.	None Specific	**FORWARD PROGRAMME** To consider the Committee's Forward Programme of work.	**69 - 72**
23.		**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC** That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.	
24.	None Specific	**SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN** A report containing details of schools causing concern will be considered in a Part 2 report.	**73 - 80**

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent
A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading

CONTACT OFFICER

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON 15 JUNE 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.50 PM

Committee Members Present
Councillors: Andrew Mickleburgh, Morag Malvern, Beth Rowland, Anne Chadwick, Graham Howe and Pauline Helliar-Symons

Other Councillors Present
Councillors: Alistair Neal as a substitute

Officers Present
Luciane Bowker, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Gillian Cole, Service Manager Schools
Adam Davis, Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help
Sal Thirlway, Assistant Director for Learning Achievement and Partnerships
Helen Watson, Children's Services Director

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN
Councillor Andrew Mickleburgh was elected Chairman for the 2022/23 municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN
Councillor Shirley Boyt was appointed Vice-Chairman for the 2022/23 municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES
An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Shirley Boyt, she was substituted by Councillor Alistair Neal.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST
A declaration of interest was submitted from Councillor Beth Rowland on the basis that she was a school governor for two local schools.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record, subject to the amendment below, and signed by the Chairman.

Amendment: Councillor Helliar-Symonds had been present online as a Committee Member (not as a guest).

Matters arising
Councillor Chadwick asked for an update on the arrangements for home to school transport for September 2022. Sal Thirlway, Assistant Director for Learning and Partnerships offered to provide a written answer after the meeting, to be included with the minutes.

The Chairman stated that there had been two vacancies for diocese representatives and two vacancies for parent governors on the Committee for a long time. He believed that it would be beneficial for the Committee to have the engagement of such representatives. He asked if there was a requirement for those representatives to be on the membership of the Committee and he also asked Officers to make an effort to recruit volunteers to fill those vacancies.

Luciane Bowker, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist explained that the vacancies referred to were listed in the terms of reference for the Committee. Officers had not been very successful in the past in recruiting volunteers to fill in those roles. However, it was agreed that a renewed effort would be made to try and find volunteers to join the Committee.

The Chairman asked if there was an update on the possibility of Members meeting with the residents of the new Care Leavers accommodation on London Road to gain their feedback.

Adam Davis, Assistant Director for Children's Social Care and Early Help explained that the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) was also interested in gaining feedback from the resident of the new accommodation for Care Leavers. CPB was still waiting for a response from residents with regards to a visit.

The Chairman asked if Members of CSO&S who were not members of CPB would also be able to speak to the residents. Adam Davis explained that this was dependent on consultation with the residents.

The Chairman asked for information about theYouth Council: do they produce minutes? If so, could this Committee receive a copy of the minutes? Could this Committee engage with the Youth Council?

Helen Watson, Interim Director for Children's Services confirmed that the Youth Council had been meeting regularly and there were notes taken of those meetings. She agreed that it was a good idea for this Committee to engage with the Youth Council, and that the Youth Council could be invited to attend a meeting of CSO&S.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Some of the comments made during the discussion of the item are listed below.

Dashboard item 1 – Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- Councillor Chadwick asked why the number of EHCPs had gone up so significantly in Q4;
- Sal Thirlway stated that there had been a greater need for assessment and placements, with an increase in the number of Special Educational Needs (SEN) children. This increase in demand impacted on the timeliness of completion of assessments;
- Councillor Rowland was concerned that the service was not good enough for schools and asked what the plan was to tackle this situation;
- Sal Thirlway stated that the service and level of activity had improved, but there was still work to do to improve the service. The capacity and nature of SEN services was continually monitored to support EHCPs requests. A Wokingham Partnership was being established in order to better understand the needs for support at schools;

- Councillor Rowland asked that this item be brought back to the next meeting to monitor the improvement of EHCPs;
- Councillor Helliar-Symonds asked for the whole total averages of the year (not just 20/21) to be included in all of the dashboards;

Dashboard item 2 – Early Help

- Councillor Rowland was concerned about the direction of travel on this indicator, she believed that Early Help for children was very important;
- Adam Davis explained that a downwards trend was not necessarily negative for this indicator. The downward time between referral and assessment was a positive result;
- Adam Davis added that there had been a significant increase in the front door referrals of 57% and the service had retained the timescales, so this was a doubly positive result.

Dashboard item 3 – Children's Social Care Front Door

- The Chairman stated that, in relation to the percentage of assessments completed within 45 days, Wokingham continued to be below the national average and statistical neighbours averages. He asked what was being done to address this?
- Adam Davis stated that work was being undertaken to clear out the backlog. He explained that sometimes delays were caused because other activities were underway, however this was an area of focus;
- In response to a question Adam Davis stated that there were 25 assessments out of the 45 day timeframe, but this number fluctuated up and down. Delays could occur because of delays in court proceedings for example, or in the case of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) delays were caused as the assessment could take longer. The service was looking to improve this performance where possible;
- In response to a question Adam Davis explained that there was a threshold document which assessed if a contact should be progressed or not. However, this judgement was complex and subjective.

Dashboard item 4 – Child Protection

- In response to a question, Adam Davis explained that child protection visits were undertaken every ten working days continuously.

Dashboard item 5 – Children In Care (CIC)

- The Chairman asked if there were any particular concerns in relation to the increase in the number of UASC;
- Adam Davis explained that any increase in any cohort of CIC would cause a challenge, not just UASC. There were additional challenges in relation to UASC in terms of culture, faith and language, where Wokingham alone may not have the resources to fully meet their needs;
- In response to a question Adam Davis made reference to the Ofsted focused visit letter, in which they talked about how to meet the emotional wellbeing of UASC. Part of the solution to this challenge was the new Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for CIC. Adam Davis added that it could be particularly difficult to support UASC in the first three to four months of their arrival;
- Helen Watson pointed out that Ofsted had commented on the "Herculaneum" effort which had been undertaken by all Children's Services staff to deal with the increase in numbers of CIC. She added that the virtual school was also focusing on the education of UASC;

- The Chairman, on the Committee's behalf, wished to commend and thank Children's Services staff for all their ongoing work;
- Councillor Rowland asked if it was possible to include a breakdown on the number of CIC to show the number of UASC;
- Adam Davis stated that some metrics used by the service did split the numbers. He confirmed that at the this point in time, out of 136 CIC 28 were UASC;
- In response to a question, Adam Davis explained that children from Hong Kong or Ukraine did not qualify as UASC;
- Councillor Howe reminded the Committee that this was a public meeting, and that all had to be mindful of that fact in relation to sharing data in the meetings;
- In response to a question Adam Davis stated that there was an error in the date in the table for this dashboard, it should have been rolled over to 2022. He explained that all visits had moved to face-to-face. There were four categories within children's social care:
  1. Child In Need– a child with a plan of support
  2. Child Protection – a child with a plan of support and protection
  3. Child In Care – a looked after child with a care plan
  4. Care Leavers – a young person with a pathway plan
- The total number of visits listed in the report included the first three categories. He confirmed that a high level of face-to-face visits had been sustained throughout the pandemic;
- Adam Davis explained that the table showed the level of activity, every visit related to one social worker meeting a child and producing a report;
- In response to a question Adam Davis explained that an upward arrow did not necessarily mean an improvement, it meant an increase in the numbers;
- Councillor Helliar-Symonds expressed concern that the number of children with more than one social worker in 12 months had gone up;
- Adam Davis agreed that this was an area of concern. However, this could be related to a particular month when a social worker became a team manager. He added that this issue related to the national challenges in the recruitment of social workers.

It was noted that there was some confusion with interpreting the presentation in the report. Officers agreed to review the format of the report, to make sure that the presentation was clear for Members.

Dashboard item 6 – Care Leavers

- Councillor Chadwick asked what was the future of Care Leavers who were Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET), she wondered if they would go on to receive benefits long term;
- Sal Thirlway explained that although there was an increase in the percentage, this equated to two young people. The figures were in relation to care leavers who were in touch with the local authority, this represented 99% of Care Leavers. The higher the number of Care Leavers in touch, the higher the NEET figure was likely to be. By having a better understanding of the numbers, the local authority would be better placed to help and support them;
- Adam Davis added that with changes in legislation, the offer to Care Leavers had been extended to 25 year olds, therefore increasing the cohort of Care Leavers;
- Sal Thirlway pointed out the NEET figures were improved compared to the same period last year.

Dashboard item 7 – Children Missing from Home/Care

- The Chairman asked what the plan of improvement in relation to the return home interviews was? (this had been mentioned in the Ofsted report). He also asked if the improvement plan could be shared with the Committee:
- Adam Davis informed that the service had challenged that figure, explaining that some children had only been 15 minutes late returning home, the figure was in relation to the police being informed of a child going missing and their status. However, the service was reviewing this issue and it was part of a plan of improvement. It was important to ensure that the reporting was right, he added that when Officers looked into the figures, there was no concern of risk to those children;
- Adam Davis stated that this was being monitored by Corporate Parenting Board. He agreed to copy Members of the CSO&S into the documentation in relation to this improvement plan;
- Councillor Chadwick asked about the statistics in relation to Elective Home Educated Children (EHEC);
- Sal Thirlway confirmed that EHEC were not included in the figures for this dashboard. EHEC were considered to be receiving an education and were not required to be on a school roll;
- Sal Thirlway explained that currently there was no legal requirement to hold the information about the number of EHEC, it was up to parents and schools to inform the local authority about EHEC. The local authority had a level of knowledge on the number of EHEC, the Education Welfare Service worked with families of EHEC. The Department for Education (DfE) was looking to put in place more robust legislation in relation to the powers of the local authority to monitor EHEC.

Dashboard item 8 – Children's Services Workforce

- Councillor Howe suggested that Officers comment on the rise of staff turn over, in particular of social workers;
- Adam Davis explained that around two years ago, a recruitment campaign had been implemented, the figure at that time was of 33% locums, and the service set itself a target of 10% - including maternity and sick leave gaps. The service got very close to the target and achieved 15%, and this remained for a period of time. The figure now was closer to 28%, this was due to a number of factors, such as covid and the 'great resignation' (people re-evaluating their lives and choosing to do different things).

  A number of measures were in place to bring down the number of locums, such as offering training opportunities for newly qualified social workers. Wokingham was also part of Memorandum Of Cooperation (MOC) this was a Member association of 19 local authorities across the South East which prevented permanent social workers from living a permanent role and becoming a locum in one of those authorities.

  There were a number of work streams underway, including a very good training offer, to tackle the recruitment challenges, this was a national challenge.
- Councillor Rowland acknowledged the efforts being made and stated that it was important to keep this under review, and to treat staff very well in order to retain staff and maintain the level of service;
- Adam Davis agreed that part of the solution was offering manageable case loads;
- Councillor Neal was concerned about the MOC, and wondered if this constituted an abuse of power, by stopping people from becoming self-employed;
- Adam Davis explained that this was the approach used in the Southeast and many other parts of England.

The Chaiman stated that the demographics of CIC profile was changing. He would like to know the implication of these changes, both in terms of challenges and opportunities.

Adam Davis stated that some of the changes were the increase in the number of UASC (30% of CIC were UASC) and the variation in the age rage of CIC, with more CIC now being 16 to 17 years old. This variation in age had an implication in the need for Care Leaver's accommodation, there was work being undertaken with Housing to support this need. There was also a focus on transition to adulthood.

Adam Davis explained that in terms of opportunities, the service offered a number of engagement opportunities with CIC. These events were regularly reported to CPB.

The Chairman stated that another issue that was often mentioned, was the increase in the level of complex needs. He asked about the implications of this increase on the services.

In response to the question about complexity, Adam Davis explained that this was about the layers of complexity. The covid situation and the rise in cost of living also had an impact on the services.

Helen Watson added that the level of complexity in relation to children and young people's mental health was increasing. There was an opportunity to make a bid to the DfE for capital funding for some provision to meet the needs of very complex children and young people. This opportunity was being explored with the CCG.

The Chairman proposed that the data in relation to UASC be continuously monitored, given that this cohort was increasing and that this trend was likely to continue in the foreseeable future. He also proposed to review data in relation to emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Councillor Rowland agreed that it was important to monitor the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. She added that children faced of lot of challenges currently, in the context of the digital age that we are living.

Councillor Howe stated that there was a lot of activity that occurred in the services in relation to UASC, he supported the proposal to monitor this data. He added that Children's Services was a very complex service. He suggested that the training session for Members include information about the structure of the service.

Councillor Helliar-Symonds agreed that training sessions were very useful to understand how the service was structured and its complexities.

Helen Watson suggested that separate information about UASC be provided in a part 2 session, given that those children were part of small cohort that could be easily identified.

Adam Davis confirmed that a training session was scheduled for later in the month. Helen Watson added that if needed, more training sessions could be provided during the year.

RESOLVED That:

1) The Committee would continue to monitor the activity of EHCPs (Dashboard item 1) at its next meeting;

2) Data on UASC would be provided in a part 2 session;

3) The number of Elective Home Educated Children in the borough would be circulated with the minutes; and

4) Training sessions would be provided to Members in accordance with the need.

9. EDUCATION UPDATE

The Education Update report was presented by Sal Thirlway. He explained that the report outlined the work being undertaken to continue to provide for the children's educational needs. It covered attendance, the ongoing development of the Borough Education Partnership, an update on the white and green educational papers and implications for Children's Services.

During the discussion of the item the following comments were made:

- Councillor Chadwick asked if children with a sick note or with covid who were not at school were counted in the number of those absent;
- Sal Thirlway explained that the government had changed its coding system to allow for covid related attendance recording. However, this was no longer in existence, the 93% attendance mentioned in the report was for all pupils on schools rolls;
- Councillor Chadwick asked for clarification in the 1.2 section of the report as to whether the guidance published by the government was statutory or non-statutory;
- Sal Thirlway explained that this was non-statutory guidance that the local authority had to follow, it was a quirk of the law;
- Councillor Rowland explained that some overseas families with children in schools had not been able to see their relatives for a couple of years due to covid. They were choosing to take their children out of school and pay the fine as this was cheaper than the cost of travelling during the school holidays. She asked how many fines had been issued in Wokingham schools because of this issue;
- Sal Thirlway explained that the local authority held the information on the number of fixed term penalties related to school attendance. There was support to schools in relation to improving school attendance. However, the level of fixed term penalty notices was set by the government, and some families felt that it was more cost effective to take their children out of school for their holidays;
- Councillor Helliar-Symonds was of the opinion that this law did not tackle the issue of children with intermittent absences, which was originally its intention;
- The Chairman asked what the implication for the services was of the new statutory obligations;
- Sal Thirlway explained that resource implications on the school attendance team were likely. Options around meeting the capacity challenge were being explored;
- Councillor Helliar-Symonds commended on the Wokingham Education Partnership, she believed that it was a great idea. She recommended that the group looking at the sufficiency of school places in the borough considered also the issue of travelling to school;
- Councillor Howe explained that when schools became academies, there was a disassociation of the local authority from schools. However, the schools and the local authority were still bound by their responsibilities in relation to SEND and school admissions. The responsibility for the education of children in the borough still remained with the local authority, but there was not a mechanism to share resources and to work strategically together. The Borough Education Partnership (BEP) was

created in an effort to bring together schools and the local authority to jointly formulate strategies;

- Councillor Malvern asked if there was a provision for governors' participation in the BEP;
- Councillor Howe explained that the primary and secondary schools federation, the senior officers and the Executive Member for Children's Services were part of BEP, this was aimed at headteachers and not governors, in an effort to keep the focus of the meetings;
- Sal Thirlway sated that governors would be regularly informed of the discussions at the BEP in other strategic meetings.

The Chairman wished to formally express the Committee's gratitude to the work being undertaken by the BEP, and that this be passed on to the partnership. He also thanked Councillor Howe for the background information and to Officers for their work in setting it up.

The Chairman asked for more information in relation to the Fair Access Protocol (FAP). Sal Thirlway explained that the FAP existed to support the placement of children who had either left their previous educational setting or who had moved into the area mid-year and needed to be placed in a school. Schools signed up to the FAP and were supportive of the policy. BEP had been involved in the creation and development of the FAP. FAP had already met twice since the implementation of the new FAP policy and placed around 40 pupils.

The Chairman asked for timescales in relation to the re-structuring and re-organisation of the leadership team. Sal Thirlway stated that the aim was to achieve a more effective leadership structure. He explained that currently the large scope of 'Learning Achievement and Partnerships' limited his capacity to engage in strategic thinking and discussions. The aim was to rationalise the leadership function without loss of service delivery. This was an operational change which did not require Executive approval.

Sal Thirlway explained that there were two phases of work in this re-organisation, and he welcomed the Committee's input.

Helen Watson confirmed that the aim was to have a structure that was fit for purpose, in line with the new requirements of the white and green papers. BEP was aware that this work was underway.

Councillor Chadwick was interested to know what were the IT issues mentioned in the report. Sal Thirlway explained that, for example, in the case of recording the number of EHCPs, an investment was needed for a recording system. Also, school admissions needed a better IT system for data collection.

The Chairman asked how reliant on WBC's IT system Children's Services were, and he also asked if the proposed changes would require changes in other areas of the Council.

Sal Thirlway stated that the white and green papers would impact other areas of the Council, IT infrastructure being one of them.

Members asked to be kept informed of further iterations in the development of the re-organisation. Officers agreed with this proposal.

RESOLVED That:

1) The report be noted; and

2) The Committee would be kept informed on the development of the re-organisation.

10. FORWARD PROGRAMME

The Chairman requested that the Executive Member for Children's Services be invited to attend future meetings, in order to share their thoughts on the service and answer questions.

Luciane Bowker informed that Councillor Bray, Executive Member for Children's Services had already offered to attend meetings.

Councillor Mickleburgh asked that stakeholders who were involved in co-producing the SEND Strategy, such as SEND Voices be invited to attend the next meeting in September when the SEND Strategy was due to be discussed. Officers agreed with this proposal.

The Chairman asked if the CSO&S Committee could receive the Children's Services Draft Strategy at its next meeting in September. Helen Watson agreed to present this update.

The Chairman suggested adding the following item to the November meeting: *Concerns about the cost of living crisis affecting children in the borough and the impact on Children's Services.* He suggested that the Executive Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty be invited to discuss this report. In response to a question Luciane Bowker suggested that Members email her with the specific requirements for this report.

Helen Watson informed that the Council was working on an Anti-Poverty Strategy, part of which involved tackling poverty in schools. This was due to be discussed with the BEP.

RESOLVED That:

1) The Executive Member for Children's Services would be invited to attend future meetings of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

2) The stakeholders involved in developing the SEND Strategy be invited to the next meeting; and

3) A report about the cost of living crisis and its implications for children in the borough and Children's Services be added to the November meeting.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of the Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as appropriate.

12. SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

This item was discussed in a part two session.

It was agreed that future reports would include a list of all schools in the borough and their current Ofsted status. Also, the local ward Members of the schools causing concern would continue to be invited to attend this part of the meeting.

It was suggested that for schools inspected by Ofsted since the last meeting, the 2-3 page overviews at the start of each Ofsted report be included with the Agenda pack.

TITLE	**Update on Children's Strategy Delivery**
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Children's Services Strategy sets out the Council's vision for children and young people in Wokingham and lays out its approach to achieving the best possible outcomes for this important section of the community.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee reviews and notes the Children's Services Strategy 2021-2024, and key progress made to date.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Since the start of the 21/22 financial year, work has been undertaken to refresh and update the Children's Services Strategy (2021-24) and develop a clear, comprehensive and achievable Delivery Plan. This Strategy builds on the previous Children's Services Strategy and aims to take the service to the next stage of its continuous improvement journey.

The focus of the Strategy is to improve outcomes for all children and young people in the Borough. The Strategic Priorities and key actions are aligned with Wokingham's Community Vision and are designed to ensure that the Council and its strategic partners collaborate in putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the details of the Strategy and key actions for review and note.

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, however the Children's Services Strategy will play a key role in enabling the delivery of projects and programmes designed to help ensure delivery of the best possible value for money in Children's Services, as well as the efficiency savings required to meet the objectives and commitments set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Background

Context

As a Council we want to ensure that Wokingham Borough is a great place for all children and young people to grow up.

Most children and young people in the Borough experience positive outcomes in relation to educational attainment, health and well-being, and successful transition to independent adulthood. In many cases the outcomes experienced by children and young people in Wokingham are better than the national average. The majority of children and young people in Wokingham have their needs met through universal services, for example through local schools, GPs and health services. They also benefit from easy access to a range of activities they can enjoy with their friends and families, through which they can continue to grow and develop.

When facing challenges or difficulties, most children, young people and families in Wokingham are able cope because they have the means to access the support they need relatively quickly.

However, for some children and young people in the Borough, there is a higher chance of poor outcomes because their circumstances mean they are exposed to higher levels of risk and are therefore more vulnerable. Universal services – whilst of crucial importance to these children and young people – often cannot meet all the needs of our more vulnerable children and young people. We want to ensure our more vulnerable and/or disadvantaged children and young people are supported to have every opportunity of achieving the same social, educational, health and economic outcomes as their peers. We are committed to helping our more vulnerable children and young people achieve personal growth, live happy and fulfilling lives, and feel hopeful and aspirational for their futures.

This Strategy sets out how we will drive the continuous improvement and transformation needed to deliver the best outcomes for all our children, young people and their families. The actions to deliver our strategic priorities are designed to ensure that all children and young people have access to a good education, and are enabled to lead safe, happy, healthy lives.

This Strategy has been developed in exceptionally challenging circumstances. The combination of sustained pressure on public finances; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic both in terms of immediate impact and emerging pressures which present challenges for the future; the increase in demand for support for asylum-seeking children; the war in the Ukraine; and changing legislation and expectations from Central Government; all give rise to extremely challenging conditions in which to achieve our ambitions for all children and young people in the Borough. The priorities and actions set out in this Strategy represent the best possible route to achieve our goals.

Analysis of Issues

Our Focus

In the light of the context set out above, in addition to ensuring our universal offer is of an excellent standard, our Children's Services Strategy (2021-24) will focus on improving outcomes for children and young people who:

1. Are in our care or leaving care
2. Have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)
3. Go missing and/or run away
4. Are young offenders
5. Have a child in need or child protection plan
6. Are living in low-income families
7. Are affected by domestic violence
8. Have disabilities and/or long-term health conditions
9. Are at risk of exploitation
10. Have parents with mental health needs
11. Are at risk of engaging in youth violence
12. Are homeless or in temporary housing
13. Have caring responsibilities
14. Are not in full time or mainstream education
15. Are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
16. Are vulnerable and have migrated to the Borough from outside the UK

In addition, there are some children and young people who do not appear vulnerable but who may not be coping as well as we think or whose circumstances are not secure; for these children and young people only small changes or challenges in life may make things difficult. Being aware of children and young people "on the edge" of vulnerability is important, particularly in the context of the pandemic. There is a growing body of evidence across the children's system that the pandemic has heightened vulnerability, and generated increases in "hidden harm" (harm to children and young people which may not have been detected by services, for example as a result of the impact of pandemic-related restrictions on face-to-face services).

Our Strategy aims to address these sorts of challenges by developing and embedding innovative new models of delivery, which reflect best practice in the sector, and our own experiences of building and developing services which have proven to have positive impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Some key principles have informed our thinking around priorities for the Strategy, and the key actions we will take to achieve these. These are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Principles which have shaped our Strategy

Principles	Description
Early Intervention and Prevention and Early Help	Early Intervention and Prevention \and Early Help may be needed at any point in a child or young person's life. It refers to interventions made early in a child's life, as well as interventions early in the development of a problem. It can refer to support at an early stage to help families solve problems, or to reduce the impact of problems that have already emerged. Acting early and ensuring the right support is in place at the right time is a key principle which underpins our Strategy and the actions in our Action Plan.
Strengthening Inclusion	Taking an evidence-based and targeted approach to narrowing the gap in positive outcomes between vulnerable children and young people, and their non-vulnerable peers. This can involve strengthening inclusion of children and young people with SEND in

	mainstream education; reducing school exclusions through provision of behavioural support; empowering and enabling vulnerable children and young people to remain at home rather than in the care system.
Focusing on Sufficiency and Managing Demand	Ensuring we manage demand for our services by investing in our preventative services, and ensuring we have sufficient provision in place to achieve this and provide the right kind of specialist support when this is essential in order to meet a child or young person's need.
Focusing on Quality and Raising Standards	Driving a culture of learning and constructive challenge, to raise standards across children's services. Ensuring the voice of the child and young person is heard and central to our approach to service development and continuous improvement.
Working Together to Focus on Outcomes	The Action Plan for the Children's Services Strategy is organised around Strategic Priorities which bring services across the directorate and the wider organisation together. The governance arrangements for delivery have been designed to facilitate cross-service working and breaking down of silos to genuinely put outcomes for children at the heart of everything we do. Also included in the Action Plan are actions we will take with our strategic partners (for example through the CYPP) to help ensure we take a "One Wokingham" approach to improving outcomes for all our children, young people and families.

Our Strategy

The Children's Services Strategy (2021-24), and priority actions are attached as **Appendix 1.**

Table 2 below summarises two of the key components of our Strategy: our Vision and our Values. Our Vision, which aligns with the Council's Vision for Wokingham as a great place to live, learn and grow and a great place to do business, defines our overarching ambition for children and young people in the Borough.

Our Values define the character of our service and help establish the principles we apply to the planning and delivery of our services for children and young people, which in turn will help us ensure that we keep our focus on improving outcomes.

Table 2: Summary of Vision, Values and Priorities

Our Vision	Wokingham is a Borough in which all children and young people are safe and cared for, enjoy and achieve, are healthy and resilient, grow up ready for adulthood, and feel happy, hopeful and loved.
Our Values	**1. We focus on making a difference.** We support children, young people and families on their journey and measure our success in terms of impact on outcomes. **2. We aim high.** We have high aspirations for every child and young person. We are ambitious for our services and strive for excellence in everything we do. **3. We are strategic, efficient and effective.**

	We manage all our resources efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our children, young people and families. **4. We value our people.** We highly value and support our children's workforce. We support our people to excel, grow, and love their work. **5. We drive partnership, collaboration and coproduction.** We work in strategic partnership with professionals, children, young people and families to achieve our shared goal to improve outcomes.

Our Strategic Priorities and Business Areas Driving Delivery

Table 3 below summarises two other key components of our Strategy: our Strategic Priorities, and the Business Areas that will drive delivery of the Strategy.

Table 3: Strategic Priorities and Business Areas driving delivery

Our Strategic Priorities	**SP1.** Ensure we are designed to deliver excellent outcomes for all children, young people & families in Wokingham **SP2.** Excel in our practice, be known for the quality of our work, and perform to the highest standards **SP3.** Develop effective strategies which improve outcomes and deliver them in the most efficient way **SP4.** Recruit, develop and retain a high-performing children's workforce **SP5**. Strengthen our partnerships, drive system leadership & put children at the heart of everything Wokingham does
Our 4 Business Areas Driving Delivery	**Children's Social Care and Early Help** • Providing the right type and amount of help at the right time, to support the most vulnerable children, young people and families • Driving an early intervention and prevention approach to anticipating and addressing needs • Strengthening resilience and well-being • Strengthening our support for vulnerable adolescents in the community • Strengthen our partnership arrangements to ensure children are safeguarded in their homes and in the wider community **Learning, Achievement and Partnerships** • Supporting children and young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential • Supporting the most vulnerable to achieve • Narrowing the gap in attainment outcomes • Supporting schools and building partnerships to drive attainment and independence

	• Driving inclusion and an inclusive approach to delivering better outcomes for all children and young people **Quality Assurance and Safeguarding** • To develop self-knowledge through quantitative and qualitative analysis • To put in place standards, systems and processes which provide a strong framework for continuous improvement • To produce accurate targeted data, effective analysis and evaluation of performance which supports management and practice across services for children • To embed a culture of challenge and improvement, where quality assurance is everyone's business • To provide opportunities for learning and development to enable staff to make the most of their aptitudes and abilities (ASYEs – Managers) • To promote excellence of practice which results in the best possible outcomes for children and young people • To advance and enhance practice through the development of the Practice Model **Strategic and Operational Delivery** • Driving cross-council working to put children and young people at the heart of everything Wokingham does • Developing strategies and programmes to drive excellence & continuous improvement • Driving commercial excellence, effective financial management & Value for Money • Engaging strategically and proactively with peers, networks and regulators

The Action Plan for the Strategy groups the key actions around Strategic Priorities. This is to help drive collaboration and efficient and effective working across Business Areas, to help facilitate the sharing of intelligence and insight, and to drive continuous improvement in the culture of the services, breaking down barriers and silos in order to ensure improving outcomes for children and young people is the focus of all our activity.

Governance Arrangements

The Governance Arrangements for delivery of the Children's Services Strategy and Action Plan are attached as **Appendix 2.**

Appendix 2 sets out the Strategic Governance Arrangements in Children's Services, showing how governance of "business as usual" (e.g. through the Children's Directorate Leadership Team) aligns with governance of strategy delivery, continuous improvement and transformation required to drive efficiencies and financial sustainability (e.g. through the Getting to Good Board).

The second page of Appendix 2 shows more detail on the role of the Getting to Good Board, in particular in terms of its role in overseeing delivery of the Children's Services Strategy and Action Plan and sets out the "Strategic Priority Leads" who will work together to ensure that the actions related to each of the Strategic Priorities are

successfully delivered, and report progress on mission-critical activities to the Getting to Good Board.

Key Delivery Successes To Date

- Establishment of a Serious Violence and Exploitation Board.
- New approach to Corporate Parenting established, focussed on improving opportunities for Member engagement and understanding of the role of the corporate parent.
- More effective Performance Cycle, driving improvement through learning.
- Stabilisation of the Social Care Workforce, including growing our own through the ASYE programme (post-qualification Assisted and Supported Year in Employment for Social Workers).
- Launch of new Emotional Wellbeing Hub in Wokingham, providing a single front door for access to emotional health support for children and young people.
- Establishment of an Education Partnership for Wokingham, bringing together education providers to champion and drive improved educational outcomes for all children and young people in the borough.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION
The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, however the Children's Services Strategy and Action Plan will play a key role in enabling the delivery of projects and programmes designed to help ensure delivery of the best possible value for money in Children's Services, as well as the efficiency savings required to meet the objectives and commitments set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None

Cross-Council Implications
N/A

Public Sector Equality Duty

Please confirm that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken and if an equalities assessment has been completed or explain why an equalities assessment is not required.
An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposed Children's Services Strategy and Action Plan (2021-24).

Outcomes from this assessment are summarised in the points below:

- The clear potential for the Strategy to have a positive differential impact on outcomes for groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (including children and young people aged 0-25 with disabilities)
- Commitments in the Strategy and Action Plan to ensure that the voice of the child and/or young person is central to care plans, design and delivery of services are designed to ensure the Strategy has a positive impact on outcomes for some of the most vulnerable groups within the borough
- Governance and performance management arrangements are designed to help ensure that those commissioning and delivering services for children and young people are aware of the impact on outcomes arising from delivery, and are able to take the actions needed to ensure the Strategy achieves its vision for improved outcomes.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*
Incorporated in the Action Plan for the Children's Services Strategy are several commitments to transformation which have the potential to make a positive contribution to the Council's efforts to tackle the Climate Emergency. Examples include: The movement to energy efficient buildings for new premises commissioned and/or developed as part of the new models of delivery within the Strategy; Shift towards a focus on self-service, remote provision of services and digital delivery, reducing motor vehicle traffic and use of paper and other supplies; Delivery of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme and Corporate Transport Programme, which includes commitments to implementation of route-optimised travel (with the potential to reduce traffic) and delivery of Independent Travel Training (with the potential to enable a greater number of children and young people to make their way to their place of learning by walking, cycling or use of public transport, rather than by car or taxi)

List of Background Papers
Appendix 1: The Children's Services Strategy and Action Plan Appendix 2: Governance and Delivery Arrangements

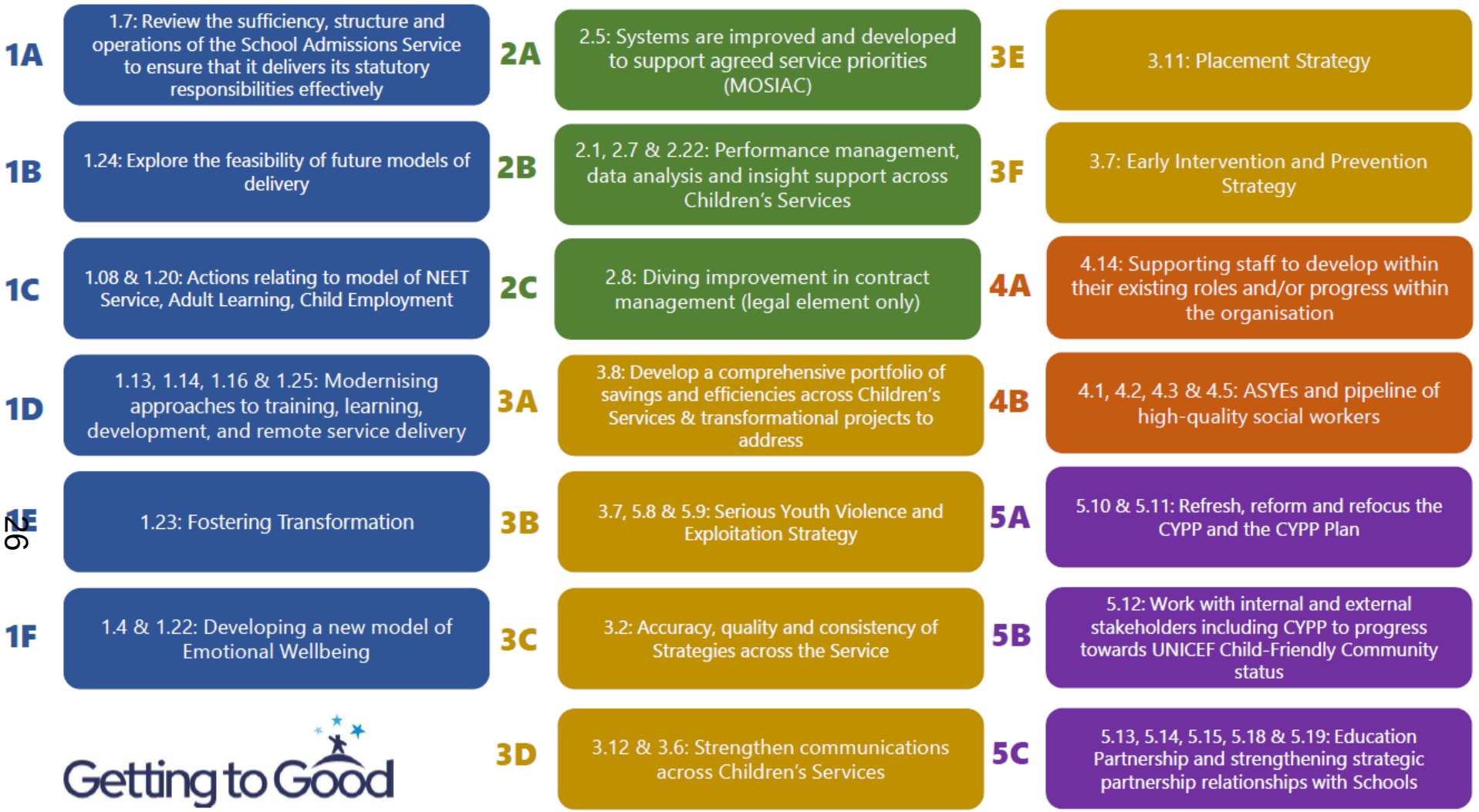
Contact Viki Elliot-King	**Service:** Strategic & Operational Delivery
Telephone No Tel: 0118 908 8226	**Email** viki.elliot-king@wokingham.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1: Children's Services Strategy (2021-24) and Priority Actions

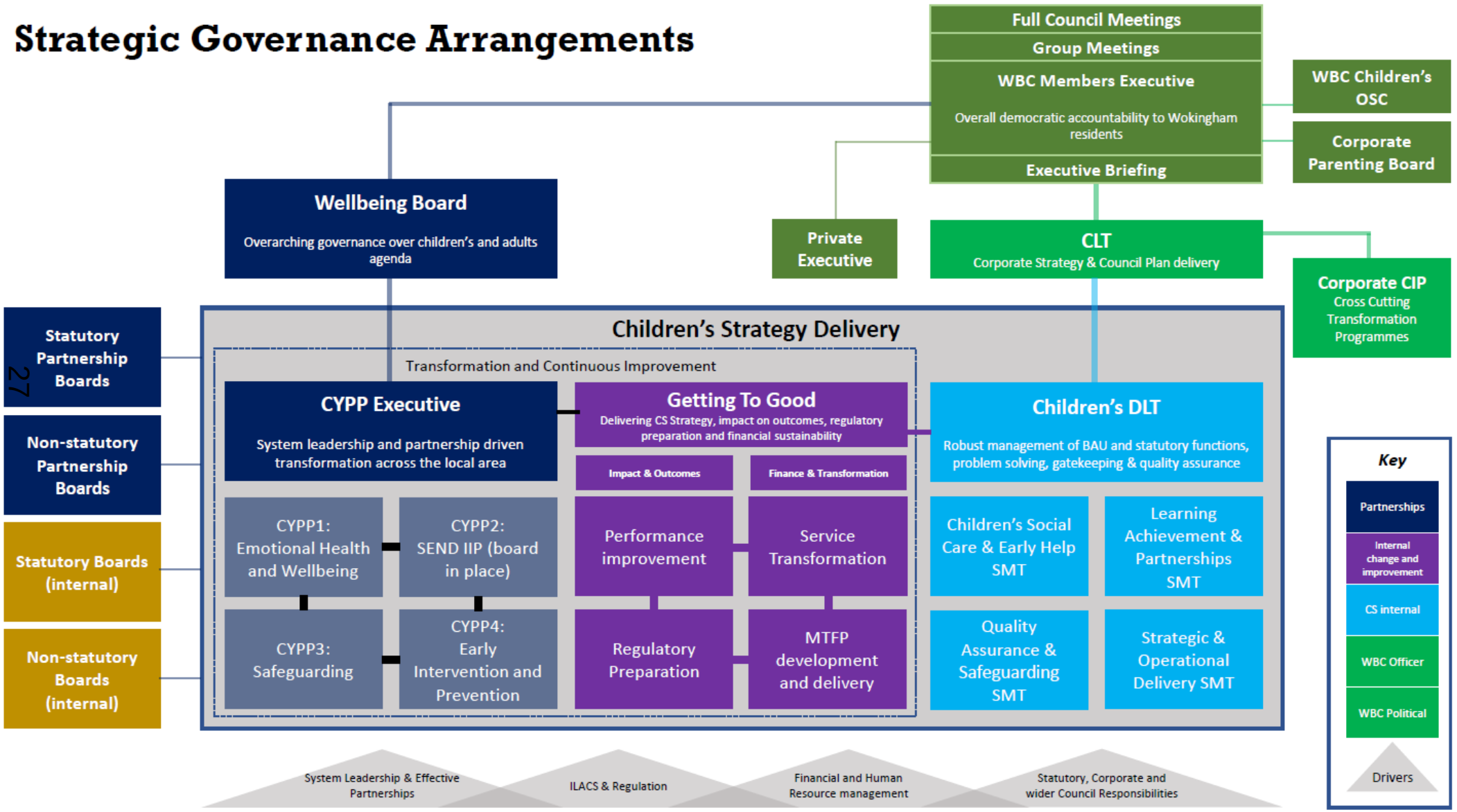
Wokingham Children's Services Strategy (2021-24)

Our Vision	Wokingham is a great place to live, learn and grow and a great place to do business				
	Wokingham is a Borough in which all children and young people are safe and cared for, enjoy and achieve, are healthy and resilient, grow up ready for adulthood, and feel happy, hopeful and loved.				
Community outcomes	Enriching Lives Safe, Strong Communities A Clean and Green Borough Right Homes, Right Places Keeping the Borough Moving Changing the Way We Work For You				
Outcomes for CYP	**1. Safe and cared for**	**2. Enjoy and Achieve**	**3. Healthy and resilient**	**4. Ready for adulthood**	**5. Happy, hopeful and loved**
Our Values	**We focus on making a difference.**	**We aim high.**	**We are strategic, efficient and effective.**	**We value our people.**	**We drive partnership, collaboration and coproduction.**
	We support children, young people and families on their journey and measure our success in terms of impact on outcomes.	We have high aspirations for every child and young person. We are ambitious for our services, and strive for excellence in everything we do.	We manage all our resources efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our children, young people and families.	We highly value and support our children's workforce. We support our people to excel, grow, and love their work.	We work in strategic partnership with professionals, children, young people and families to achieve our shared goal to improve outcomes.
25 Our Strategic Priorities	**SP1.** Ensure we are designed to deliver excellent outcomes for all children, young people & families in Wokingham	**SP2.** Excel in our practice, be known for the quality of our work, and perform to the highest standards	**SP3.** Develop effective strategies which improve outcomes and deliver them in the most efficient way	**SP4.** Recruit, develop and retain a high-performing children's workforce	**SP5.** Strengthen our partnerships, drive system leadership & put children at the heart of everything Wokingham does
	SP1.1) Develop a sustainable future model and design of children's service SP1.2) Embed our models of early intervention and prevention, including Early Help, Edge of Care and Emotional Wellbeing SP1.3) Continue to develop and embed an effective approach to tackling exploitation SP1.4) Embed innovative models of support for CWD, SEND and Inclusion	SP2.1) Continue to drive improvements in performance & practice standards SP2.2) Set challenging goals for all our services, and continually challenge ourselves to be the best we can be SP2.3) Target our business change and continuous improvement activities	SP3.1) Ensure our strategies have impact and focus on delivering better outcomes SP3.2) Continuously improve our ways of working, pathways & processes SP3.3) Strengthen our data and information management SP3.4) Work in an agile and flexible way to help manage demand SP3.5) Make intelligent decisions about how we best manage risks & financial resources	SP4.1) Refresh and reinvigorate our approach to recruitment SP4.2) Invest in and support our staff to grow in their roles and capabilities, and accelerate in their careers SP4.3) Strengthen retention & succession planning SP4.4) Responding successfully to prevailing and forecast changes in the job market SP4.5) Build effective and successful leaders	SP5.1) Strengthen the strategic focus and nature of our partnership working SP5.2) Deliver genuine coproduction at the strategic and individual level SP5.3) Drive a "one Wokingham" approach to improved outcomes for children, young people and families, across the council and the Wokingham area SP5.4) Strengthen our relationship with Schools to collectively improve outcomes for children and young people
Our Business Areas driving delivery	**Children's Social Care and Early Help** • Providing the right type and amount of help at the right time, to support the most vulnerable children, young people and families • Driving an early intervention and prevention approach to anticipating and addressing needs • Strengthening resilience and well-being • Strengthening our support for vulnerable adolescents in the community • Strengthen our partnership arrangements to ensure children are safeguarded in their homes and in the wider community	**Learning, Achievement and Partnerships** • Supporting children and young people to enjoy life and achieve their potential • Supporting the most vulnerable to achieve • Narrowing the gap in attainment outcomes • Supporting schools and building partnerships to drive attainment and independence • Driving inclusion and an inclusive approach to delivering better outcomes for all children and young people	**Quality Assurance and Safeguarding** • To develop self-knowledge through quantitative and qualitative analysis • To put in place standards, systems and processes which provide a strong framework for continuous improvement • To produce accurate targeted data, effective analysis and evaluation of performance which supports management and practice across services for children • To embed a culture of challenge and improvement, where quality assurance is everyone's business • To provide opportunities for learning and development to enable staff to make the most of their aptitudes and abilities (ASYEs – Managers) • To promote excellence of practice which results in the best possible outcomes for children and young people • To advance and enhance practice through the development of the Practice Model	**Strategic and Operational Delivery** • Driving cross-council working to put children and young people at the heart of everything Wokingham does • Developing strategies and programmes to drive excellence & continuous improvement • Driving commercial excellence, effective financial management & Value for Money • Engaging strategically and proactively with peers, networks and regulators	

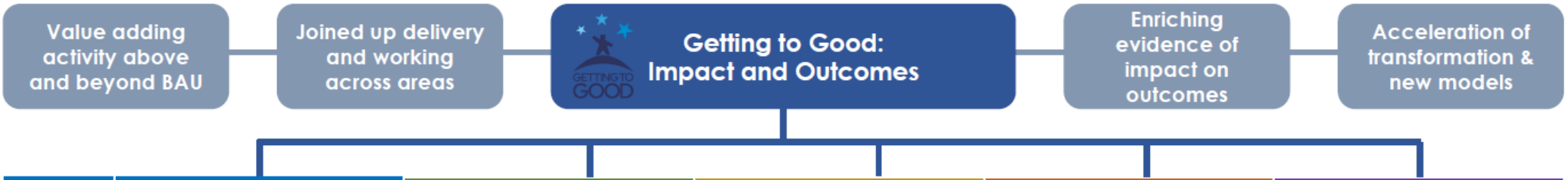
Priority Actions



APPENDIX 2: Children's Services Strategy Governance Arrangements



From Strategy to Delivery



PRIORITY	**SP1.** Ensure we are designed to deliver excellent outcomes for all children, young people & families in Wokingham	**SP2.** Excel in our practice, be known for the quality of our work, and perform to the highest standards	**SP3.** Develop effective strategies which improve outcomes and deliver them in the most efficient way	**SP4.** Recruit, develop and retain a high-performing children's workforce	**SP5.** Strengthen our partnerships, drive system leadership & put children at the heart of everything Wokingham does
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	SP1.1) Develop a sustainable future model and design of children's service SP1.2) Embed our models of early intervention and prevention, including Early Help, Edge of Care and Emotional Wellbeing SP1.3) Continue to develop and embed an effective approach to tackling exploitation SP1.4) Embed innovative models of support for CWD, SEND and Inclusion	SP2.1) Continue to drive improvements in performance & practice standards SP2.2) Set challenging goals for all our services, and continually challenge ourselves to be the best we can be SP2.3) Target our business change and continuous improvement activities	SP3.1) Ensure our strategies have impact and focus on delivering better outcomes SP3.2) Continuously improve our ways of working, pathways & processes SP3.3) Strengthen our data and information management SP3.4) Work in an agile and flexible way to help manage demand SP3.5) Make intelligent decisions about how we best manage risks & financial resources	SP4.1) Refresh and reinvigorate our approach to recruitment SP4.2) Invest in and support our staff to grow in their roles and capabilities, and accelerate in their careers SP4.3) Strengthen retention & succession planning SP4.4) Responding successfully to prevailing and forecast changes in the job market SP4.5) Build effective and successful leaders	SP5.1) Strengthen the strategic focus and nature of our partnership working SP5.2) Deliver genuine coproduction at the strategic and individual level SP5.3) Drive a "one Wokingham" approach to improved outcomes for children, young people and families, across the council and the Wokingham area SP5.4) Strengthen our relationship with Schools to collectively improve outcomes for children and young people
LEADS	• AD Learning Achievement and Partnerships • AD Strategic and Operational Delivery	• AD Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Support • AD Safeguarding & Early Help	• AD Strategic and Operational Delivery • AD Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Support	• AD Safeguarding and Early Help • AD Learning Achievement and Partnerships	• AD Strategic and Operational Delivery • Additional Lead TBC
PROGRAMME SUPPORT: Viki Elliot-King (Programme and Project Management); Jo Jolly (Programme and Project Management); Matthew Booth (Programme and Project Management) + Project Managers and Project Support as required and as per Business Case					

TITLE	**SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme (SEND IIP) Update**
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Provide Members with an overview of progress with delivery of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme (SEND IIP)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members of the Committee:

- **Note and discuss** progress with the delivery of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Purpose of the SEND IIP is to deliver the local area SEND Strategy 0-25 (2021-24).

The Strategy is a local area, partnership strategy. Multi-agency members of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Board (SEND IIP) play a leading role in ensuring the goals and objectives of the SEND Strategy are successfully achieved.

The work of the SEND IIP is coproduced with key stakeholders across the local area, including strategic partners across education, health, social care, and the voluntary, community and charity sector, and parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.

The SEND IIP:

- Focuses on delivering the four strategic priorities set out in the SEND Strategy, and key actions to achieve the vision of improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families;
- Takes a strategic multiagency approach to successfully addressing complex challenges such as the need to improve outcomes in the context of significant increases in demands, and sustained pressures on the financial and staffing resources available to local public services in Wokingham;
- Responds directly to key requirements set out in inspections and performance reviews by Ofsted, CQC and DfE
- Drives an ambitious programme of delivery over the coming years, which will improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable children and young people in the Borough; help deliver on the Council's commitments to deliver excellence for all children, young people and families in Wokingham, and help to strengthen the sustainability and viability of SEND services in the coming years.

The SEND IIP meets quarterly to review the progress made by its four Working Groups, which meet monthly to drive on-the-ground improvements to services and support for children and young people with SEND.

Background

As a Council we want to make sure we deliver excellent services for children and young people with SEND and their families, enabling them to access the support they need to achieve the best possible outcomes. The Council understands that needs and the types of support required to address them differ considerably from one child or young person to another, so its Strategy for children and young people must address a broad range of challenges and be comprehensive enough to ensure all children and young people with SEND receive the right type and level of support at the right time.

The SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme (SEND IIP) was established to deliver the SEND Strategy 0-25 (2021-24). The aspiration set out the SEND Strategy 0-25 is that Wokingham is a great place for children and young people with SEND to grow up. There are already several good services and support locally for children and young people with SEND in Wokingham and their families. There is a good range of public and privately funded resources for Wokingham children and young people with SEND. Parents and Carers of children and young people with SEND in Wokingham benefit from an extremely active and engaged Parent Carer Forum, as well as advocacy, advice and support from outstanding independent, voluntary, community and charity sector organisations.

However, like many local areas, Wokingham faces several challenges which need to be addressed in the coming years in order to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND – and the SEND IIP aims to address these.

For example, the needs of children and young people are changing and increasing in the context of sustained pressures on public finances. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is already being felt significantly in terms of additional pressures on funding for local public services and dramatic shifts in the way that services are provided, which present further challenges for improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Over the years, pressures on funding for SEND support have increased significantly. Increases in demand and the challenges of meeting needs locally has driven increases in placements for children and young people outside Wokingham, which has put additional pressure on available funding. Although investments have been made in strengthening local provision (including expansion of Special provision in the Borough) and further investments are set to follow in the coming years, costs of placements in the Independent and Non-Maintained Sector and with travel assistance for children and young people with SEND accessing education out of borough are significant and unsustainable at their current rate. Trend data show that the demand for SEND support in Wokingham is increasing. Over the last few years there has been a significant upward trend in the numbers of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and numbers of children and young people requiring SEN support in schools.

There have been notable increases in demand for support in relation to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) in particular.

The numbers of younger children (aged 7-11) requiring some form of SEN support has increased significantly over the last three years, partly as a result of changing demographics and needs, and partly as a result of better assessments and more successful early identification and prevention. Strategic partners across Wokingham are committed to putting better outcomes for children and young people with SEND at the

heart of everything they do; they work collaboratively through the SEND IIP to achieve this.

The SEND IIP is also designed to continue to strengthen coproduction and engagement with families. The SEND IIP has a specific workstream focused on coproduction, and each of the 4 Working Groups has representatives from parents and carers via the Wokingham Parent Carer Forum (SEND Voices Wokingham).

The SEND IIP is also focused not just on improving SEND services and outcomes, but also on addressing the financial challenges that arise mainly from demand increasing at a significantly faster place than supply of support and services and available resources. Working Group 4 (described further below) seeks to address these complex challenges through effective resource and performance management, and evidence-based commissioning.

Future challenges and horizon scanning

As the SEND IIP continues to deliver, it is increasingly looking ahead to future challenges, and provides a platform for strategic decision-making about how to address complex issues on the horizon – for example, the implications of the recent government Green Paper on SEND (Right Help, Right Place, Right Time) – which amongst other things calls for SEND Boards to be established in all areas to drive improvements in the SEND system; and the Education White Paper which has significant implications for Education provision, including provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. In addition, a new inspection and regulatory framework for SEND is expected to be implemented soon; the SEND IIP will be a crucial space for working through the implications of this and ensuring an efficient and effective response to new inspection requirements is in place.

Analysis of Issues

The SEND IIP aims to successfully address the key challenges and issues in relation to SEND identified above.

Levels of demand for support in relation to SEND have increased significantly over the past three years. The number of children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Wokingham has risen significantly in recent years. While the main driver of this relates to the extension of duties brought about by the Children & Families Act 2014, this comes at a time when the local population is also on the increase. Data underpinning the SEND Strategy 0-25 indicates that funded ECHPs increased by 8%, whilst the local population has grown by an estimated 4%. On the basis of this trajectory, it is predicted that over the coming years the number of children and young people with EHCPs is likely to increase significantly, as is the proportion of the school population with an EHCP.

Needs have continued to grow in relation to certain types of SEND and SEND-related issues, in particular Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), certain types of Learning Disability (LD) and needs in relation to Social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH). Practitioners also report that complexity of need is also increasing, as an increasing number of children and young people may require multiple types of support relating to several different types of need. Demand for SEND support in mainstream educational settings below the thresholds required for EHCPs has also grown substantially over the past three years, particularly in relation to SEMH.

SEND IIP addressing issues identified through inspections and formal progress reviews

The Spring 2019 joint inspection of Wokingham's local area approach to support for children and young people with SEND found that although there were some key areas of strength in terms of service planning and delivery, there were several areas for improvement, including:

1. Wokingham needs a clearly communicated and co-produced SEND Strategy and accompanying action plan, which are shared and understood across education, health and care, and which are focused on improving the outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
2. The timeliness and quality of EHCPs needs to improve
3. Co-production at the strategic level to inform effective co-production at all other levels is lacking and needs focused development
4. The quality of management information to inform accurate evaluation and energise service improvement needs to improve
5. Joint working and joined up thinking and delivery between professionals across education, health and social care needs to be strengthened
6. Successful transitions to adulthood also requires focused improvement in Wokingham.

The SEND IIP drove significant performance improvement in each of these areas, and in an inspection Revisit in Spring 2021, inspectors determined that sufficient progress had been made in 5 of the 6 areas set out in the Written Statement of Action. In one area – transitions to adulthood – Wokingham Borough was asked to prepare a separate "Accelerated Progress Plan" (APP) to drive multiagency work to improve transitions outcomes for all children and young people with SEND.

A recent formal review of the SEND IIP's progress with improving transitions support and outcomes found that good progress had been made across all areas of the APP, however further progress is required in order to demonstrate the impact on outcomes for children and young people arising from the improvements made over the past six months; engagement with mainstream education needs to be strengthened and clarified; and members of the SEND IIP need to continue to focus on improving transitions for all children and young people with SEND, not just those making transition from children's to adult social care. The next formal review of progress against the APP relating to transitions will be in January 2023.

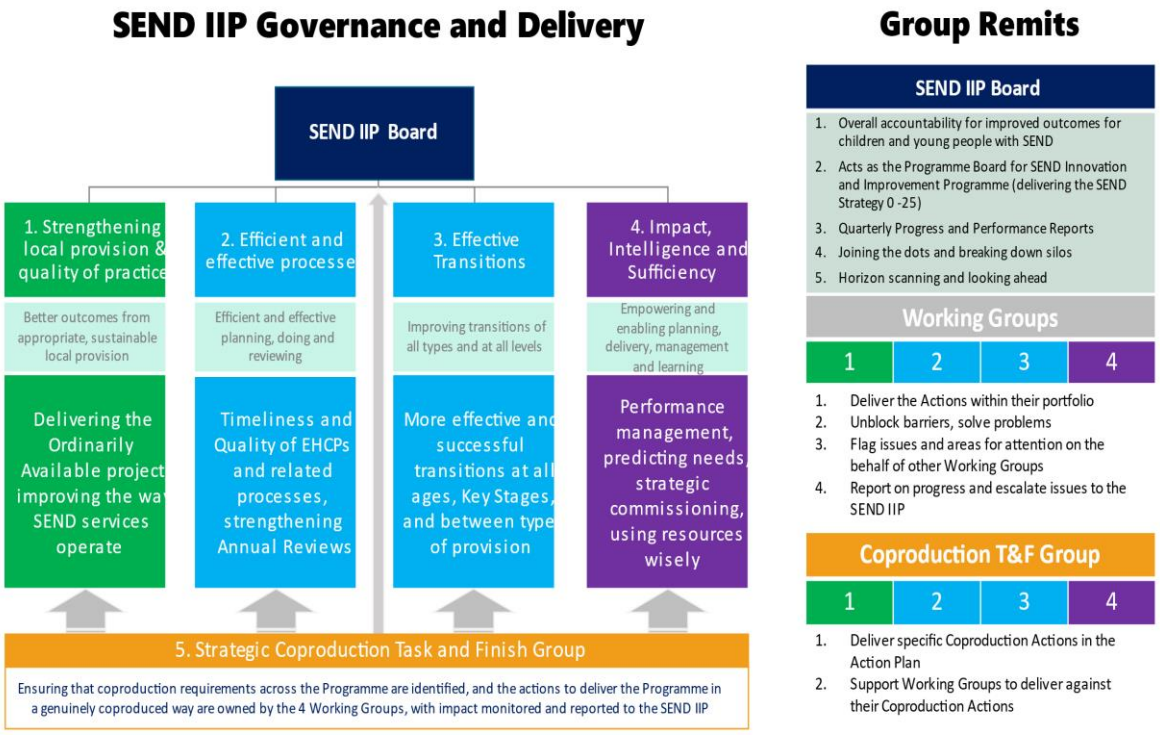
Financial challenges

Several complex financial challenges arising from the increases in and changing nature of demand for support for children and young people with SEND. These are explored in greater detail in the "Financial Implications" Section of this report.

SEND IIP Working Groups

The SEND IIP delivers the goals and aims of the SEND Strategy through Four Working Groups, which mirror the Priorities set out in the SEND Strategy. These Groups are supported by the Coproduction Task and Finish Group. These arrangements are set out in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Governance Arrangements for SEND IIP



Working Group 1 (delivering Priority 1): Build local provision to better meet local needs.

- Improving the sufficiency and consistency of local SEND provision
- Defining consistent universal offer and “ordinarily available” provision in education settings
- Establishing the future direction and strategy for inclusion and support offer in mainstream settings
- Improving the value for money (effectiveness and cost) of resource base provision
- Defining the future direction and strategy for in-borough special provision
- Focusing on gaps / issues of concern to parents, carers, children and young people: e.g. mental health and transport services

Working Group 2 (delivering Priority 2): Delivered through an efficient, effective and well-managed system

- Strengthening “transitions” of all types – into adulthood, between mainstream and special, between school years, “managed moves”
- Embed a consistent graduated approach across Wokingham
- Early intervention, prevention and forward planning is embedded in assessment and decision making
- Strengthening the timeliness, quality and effectiveness of assessments to reflect the points above
- Make it easier for parents and carers to engage with services

Working Group 3 (delivering Priority 3): Real coproduction embedded at all levels of planning and delivery

- Drive meaningful coproduction at a strategic and individual level
- Strengthen genuine partnership between professionals, children, young people, parents and carers in the way services are planned, delivered and reviewed
- Effective implementation of the SEND Coproduction Charter, with systematic reviews to ensure change is happening on the ground
- Consistently effective approaches to evaluation and management of service user feedback

Working Group 4 (delivering Priority 4): Enabled through intelligence and strategic commissioning

- Strengthen quality and use of data and evidence-led planning
- Develop a single shared view of local needs across the area
- Genuinely strategic joint commissioning
- Early intervention and prevention central to commissioning
- Strengthen the focus on outcomes / impact on people's lives in performance management, and management of implementation of the SEND Strategy

Managing Delivery: Highlight Reports on Progress
Working Groups meet monthly to drive delivery against the key actions for which they are responsible. Highlight reports are presented to the SEND IIP Board, which meets quarterly to:

- Discuss progress since last meeting, and priorities for the forthcoming meeting
- Discuss key issues arising which require multi-agency discussion and agreement
- Take key decisions relating to improvements for services and support for children and young people with SEND
- Manage risks associated with delivery of the programme
- Horizon scan and look ahead to any challenges and upcoming issues relating to SEND which Wokingham needs to tackle as a local area

In order to provide Members with additional detail of key activities currently prioritised by the SEND IIP, and additional detail on the focus of each of the key Working Groups in most recent months and the coming period, APPENDIX 1 provides the most recent pack of Highlight Reports reviewed at the July meeting of the SEND IIP.

Managing Delivery: Refreshed SEND Dashboard (currently in development)
In addition to comprehensive Highlight Reports to the SEND IIP on a quarterly basis, Working Group 4 is currently updating and developing a comprehensive SEND Dashboard to demonstrate the impact of the SEND IIP's work on Key Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures.

To note, Outcome Measures are one of several key sets of information to enable stakeholders across the local area, and service users, to monitor impact on outcomes arising from SEND IIP delivery. Outcome Measures have been discussed previously with key stakeholders with support from the Council for Disabled Children (CDC). Those

discussed to date are based around “I Statements”, with clearly measurable indicators attached to each statement. The “I Statements” are:

1. I am physically and mentally as healthy as I can be
2. I am happy
3. I feel supported
4. I feel safe
5. I am included and active in my local community
6. I am hopeful for the future
7. I am as independent as I can be
8. My family and/or the people who care for me are supported.

Feedback received from stakeholders during the consultation period and at the time of writing indicates that whilst the success measures included in the SEND Strategy should include some Outcome Measures, these are not necessarily appropriate for *all* children and young people with SEND (e.g. very young children, children and young people who do not communicate verbally), and on their own are not necessarily sufficient to measure and assess the impact of the SEND IIP. For these reasons success measures in the final SEND Dashboard will include a refreshed set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to measure delivery against statutory requirements and service standards (e.g. performance measures related to the timeliness and quality of EHCP assessments; complaints received and numbers of tribunals).

Once the Dashboard has been completed and signed off by the SEND IIP, performance against KPIs and Outcome Measures will be monitored and reviewed by Working Group 4 and then reported to the SEND IIP on a quarterly basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- **Note and discuss** progress with the delivery of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

However, there are several financial challenges arising from the increases in and changing nature of demand for support for children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers. In summary the challenges arise from issues which affect Wokingham, but which are common to local areas across the country include:

a) Sustained pressures on the High Needs Block funding available to the Council to address the growing and changing demands for SEND services and support
b) Sustained pressures on local public service partners' budgets and resources to address local challenges in relation to SEND
c) Challenges around sufficiency of local SEND provision to meet growing levels of demand, driving the use of out of borough and Independent Non-Maintained Sector provision, particularly in relation to special provision and post-16 provision
d) Market and cost management challenges relating to costs of provision particularly in terms of Independent and Non-Maintained Sector provision and some inflationary pressures
e) Complexity of joint strategic commissioning and a complex commissioner and provider landscape; challenges around aligning numerous strategic priorities driving commissioning across the Wokingham and Berkshire West area

In the Summer of 2019 Wokingham was one of 32 local authorities required to submit a deficit management plan to DfE in relation to High Needs Block (HNB) funding. Challenges around developing and delivering this plan include significant increases in demand and rising costs for local settings.

The current forecast in-year deficit for the HNB is £4.3m, which represents 17% of available funding for the year. The cumulative DSG deficit projected to the 31st March 2023 is currently £14.5m. Costs and activity are regularly reviewed to ensure that any immediate and short-term opportunities to reduce budget pressure are explored.

However, in terms of ensuring longer term financial viability, the SEND IIP has a key role to play in addressing challenges around the resources available to deliver and improve SEND Services in Wokingham. The SEND IIP will play a vital role in helping to address pressures on HNB funding and other financial resources required to deliver the actions and commitments set out in the Strategy.

Some key actions included in the SEND IIP's work programme which will help to achieve this include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. More effective demand modelling and forecasting, to ensure the best possible services are in place to help manage demand in coming years
2. More effective activity and financial reporting, as a result of better systems and information management, and closer joint working between the Children's Services Finance Team and SEND professionals
3. More effective joint commissioning with other agencies including Health partners (e.g. in relation to a range of Integrated Therapies for children and young people such as speech and language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy), and taking advantage of efficiencies and economies of scale from commissioning some SEND services in partnership with other agencies and/or neighbouring local areas - where there is a clear value for money benefit to Wokingham residents

4. Several actions relating to a substantial review of the use of the Independent and Non-Maintained Sector, to reduce dependency on out of borough provision and ensure the best possible value for money is delivered through use of independent and non-maintained provision
5. Implementation of the "Ordinarily Available" project in Wokingham, designed to ensure a common standard of SEND support provision is available across Wokingham schools, and that a greater proportion of Wokingham children and young people with SEND needs have their needs met within local, mainstream education
6. A substantial review of Resource Base provision to ensure a viable financial model is in place to deliver the right SEND support locally to help ensure that SEND needs are met as far as possible in-borough and within mainstream education (this work is aligned with the "Ordinarily Available" project summarised above)
7. The focus in the Strategy on building local provision will also help to drive reductions in the costs of Home to School Transport and Travel Assistance associated with transportation of children and young people with SEND out of borough to access appropriate education placements
8. Review of key funding models used by the local authority to ensure sustainable funding models are in place for key SEND services in the coming years – e.g. a review of the Foundry funding Model, to help strengthen outreach provision, provision for post-16 pupils who require ongoing support, provision for re-engagement of children missing from education, and some specialist provision for primary pupils with SEMH and secondary pupils with ASD, and exploration of the development of on-site Alternative Provision for KS4 pupils in vocational and work-related learning
9. Improvements in local special provision – for example in relation to the new DfE-funded Free School at Winnersh Farm for children with Autism which will serve Reading and Wokingham, which will offer an additional 75 places to Wokingham children and young people

Delivery of a comprehensive SEND Sufficiency project, involving a comparison of a comprehensive assessment of current and forecast needs with an assessment of currently available provision, for the purposes of identifying gaps and areas to be addressed in the coming years; development of a clear viable funding model designed to ensure that needs are addressed and demand is managed within available resources.

Cross-Council Implications

The aims, objectives and work programme within the SEND IIP have significant implications for a range of services within Children's Services, in particular Education and Social Care. In terms of the impact of the SEND IIP on other Council Departments, objectives around provision of information, advice and guidance for families; coproduction with Parent Carers; and communication and engagement with families on SEND-related issues, these all have implications for the Council's communications functions, and members of the communications teams have been engaged in the process of promoting the work of the SEND IIP and specific projects within its remit. Issues such as Home to School Transport (HST) for children and young people with SEND also require engagement and joint working between Children's Services, Corporate functions such as Finance, and Place and Growth. Although work relating to HST is governed separately from the SEND IIP, stakeholders within the SEND IIP are closely connected with this work and outcomes from discussions within the SEND IIP will help steer and inform some aspects of the work on HST moving forward. Large-

scale commissioning activities within the SEND IIP portfolio, such as strategic development of in-borough SEND provision, have implications for the Council's capital programme, and require effective joint working between SEND IIP stakeholders and colleagues from Place and Growth. In all cases where the SEND IIP's programme impacts on other Council Departments and services, engagement takes place outside and around SEND IIP meetings to ensure appropriate joint working and information sharing is in place.

Public Sector Equality Duty

There are no recommendations for decisions arising from this report, so there are no direct Equality Impacts arising. However, to note, an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the SEND Strategy 0-25, which is now delivered by the SEND IIP.

Outcomes from this Equality Impact Assessment are summarised in the points below. Some of the Equality issues raised in the initial EIA have been used to guide discussion and strategic decision-making in SEND IIP meetings, including:

- The clear potential for the Strategy to impact on groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (including children and young people aged 0-25 with disabilities)
- The potential for positive differential impacts on the lives of children and young people 0-25 with disability which would arise from successful delivery of the priorities and key actions set out within the Strategy
- Outcomes from the Needs Analysis included within the SEND Strategy indicate that the needs of specific cohorts of children and young people with SEND in Wokingham require particular attention and action; commitments in Priority 1 of the Strategy are designed in part to ensure these needs are met as far as possible through local provision; commitments in Priority 4 of the Strategy are designed to ensure this is delivered in an equitable and financially viable way
- Commitments in the Strategy to coproduction in design and delivery of services for children and young people with SEND are designed to ensure that the SEND Strategy has a positive impact on outcomes for some of the most vulnerable groups within the borough; governance and performance management arrangements are designed to help ensure that those commissioning and delivering services for children and young people with SEND are aware of the impact on outcomes, and are able to take the actions needed to ensure the Strategy achieves its vision for improved outcomes.

Any key decisions proposed by the SEND IIP which require Member approval will be presented with the appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

Priority 1 within the SEND Strategy (delivered by SEND IIP Working Group 1) focuses on building better local SEND provision. Achievement of this objective would reduce the demand for out-of-borough placements, and the transport provision associated with this. In the main the transport the Council provides is in the form of motor vehicles: reducing demand for Home to School Transport and Travel Assistance is therefore likely to reduce motor vehicle emissions, and contribute to the Council's commitment to address the Climate Emergency.

List of Background Papers
Appendix 1: Highlight Reports from July 2022 SEND IIP

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SEND IIP Programme Board Delivery Update

11.07.22

Agenda

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. Highlight Report Updates (including WG4 Dashboard Update (DR)
3. Local Offer Development
4. Harm Outside the Home Strategy
5. AOB

Progress Overview this Period

Good progress has been made across the SEND IIP Programme, especially on the 'Accelerated Progress Plan' (APP), but largely outside Working Group meetings and driven through specific meetings focusing on specific issues / actions within the Programme. Working Group sessions for 'Early Years Transitions' have commenced and are identifying potential projects and Co-Production has agreed a schedule of projects

Significant challenges remain, arising from delays to opening of Oak Tree School, with implications for management of High Needs Block (HNB) funding. However, dialogue with DfE and colleagues in Reading have enabled us to develop options and mitigations – all work in progress and subject to further work and discussions. The Local Offer requires review, and a business case will be presented for discussion

Forthcoming period brings challenges in terms of deliverables across the programme – including signing-off progress of the APP with the DfE (13th July), developing the Data Dashboard and next phases of work in relation to addressing HNB challenges

Highlight Report – WG1

Working Group	**1: Strengthening local provision and improving the quality of local practice**	**Overall Status RAG**	**On track**	**Report Date Completed By**	1/7/22 Matthew Booth & Charles Blake	**Purpose of Report**	**Decision**	
							Update	✓
							Support	
Objectives and Deliverables	• Ordinarily Available & Right Time Right Place roll out • The future of information, advice and guidance (including future of the Local Offer) • Training and development, including online training	**Overall Status**	Good progress has been made, with the Transport, SEND Restructure and Y9 AR reviews complete.					

Decisions / Support required from SEND IIP

None.

Delivered following the previous SEND IIP	Planned Delivery by next SEND IIP
Ordinarily Available • Undertaking consultation with schools regarding the WBC response on SEND Review • Coordinating WBC response (WBC will be responding from an officer point of view and sharing with Schools, it will not be a joint response from schools and WBC) **Transport Review** • Business case for the Liaison officer not supported • Monthly Transport Panels ongoing, remaining successful **SEND Service restructure** • May 2022 review completed • Update on the day (currently interview stage) • New Business case being developed to focus on increasing the number of case officers **Annual Reviews** • Review of 80 Y9 meetings with schools complete, report in draft form **Outreach** • Working with Commissioning regarding the SLA for Foundry College • Review Sufficient Offer for Wokingham Mainstream Schools and funding mechanisms ongoing **Inclusion Group ENF** • Regular meetings for vulnerable learners ongoing, discussing accessibility and creating a matrix for accessing funds **Local Offer (WG2 and WG1 working together with WG2 leading)** • See WG2 & Co-production	**Ordinarily Available** • Complete WBC response to SEND Review Green Paper **Transport Review (complete)** • Ongoing monthly Transport Panels **SEND Service restructure (main restructure complete)** • Continued Business Case development for case officers **Outreach** • Addington developing offer with funding from the ENF (HNB) • Review Sufficient Offer for Wokingham Mainstream Schools and funding mechanisms ongoing • Link into WG3 Early Years **Annual Reviews** • Finalise Y9 report **Inclusion Group ENF** • Review and explain process development and communication needed to stakeholders **Local offer** • See WG2 **Capita 1** • Launch procurement on Capita 1

Highlight Report – WG2

Working Group	**2: Effective Processes**	**Overall Status RAG**	**On track**	**Report Date Completed By**	1/7/22 Matthew Booth & Charles Blake	**Purpose of Report**	**Decision**	✓
							Update	✓
							Support	✓
Objectives and Deliverables	• Process for roll-out and embedding the Ordinarily Available • Interfaces: between Ordinarily Available and EHCPs, between Working Groups • Strengthening process around Annual Reviews	**Overall Status**	Good progress has been made reviewing transition pathways, communications and the Local Offer.					

Decisions / Support required from SEND IIP

Support from SIIB is needed to develop the Local Offer considering both the IT platform and resources /staffing required

Delivered	Planned Delivery by next SEND IIP
Quality • Finalised communications matrix • Identified options for improving the existing Local Offer and held meetings with neighbouring councils to understand resourcing requirements • Created Local Offer Business Case (to be discussed, see Appendix 1 – Local Offer Business Case) • Y9 Annual Review, review of 80 sessions completed (link to WG1) **Transitions** • Continued input into Transitions Pathway mapping, to help improve efficiency and forward planning • Additional tool created to map transitions in SEND Assessment Service **Timeliness / workflow** • Ongoing development of the tender for the replacement for Capita (with the replacement system targeted for implementation in 2-3 years) • SEND Needs Assessment review underway (with co-production group) • Annual Review paperwork review underway (with co-production group and MS schools)	**Quality** • Review outcome of Health's analysis of cases know/not known and consider implications • Further development of the Local Offer Business Case following SEND IIP and submission if agreed **Transitions** • Continued input into Transitions Pathway mapping, to help improve efficiency and forward planning **Timeliness / workflow** • Ongoing assessment of obtaining feedback from the EHCP process can be improved • Continue reviewing draft EOTAS policy • Continue Needs Assessment process review • Continue Annual Review paperwork review **Capita 1** Note progress on replacement Capita 1 system

Highlight Report – WG3 14+

Working Group	**3: Effective Transitions**	**Overall Status RAG**	**On track**	**Report Date Completed By**	1/7/22 Matthew Booth & Charles Blake	**Purpose of Report**	**Decision**	
							Update	✓
							Support	
Objectives and Deliverables	• Clarifying the remit / the language we use / the people we need • Building on good work, addressing the gaps • Structuring to deliver EY-Primary, 14-15 & Y6-Y7	**Overall Status**	Significant work on the Accelerated Progress Plan has been completed meeting many of the required standards, further work being undertaken to drive forward remaining items.					

Decisions / Support required from SEND IIP

None requested.

Delivered following the previous SEND IIP	Planned Delivery by next SEND IIP
Accelerate Progress Plan 14-25 • Prepared for the upcoming 13th July DfE 'final' meeting • Gathered suite of evidence for the upcoming DfE APP meeting • Completed updated Approaching Adulthood Policy • RBFT updated on hospital transitions journey and highlighted new mapping exercise and highlighted the new 'Clinical Services Strategy' launched in May 2022. • Identified continued improvement in 'NEET' and 'Not Known' data, currently 3rd lowest in the region, with only 6% 'Not Knowns' • Completed analysis of 80 Y9 Annual reviews (noted WG1 and 2) • Continue developing a version of the 'Preparing for Adulthood' guide for professional use and consider against the PfA distributed to schools and CYP • Identified improvements in '14+ LD Health Check' data from 62% to 65% for financial year 21/22 • Identified training completed by RBFT on 14+ Health checks • Optalis commissioned new videos to evidence feedback from children and young people that have been through the transitions system • Agreed approach to obtaining feedback from CYP and parent carers during the transitions process at three stages, in addition noted the IT available to WBC to ensure this is viable. • SEND Voices Wokingham launched a new survey that will be reviewed by the group	**Accelerate Progress Plan 14-25** • Report to the DfE 13th July to sign-off APP progress • Continue developing a version of the 'Preparing for Adulthood' guide for professional use. • Identify training needs across Education, Health and Care for 14-25 Transitions • Link into health regarding the ongoing Hospital Journey mapping work with RBFT • Continue monitoring NEET and Not Known and seek opportunities with the service • Outline implications of the analysis work on Y9 reviews • Consider the results of the SEND Voices Wokingham survey • Consider the results of the Say YES Forum survey • Further develop a proposed 'Transitions Feedback Questionnaire' • Review potential key measures to include in the to be developed and included in the Transitions Feedback Questionnaire

Highlight Report – WG3 Early Years

Working Group	**3: Effective Transitions (EY)**	**Overall Status RAG**	**On track**	**Report Date Completed By**	1/7/22 Matthew Booth & Charles Blake	**Purpose of Report**	**Decision**	
							Update	✓
							Support	
Objectives and Deliverables	• Clarifying the remit / the language we use / the people we need • Building on good work, addressing the gaps • Structuring to deliver EY-Primary	**Overall Status**	The group recently formed and is identifying key areas and the work of internal and external staff in transitions.					

Decisions / Support required from SEND IIP

None requested.

Delivered following the previous SEND IIP	Planned Delivery by next SEND IIP

• The Group assessed and outlined the roles, issues and remits of those involved in early years to ensure a clear understanding going forward.
 	
• The Group identified 25 issues across early years, and through a review process considering addressability and impact, focused on 14 to be considered at the next phase (see Appendix 2), including but not limited to:
  • Need for greater commissioning focus on EY
  • Need for data to feed into commissioning
  • Key vacant roles (Early Years Advisor)
  • Early Years teams having low capacities to deliver services (Portage, SENDIASS, Early Years and Childcare team +)
  • Ordinarily Available engagement
  • Variability of provision across settings
  • Visibility of services to parent carers
  • Lack of specialist provision in EY in MS and special schools
 	
• Identified the Borough Education Partnership as delivering key elements
• Commissioning procured a new resource to complete data analysis and push forward commissioning in EY focusing on Short Breaks.
• CWD confirmed Short Break Steering Group was being reinstated and will be meeting in July 22.
	• Review, prioritise and form projects identifying actions owners for the 14 identified issues.
	• Continue tracking progress on short commissioning in EY and link into Coproduction group (links to above).
	• Continue link into Short Break Steering Group.

Highlight Report – WG4

Working Group	**4: Impact, intelligence and sufficiency**	**Overall Status RAG**	**On course with some key deliverables but significant pressures on HNB**	**Report Date Completed By**	1/7/22 Matthew Booth & Charles Blake	**Purpose of Report**	**Decision** **Update** ✓ **Support**	
Objectives and Deliverables	• Assigning owners to actions • Progressing sufficiency at pace and aligning work across SEND IIP to meet budget challenges • Next steps around data and dashboard	**Overall Status**	Initial 'Data Dashboard' created with further work needing to be complete to shape this into the final product.					

Decisions / Support required from SEND IIP

None requested.

Delivered following the previous SEND IIP	Planned Delivery by next SEND IIP
Dashboard • Completed initial Data Dashboard with available information from Capita 1 • Identified and reviewed non-Capita 1 data sources to include in the Dashboard (NEET & NK + Health data) • Continued reviewing the 'Data Dashboard' including predicting future needs (as indicated by data and analysis) and identified a set of questions that the Dashboard needs to answer. **School Provision and Resource Base** • Continued discussions with Planning on the new school provision • Continued to implement outcomes from the Resource Base review • Reviewed outcomes from INM with Intensive Support Team and check any interactions with project for example Ordinarily Available	• Continue development of the 'Data Dashboard' considering available information from varying sources and key questions • Identify and agree process to create Dashboard with relevant teams

Highlight Report – Co-Production Task and Finish Group

Co-Production Task and Finish Group		Overall Status RAG	On track	Report Date Completed By	1/7/22 Matthew Booth & Charles Blake	Purpose of Report	Decision	
							Update	✓
							Support	
Objectives and Deliverables	1. Deliver specific Coproduction Actions in the Action Plan 2. Support Working Groups to deliver against their Coproduction Actions	**Overall Status**	The Group has identified a set of specific projects and actions that benefit from additional co-production and have a planned schedule to deliver these outcomes.					

Decisions / Support required from SEND IIP

See WG2 re Local Offer.

Delivered following the previous SEND IIP	Planned Delivery by next SEND IIP

• Met with the Chairs of the 4 Working Groups to identify projects that could benefit from additional co-production. Initially outlined 8 projects of focus that run until March 2023:
  • **SEND Needs Assessment Process** – initial meeting held
  • **Annual Review process** – initial meeting held
  • **SEND Transport** – feedback in new academic year
  • **Local Offer** – ongoing meetings
  • **Outreach** – review in new academic year
  • **SEND Dashboard** – ongoing meetings with WG4
  • **SEND Strategy Update** – review in new academic year
  • **Short Breaks –** Steering Group reinstated see WG3 EY (managed under CWD)
• Identified potential opportunities that would be revisited in the new academic year:
  • **EOTAS Policy**
  • **WG1 - SEND Restructure**
  • **Inclusion Group**
  • **Working Group 3**
• Reviewed and agreed on the contents of the Co-production Charter and agreed to ensure new Members and officers were sighted
• Identified opportunity for the Say YES Forum to obtain feedback from CYP on the Green Paper and may identify new areas to focus on.
	• Continue progressing identified projects:
	  • **SEND Needs Assessment Process –** review of paperwork and available training
	  • **Annual Review process** – initial meeting held
	  • **Transport** – feedback in new academic year
	  • **Local Offer** – ongoing meetings
	  • **Outreach** – review in new academic year
	  • **SEND Dashboard** – ongoing meetings with WG4
	  • **SEND Strategy Update** – review in new academic year
	  • **Short breaks** – hold new steering group meeting
	• Review and consider feedback from parent carers from SEND Voices Wokingham (survey)
	• Review and consider feedback rom children and young people through the Say YES Forum and other Me2Club activities

Key Risks and Issues

Programme wide risks and issues

- Owners for actions and on the ground capacity to deliver change, short-term capacity pressures (e.g., COVID, Ofsted)
- Challenges to make the links across groups and areas of work, manage the interdependencies
- Forward planning and space to think creatively required for effective co-production
- Managing resources (including time) and addressing budget pressures whilst delivering improvement and innovation
- Communications Plan delivery requires focused attention and needs to align with other “on the ground” improvements

Working Group risks and issues

WG1: Strengthening local provision and improving the quality of local practice	Local Offer is currently not configured to meet all the goals originally identified, is insufficiently resourced compared to our neighbours and may lead to push back from stakeholders Challenges to ensure that support to improve the effectiveness of processes is directed at the most important / value-adding areas: a mitigation of this issue has been to identify areas of responsibility Working Groups across the programme which could benefit from targeted support to improve processes (e.g., Annual Reviews, Transitions).
WG2: Effective Processes	
WG3: Effective Transitions (14+ only)	Main issues are around the scale and complexity of the Transitions agenda (particularly at all stages and ages). Challenges to meet expectations around delivery of the APP within required timescales. Some issues reported around ensuring all Early Years settings are able to successfully engage in training, support, information sharing. Some settings experience challenges around appropriate financial resources; burden of paperwork; having sufficient information around key issues and future direction.
WG4: Impact, intelligence and sufficiency	Challenges around mitigating impacts on HNB expenditure in the light of delays to the Oaktree opening. The ongoing need to balance longer term strategic thinking around investment / invest to save, with shorter-term objectives around addressing pressures on resources (e.g., High Needs Block). Progress with performance monitoring and management has been made; regular systematic reports regarding “on the ground impact” is still in progress.
Co-Production Task and Finish Group	Identified a gap for commissioning in the early years and the need for data to be analysed in order to effectively commission services. A new project was established, and resource obtained, but the market is lacking in providers for Short Breaks and may prove difficult to meet the needs of users.

Delivery arrangements from April 2021

Meets quarterly

SEND Improvement Board

1. Strengthening local provision & quality of practice	2. Efficient and effective processes	3. Effective Transitions	4. Impact, Intelligence and Sufficiency
Better outcomes from appropriate, sustainable local provision	Efficient and effective planning, doing and reviewing	Improving transitions of all types and at all levels	Empowering and enabling planning, delivery, management and learning
Delivering the Ordinarily Available project, improving the way SEND services operate	Timeliness and Quality of EHCPs and related processes, strengthening Annual Reviews	More effective and successful transitions at all ages, Key Stages, and between types of provision	Performance management, predicting needs, strategic commissioning, using resources wisely

5. Strategic Coproduction Task and Finish Group

Ensuring that coproduction requirements across the Programme are identified, and the actions to deliver the Programme in a genuinely coproduced way are owned by the 4 Working Groups, with impact monitored and reported to the SEND IIP

Group Remits

SEND Improvement Board

1. Overall accountability for improved outcomes
2. Retained responsibility for WSoA delivery
3. Acts as the Programme Board for SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme
4. Quarterly Progress and Performance Reports
5. Joining the dots and breaking down silos
6. Horizon scanning and looking ahead

Working Groups

1	2	3	4

1. Deliver the Actions within their portfolio
2. Unblock barriers, solve problems
3. Flag issues and areas for attention on the behalf of other Working Groups
4. Report on progress and escalate issues to the SEND IIP

Coproduction T&F Group

1	2	3	4

1. Deliver specific Coproduction Actions in the Action Plan
2. Support Working Groups to deliver against their Coproduction Actions

Appendix 1 – Local Offer Business Case

Appendix 2 – WG3 EY Issue Tracker

Appendix 3 – Co-production Programme

TITLE	**Key Performance Indicators**
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 September 2022
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Children's Services performance indicators underpin the council's priorities and principles to focus on every child reaching their potential and looking after the vulnerable.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children's Services performance indicators be noted.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee means that the information reported against in each performance indicator relates to the position at the end of June 2022.

Background

A full report covering the broad scope of Children's Services is included in this report.

Analysis of Issues

Please see the report below.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION
The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	n/a		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
n/a

Cross-Council Implications
n/a

Public Sector Equality Duty
Please confirm that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken and if an equalities assessment has been completed or explain why an equalities assessment is not required.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*
Please state clearly what the impact of the decision being made would be on the Council's carbon neutral objective.

List of Background Papers
n/a

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Children's Services Dashboard

Quarter 1 2022-23

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Introduction

This report covers Children's Services performance during April, May and June 2022, which will be referred to as quarter one (Q1) throughout this report.

Dashboard Item 1 – Funded Education, Health & Care Plans

Measure	2020-21	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
Current EHCPs placed in borough (snapshot at end of period)	783	827	806	865	912	976	↑
Current EHCPs placed out of borough (snapshot at end of period)	416	437	462	511	514	507	↓
EHCPs issued within 20 weeks of the referral	75.1%	86.4%	87.7%	71.8%	69.0%	63.6%	↓

What does this show us?

The numbers of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) funded by Wokingham Borough Council where the children are placed in the borough has increased by 7% from last quarter. The total number of EHCPs between the same period last year and this quarter have risen by 17%.

The percentage of plans issued within the 20-week period has decreased from Q3 21-22.

What is the background to this?

The total number of requests during April to June 2022 is 115, slightly higher than between January to March 2022, when it was 105.

There have been delays in receiving information from other partners as a result of service capacity issues, combined with the increased volume in requests received. When information is not received on time, the timelines of the assessment process administered with SEND is restricted.

As Wokingham does not have a Further Education college, most of the post-16 cohort were placed in out of Borough provision.

What action is the service taking?

The service's focus remains on continuing to enhance the timeliness of EHC Plans. The SEND Team is proactively working with the partners to improve the information submission timescales.

What is the national context?

This quarter's timeliness is well above both the 2021 national average (57.9%) and that of statistical neighbours (57.89%).

Dashboard Item 2 – Early Help

Measure	2021-22	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
No. of referrals to Early Help	1474	449	314	362	349	489	↑
No. Early Help Assessments	1233	321	337	281	294	368	↑
Avg. length of time in days between referral and assessment completion	24	19	23	30	25	22	↓

What does this show us?

The number of Early Help referrals increased by 40% from the previous quarter and 9% from the same period last year. The number of assessments increased from the previous quarter by 25% and increased by 15% compared to the same period last year.

The average length of time taken to complete an assessment has improved since Q3 despite the increase in referrals and assessments.

What is the background to this?

There are no targets for the number of referrals received by Early Help, nor any for the number of assessments carried out, as they are considered on a case-by-case basis. According to the Children's Services Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating system for performance management, an average of 30 days or less between referral and assessment completion is on target (Green), 31 to 35 is Amber, and 36+ is of concern (Red).

What action is the service taking?

Early Help Service provides targeted support to the children, young people, and families at the stage of a problem first arising, to try to prevent the need for statutory intervention at a later point. The service will continue to carefully monitor demand, ensure there is capacity to address the increase of the demand, and further improve timeliness despite the increases in demand. A designated person is assigned to monitor cases on the waiting list and parents are kept informed.

What is the national context?

Comparative national figures are not available for Early Help activity and timeliness.

Dashboard Item 3 – Children's Social Care Front Door

Measure	2021-22	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
No. of Contacts progressed to Referral	1575	415	328	383	449	399	↓
% Of referrals to which are repeat referrals within 12 months	17.8%	14.7%	15.9.%	19.1%	20.9%	24.8%	↑
% Assessments completed within 45 working days	67.4%	70.6%	61.8%	69.9%	67.0%	68.6%	↑

What does this show us?

In Q1 2022-23, the referrals are reduced by 11.1% when compared to the previous quarter. There were 99 repeat referrals within 12 months out of 399 referrals.

Timeliness of assessments completed within 45 working days has increased. In Q1 267 out of 389 assessments were completed within 45 working days. In June 85.6% of the assessments completed were in timescale showing an improvement at the latter part of the quarter.

What is the background to this?

When an agency shares information with the local authority on a Multi-Agency Referral form, or a member of the public shares concerns about a child, this is considered a Contact. A Contact progresses to a Referral when a decision has been taken to complete an Assessment. There is no target for the number of Referrals to CSC as each Contact is individually assessed.

CSC aims for less than 20% of its referrals to be repeat referrals within 12 months and strives for 90% of assessments to be completed within 45 days. Re-referrals are above target this quarter despite the number of referrals in (Q1 22-23) being 11.1% lower than the previous quarter.

Re-Referrals are audited by the service if over target to reassure ourselves that appropriate services have been provided.

What action is the service taking?

The Service is reviewing the number of Contacts that have not progressed to Assessment to ensure that thresholds are being applied consistently. All assessments are being closely checked to ensure that those assessments approaching 45 days are completed within timescales where possible and the back log addressed. This can be evident as highlighted above in the June completion rate.

Given that the Service continues to see cases of increased complexity, it assesses and closely monitors them to ensure children receive the right help and support and therefore reduce the need for a second referral.

Service improvement plan has been successful in addressing timeliness of C&F Assessments which has now shown a considerable increase in performance over the last couple of months.

What is the national context?

The statistical neighbours and England averages in 2020-21 for assessments completed within 45 days are 89% and 87.6% respectively. The national average for repeat referrals within 12 months is 22.6% and the statistical neighbours 23.9%.

Dashboard Item 4 – Child Protection

Measure	2021-22	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
Children subject to CP Plans (snapshot at end of period)	164	169	166	160	164	135	↓
% Of children coming onto a CP plan for a second or subsequent time ever	20%	17.5%	27.6%	0.0%	32.3%	11.8%	↓
% Of child protection visits within timescale (10 working days)	74%	73%	71%	72%	77%	74%	↓

What does this show us?

The number of children on a Child Protection Plan (CPP) has significantly decreased this quarter and is lower than the figure for the same period last year.

There were 17 children who became subject to a CPP in Q1 2022-23 and 2 of these had a previous plan.

The proportion of CP visits occurring within timescales has reduced slightly in Q1 2022-23 to 74%.

What is the background to this?

Subject to thresholds, CSC places no limits on the number of children that can be made subject to a CPP.

CSC places great emphasis on preventing the need for children to return to a Protection Plan. The Service aims to have less than 19.5% of children starting the plan for a second time ever. Over the whole year in 2021-22, 20% of the children starting new plans had previously been the subject of a CP plan at some time in their life.

Wokingham sets itself a best-practice standard of carrying out each Child Protection visit within 10 working days of the previous visit. The service has a target of 80% of visits within this timescale.

What action is the service taking?

The Service will continue its work towards the timeliness targets and maintain its flexible approach in order to have the capacity to deal with demand as it rises or remains consistent.

We are concerned that the number of visits has dropped and there is work being underway to understand and address this.

What is the national context?

Wokingham's Child Protection Plans per 10,000 at the end of Q4 was 40.7, which is below the England average of 41.4 in 2021. Since 2019-20, the increase in number of children subject to CP Plans has placed Wokingham above our statistical neighbour's average of 32.75.

Across 2021-22 Wokingham's repeat referrals to CPP is 20% which is in line with the national average (22.1%) and statistical neighbours (21.53%).

Dashboard Item 5 – Children in Care

Measure	2021-22	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
No. children in care (snapshot at end of period)	136	112	113	119	136	135	↓
% visits to children in care within timescale	76%	83%	76%	76%	76%	77%	↑
% children in care who have more than 1 allocated social worker in 12m (snapshot at end of period)	25%	20%	34%	22%	25%	19%	↓

What does this show us?

There has been consistency in the percentage of visits to children in care taking place within timescale (326 out of the 422) visits carried out in Q1 were in timescale.

The percentage of children in care who have had more than one allocated worker in the previous 12 months has decreased since last quarter.

What is the background to this?

Wokingham's children in care figures are historically lower than those of statistical neighbours and regional averages, which reflects the boroughs' demographic, and our approach to only taking children into care when all other safe alternatives have been explored and found not viable.

The target is to have less than 10% of children allocated to more than one social worker in a twelve-month period. Whilst it is our ambition for this indicator to be as low as possible, we acknowledge that there will always be some occasions where a change of social worker will be in the best interests of the child.

What action is the service taking?

The number of visits carried out within timescale has increased quarter-on-quarter this year. CSC emphasises a child-focussed approach to social work; in some instances, visits will be allowed to go outside of timescale to ensure that children are visited by the same social worker to provide reassuring continuity in relationships and case planning.

Furthermore, greater weight is being placed on visits and their recording as part of the service's performance scrutiny so that the figures reflect the work carried out by social workers.

What is the national context?

The rate of Children in Care per 10,000 at the end of March 2021 is 67.0 for England, and 46.3 for statistical neighbours, with Wokingham rate being significantly lower at 34 in March 2022. If Wokingham was at the National average the number of looked after children would be 275.

Dashboard Item 6 – Care Leavers

Measure	2021-22	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
% of care leavers 'in touch' (snapshot at end of period)	99%	95%	96%	94%	99%	98%	↓
% of care leavers aged 18-24 "in touch" and who are NEET	34%	38%	30%	32%	34%	30%	↓
% of care leavers "in touch" in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of period)	97%	97%	100%	97%	97%	94%	↓

What does this show us?

The percentage of care leavers that remain in touch have decreased slightly with the Service often maintaining a good working relationship with those formerly in its care.

There has been a very slight decrease in the number of care leavers not in education, employment, or training - the number now at 26, a decrease from 30 in last quarter.

The percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation has also decreased slightly since last quarter.

What is the background to this?

The target is to stay in touch with at least 90% of care leavers, which continues to be achieved. Amongst the reasons for care leavers not being in touch with CSC are a simple refusal to engage with the Service and young people no longer needing the support provided by CSC.

The Service aims to have high levels of care leavers in education, employment, or learning. Despite the increasingly challenging economic situation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, Care Leaver employment, education and training figures have remained consistently high throughout 2021-22.

CSC endeavours to ensure at least 90% of care leavers are in suitable accommodation, which it continues to achieve.

What action is the service taking?

CSC will continue to place emphasis on maintaining good relations with care leavers so that they can receive all the support they need, particularly during the current challenging times.

The Service places great importance on the futures of the children for which it has responsibility, and addresses each care leaver's situation individually, helping them either re-engage with education or training or supporting them to find suitable employment opportunities where possible. Efforts in this have increased in response to the current economic situation.

Monthly NEET meetings are held and each young person who is NEET has an action plan to try to get them into employment or training. Many of the young people who are NEET are young parents or have experienced mental health which impacts on their availability to access employment or training.

The number of care leavers in unsuitable accommodation has increased over the course of this year. The number living independently and semi-independently has increased.

The increase in the use of semi- independent accommodation is attributed to increase in UASC over 16 and the opening of London Road.

Social Care and Housing work closely together to ensure our care leavers are provided with suitable accommodation. The joint housing panel for young people is now up and running.

What is the national context?

Nationally in March 2021, 95% of care leavers were in touch with their Local Authority; 41% of care leavers were NEET; and 88% were in suitable accommodation. Wokingham consistently performed above the bench marking averages.

Dashboard Item 7 – Children Missing from Home/Care

Measure	2021-22	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
Children missing from home	81	25	21	34	28	29	↓
% of return home interviews accepted (out of number of return home interviews required)	30%	53%	37%	39%	50%	33%	↓
% return home interviews carried out on time	32%	38%	60%	44%	33%	40%	↑
Children missing from care	16	2	3	14	11	8	↓
% of return home interviews accepted (out of number of return home interviews required)	18%	50%	33%	39%	47%	75%	↑
% return home interviews carried out on time	86%	100%	100%	44%	100%	33%	↓
Children missing from education (**not currently on a school roll**)**	7	14	22	12	8	9	↑
No. of permanent exclusions	8	x	x	4	7	x	↓

** Snapshot figure at the end of the period.
x small number suppressed to preserve confidentiality

What does this show us?

The number of children going missing from home or care (37) shows an increase in Q1 2022-23. These figures do not include children in care placed in Wokingham by other Local Authorities.

The percentage of return home interviews accepted (for children missing from home) shows how many interviews were accepted out of how many were required (6 acceptances out of 18 interviews required).

CSC aims to have 100% of Return Home Interviews (RHIs) taking place within timescale. The figures have increased in Q1 compared to Q4 and higher than the same period in 2020-21.

The percentage of return home interviews accepted (for children missing from care) shows how many interviews were accepted out of how many were required (3 acceptances out of 4 interviews required).

CSC aims to have 100% of Return Home Interviews (RHIs) taking place within timescale. The figures had increased significantly in the last quarter but has decreased in Q1. It is also lower than the same period in 2020-21

The number of children not currently on a school roll has increased in this quarter but significantly lower than the same period last year.

There have been 16 permanent exclusions in Wokingham schools in total for the whole year. The figures are not comparable as schools were operating under pandemic restrictions during the same period last year.

What is the background to this?

It can be difficult to persuade children who have gone missing to engage with a Return Home Interview (RHI), achieving the timeliness target of 100% is therefore difficult to reach. Regardless, CSC's emphasis on tackling child exploitation risks has led to a focus on RHIs. While not always within the timescale, every child that goes missing is interviewed about the motivations and reasons behind their leaving.

The number of children not currently on a school roll is in range in this quarter compared to the last quarter and significantly low compared to the same period last year. Admissions managed to find the school place for most of the children relocating to Wokingham which helped to keep the numbers in range.

What action is the service taking?

Children's Social Care works closely with the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the issue of child exploitation remains a focus. The Service is currently examining the problems and risks of child exploitation, working with neighbouring local authorities to gain insight and develop a joined-up approach.

The Ofsted focused visit in May 2022 identifies RHI and the learning from aggregated data as an area for improvement. An Action Plan is being drawn up in response to this area of improvement.

What is the national context?

Comparative national figures are not available for children missing education.

Dashboard Item 8 – Children's Services Workforce

Measure	Q4 20-21	Q1 21-22	Q2 21-22	Q3 21-22	Q4 21-22	Q1 22-23	Direction of Travel
12 months rolling turnover of permanent qualified social workers	12%	10%	14%	14%	19.43%	20.99%	↑
% agency staff across qualified social work workforce (snapshot at end of period)	21%	17%	14%	16%	26%	28.0%	↑

What does this show us?

During Q1 2022-23, the percentage of 12 months rolling turnover of permanent qualified social workers and agency staff has increased significantly compared to the same period last year and the previous quarter.

What is the background to this?

Permanency of workforce has been a continuous focus for CSC, though we have seen an increased turnover across the whole organisation this quarter.

What action is the service taking?

Recruitment of permanent social workers is ongoing via various mediums including social media, and specialist publications. We have also signed up to the refreshed Memorandum of Cooperation across the Southeast.

The MoC is an agreement between the 19 authorities in the Southeast to work in a cooperative and collaborative way. It is designed to help control costs and reduce churn of both agency and permanent social workers.

It also aims to improve the quality of information sharing between authorities when supplying references for agency social workers. In 2022 Wokingham will also be recruiting a new cohort of newly Qualified Social Workers, as they leave university and begin their career in social work.

CSC now have in post a worker whose primary focus on recruitment and retention, as well as promoting and advertising vacancies as they occur. Providing support to team managers recruiting to post and streamlining the onboarding process.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
2022/23 WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
7 September 2022	**SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme Update**	To update on progress with delivery of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme. Stakeholders involved in the development of the strategy to be invited to attend.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	Update on Children's Strategy Delivery	To update on progress with delivery of the Children's Services Strategy.	Challenge item	Children's Services / DCS
	Report and Q&A with the Executive Member for Children's Services	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Regular update	Councillor Prue Bray
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Standing Item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
DATE OF MEETING	**ITEM**	**PURPOSE OF REPORT**	**REASON FOR CONSIDERATION**	**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER**

2 November 2022	**Fostering Transformation update**	Update on progress with Fostering transformation.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Adam Davis
	Key Performance Indicators	To monitor the performance of the service.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Helen Watson
	Anti-Poverty Strategy	To understand the impact of the cost of living crisis on children and young people in the borough and on Children's Services.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sally Watkins
	Report and Q&A with the Executive Member for Children's Services	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Regular update	Councillor Prue Bray
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Standing item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
DATE OF MEETING	**ITEM**	**PURPOSE OF REPORT**	**REASON FOR CONSIDERATION**	**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER**
4 January 2023	**Travel Assistance Policy Implementation**	Update on outcomes from implementation of the Travel Assistance Policies (formerly Home to School Transport policies).	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	Report and Q&A with the Executive Member for Children's Services	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Regular update	Councillor Prue Bray
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the work being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Standing item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway

	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
DATE OF MEETING	**ITEM**	**PURPOSE OF REPORT**	**REASON FOR CONSIDERATION**	**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER**
22 March 2023	**Key Performance Indicators**	To monitor the performance of the service.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Helen Watson
	Report and Q&A with the Executive Member for Children's Services	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Regular update	Councillor Prue Bray
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the work being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session	Standing item	Children's Services/ Sal Thirlway
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS

School	Phase	Inspection Date	Inspection Grade	Status/Organisation
Addington School	Special	Oct-17	Outstanding	maintained
Aldryngton Primary School	Primary	Dec-11	Outstanding	maintained
All Saints Primary School	Primary	Sep-21	Good	Frays MAT wef Sept-22
Ambleside Centre	Nursery	Nov-21	Outstanding	maintained
Bearwood Primary School	Primary	Mar-19	Good	maintained
Beechwood Primary School	Primary	May-18	Inadequate	Frays MAT (sponsored)
Bohunt	Secondary	May-19	Good	Bohunt Trust
Bulmershe School	Secondary	Nov-17	Good	maintained
CAMHS Phoenix	PRU Hospit	Oct-17	Outstanding	maintained
Chiltern Way (previously Northern House)	Special	Oct-18	Special Measures	Chiltern Way
Colleton Primary School	Primary	Jul-17	Good	maintained
Coombes Primary School	Primary	Jan-22	RI	Keys Trust C of E
Crazies Hill CE School	Primary	Mar-16	Good	Keys Trust C of E
Earley St Peter's Primary School	Primary	Sep-21	Good	Keys Trust C of E
Emmbrook Infant School	Primary	Jan-19	Outstanding	maintained
Emmbrook Junior School	Primary	Apr-22	Good	maintained
Emmbrook School	Secondary	Mar-17	Good	The Circle Trust
Evendons Primary School	Primary	Jun-17	Outstanding	Bellevue Place Education Trust
Farley Hill Primary School	Primary	Oct-19	Good	maintained
Finchampstead Primary School	Primary	Oct-18	Good	maintained Cof E
Forest School	Secondary	Jul-21	Good	Stand Alone Academy
Foundry College	PRU	Feb-18	Good	maintained
Gorse Ride Infant School	Primary	Nov-19	Good	maintained
Gorse Ride Junior School	Primary	Apr-22	Good	maintained
Grazeley Parochial Primary School	Primary	Sep-19	Good	maintained Cof E
Hatch Ride Primary School	Primary	May-22	Good	Corvus
Hawkedon Primary School	Primary	Oct-18	Good	maintained
Hawthorns Primary School	Primary	May-17	Good	maintained
Highwood Primary School	Primary	Dec-21	Good	maintained
Hillside Primary School	Primary	May-18	Good	maintained
Holt School	Secondary	Jun-08	Outstanding	Stand Alone Academy
Keep Hatch Primary School	Primary	Oct-18	Good	Frays MAT
Lambs Lane Primary School	Primary	Jan-22	Good	maintained
Loddon Primary School	Primary	Jan-18	Good	maintained
Maiden Erlegh School	Secondary	Mar-20	Outstanding	Maiden Erlegh Multi-Academy Trust
Montague Park	Primary	Jun-19	RI	GLF Trust
Nine Mile Ride Primary School	Primary	Dec-13	Good	The Circle Trust
Oakbank	Secondary	Jan-20	RI	Anthem Schools Trust
Oaklands Infant School	Primary	Jun-16	Good	Corvus
Oaklands Junior School	Primary	Apr-22	Good	Corvus
Polehampton Infant School	Primary	Jan-11	Outstanding	Keys Trust C of E
Polehampton Junior School	Primary	Nov-12	Outstanding	Keys Trust C of E
Radstock Primary School	Primary	Jan-22	Good	maintained
Rivermead Primary School	Primary	Nov-18	Good	maintained
Robert Piggott Infant School	Primary	Jun-18	good	maintained Cof E
Robert Piggott Junior School	Primary	May-18	Good	maintained Cof E
Shinfield Infant School	Primary	Feb-19	Good	The Circle Trust
Shinfield St Mary's Junior School	Primary	Feb-18	Good	maintained Cof E
Sonning Primary School	Primary	Mar-16	Good	Keys Trust C of E
South Lake Primary School	Primary	Mar-13	Outstanding	maintained
St Crispins School	Secondary	Mar-17	Good	The Circle Trust
St Dominic Savio Primary School	Primary	May-19	Good	maintained Catholic
St Nicholas Primary School	Primary	Apr-19	Good	Keys Trust C of E
St Paul's Junior School	Primary	Jun-11	Outstanding	maintained Cof E
St Sebastian's Primary School	Primary	Oct-21	Good	Keys Trust C of E
St Teresa's Primary	Primary	May-10	Outstanding	Frassati Catholic Trust
The Piggott CE School	All through	Nov-17	Good	Stand Alone Academy
Waingels College	Secondary	Feb-18	Good	Stand Alone Academy
Walter Infant School	Primary	Nov-13	Outstanding	maintained
Wescott Infant School	Primary	Dec-10	Outstanding	The Circle Trust

WOKINGHAM SCHOOLS

Westende Junior School	Primary	Jan-20	Good	The Circle Trust
Wheatfield Primary School	Primary	May-17	Good	GLF
Whiteknights Primary School	Primary	Dec-18	Good	Bellevue Place Education Trust
Willow Bank Infant School	Primary	Jan-17	Good	maintained
Willow Bank Junior School	Primary	Jul-17	Good	maintained
Windmill Primary School	Primary	Jan-20	good	GLF
Winnersh Primary School	Primary	Jan-20	Good	maintained
Woodley Primary School	Primary	Nov-18	Good	maintained Cof E