



## Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee (revised)

Meeting to be held on: **Monday 30 January 2023 at 6.00 p.m.**

Meeting at: Walsall Council House.

Public access to meeting via: <http://www.WalsallCouncilWebcasts.com>

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

Chair:	Councillor. Hicken
Vice Chair:	Councillor. Jukes
	Councillor. Garcha
	Councillor. Harrison
	Councillor. Horton
	Councillor. Kaur
	Councillor. Mazhar
	Councillor. Nasreen
	Councillor. Rattigan
	Councillor C. Statham
	Councillor. Waters

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** Councillor S. Elson

**Note:** Walsall Council encourages the public to exercise their right to attend meetings of Council, Cabinet and Committees. Agendas and reports are available for inspection from the Council's Democratic Services Team at the Council House, Walsall (Telephone 01922 654767) or on our website [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk).

---

Democratic Services, Council House, Lichfield Street, Walsall, WS1 1TW  
Contact: Nikki Gough ☎ 01922 654767 E-mail: [nikki.gough@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:nikki.gough@walsall.gov.uk)  
*If you are disabled and require help to and from the meeting room please contact the person above.*  
[www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk)

## AGENDA

1.	<b>Apologies</b> To receive apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.	
2.	<b>Substitutions</b> To receive notice of any substitutions for a Member of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.	
3.	<b>Declarations of interest and party whip</b> To receive declarations of interest or the party whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.	
4.	<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)</b> To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda (if applicable).	
5.	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting that took place on 8 December, 2022.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b><u>Scrutiny</u></b>		
6.	<b>Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7 month position ended 31 October 2022</b> To inform the Committee of the updated forecasted financial position for 2022/23.	<u>Enclosed</u>
7.	<b>Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27</b> To receive the draft budget, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022. To also receive the draft revenue budget proposals and draft capital programmes relating to the Committee's remit.	<u>Enclosed</u>
8.	<b>Locality Working &amp; Family Hubs</b> To provide an overview of the progress to date and on-going planning for the blended 'hybrid' model of delivery.	<u>Enclosed</u>
9.	<b>Family Hubs</b> To provide an overview of the Department for Education & Department for Health & Social Care Family Hubs and Start for Life programme.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<b><u>Overview</u></b>		
10.	<b>Recommendation Tracker</b> To review progress with recommendations from previous meetings.	<u>Enclosed</u>
11.	<b>Areas of Focus 2022/23</b> To agree the Committees Work Programme and review the Forward Plans for Walsall Council and the Black Country Executive Committee.	<u>Enclosed</u>
12.	<b>Date of next meeting</b> To note that the date of the next meeting will be 13 March 2023.	

## The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

### Specified pecuniary interests

The pecuniary interests which are specified for the purposes of Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 are the interests specified in the second column of the following:

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by a member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of a member.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Regulations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority:</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to a member's knowledge):</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant authority;</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:</p> <p>(a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and</p> <p>(b) either:</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.</p>

## **Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)**

### **Access to information: Exempt information**

#### **Part 1**

#### **Descriptions of exempt information: England**

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:
  - (a) to give any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
  - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.
8. Information being disclosed during a meeting of a Scrutiny and Performance Panel when considering flood risk management functions which:
  - (a) Constitutes a trades secret;
  - (b) Its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the risk management authority);
  - (c) It was obtained by a risk management authority from any other person and its disclosure to the public by the risk management authority would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that other person.

**Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**  
**Conference Room 2, Walsall Council House**

**Thursday 8 December 2022 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillor A. Hicken (Chair)  
Councillor T. Jukes (Vice Chair)  
Councillor A. Garcha  
Councillor L. Harrison  
Councillor S. Nasreen  
Councillor F. Mazhar  
Councillor L. Rattigan  
Councillor C. Statham  
Councillor V. Waters

**Portfolio Holder**

Councillor S. Elson

**Officers Present**

Colleen Male	-	Director Childrens Social Work
Julie Jones	-	Group Manager
Rita Holmer	-	Head of Safeguarding and Localities
Jade Read	-	Group Manager
Nikki Gough	-	Democratic Services Officer

**30/22 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor C. Horton.

**31/22 Substitutions**

There were no substitutions.

**32/22 Declarations of interest and party whip**

There were no declarations and no party whip of interest.

**33/22 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

There were no items to be considered in private session.

**Minutes**

**34/22** The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2022 were considered by the committee.

## **Resolved**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 November be approved as a true and accurate record.

### **35/22 Early Help Young Carers Support**

The Group Manager presented the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed). The Committee was provided with a national and local overview of young carers. It was clarified that that young carers were children and young people under the age of 18 who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who was physically or mentally disabled or misuses substances. The Care Act 2014 outlined the requirements on Local Authorities in relation to young carers.

Members were given detail on the impact of being a young carer, particularly on their education and school life which had been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. A 'Young Carers Service Review' had taken place with the aim of understanding what young carers would consider a good service to look like, in response to this an action plan had been produced, which included:

- Raising awareness of young carers.
- Improve information available.
- Young carers champion programme and ID card scheme.

Other support to young carers was described and included provision of leisure passes, participation in Holiday Activity Fund programmes, and a young carers group. The Committee watched a video which had been produced by young carers describing the positives of being a young carer and how the young carers group provided support.

In Walsall, the service was supporting 205 young carers across various localities within the borough. In the future consideration was being given to rotating the location of the group to improve accessibility. An adult carer strategy would include a section around young carers.

A Member expressed concern that young children were missing out on experiences in their childhood and challenged what was being done to help this cohort. The Group Manager explained that this was included as part of the young carer assessment, it was determined whether any additional support could be provided to the family to mitigate the impact of caring. This took place in the home to ensure that the families' situation was taken into account. The young carers group provided direct support and leisure opportunities for the child.

In response to queries from members, further detail was provided on how young carers were identified, this included referral via school, adult social care, the hospital and from the GP. Part of the assessment included a strength based approach and reassurance to the young carer with a plan created. It was confirmed that school nurses provided emotional health and wellbeing support and played a strong role. Further work was being done with adult social care to improve the identification of young carers and to plan the transition into adulthood.[Page 6 of 112](#)

In response to further questions the Group Manager informed the Committee that £10,000 funding had been received for the young carers group to provide and plan activities for young people – this funding recurred each year. It was acknowledged that further work was needed with schools to increase engagement with the service.

### **Resolved**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Group Manager contact the Mayor's Office to arrange for the young carers to group to have tea with the Mayor.

## **37/22 Private Fostering**

The Group Manager presented the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed). The report provided detail on how Walsall Safeguarding partnership had delivered its duties and functions in relation to private fostering. The Committee was informed that a private fostering arrangement was one that was made privately for the care of a child or young person under the age of 16 by someone other than a parent or close relative with the intention that it should last 28 consecutive days or more. The Director stated that if a child was living outside of their family it made them vulnerable.

In Walsall there were 6 children in private fostering arrangements, all of which were teenagers and the reasons for this varied. Research suggested that there were a lot more children in these arrangements than is being identified, however this was typical across all local authorities. A private fostering toolkit had been developed, which provided a step by step guide for professionals. Awareness raising had taken place within the community to promote recognition of private fostering.

It was acknowledged that work needed to be done to improve the identification of private fostering arrangements in Walsall, a media campaign would be launched and training would be continued across the partnership. A Member expressed concern that the numbers were low, and asked if special guardianships would be considered for children living in these arrangements. The Group Manager confirmed that the arrangement was reviewed to secure the child's permanency.

In response to a Member query, it was confirmed that good engagement and understanding was held by designated safeguarding leads within schools (DSLs), and school admissions. Officers stressed that an awareness raising campaign within the community was needed. The Committee was provided with further information on DBS checks, and the reasons that these may be delayed – however whilst the service were waiting for DBS checks, police and partnerships checks (of private fosterers) were carried out.

Members suggested that the media campaign contained videos produced in different languages to ensure that it was accessible to all sections of the community. Further discussion was held on the ways in which awareness of private fostering could be improved.

### **Resolved**

1. The progress made to date since the Ofsted recommendation was made in October 2021 was noted.
2. The Committee support the safeguarding partnership in driving accountability across the wider partnership and community in raising awareness of children who reside in Private Fostering arrangements.

### **Recommendation Tracker**

**38/22**

The Committee considered the recommendation tracker.

#### **Resolved**

That the recommendation tracker be noted

### **Draft Letter**

**40/22**

The Committee considered the draft letter to the Department of Education and considered its contents (annexed). After discussion, the Director suggested that the issue of profiteering was also addressed.

#### **Resolved**

That the letter be agreed subject to minor changes to be agreed by the Chair.

### **39/22 Areas of Focus 2022/23**

In consideration of the areas of focus it was agreed that placement sufficient and transition from children's services into adult services would be deferred until the new municipal year. Members noted the committees work programme and the forward plan for Walsall Council and the Black Country Executive Committee. A discussion was held in relation to the prioritization of work items.

#### **Resolved**

That the areas of focus for the municipal year 2022/23 be noted.

### **40/22 Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was noted as 30 January 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business this meeting was terminated at p.m.

Signed:

Date:



**Children's Services  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**30 JANUARY 2023**

**Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7 month position ended 31 October 2022**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Cllr S Elson – Children's

**1. Aim**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the updated forecasted financial position for 2022/23 based on the position to October 2022, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022, to allow the scrutiny of the financial performance of the council, and specifically for the services within the committee's remit.

**2. Recommendations:**

The Committee are requested to:

- 2.1 Note the forecast 2022/23 year-end financial position for the council as a whole – a predicted net revenue overspend of £11.33m (an increase of £5.21m since last reported to Cabinet in October 2022), and capital break even position after re-phasing of £92.64m into 2023/24. The section 151 Officer requested that all budgets be reviewed and that services identify mitigating actions to address the revenue position. Following this review, £11.28m of mitigating actions have been identified to address this, resulting in a marginal revenue forecast overspend of £0.05m. Any on-going pressures or undelivered savings not addressed during the year will need to be considered as part of the 2023/24 budget process, putting pressure on that process. Officers are confident at this stage, based on known assumptions, that actions being taken will address this and the outturn on budget.
- 2.2 Note and comment on the forecast 2022/23 year-end financial position for services within the remit of this committee – a predicted net revenue overspend of £6.45m and net capital break even position.

**3. Report detail - Know**

- 3.1 This report summarises the forecast revenue and capital financial position for 2022/23, based on the position to October 2022, for services within the remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022. The full Cabinet report can be accessed by the following link:

[Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 - Cabinet 14 December 2022](#)

3.2 The Quarter 2 financial position was last reported to this Committee on 3 November 2022, with the next Quarter 3 position planned to be circulated to scrutiny members following the report to Cabinet in February 2023. Given the worsening financial position reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022, based on the October forecast (an increase of £5.21m since last reported to Cabinet in October 2022) and the mitigation to ensure we can outturn within budget by the year end, it was felt appropriate for each scrutiny to receive this update, along with the impact on services within the remit of their committees.

3.3 The forecast revenue outturn for 2022/23 for services within the remit of this committee as at the end of October 2022, is a net overspend of £6.45m against budget, net of the use of earmarked reserves. This represents an increase of £3.17m since the position reported to this Committee on 3 November 2022. Further details are shown in **Appendix 1**.

3.4 The forecast capital outturn for 2022/23 for services within the remit of this committee as at the end of October 2022, is expected to be break even. Further details of schemes are shown in **Appendix 2**.

#### **Resource and legal considerations:**

3.5 This report represents the forecast revenue and capital outturn as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022.

#### **Reducing inequalities:**

3.6 Services consider equality issues in setting budgets and delivering services. Irrespective of budgetary pressures the council must fulfil its equal opportunities obligations.

### **4. Decide**

4.1 This Committee is asked to note and comment on the forecast revenue and capital forecast for 2022/23 and consider the recommendations as set out.

### **5. Respond**

5.1 This report is for noting and comment by the Committee as above.

### **6. Review**

6.1 This report is for noting and comment by the Committee as above.

#### **Background papers:**

- Various financial working papers.
- Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022.

**Contact Officers:**

Sally Rowe – Executive Director, Children's and Customer, ☎01922 652081,

✉ [Sally.Rowe@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Sally.Rowe@walsall.gov.uk)

Vicky Buckley, Head of Finance and Assurance, ☎ 01922 652326 / 07983 604698, ✉

[Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk)

Ross Hutchinson – Head of Finance – Finance Business Partnering & ESS Projects, ✉

[Ross.Hutchinson@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Ross.Hutchinson@walsall.gov.uk)

**Forecast Revenue position 2022/23**  
**Services within the remit of the Children's Services Overview and**  
**Scrutiny Committee**

**Revenue Forecast**

The forecast revenue outturn for 2022/23 for the services under the remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is an overspend of £6.45m, net of the use of earmarked reserves of £2.95m, as shown in **Table 1**. The forecast revenue outturn shown is based on actual information from the financial system as at the end of October 2022, and discussions with managers regarding year end forecast and achievement of approved savings.

For completeness, the forecast revenue overspend for services under the remit of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee is an overspend of £0.75m. This gives a total forecast position of an overspend of £7.2m for Children's Services directorate as at 31 October 2022.

**Table 1: Forecast revenue analysis 2022/23 by Service**

Service	Annual Budget	Year End Forecast	Net Use of Reserves	Action Plan	Draft Outturn after use of and transfer to Earmarked Reserves	Variance to Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's Wide	0.84	0.78	(0.02)	-	0.76	(0.08)
Children in Care (CiC), in Care costs	27.35	36.12	(2.10)	-	34.02	6.67
Children's Social Care	21.16	21.75	(0.49)	-	21.26	0.10
Early Help and Commissioning Services	3.59	3.69	(0.34)	-	3.35	(0.24)
<b>Total Services within remit of Committee</b>	<b>52.94</b>	<b>62.34</b>	<b>(2.95)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>59.40</b>	<b>6.45</b>

The main variances are summarised in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2 – Reasons for revenue outturn variance**

Service	Variance £m	Explanation of Year End Outturn
Children's Wide	(0.08)	Vacant posts
Children in Care (CiC) costs	6.67	Overspend linked to ongoing increases in costs of placements for CiC and changes in the mix of CiC linked to placement sufficiency issues. Further detail is provided in Appendix 3 below.
Children's Social Care	0.10	Various minor overspends across the service
Early Help and commissioning Services	(0.24)	Mitigating actions identified to support the Directorates overall position
<b>Total Services within remit of this Committee</b>	<b>6.46</b>	

## Reasons for Movements

The August forecast position reported to this committee on 3 November 2022 was an overspend of £3.28m, net of the use of reserves therefore a net increase of £3.17m over the 2 months. The key reasons for movements are detailed in **Table 3** below:

Table 3 – Reasons for movements in variance		
Service	Movement £m	Explanation of Movement in Year End Variance
Children's Wide	(0.07)	Vacant Posts not expected to become occupied
Children and young people in care costs	3.39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£0.92m placement moves</li> <li>£0.47m starters and leavers (placement costs of starters higher than expected)</li> <li>£2.00m further placement moves expected throughout the remainder of the year based on trends seen in 2022/23 to date</li> </ul>
Children's Social Care	0.09	Various minor movements across the service
Early Help and commissioning Services	(0.24)	Mitigating actions identified to support the Directorates overall position
<b>Total Movements for Services within remit of this Committee</b>	<b>3.17</b>	

## Reserves

The total allocated reserves for 2022/23 for services under the remit of this committee are £6.15m, of which (£3.3m) has been used or committed to date and £0.35m will be transferred to reserves at the year-end, ringfenced for expected spend in 2023/24.

The use of reserves below is predominantly made up of:

- Corporate reserves including Covid General fund (£0.96m) and pay award reserve (£0.55m)
- (£0.29m) external funding to support Family Drugs & Alcohol Programme & Regional Recovery Building Back Better Programme
- (£0.25m) Children in Care complex cases reserve
- (£0.15m) Safeguarding Board reserves
- (£0.84m) net use of Supporting Families reserve

Table 4 below details the use of / transfer to reserves across the services within the remit of this committee.

<b>Table 4 - Summary of use of reserves and transfer to reserves</b>				
<b>Reserve Details</b>	<b>Allocated reserve</b>	<b>Use of reserve</b>	<b>Transfer to reserve</b>	<b>Balance of reserve</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Children's Wide	0.25	(0.02)	-	0.22
Children and young people in care costs	1.73	(1.70)	-	0.03
Children's Social Care	2.50	(1.01)	0.11	1.61
Early Help and commissioning services	1.67	(0.57)	0.24	1.35
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>6.15</b>	<b>(3.30)</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>2.46</b>

## **Risks**

For the services under the remit of this committee, there are total risks of **£3.09** which are not included in the above forecast. At this stage the risks are not a certainty and as such are not included in the monitoring position. There are high risks of £1.23m relating to Services within the remit of this committee. If any risks became a certainty they would need to be included in the forecast position as an overspend, unless alternative action can be identified to mitigate these costs. A summary of the risk assessment is shown in **Table 5** below.

<b>Table 5 – Revenue Risks 2022/23</b>				
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Value £m</b>	<b>Ongoing £m</b>	<b>One Off £m</b>	<b>Actions to manage risk</b>
High	1.23	1.23	0	
Medium	1.86	1.86	0	The amber risks will continue to be monitored and reviewed within the service on a monthly basis.
Low	0	0	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>0</b>	

The main high risks (Red risk) that could negatively impact the current forecast position is detailed in **Table 6** below:

<b>Table 6- High risks</b>		
<b>Service</b>	<b>Reason / explanation of risk</b>	<b>£m</b>
Children and young people in care	£1.23m amber savings where it is not certain these benefits are achievable. The service is currently working with finance to update and refresh the original benefits and identify mitigating actions where needed.	1.23
<b>Total High Risks</b>		<b>1.23</b>

The amber risks above are linked to the risk of further placement breakdowns and cost increases for Children in Care over and above what has been included in the forecast for the remainder of the financial year.

## Service Transformation Plan Benefits

Included within the budget for 2022/23 for services within the remit of this Committee are £5.46m of approved savings. **Table 7** gives an update on progress towards implementing these benefits:

<b>Table 7: Delivery of 2022/23 approved savings – services within the remit of this Committee</b>					
<b>Saving</b>	<b>Total savings £m</b>	<b>Delivered (Blue) £m</b>	<b>To be delivered by 31/03/23 (Green) £m</b>	<b>Not fully guaranteed (Amber) £m</b>	<b>At High risk of non- delivery (Red) £m</b>
OP6 – Review of current establishment and reduction in the use of agency staff, following recruitment of permanent staff	(0.75)		(0.40)		(0.35)
OP7 – Mother and Baby Daisy Project	(0.79)	(0.23)	(0.11)	(0.45)	
OP8 – Strengthening Families, Protecting Children. This is a cost avoidance scheme for future placement projections which will reduce future growth need.	(0.46)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.32)	
OP9 – Adolescent service - Turning Point - reduce number of adolescents coming into care	(0.76)	(0.52)	(0.24)		
OP10 – Family drugs and alcohol court	(0.21)		(0.10)	(0.11)	
OP11 – Foster carer support to reduce placement disruption	(1.55)	(0.28)	(1.27)		
OP12 – Placement sufficiency – recruitment and retention	(0.15)	(0.15)			
OP13 – Grandparents plus- build in for future years	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.02)		
OP29 – Children’s – To develop Power BI reports to create efficiencies	(0.12)	(0.12)			
OP107 – Independent Living	(0.37)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.35)	
OP3 – Development of locality partnership offer in Early Help and restructure of ‘change grow live’ following contract bought in house (implementation of restructure).	(0.10)	(0.10)			
P1 – Change, Grow Live Contract- bringing service back in house	(0.12)	(0.12)			
<b>Total approved savings for services within remit of Committee</b>	<b>(5.46)</b>	<b>(1.65)</b>	<b>(2.23)</b>	<b>(1.23)</b>	<b>(0.35)</b>

Each benefit is “BRAG” categorised as follows:

- Blue (delivered);
- Green (on track to be delivered with no issues at year end of 2022/23);
- Amber (not guaranteed at this stage but no major issues expected, some management action needed to ensure delivery) or,
- Red - (at high risk of not being achieved either in part or in full and therefore either alternative actions are required or a plan to ensure delivery is put back on track);

A Walsall proud resource plan has been agreed to provide additional support towards delivery.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Forecast Capital position 2022/23** **Services within the remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

#### ***Capital Forecast***

The capital programme for the services under the remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as at the end of October 2022, is £1.34m. As at October, it was expected that this will be fully spent in this financial year. A list of schemes within the remit of this committee is shown in **Table 8**.

<b>Table 8 – Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Services within the remit of this Committee</b>						
<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Approved Budget £m</b>	<b>Actual year to date £m</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn £m</b>	<b>Year End Variance £m</b>	<b>Proposed Carry Forward to 2023/24 £m</b>	<b>Variance Over / (Under) £m</b>
<b>Council Funded schemes</b>						
Redesign of Children's Homes	1.07	0.50	1.07	0.00	0.00	0.00
Refurbishment of homes to support Foster Carers	0.25	0.07	0.25	0.00	0.00	0.00
Children's Localities	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Council Funded Schemes</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Capital – Services within the remit of this Committee</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>



### **Children in Care (CiC) Financial Monitoring Position for Quarter 3 as at October 2022**

#### **Overview**

Local Authorities in England have a statutory responsibility for protecting the welfare of Children and delivering Children's Social Care. In more serious situations Local Authorities may use their statutory powers to place children and young people in need on child protection plans or even take them into the care of the Local Authority.

Despite a challenging year due to placement sufficiency, Walsall's Social Care demand led pressures are in-line with the national picture and although costs continue to increase, extensive work has been undertaken to effectively manage demand.

This financial year the service has experienced on-going pressures surrounding placement sufficiency, which has been further compromised by changes in legislation. The new legislation, which came into force in September 2021 states that no child under the age of 16 should reside in a placement that is not Ofsted registered. This has resulted in several unregulated/unregistered placement providers exiting the market, which has subsequently reduced supply, heightened demand and the related costs. This has been compounded by a lack of sufficiency of foster placements locally and nationally.

Despite the heightened demand and subsequent costs the overall number of children entering care has reduced. This is due to extensive work undertaken to proactively manage the welfare of children within their family.

#### **Children in Care of the Local Authority**

It should be noted that the forecast position reported in year is calculated based on the number and mix of children and young people (C&YP) at a point in time and is adjusted for anticipated placement moves and budgeted inflow/ outflow for the remainder of the financial year.

In line with the rise in average costs in prior years and the current mix of children, there was approved additional investment of £3.454m included in the budget for the financial year 2022/23.

In October, the total forecast for current placement costs for 2022/23 is **£36.00m**. This forecast is based on the current mix of children in care and the projected future demand for the remainder of the financial year. The current budget is **£27.26m**, therefore there is a forecasted overspend of **£8.74m**. This forecast includes the use of £0.96m Covid reserve, £0.24m corporate reserve for complex cases, £0.13m other corporate reserve and £0.75m children's wide action plan reducing the forecast position to **£6.66m** overspent. This is made up of the following:

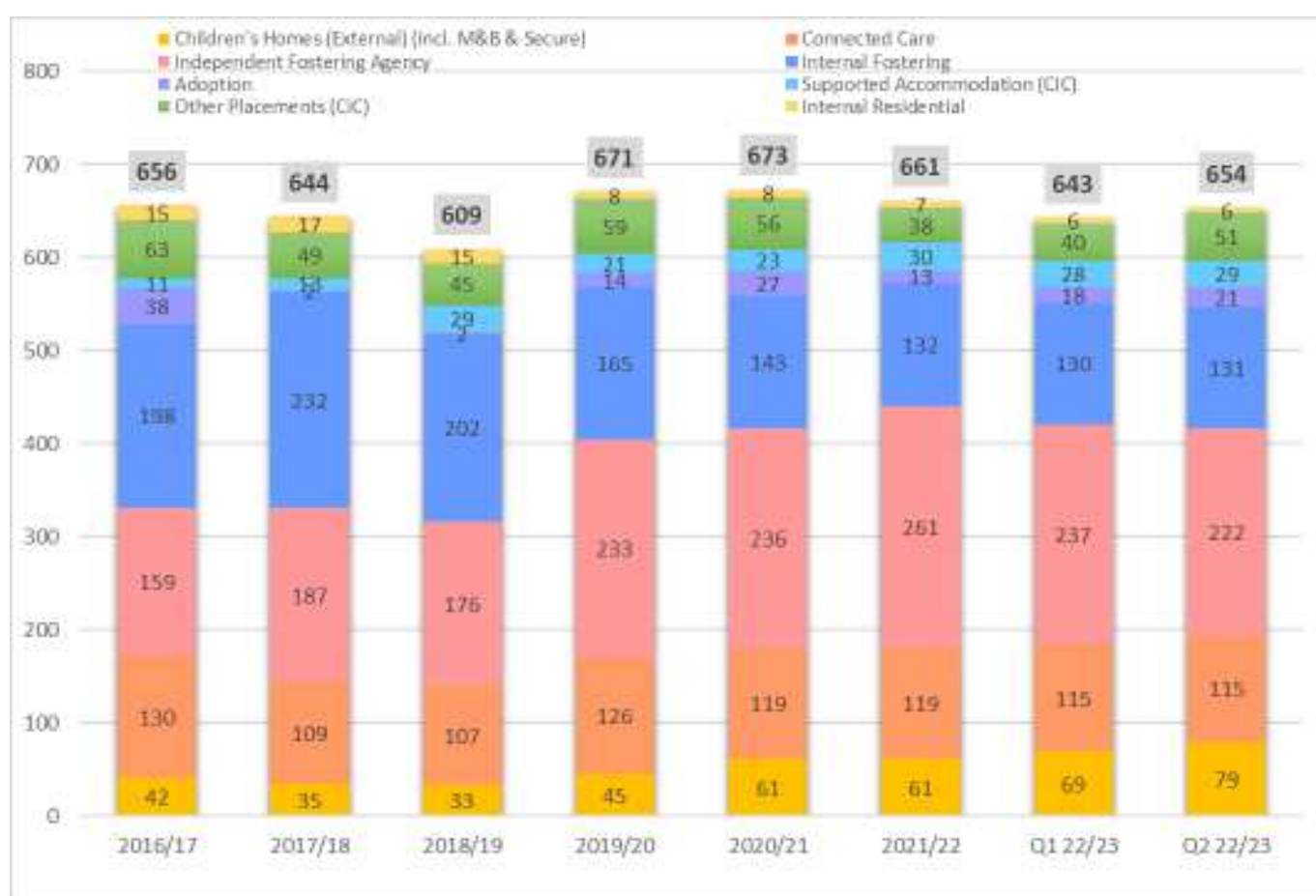
- £3.03m ongoing impact of price increases and changes in the number/mix of children in care seen in 2021/22

- £4.51m increase in cost due to placement moves and changes in costs for new placements in 2022/23
- (£0.75m) implementation of Children's Wide action plan
- (£0.13m) use of corporate reserve
- £0.96m increased costs in remand and external residential placements linked to court delays and placement sufficiency following Covid. This is offset by the use of the Covid reserve.

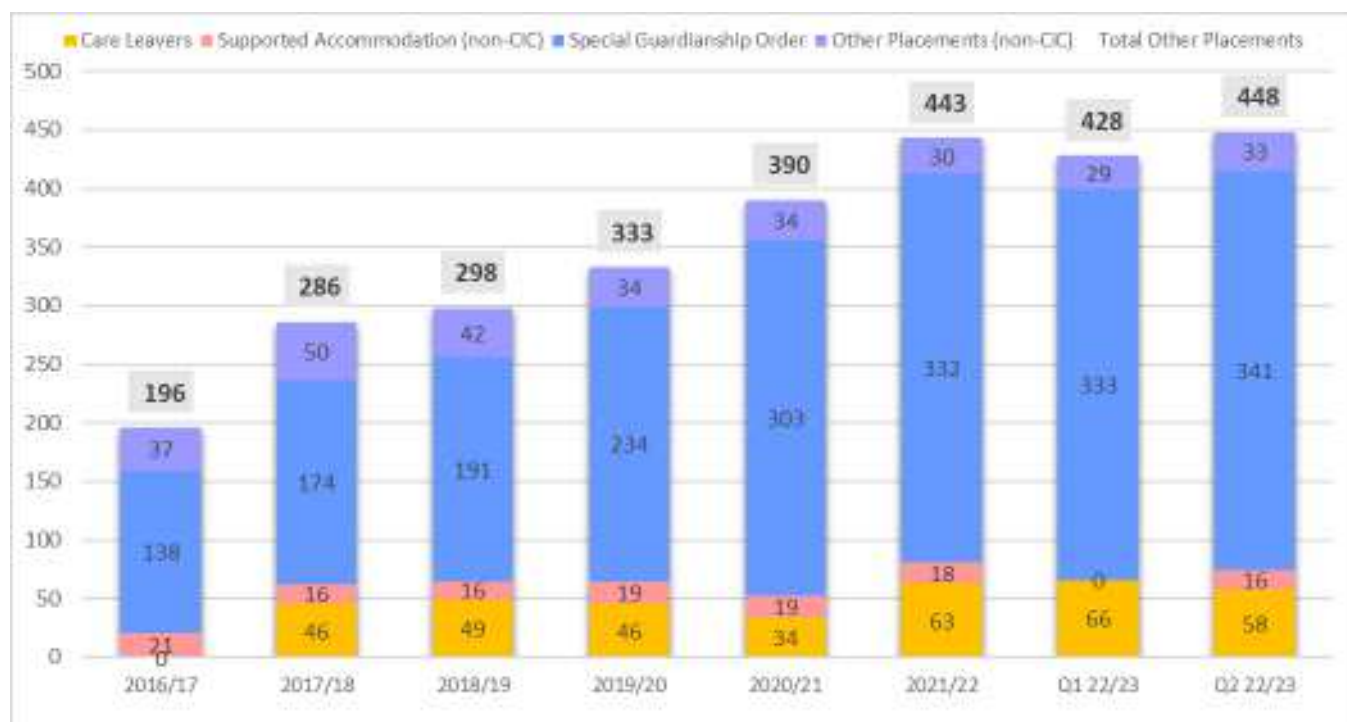
As part of the Proud Transformation Programme £4.37m of benefits have been identified specifically relating to Children in Care for 2022/23 of which £1.32mm has been achieved as at October 2022 and a further £1.82m is expected to be achieved by March 2023. Had this not been achieved this would have increased further pressure onto the budget for 2022/23. There is a risk that the remaining £1.23m may not be fully delivered in this financial year. Extensive work is underway in the service to prevent further pressures on the financial position and support the full delivery of all identified benefits.

Overall, there has been a gradual decrease in the number of Children in Care (CiC) since March 2021. As at October 2022, there were 654 CiC compared to 661 at the end of 2021/22 and 673 at the end of 2020/21. Table 1 and 2 below shows the mix of CiC and those in other placements as at October 2022.

**Table 1 – Mix of Children in Care 2016/17 to 2022/23**



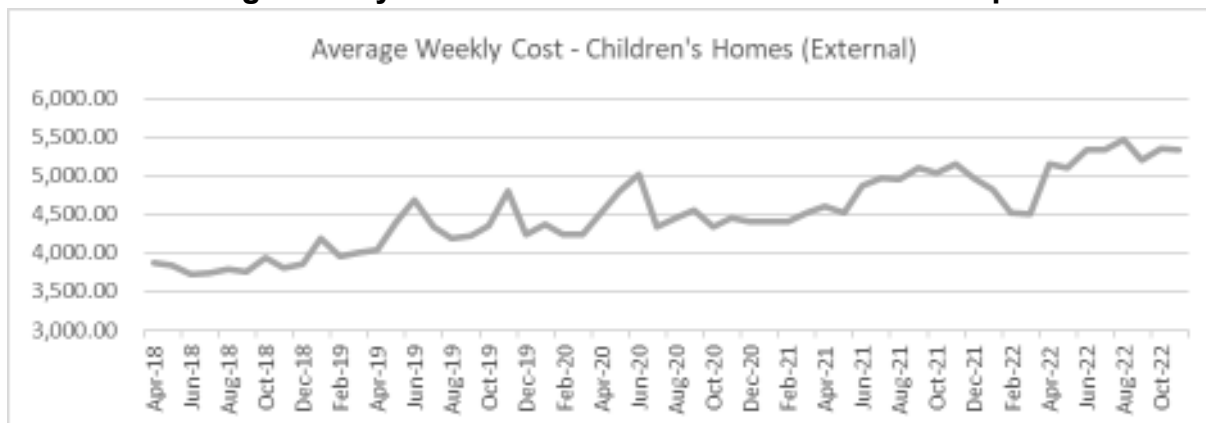
**Table 2 – Mix of Other placements 2016/17 to 2022/23**



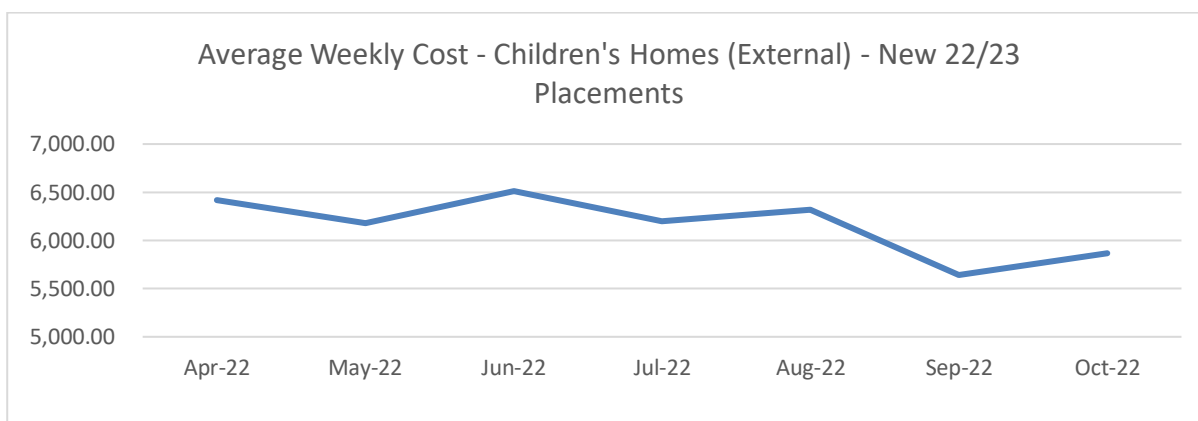
Despite the overall number of children in care and net inflow/outflow of C&YP in Walsall decreasing and beginning to stabilise through the implementation of the services transformation plans, the overall costs relating to children in care have increased due to the following reasons:

- On-going nationwide pressures surrounding placement sufficiency, which creates a reliance on higher cost placements, predominately external residential placements which have increased from 53 in 2020/21 to 70 in October 2022. In comparison internal fostering placements have decreased from 143 in 2020/21 to 131 in October 2022.
- The introduction of new legislation in September 2021, removing the use of non-Ofsted registered placements for those under the age of 16;
- An increasing number of complex children, together with a higher proportion of children in care over the age of 15, and subsequent increasing placement costs;
- An increase in the proportion of children whose first placement is external residential from 3.7% in 2019-20 to 7.7% in 2021-22;
- On-going increases to average weekly placement costs, which has significantly impacted external residential with the average weekly cost rising from £3.8k to £5.7k over the last 4 financial years, and the average cost of a new external residential placement in 22/23 increasing to between £5.7k and £6.5k. Table 3 and 4 below demonstrates these increases.

**Table 3 – Average weekly cost for all current external residential placements**



**Table 4 – Average weekly cost for new external residential placements placed in 2022/23 (inflow)**



Mitigating actions are being taken locally and there are several workstreams in place, with a focus on the following actions:

- Reducing the number of children coming into the care of the Local Authority
- Increasing Foster Carer sufficiency
- Review of the Placement Sufficiency Strategy
- Reviewing the use of contract beds with local providers
- Opening of two new residential homes in the next 3-6 months
- Review of External Placement Panel (EPP) and process for securing joint funding from health and education
- On-going review of current placements suitability and placement moves.

**Children's Services  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**30 JANUARY 2023**

**Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Cllr S Elson – Children's

**Executive Summary:**

The draft budget, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022, includes the latest medium term financial outlook (MTFO) for the four year period from 2023/24 to 2026/27. It also outlines the draft revenue budget for 2023/24 to 2026/27 (including savings proposals for consultation), the draft capital programme for 2023/24 to 2026/27, and sets out the process and timescale for setting a legally balanced budget for 2023/24.

Our MTFO has been updated for all known pressures, including best professional assumptions on the impact of increasing demand and the cost of living on service delivery and finances. The Council is legally obliged to set a one-year balanced budget (2023/24), however a medium term approach is beneficial to allow for sound financial planning and to support future financial stability. This report presents a balanced budget for 2023/24 subject to changes arising from the settlement yet to be received. A number of savings proposals are also included for 2024/25 to 2026/27, with further options being identified to allow for a balanced budget over the period 2024/25 to 2026/27 aligned to the Council Plan and Proud activity.

The Autumn Statement was announced on 17 November 2022 and, whilst it has provided some further detail for 2023/24, the impact on our financial forecasts remains uncertain until we formally receive further policy documents, as referred to in the Statement, and our provisional core grant settlement which is expected in late December 2022, and which will be included in the final budget report to Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

The 2023/24 draft budget assumes a 2.99% general council tax increase. This is in line with Government referendum limits announced in the Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022, with the option to increase by a further 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept, which Cabinet are currently not minded to do, but are consulting on.

The total draft capital programme for 2023/24 is £110.09m. It sets out new capital investment funded from the council's own resources of £66.86m (funded by capital receipts and borrowing) and externally funded schemes of £43.23m (funded by capital grants) and represents a balanced programme for 2023/24. In addition, the report sets out a further three years of indicative proposals to 2026/27. Despite reductions in capital funding in recent years and going forward, the draft capital programme contains significant investment into highways, education, and housing to support vulnerable households through Health, through Warmth and provision of aids and adaptations.

This report provides an extract of the Proud draft revenue savings proposals and investments/ cost pressures for 2023/24 – 2026/27 by Proud Outcomes, which fall within the remit of the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. It also provides a summary of the draft capital programme for schemes within the remit of this Committee.

Feedback from the Committee on the draft revenue and capital proposals will be reported back to Cabinet on 8 February 2023, to inform the final draft budget to be recommended to Council on 23 February 2023. Any changes to the draft revenue and capital budget proposals, as a result of equality impact assessments and consultation, will also be fed into the final budget report.

### **Reason for scrutiny:**

To enable consultation of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The Committee are recommended to consider the draft revenue budget proposals attached that relate to the remit of this committee as shown in **Appendices 1 and 2**, and that feedback will be presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2023.
2. The Committee are recommended to consider the draft capital schemes included in the draft capital programme attached that relate to the remit of this committee as shown in **Appendix 3**, and that feedback will be presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2023.

### **Background papers:**

Various financial working papers.

### **Resource and legal considerations:**

On 14 December 2022 Cabinet were presented with a list of draft Proud revenue savings proposals for consultation and a list of investment/cost pressures by Proud outcome, along with a draft capital programme over the period 2023/24 to 2026/27.

The full Cabinet report can be accessed at the following link:

[Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Cabinet 14 December 2022](#)

[Maximising Outcomes through Budgeting 2023/24 onwards](#)

Our approach to budget setting was established for 2022/23 with overall financial savings expected to be delivered via Proud activity. For 2023/24 Proud work streams will continue to provide the ‘enablers’ to allow Directorates to deliver through Service Transformation Plans (STP’s).

Directors and their Heads of Service were tasked with completion of new STP’s linking their current and future service delivery with Council priority outcomes as per the Council Plan. This will allow for identification of potential transformation activity and associated savings for future



financial years. Those identified to date are outlined within this report, with the need for further review to close the financial gap from 2024/25 onwards.

The Council Plan direction of travel approach will set out how the budget will be aligned to deliver the desired outcome i.e., through different amounts of delivery, coordination, influencing, signposting or regulating. A review of the current delivery model will be undertaken alongside the direction of travel and re-prioritised where appropriate to maximise value for money and overall delivery of outcomes and ensuring the 2023/24 onwards budget is built and developed on this moving forward.

#### Investment/ cost pressures

Further to the changes in assumptions, the draft budget 2023/24 – 2026/27 includes provision for growth and investment of £111m (£50.52m of this is in 2023/24). Those investments relating to the remit of this Committee are shown in **Appendix 1** and total £20.71m over 4 years.

#### Savings proposals

The Proud service transformation plans have identified £9.02m of financial benefit for 2023/24, in addition to the £7.28m identified in the budget report to Council in February 2022. There is also £1.95m identified for 2024/25 (in addition to £1.15m already identified), £854k for 2025/26 and £844k for 2026/27. The Benefits/ savings are classified into two categories:

1. Policy Proposals - which require an Executive decision to proceed, and which will be referred for public consultation and an equality impact assessment. These total £1.16m in 2023/24.
2. Operational Proposals – savings which officers have delegations to implement; examples include restructures, back-office savings, operational efficiencies. These total £15.14m in 2023/24 (£19.94m over the four years).

Some proposals require investment to support delivery which will only be allocated if the relevant saving proposal is included within Cabinet's final budget report in February, once consultation and equality impact assessment has concluded.

Savings proposals outlined in the report to Cabinet on 14 December 2022 will ensure a balanced budget for 2023/24. A gap of £13.85m remains in 2024/25, with a further £12.56m saving requirement for 2025/26 and £8.54m for 2026/27 (after the delivery of the £3.10m saving identified for 2024/25, £854k for 2025/26 and £844k for 2026/27). Directors continue to work on identifying additional options for Members consideration through the STP process, and a further report will be presented to Cabinet outlining further options to balance the budget for 2024/25 onwards. A work stream review of the STP's is taking place to ensure that they maximise opportunities from the Proud ways of working and capabilities, therefore capture the full benefits; to ensure they capture innovative thinking and to challenge any opportunities to accelerate identified savings.

Those savings proposals relating to the remit of this Committee are shown in **Appendix 2** and total £5.71m over 4 years.

#### Net investment / savings

The following summarises the net investment /(savings) by Directorate for 2023/24.

<b>Net Investment/savings by Directorate 2023/24</b>	<b>Investment £m</b>	<b>Savings £m</b>	<b>Net £m</b>
Adult Social Care, Public Health and Hub	8.00	(2.25)	5.75
Children's Services	13.41	(2.68)	10.73
Children's - Customer Engagement	0.45	(0.88)	(0.44)
Economy, Environment and Communities	1.53	(3.43)	(1.90)
Resources and Transformation	2.21	(1.68)	0.53
Central / Capital Financing*	24.92	(5.37)	19.56
<b>Total Net Investments by Directorate</b>	<b>50.52</b>	<b>(16.30)</b>	<b>34.23</b>

\*Central investment includes £12.5m of pay and pension costs which will be allocated to services following a detailed review of salary budget requirements, and £6.92m Social Care Grant which will be allocated to support both Adults and Children's Social Care when the allocations are confirmed. Central savings include £4.47m for Customer Access Management which will be allocated to services once the plan is finalised.

Therefore, when central investments are taken into account all Directorates will see a net increase in budgets.

#### Draft Capital Programme

The draft capital programme for 2023/24 is balanced and totals £110.09m. It sets out the new capital investment funded from the council's own resources of £66.86m (funded by capital receipts and borrowing) and externally funded schemes of £43.23m (funded by capital grants). In addition, the report sets out a further three years of indicative proposals to 2026/27.

The council funded schemes relating to the remit of this Committee are shown in **Appendix 3** totalling £300k over 4 years with no external funded schemes.

#### **Contact Officers:**

Sally Rowe – Executive Director, Children's and Customer, ☎01922 652081,

✉ [Sally.Rowe@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Sally.Rowe@walsall.gov.uk)

Vicky Buckley – Head of Finance and Assurance, ☎ 07983 604698,

✉ [Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk)

Ross Hutchinson – Head of Finance (Finance Business Partnering & ESS projects),

☎ 07415 308513, ✉ [Ross.Hutchinson@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Ross.Hutchinson@walsall.gov.uk)



## APPENDIX 1

### Summary of New Growth and Investment 2023/24 to 2026/27 aligned to Proud Outcomes relating to the remit of this Committee

Directorate	Ref No	Details of Growth by outcome	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
<b>Children and young people grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere</b>							
Children's Services, Education & Customer Engagement	38	Additional Looked after Children demand/ cost pressures	10,786,348	2,460,336	2,583,751	2,351,106	18,181,548
	39	Foster care/ Special Guardianship Order allowances and proposed change to current fostering fees	570,602	111,800	113,800	116,000	912,202
	40	Increase in social workers pay (full year impact of 2022/23 investment)	131,000	12,000	0	0	143,000
	41	Additional social workers and training for foster carers to support the increase in foster care placements (linked to saving OP45 & OP51)	78,000	105,000	55,000	115,000	353,000
	42	Additional capacity within internal residential services and high cost external placements (linked to reducing high cost placement costs)	92,000	0	0	0	92,000
	46	Additional capacity to deliver Special Guardianship Orders due to increased demand	140,961	0	0	0	140,961
	47	Removal of saving OP50 due to legislation changes - Development of locality partnership offer in Early Help.	0	888,396	0	0	888,396
<b>Total Children and young people which grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere</b>			<b>11,798,911</b>	<b>3,577,532</b>	<b>2,752,551</b>	<b>2,582,106</b>	<b>20,711,100</b>
<b>Total Growth and investment relating to the remit of this Committee</b>			<b>11,798,911</b>	<b>3,577,532</b>	<b>2,752,551</b>	<b>2,582,106</b>	<b>20,711,100</b>

## APPENDIX 2

### Benefits Realisation (Savings) for Proud activity by Outcome 2023/24 to 2026/27 relating to the remit of this Committee

#### A: Summary of Policy Proposals by Outcome 2023/24 – 2026/27

None relating to the remit of this Committee

#### B: Summary of Operational Proposals by Outcome 2023/24 – 2026/27

Directorate	Ref No	Detail of Operational Proposals by Outcome	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
<b>Children and young people grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere</b>							
Children's Education & Customer Engagement	OP43	Extension of Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Model	(75,000)	0	0	0	(75,000)
	OP44	Adolescent Service - Turning Point	(560,000)	0	0	0	(560,000)
	OP45	Recruitment & Retention of internal Foster Carers	(260,000)	0	0	0	(260,000)
	OP46	Specialist Foster Placements	(392,000)	0	0	0	(392,000)
	OP47	Sibling Groups of 4+	(200,000)	0	0	0	(200,000)
	OP48	Review of Non-Staffing Costs across Children's Social Care	(100,000)	0	0	0	(100,000)
	OP49	Efficiencies from the utilisation of existing resources	(329,373)	0	0	0	(329,373)
	OP50	Development of locality partnership offer in Early Help. Investment 48 proposes that this saving is removed.	0	(888,396)	0	0	(888,396)
	OP51	Further Recruitment & Retention of internal Foster Carers	(370,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(600,000)	(2,170,000)
	OP52	Specialist Foster Placements	0	(244,000)	(244,000)	(244,000)	(732,000)
<b>Total Children and young people which grow up in connected communities &amp; feel safe everywhere</b>			<b>(2,286,373)</b>	<b>(1,732,396)</b>	<b>(844,000)</b>	<b>(844,000)</b>	<b>(5,706,769)</b>
<b>Total Operational Proposals relating to the remit of this Committee</b>			<b>(2,286,373)</b>	<b>(1,732,396)</b>	<b>(844,000)</b>	<b>(844,000)</b>	<b>(5,706,769)</b>

Total Savings Proposals	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Total £
A - Policy Proposals	0	0	0	0	0
B - Operational Proposals	(2,286,373)	(1,732,396)	(844,000)	(844,000)	(5,706,769)
<b>Total Savings Proposals relating to the remit of this Committee</b>	<b>(2,286,373)</b>	<b>(1,732,396)</b>	<b>(844,000)</b>	<b>(844,000)</b>	<b>(5,706,769)</b>

## APPENDIX 3

### Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 – Council Funded Schemes relating to the remit of this Committee

#### Development investment

Directorate	Capital Scheme	Detail of Capital investment	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
<b>Children and young people grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere</b>						
Children's, Education & Customer Engagement	Looked After Children Foster Care refurbishment programme	This funding is provided to enable foster carers and special guardians for children in care to enlarge & adapt their homes.	150,000	150,000	0	0
<b>Total Development Investment</b>			<b>150,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Draft Capital Programme – Council Funded Schemes within the remit of this Committee</b>			<b>150,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**30 January 2023**

**Locality Working & Family Hubs**

**Ward(s): All**

**Portfolios: Cllr Stacie Elson. Children's.**

**1 Aim**

- To provide an overview of the progress to date and on-going planning for the blended 'hybrid' model of delivery for the co-location of Children's Social Care, Early Help and key locality partners within the North, West, Central South and East Locality
- To provide an overview on the alignment to the Family Hub model and implementation

**2 Recommendations**

1. For the direction of travel to date to be supported and any suggested recommendations to be provided
2. To consider how overview and scrutiny committee can support in the further development of the locality model

**3 Report detail- know**

- 3.1 Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C) transformation programme is driving the delivery of our children's vision, aimed at ensuring the right children are 'in the right place with the right support for as long as it's needed' so they are safe from harm, happy and learning well.

At the start of 2020 we set out our 5 key cross directorates priorities, driven by the evidence from our performance framework, Ofsted Improvement Plans and our 'Big Conversations' with children, young people and families.

One of these priorities was to

- co-locate teams across the 4 locality hubs

We know the benefits of delivering a community based model of working reduces the chances of poor outcomes for children, young people and their families by having a range of local services and support networks together, as well as building community capacity and community resilience by having the right support available at a local level and accessible at the earliest opportunity.

Within the whole WR4C partnership there are shared concern around poverty, domestic abuse, and other 'hidden harms,' the late presentation of need, a further widening of the education gap as well as the impact of social distancing on children's development and their mental and emotional health.

Locality working enables an opportunity for practitioners to connect with their local community by building "community capacity" enabling people to provide support and assistance for each other and generate solutions for locally prioritized issues.

Unfortunately shortly after the agreement for the locality based model was secured came the COVID 19 Pandemic, causing significant delay to the physical co-location of Social Workers, Early Help Practitioners and key partners, as well as introducing a layer of complexity which needed careful consideration. The development of services rooted in the communities where our families reside is essential given what we know in respect of the impact on families directly attributable to the pandemic and more recently the cost of living crisis, financial and economic climate.

### 3.2 Progress of physical co-location

West Locality: the first co-location opportunity came about in the West at the Darlaston Family Hub Illmington House, Crescent Road, Wednesbury, Darlaston WS10 8AE .

It was agreed to pilot the West locality to help inform the model further and to introduce a phased approach as follows:

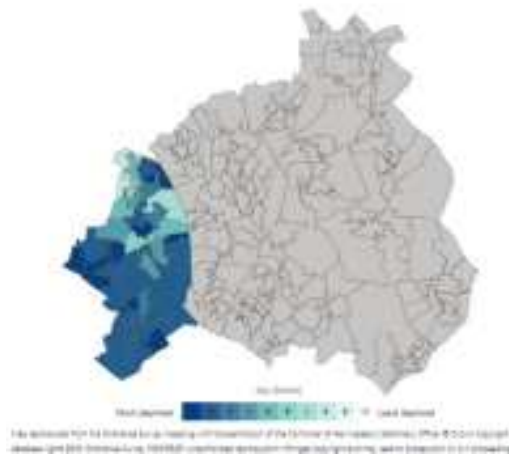
- 1st September 2021 - Children's Family Safeguarding Social Workers
- 6th September 2021- Early Help Practitioners and the CSC Duty and Assessment Teams
- 13th September 2021 onwards commenced the partnership focus which to date has secured co-location of School Nurses, Health Visitors, DWP Officers, Early Help Police Officers, Black Country Domestic Abuse Practitioners, Money, Home, Job colleagues, WHG colleagues.

The move to Darlaston was successful in that there was already a purpose built space which local families utilised and such supported the activity of the practitioners in their engagement with families.

Each locality area of Walsall needs to be understood in its own right. Whilst the overarching aim is to work to restorative principles across children's services and our key partners there needs to be nuanced understanding by practitioners of the areas they serve.

Within the West locality co-located partners and wider community partners have started working closer together to understand the needs of local families, we know and have shared together the West has the second highest rate of referrals into children's social care by 10,000 of the population. Domestic abuse is a problem for the West locality, this is evident in both Police, Children's Services and Black Country Women's Aid data. Parental mental health is also high at 29.8% (percentage of assessments where mental health was a factor) whereas childhood mental health is low at 1.9% (as a percentage factor for assessment) as is socially unacceptable behaviour.

West locality families are made up of a mixture of different households ranging from low income families with multiple children to older people living in inexpensive homes that they own. There are long-term social renters living in low value properties in this area which may include multi-storey flats in urban locations. There are small pockets within in this area where homes are owned by more mature adults where they are enjoying "empty-nest" status or where they have older children that still live at home, they tend to live in mid-range family homes in traditional.



North Locality: In August 2022 the North Locality co-location commenced, the former Children's Centre could not accommodate the physical co-location so it was agreed to have a two centred approach within the North, utilising the existing Family Hub where Early Help and partners had been co-located previously to deliver bespoke and targeted support to children, young people and their families whilst having a co-located office environment for Social Workers, Early Help Practitioners and key partners, developing relationships in the spirit of cooperation colleagues worked together and were co-located in the office building of 275 Blakenhall Heath.

There then followed a series of disturbances and anti-social behaviour in the Blakenhall area. The locality office where practitioners were based is on the row of shops that were being targeted by local youths. The increase in tension in the area pre dated the arrival of the co-located model and was thought by local community workers to be an impact of the closures of schools and youth provision during Covid 19 pandemic.

There was anxiety expressed by both social care staff and partners which resulted in a temporary leave of the building pending risk assessments being implemented and wider work being undertaken with the community as well as other building opportunities being considered, including an extension to the former children's centre.

There is now a 'Multi-agency North Locality Working Group' set up, including Children's Social Care, Early Help, the Violence Reduction Partnership, the Police, Walsall Housing Group and Community Safety where there is a joined up approach to working with the local community in regard to anti-social behaviour. Significant progress has been made and there has been a reduction in anti-social behaviour alongside a decrease in referrals to the North Locality in regard to anti-social behaviour.

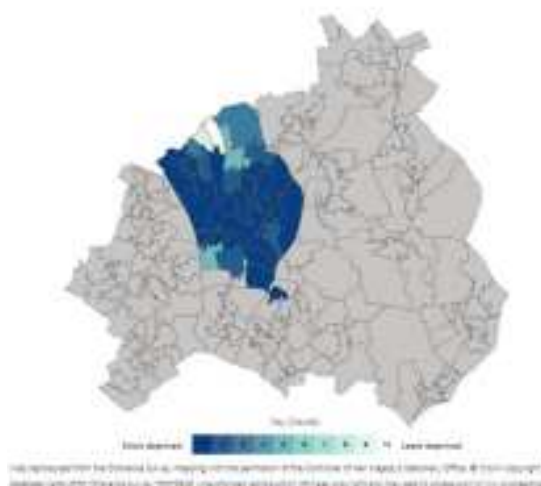
The former Children's Centre has remained open however and has, thankfully, not been a target for the anti-social behaviour experienced within the high street. The centre continues to be staffed by the co-located partners and is delivering targeted and bespoke support to children, young people and their families.

Partners continue to work together however and have shared what is known, North locality is the most deprived locality in the borough. The North locality is mainly made up of low income families aged between 25-40 yrs with multiple children with little or no qualifications. Homes in this area are usually low cost and are often found in areas with fewer employment options. Transient renters who pay modest rents for low cost

homes are apparent in this area, they are mainly young people often only living in properties for short periods of time before moving on.

59,551 people live in the North – 20.9% of the Walsall population, of which 15,931 (26.8%) are aged 0-17 – 23.1% of all Walsall children. The North locality is the least populous, but has the highest proportion of children as a percentage of population, but the lowest percentage of children overall. This suggests that sibling groups are bigger in this area

The North locality receives the highest number of referrals into Children's Social Care and Early Help despite having the lowest percentage of child population. Neglect and emotional abuse are a significant factor for assessments in the North locality.



Central/South Locality: In December 2022 the move to Central/South locality took place, the building is the former Birchills Children's Centre on Birchills Street, WS2 8NF.

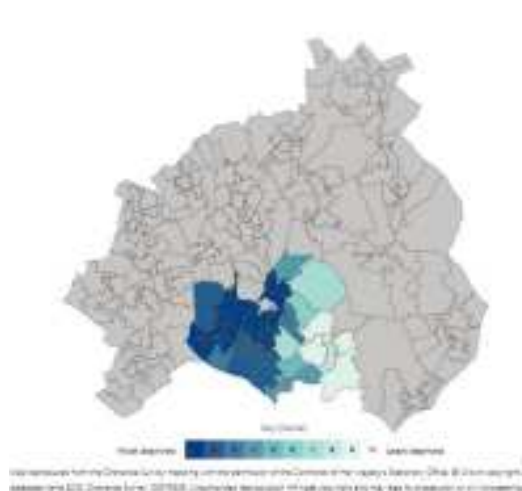
The building will be shared with Social Care, Early Help, partners and the Safeguarding and Review service. There has been a delay in this move due to concerns expressed around whether the current IT system could accommodate the 60 practitioners who will be using the building. Whilst there is not sufficient capacity to accommodate the entire service areas at all times and the nature of the work and demands can enable flexibility, the current issue is that the IT is at capacity when there are only 35 workers within the building. Currently the building is occupied by Children' social workers, family safeguarding practitioners, Early Help and the academy and the safeguarding and review service. However owing to the IT issues not all staff can be in the office at any one time.

The building is ideally located by a fire station, school and Mosque. It is at the heart of the community and purpose built to undertake direct work with children and families. There is an outdoor space that can be creatively used in the summer months to support play with children and families.

Partners have started to work together to understand the local needs of families, what we do know is that 64,635 people live in the Central/South locality – this area has the joint highest proportion of children as a percentage of the population.

The locality has seen the greatest increase in referrals with a 13.9% increase in referrals leading to an assessment. There is an increasing demand to Children's Statutory Services in the South however the take up of Early Help is lower than in the other three localities. The Early Help service had formally been commissioned out, however this was brought back into the local authority in November 2021 and on-going work with the Early Help practitioners, local services and community leaders has commenced and needs further exploration in regard to the reasons for the low number of referrals into Early Help.

The increase of demand in South to CSC needs to be properly understood in order to ensure an appropriate offer of support to meeting the vulnerabilities of families residing in the South locality. This is a factor that is being reconsidered alongside the increase in demand.

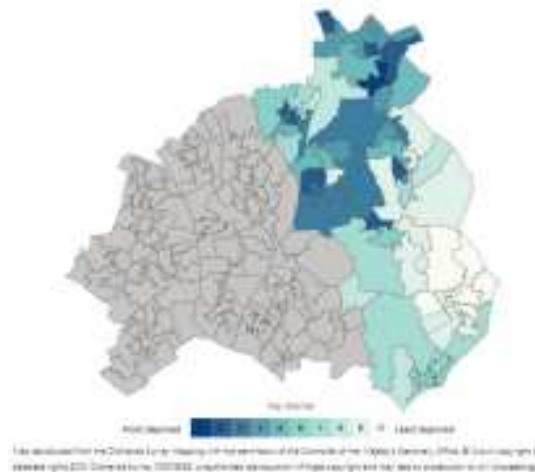


East Locality: This remains the final locality to be opened. A building within Silver Court Brownhills has been identified and is currently being renovated. This has not stopped the building of relationships however with those to be co-located (it is recognised that without a physical location it does hinder but does not totally prevent) and partners are already being identified to be co-located within the East.

What we do know about the East locality is it is mainly made up of elderly homeowners or married couples with high value detached homes. There is more financial security in this locality and includes people who have children who have left home and those who have chosen to downsize to live among others of similar age and life style. There are pockets of areas that consist of spacious and prestigious homes in established residential areas.

The East is the smallest locality, almost 40 % of assessments in the East have domestic abuse as a factor, alcohol and substance misuse appear in higher proportions in the East alongside child mental health issues.





### 3.3 What's going well?

There are a number of area's of work going well, including relationships between practitioners in Early Help, CSC and key partners with School Nurses, Health Visitors, DWP, Black Country Women's Aid, Money, Home, Job, WHG, Police and the voluntary and community sector.

- Local services building networks – partners reporting feeling connected and involved
- Group supervision for children and young people and the ability to transfer learning from the Family Safeguarding model across the locality area
- Improved and improving relationships with voluntary and community sector
- Hearing about new initiatives through time to talk
- Starting to identify barriers and/or gaps in service provision against demand
- Delivery of a 'hybrid' parenting support offer, offering group work, one to one intervention and virtual training and support. Various groups taking place at Darlaston including Mellow Dads, Circle of security etc. ensuring flexibility to meet the needs of parents/carers, so delivery virtually, in the evenings and at weekends
- Developing an understanding of the local area, customs and practices. Practitioners are getting a sense of what it's like to be a family in the area and can better understand the cultural context
- Closer relationships with schools
- Connection to local 'hubs' for additional support for families
- Connectivity to the new Family Hub model and approach
- The introduction of the 'hub and spoke' model – where key community venues have been funded to work with and be part of the 'locality hub' offering their venues to partners working with children, young people and their families as well as offering the venues to have co-located meetings and opportunities to further strengthen partnerships and collaboration

The Early Help Partnership Time to Talk has become embedded in 3 of our 4 localities, with Central/South is now being focused on. This platform offers an opportunity for partners to come together in each locality to understand the issues faced and resources available to share information, connect local partners and consider the local offer and needs further. Themes discussed to date include:

- ❖ Understanding the Early Help demand for children, young people and their families
- ❖ CAMHS , demand and referral pathways

- ❖ Understanding of mental health needs
- ❖ WHG offer
- ❖ 'Walking in my shoes' presentation from social worker and voluntary sector
- ❖ Holiday Activity Fund (HAF)
- ❖ Hub & Spoke model
- ❖ School Nurses offer
- ❖ Understanding behaviour, behaviour and relationship policy
- ❖ VRU support for ASB/violent behaviour
- ❖ Young carers & the local offer
- ❖ Reducing Parental Conflict
- ❖ Domestic Abuse
- ❖ Early Help volunteer programme
- ❖ LGBTQ
- ❖ Family Safeguarding Model
- ❖ Launch of the Early Help, Domestic Abuse and Child Neglect Strategy

The Early Help Partnership launch of its 'outcomes framework' adopting the Government Supporting Families (Supporting Families Programme Guidance 2022 to 2025) 10 priority need categories to help us all identify the areas of support that families need which are:

1. Education
2. Early Years
3. Health
4. Drugs & Alcohol
5. Family Relationships
6. Abuse & Exploitation
7. Crime Prevention and Tackling Crime
8. Domestic Abuse
9. Secure Housing
10. Financial Stability

The outcome framework describes what we think would be a positive outcome for the families receiving help and support from the partnership, framed against each of the 10 priority needs.

Children's services launched the family safeguarding model in September 2020 which adopted a whole family approach to meeting the needs of children and their families. The emphasis across the partnership is adopting an approach to meeting the needs of families with an emphasis of working with the wider partnership and community.

### 3.4 Areas of Improvement

- Physical co-location has been significantly delayed due to the COVID pandemic, delay in physical building refurbishment and anti-social behaviour within the North locality, all of these are being addressed independently however has caused delay
- Opportunities to understand inter-dependencies could be better developed by easier access to data that supports this understanding. This will be further supported by the introduction and alignment with the Family Hub Model
- Space does not allow for full co-location however there is further opportunities for shared reflective spaces that support and align collective partnership thinking, again supported by the 'hub and spoke' model and will be further strengthened by Family Hubs

- There needs to be further development of the business support offer
- Further opportunities for collaboration and joint working to better understand how the wider partnership can collectively address local issues such as domestic abuse perpetrator commissioning for example
- Opportunity around providing mental health/emotional wellbeing support

### 3.5 Family Hubs Alignment

With the implementation of the Family Hubs across the borough this will further strengthen the support available for children, young people and their families along with the co-location and wider local offer for families within our localities. The Family Hub blue print is a system-wide model of providing high-quality, joined-up, whole-family support services. Hubs deliver these services from conception, through a child's early years until they reach the age of 19 (or 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).

Family hubs aim to make a positive difference to parents, carers and their children by providing a mix of physical and virtual spaces, as well as outreach, where families can easily access non-judgmental support for the challenges they may be facing. Family Hubs will provide a universal 'front door' to families, offering a 'one-stop shop' of family support services across their social care, education, mental health and physical health needs, with a comprehensive Start for Life offer for parents and babies at its core.

The programme focuses on 6 specific areas of action and requires the wider partnership to commit to implementing these

1. Seamless support for families: a coherent joined-up Start for Life offer available to all families. The universal Start for Life offer should include the essential support that any new family might need: midwifery, health visiting, mental health support, infant-feeding advice and specialist breastfeeding support, safeguarding and services relating to SEND.
2. A welcoming hub for families: family hubs as a place for families to access Start for Life services. Services available physically, virtually and via outreach.
3. The information families need when they need it: designing digital, virtual and telephone offers around the needs of the family, including a digital child health record
4. An empowered Start for Life workforce: developing a modern, skilled workforce to meet the changing needs of families.
5. Continually improving the Start for Life offer: improving data, evaluation, outcomes and proportionate inspection.
6. Leadership for change: ensuring local and national accountability and building the economic case

Our localities Family Hub & Spoke approach and co-location of key partners and strengthen working together will be aligned.

## 4 Financial information

<b>Original Budget</b>					<b>72,780.00</b>
<b>Spend as at December 2022</b>	<b>CCTV £</b>	<b>Card Access System £</b>	<b>Non-Security works £</b>	<b>Contribution from revenue £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Birchills</b>	7,995.00	-	11,731.64		19,726.64
<b>Blakenhall</b>	4,995.00	-	30,475.74		35,470.74
<b>Darlaston</b>	-	15,175.00	11,194.24		26,369.24
<b>Silver Court</b>	4,995.00	11,829.00	27,404.74		44,228.74
<b>Unallocated</b>	-	-	1,172.36	(12,639.00)	- 11,466.64
<b>Total</b>	17,985.00	27,004.00	81,978.72	(12,639.00)	<b>114,328.72</b>
<b>Over Budget</b>					<b>41,548.72</b>

A number of factors including inflationary rises and scope change are thought to be contributors to the overspend.

There is currently work ongoing to determine exact causes of overspend and appropriate re-allocation to negate the overspend.

## 5 Reducing inequalities

The move to localities is an integral aspect of our transformation journey and enables a greater sense of connectivity between workers and the community with who they engage. By building “community capacity” – the ability of people to provide support and assistance for each other and generate solutions for locally prioritized issues. Communities with high community capacity have extensive networks of relationships through which reciprocity can flow and foster the kind of actions to influence whole systems. There is emerging examples of good partnership practices that can be shared across the system.

There are issues present in each locality- domestic abuse is the highest and most consistent factor for referral across all four localities. There has been an increase in referrals and assessments owing to parental mental health. There has also been an increase in child mental health in East and a rise in physical abuse in West, Central & South. Locality working enables a partnership approach to meeting the needs of the community.

The benefits and evidence of delivering a community based model of working reduces the chances of poor outcomes for children, young people and their families by having a range of local services and support networks together as well as building community capacity and community resilience by having the right support available at a local level and accessible at the earliest opportunity.

## 6 Decide

The WR4C transformation programme and Family Hub Model continues to be developed and will further strengthen the partnership, whilst there is no decision for

scrutiny to be made around the programmes, scrutiny are asked to support the direction of travel and endorse the achievements made so far.

## **7 Respond**

There has been an increase in demand in West and South, there is further exploration and analysis needed to ensure that each locality is sufficiently resourced to meet the increase in demand that has shifted since the original data analysis was completed in 2019 that determined the resource for each locality area. The transformation journey pre dates the pandemic as it pre dates the cost of living crisis that will no doubt see many families struggle with poverty. There will be families who may not previously have come to the attention of statutory services who owing to the shift in landscape are facing unprecedented challenges to their health and wellbeing.

The North locality has seen increased stability in staffing across children's social care and Early Help. This stability has led to a 50% reduction in children where care proceedings are issued. There has also been a decrease in children made subject to child protection plans. There is however anxiety amongst practitioners in regard to the proposed return to the Blakenhall Office owing to the experiences of practitioners during the summer months which are being considered further.

## **8 Review**



Performance conversations have become more meaningful owing to more in depth analysis of each locality area. This enables a more sophisticated level of discussion around the issues, demographics and needs of each locality that support system wide analysis leading to a greater understanding of what resources are needed to meet the demands of the children and families in line with our transformation objective of ensuring that children in Walsall have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy and learning.

In order for families to benefit from the family safeguarding model and relaunched Early Help offer it is essential that we continue to use performance data and system intelligence to ensure that we are meeting our ambitious objective.

A review report to scrutiny will be scheduled for 12 months, detailing the achievements, barriers and further co-location and Family Hub model

Background papers  
Early Help Strategy 2021- 2024

Authors:

Rita Homer  
Head of Service Locality Family  
Safeguarding  
  
 Rita.homer@walsall.gov.uk

Julie Jones  
Early Help Group Manager  
 655412  
 Julie.jones@walsall.gov.uk

## **Family Hubs**

**Ward(s):** All

**Portfolios:** Cllr Stacie Elson

### **1 Aim**

- To provide an overview of the Department for Education & Department for Health & Social Care Family Hubs and Start for Life programme where families are provided with the integrated support they need to care for their children from conception, throughout the early years and into the start of adulthood. This is to enable parents to establish a firm foundation for their children, from which to meet their full potential in life
- To provide an overview of how the programme will be delivered in Walsall in line with the family hub framework and the progress made in implementing the programme to date
- To provide an overview of the implementation plan for 2023- 2025, reporting and evaluation proposal for ensuring the programme in Walsall improves outcomes for babies, children and families and reduces inequalities in outcomes, experiences and access to services within the Walsall borough

### **2 Recommendations**

1. For the direction of travel for the implementation of the Family Hub & Start for Life Programme to be supported
2. To support the implantation plan and partnership in driving forward the model and embedding across the borough

### **3 Report detail – know**

- 3.1 On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care announced 75 local authorities were eligible to receive a share of £301.75 million Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funding package for the period 2022-2025.

Walsall is one of the 75 local authorities to receive this investment and to implement the programmes vision, objectives and ambition across the borough.

Vision – to provide families with the integrated support they need to care for their children from conception, throughout the early years, and into the start of adulthood. This is to enable parents to establish a firm foundation for their children, from which to meet their full potential in life.

Objectives - to join up and enhance services delivered through transformed family hubs in each local authority, in order for parents and carers to feel supported and empowered in caring for and nurturing their babies and children, ensuring they receive the best start in life which will improve health and education outcomes for babies and children and enable them to thrive in later life.

Ambition - all families need support from time to time to help their babies and children thrive, whether that's from friends, family, volunteers, or practitioners. The ambition of this programme is for every family to receive the support they need, when they need it. To ensure all families have access to the information and tools they need to care for and interact positively with their babies and children, and to look after their own wellbeing.

Families we know at times experience difficulties interacting with complex service landscapes and have to 're-tell their story' to different services and professionals, this is specifically the case for vulnerable and disadvantaged families. The introduction of a non-stigmatising and single front door model is aimed at addressing this with local services, working together and in partnership with the voluntary, community and faith sectors, all of whom have a vital role to play in supporting families. Breaking down the organisational barriers professionals often face in working together along with organisational geographical boundaries which don't always align when it comes to the delivery of services, which can add to the complexity. Improving 'join-up' between state and non-state services and taking a whole family approach better supports families to access the help they need, when they need it.

The family hub programme focusses on 6 specific areas of action and requires all local authorities to commit to implementing these:

1. Seamless support for families: a coherent joined-up 'Start for Life' offer available to all families. The universal Start for Life offer should include the essential support that any new family might need: midwifery, health visiting, mental health support, infant-feeding advice and specialist breastfeeding support, safeguarding and services relating to SEND
2. A welcoming hub for families: family hubs as a place for families to access Start for Life services. Services available physically, virtually and via outreach
3. The information families need when they need it: designing digital, virtual and telephone offers around the needs of the family, including a digital child health record
4. An empowered Start for Life workforce: developing a modern, skilled workforce to meet the changing needs of families
5. Continually improving the Start for Life offer: improving data, evaluation, outcomes and proportionate inspection
6. Leadership for change: ensuring local and national accountability and building the economic case

Best start in life programme focusses on the 1,001 critical days, from conception to the age of two, which is a time of rapid development. Our experiences during this time lay the foundations for lifelong emotional and physical health. This means that the love, care, and nurture that a baby experiences in this period is particularly important, and adverse experiences can have lasting consequences.



The core elements – the programme funding provided through the government focusses on developing integrated services for children aged 0-2 and will focus on the delivery of 5 core activities/services which need to be developed as part of the programme, with each element having a minimum offer which each local authority must deliver on and a more ambitious (optional) 'go further' offer. The 5 core activities are

1. Parenting support -provision for new and expectant parents which helps make the transition to parenthood as smooth as possible, and which stresses the importance of sensitive, responsive caregiving. This must include both universal provision and some more targeted programmes available for parents/carers with further needs
2. Perinatal mental health support – this should build on the investment and progress made as part of the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) (LTP) commitments already underway where particular focus on moderate to severe or / complex mental health needs has been targeted. This start for life funding is an opportunity to complement the improvements to specialist mental health services made as part of the LTP and to offer an evidenced based assessment and support to parents/carers with mild moderate health needs and to develop support specifically for fathers and co-parents
3. Parent-infant relationship support – to develop and deliver a range of evidenced based high quality parenting programmes and parenting support/interventions available to all local expectant parents and those with babies from conception to the age of two, alongside wider integrated support that is inclusive and culturally tailored for parents to improve child and parent outcomes across area of babies and children's development. To develop peer to peer support networks and community outreach activity open to all, with a focus on supporting fathers
4. Feeding support – to promote breastfeeding and support parents to meet their infant feeding goals, to have flexible and tailored services available to all parents
5. Home learning environment (HLE) support – to provide evidenced based interventions that train practitioners to support parents with the HLE. Aimed at supporting educational recovery and the school readiness of children who were babies during the pandemic including early language

Parents should be seamlessly connected to all services within the family hub and in practice support may overlap for parenting, perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships, all of which is underpinned by a knowledgeable, skilled, and confident workforce.

Sign up- all local authorities were required to complete an initial sign- up form in September 2022 and submit to Government, indicating the commitment to delivering these minimum expectations and identifying which core elements the 'go further' offer would be committed to.

Walsall have given a commitment to deliver an ambitious programme with achieving the 'go further elements across all of the delivery strands.



Family hub blueprint for action - the Department for Education and Department for Health and Social Care published a detail guidance and funding allocation for each Local Authority along with a family hub blue print which supports strategic and operation design and development of the family hub and best start in life, based on learning from 14 local authorities who had been part of an initial trail blazer and brings together the 'expertise through experience' approach.

- 3.2 Local context/ current landscape: Walsall are using the blue print to start to implement our family hub and best start in life programme, along with working closely with Coventry who were one of the initial trail blazers and now a regional lead on the programme.

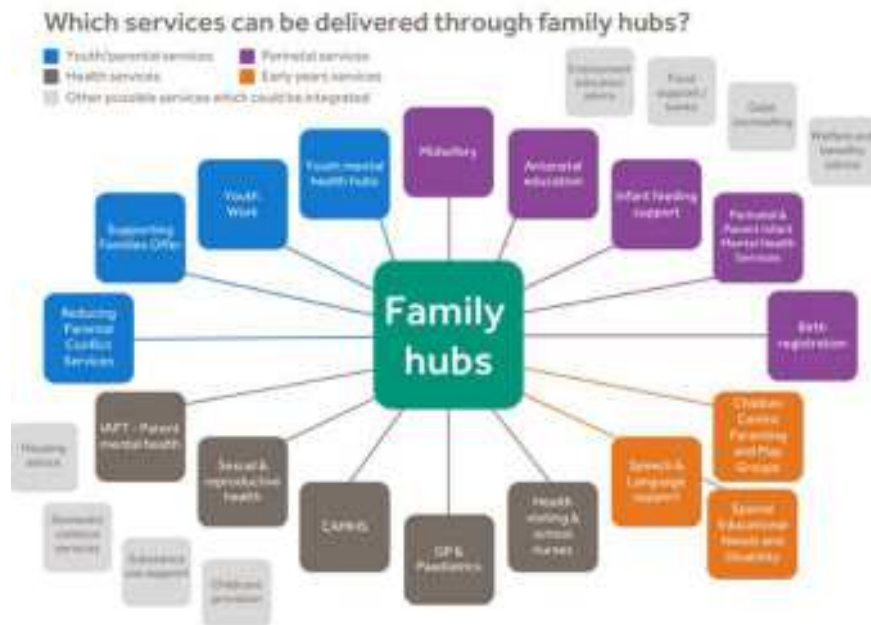
As part of our Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C) transformation programmes we have already created four locality hubs and 11 community spokes known as the 'Hub & Spoke Model' strengthening and building further relationships with key voluntary and community sector partners to ensure we connect families to community support and secure sustainable support. See appendix A

The locality hubs have seen the opportunities to co-locate teams, connecting practitioners (including Social Workers, Family Support Practitioners, Health Visitors, School Nurses, Early Help Police Officers, Domestic Abuse Support Practitioners, mental health support and substance misuse support), with each other, with community resources and the families they work with to enable us to provide easier access to integrated services giving the right help and the right time.

The family hubs will enable us to further strengthen our integrated locality model focussed on giving all children in Walsall a best start in life and is based on 3 principles

- Strengths
- Assets
- Connections

Although the Focus of Family Hubs is on delivering effective information and services to children aged 0-5, there is an expectation to expand these services to ensure the programme has a whole family approach and supports children 0-19 to grow up safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well. Therefore the below services are expected to form part of the Family Hub delivery



In addition to our specific children transformation programme we will be using two wider key local partnership change programmes as fundamental enablers in the development of our family hubs

1. Walsall Connected - a partnership between LA and local community associations, libraries and other trusted partners. The programme focussed on training staff and volunteers to improve people's digital access and skills.
2. Resilient communities – led through our Integrated Care partnership this programme focussing on early intervention and prevention rather than treatment. Identifying how we can help build community resilience by creating connections and an environment for increased social and voluntary action amongst citizens. As a partnership we are focussed on reducing health inequalities, acknowledging the need to address the wider determinants of health, which have a bigger impact on people's health than healthcare alone.

Needs analysis – there has been two key needs analyses' completed in 2022 which is supporting the implementation and focus of support

- Walsall Insight commissioned by the Children and Young People Alliance on the 1001 days included a deep dive into infant mortality as Walsall has the worse rates in the country.
- Walsall Maternity Ethnicity needs assessment and review of support which gives us a good baseline for the work that needs to be done as part of family hubs.

Please see appendix B attached.

Partnership working - information gathered as part of 'We are Walsall 2040' with parents and carers of children aged 0-19 will provide us valuable information to help shape the family hub programme in Walsall.

Children's Services are taking a lead on the development of the programme and have secured good engagement from key stakeholders along with the development of a multi-agency Family Hub Steering Group.

A number of briefings have been and continue to be held and various stakeholder implementation workshop are taking place.

Stakeholders to date include Public Health, Walsall Together, Community Mental Health, 0-19 Healthy Child programme (health visiting and school health), Paediatric Service, Voluntary and Community sector, local authority Early Years Team, Resilient Communities, Walsall Health Care Trust, Housing, Black Country Mental Health; Police and ICS.

Sign up form: In September 2022 Walsall submitted the initial sign up agreement indicating where we are at against the required elements of delivery, along with how we are planning to deliver an ambitious programme with achieving the 'go further elements across all of the delivery strands.

Delivery plan: In December 2022 Walsall completed and submitted the family hub delivery plan setting out our current position as reflected above along with the medium and long term plan which is awaiting approval by the governments Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme Team.

Consultation: Locally Family Hubs are seen as an opportunity to drive system change which will have a significant positive impact on our future generation. This was reflected in our consultation with parents and partners who felt following principles where key building our consensus for change:

- Understanding the lived experience of children, families and communities and how Family Hubs/Start For Life can improve these
- Equity at the heart of decision making - recognising that that the needs of our families across the localities are different and therefore we need to allocate resources and opportunities accordingly to reach an equal outcome.
- Sustainability - building a model that is not just relying on government guidance or funding, but that is rooted in local strategy and transformation programmes. It has therefore been agreed that Family Hubs will form an integral part of 'We Are Walsall 2040' vision and Strategy

During October and December 2022 we have undertaken extensive consultation with all stakeholders, including parents and carers around the vision and branding of our local programme, this information is currently being processed to develop our joined localised vision and branding which will be taken for sign off to the Family Hub Steering Group in February 2023.

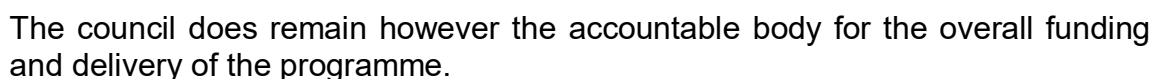
Governance - In September, the confirmed their support to the delivery of the programme as it aligned to the Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its three priority areas:

- 1) Children and young people: Ensuring all children have the best possible start in life and support them in growing up safe from harm, happy and learning well with self-belief, aspiration and support to be their best: Walsall

- 2) Mental health and wellbeing: supporting both the parents and children health and wellbeing to increase resilience and supports the building and maintenance of strong relationships
- 3) Digital: the development of a digital inclusive offer to ensure that the information and services are easy to access by all.

An operational management group has been established reporting into CPLG.

- 1) Development of the Start for Life offer
- 2) Local needs assessment
- 3) Workforce and OD
- 4) Digital
- 5) Data and Performance
- 6) Communications and branding



- Development of an outcome framework
- Development of a branding and communication plan, including the Start for Life Offer due for publication April 2023
- Development of a specific website
- Development of a digital solutions to provide better access

- Development of the 'Family Hub Way of Working' document setting out our vision, values and behaviours
- Recruitment of the family hub transformation team, including a lead officer along with a recruitment drive for further workforce development, including further investment in parenting support for fathers and for parents/carers of SEND children, volunteer's co-ordinator and local volunteers etc.
- Development of a commissioning framework
- Draft parent/carer engagement strategy and plan, which will be presented to a range of parents/carers with a view to finalise and publish final strategy in April 2023
- Development of family hub training package for staff across the 'hub ab spoke/ model
- Implementation of data sharing systems

April 2023 will see the official launch of Walsall Family Hubs, this will be the formal opening of our 4 (re-branded) Family Hub locality sites and our 11 Family Hub spokes (community buildings with a family hub offer) with each site having a clear Family Hub/Start for life offer.

Through our commissioning framework we will be looking to expand our Family Hub outreach sites from 11 to 20 in year 2

#### **4 Financial information**

Funding to deliver the Family Hub & Start for Life Programme for Walsall has been confirmed between £3.74m and £3.90m over 3 financial year (2022/23 – 2024/25). The funding is made up of a mixture of revenue and capital funding and must be spent in line with the percentage allocations set out in the grant guidance. This is detailed in appendix C at the end of the report.

The Local Authority will be the key accountable body for the grant but there is a clear expectation the programme will be developed and delivered in collaboration with partners with Health, Voluntary Sector and Education system.

Financial returns will be completed twice a year to provide assurance that expenditure is in line with the grant determination and agreed programme outcomes. All funds must be fully spent within the financial year they are intended for. Any unspent funds will be required to be repaid to the grant provider.

Walsall have submitted all relevant sign up documentation which was approved on 21<sup>st</sup> November and a memorandum of understanding has been completed and approved by senior management. In addition to this a full delivery plan has been submitted in December 22 and the first 50% of the 2022/23 funding is expected to be received in January 2023.

Spend will be monitored and reported to the Director of Early Help on a monthly basis to ensure all spend is in line with the grant determination and all funds are spent within the timescales set. Monthly progress meetings will also be held with the Family Hub project team to monitor progress and spend.

## **5 Reducing Inequalities**

Effective, evidence based and accessibility of the family hubs that improves the services for parents and children will help reduce a range of issues that result in or exacerbate inequalities, informed by needs assessments to understand population and accessibility needs.

Information for families will meet the Accessible Information Requirement and will be available in local languages.

The family hub and its services demonstrate and model inclusion for children, young people and families with all types of special educational needs and disability, with reasonable adjustments proactively built in.

Services will be accessible, ensuring environments are physically and sensory accessible.

Services across the family hub network will gather and share a range of evidence and data to ensure that families in priority groups, including those with protected characteristics, vulnerable and seldom-heard groups, are accessing services through the family hub network and feel their needs are being met, and that the impact of services on individual families is effectively monitored.

## **6 Decide**

The Family Hub model and delivery is an ambitious programme, whilst there is no decision for scrutiny to be made about the delivery model, scrutiny are asked to support the direction of travel and endorse the delivery plan to date.

## **7 Respond**

The Family hub model and implementation plan is responding to the needs of parents and children, ensuring an integrated support offer is available and accessible to all and supports the needs and care from conception throughout early years and beyond. It ensures parents establish a firm foundation for their children, from which to meet their full potential. Walsall's extension to the existing locality family hub and spoke model is responding to the family hub blueprint along with the delivery plan which is awaiting sign off by the governments Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme Team.

## **8 Review**

The delivery plan and associated work will be continually reviewed by the Steering Group and reported Health and Wellbeing Board. It is intended to also bring regular updated reports to scrutiny for information.

### **Background Papers**

[The Best Start in Life: A vision for the 1,001 Critical Days](#)

[Healthy Child Programme 0-19 public health services](#)

**Author**

Isabel Vanderheeren

Director Walsall Right for Children Early Help and Partnerships

☎ 650434

✉ [Isabel.vanderheeren@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Isabel.vanderheeren@walsall.gov.uk)

Julie Jones

Group Manager Early Help

☎ 655412

✉ [Julie.jones@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.jones@walsall.gov.uk)



## Appendix A

### Walsall Hub & Spoke Model

#### North

**Locality Hub:** Venue spread over two buildings in close proximity of each other:  
275 Blakenall Heath, Walsall, WS3 1HJ and Blakenall Row.

#### Locality Spokes:

- Bloxwich Community Partnership, Blakenall Row, Blakenall, Walsall., WS3 1LW - 01922 712069 – Dan Garbett
- Frank F Harrison CA, Beechdale Centre, Stephenson Square, Bloxwich, Walsall WS2 7DY Tel: 01922 746967 Contact: Deb Mohammed
- Ryecroft Community Hub 28 New Forest Road. Ryecroft, Walsall WS3 1TR Tel: 01922 234080 Contact: Dave Taylor/Paul Staples

#### West

##### Locality Hub:

Ilmington House, Crescent Road, Wednesbury, WS10 8AE

##### Locality Spokes:

Darlaston All Active,  
Darlaston Town Hall,  
Victoria Road  
Darlaston, WS10 8AA  
Tel: 0121 5686144  
Contact: Sharon Felton

Willenhall CHART19  
Gomer St, Willenhall  
WV13 2NS  
Tel: 01902 368199  
Contact: Sylvia Squires

The Hive Community Hub,  
New Invention,  
The Square  
Tel: 01922 746967  
Contact: Deb Mohammed



#### East

##### Locality Hub:

Silver Court, Brownhills  
WS8 6HA

##### Locality Spokes:

Brownhills CA, Chester Road  
North, Brownhills, WS8 7JW  
Tel: 01543 452119  
Contact: Janet Davies

Manor Farm CA, King George  
Crescent, Walsall, WS4 1EG  
Tel: 01922 614316  
Contact: Sue Evans

Pelsall Community Centre,  
Station Road, Pelsall, Walsall,  
WS3 4BQ  
Tel: 01922 682156  
Contact: Arthur Roberts

#### South

##### Locality Hub:

Birchills Street, Walsall WS2 8NG

##### Locality Spokes:

- Nash Dom CIC Sun Street, Palfrey Walsall, WS1 4AL  
Tel: 01922 616444 /07531090695 Contact: Juraj Modrak/Ana Tomulescu
- Aaina Community Hub Bath Road, Caldmore, Walsall, WS1 3BS Tel: 01922 644006 Contact: A'isha Khan



## Appendix C – Family Hub Grant Allocation

Strand	Split	2022/23 Allocation £	2023/24 Minimum Allocation £	2023/24 Maximum Allocation £	2024/25 Minimum Allocation £	2024/25 Maximum Allocation £	Total Minimum Allocation £	Total Maximum Allocation £
<b>Revenue Funding</b>								
Family Hub Programme Spend	20%	183,800	307,400	325,600	257,000	271,400	748,200	780,800
Parenting Support	16%	147,040	245,920	260,480	205,600	217,120	598,560	624,640
Home Learning Environment	8%	73,520	122,960	130,240	102,800	108,560	299,280	312,320
Parent-infant relationships & perinatal mental health	31%	284,890	476,470	504,680	398,350	420,670	1,159,710	1,210,240
Infant feeding support	16%	147,040	245,920	260,480	205,600	217,120	598,560	624,640
Publish start for life offer & parent carer panels	3%	27,570	46,110	48,840	38,550	40,710	112,230	117,120
Other	1%	9,190	15,370	16,280	12,850	13,570	37,410	39,040
<b>Total Revenue Funding</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>873,050</b>	<b>1,460,150</b>	<b>1,546,600</b>	<b>1,220,750</b>	<b>1,289,150</b>	<b>3,553,950</b>	<b>3,708,800</b>
<b>Capital Funding</b>								
Family Hub Capital Spend	5%	45,950	76,850	81,400	64,250	67,850	187,050	195,200
<b>Total Capital Funding</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>45,950</b>	<b>76,850</b>	<b>81,400</b>	<b>64,250</b>	<b>67,850</b>	<b>187,050</b>	<b>195,200</b>
<b>Total Grant Funding</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>919,000</b>	<b>1,537,000</b>	<b>1,628,000</b>	<b>1,285,000</b>	<b>1,357,000</b>	<b>3,741,000</b>	<b>3,904,000</b>

# Walsall Children & Young people Alliance



# Key Headlines



The Infant Mortality Rate in Walsall is the highest in the country, with **7** in every **1000** live births dying before their 1st birthday.<sup>11</sup>



The uptake of routine childhood vaccinations in Walsall is **decreasing** in trend, and is below the national ambition.<sup>14</sup>

Abuse and Neglect is the most common presenting need in Walsall Children's Service support programmes, and this is proportionally **higher** in 0-2 year olds than in the overall cohort.<sup>23</sup>



Blakenall and Darlaston South have the **highest number** of families with children aged 2 and under that are claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit. These wards also have the highest number of these families that are in Council Tax Arrears.<sup>21</sup>

There was a **22.7% increase** in the number of Children in Care who are aged 2 and under, between 2019 and 2020. This number has since remained stable.<sup>23</sup>



The number of children aged 2 and under who are subject to Child Protection Plans and Early Help has **decreased** significantly since 2019.<sup>23</sup>



The percentage of 2-2.5 year olds reaching the expected level of development at the Healthy Child Programme review is **decreasing** in trend and is significantly lower than the national rate.<sup>17</sup>

# 0-2 year old Population in Walsall



In **2020**, there were  
**11,600** 0-2 year olds  
living in Walsall.<sup>1</sup>



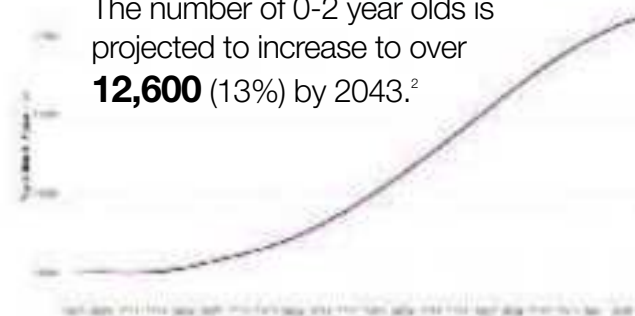
**Wards** in the South and  
West of the borough have  
the **highest numbers** of  
0-2 year olds, particularly  
Blakenall, Darlaston South  
and Palfrey, each with  
about **900** 0-2 year olds.

Ward Name	Pop	%
Blakenall	1,000	8.62%
Birchills Lanehead	600	5.20%
Darlaston South	900	7.76%
Palfrey	900	7.76%
Preck	900	7.76%
St. Matthews	800	6.90%
Willenhall South	800	6.90%
Gentley and Darlaston North	700	6.03%
Goxwich East	600	5.17%
Aldridge Central and South	500	4.31%
Aldridge North and Walsall Wood	500	4.31%
Goxwich West	500	4.31%
Grownhills	500	4.31%
Proddock	500	4.31%
Rushall Greenfield	500	4.31%
Willenhall North	500	4.31%
Petsall	400	3.45%
Preesley Park Farm	400	3.45%
Short Heath	400	3.45%
Shirley	400	3.45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,600</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**11,600**



The number of 0-2 year olds is  
projected to increase to over  
**12,600** (13%) by 2043.<sup>2</sup>



© Crown Copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100019529

# Healthy Pregnancy



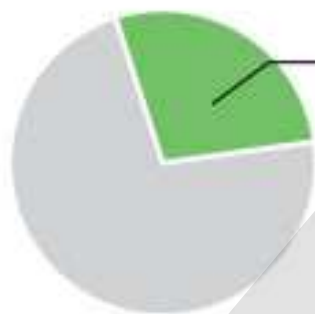
In **2018/19**, **68.5%** of pregnant women accessed early maternity care, which is higher than the England rate **(57.8)**.<sup>3</sup>



## Late booking

However, this means that about **1 in 3** women access maternity care later in pregnancy. Late access to maternity care increases the risk to the pregnancy, as they have potentially missed the window of opportunity for screening for particular infectious and inherited conditions. Inadequate use of antenatal care has been shown to be strongly independently associated with increased odds of maternal death.<sup>3</sup>

## In Walsall mothers;



**27.9%** were obese in early pregnancy in 2018/19.<sup>4</sup>



In **2017/18** – about **12%** of mothers had social complex factors.<sup>5</sup>



**18.7%** were smokers in early pregnancy in **2018/19**<sup>3</sup>

While **13.5%** were smokers at time of delivery in **2020/21**.<sup>4</sup>

\*Complex social factors as defined by NICE guidance (CG110): Domestic abuse; Recent migrants (women who moved to the UK within the previous 12 months); Substance misuse (alcohol and/or drugs). See NICE guidance CG110 for detailed definition.



# Healthy Births

In 2020, there were **3,402** live births in Walsall.<sup>6</sup>



**39** of these births were to mothers aged under 18 years.<sup>7</sup>

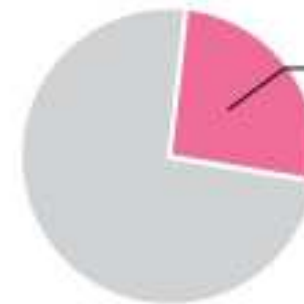


At a rate of **62.9** live births per 1000 women aged 15-44 in Walsall, which is higher than the England rate (55.3).<sup>9</sup>

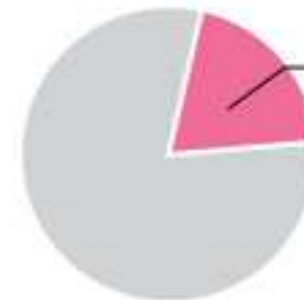


**4.2%** of full-term babies were born with a low birth weight, which is significantly higher than both the West Midlands regional (**3.1%**) and the national (**2.9**) rates.<sup>4</sup>

**Walsall** has the highest infant mortality rate in the country with **7** in every **1000** live births dying before their first birthday.<sup>11</sup>



**25.9%** of babies born in Walsall were born to non-UK born mothers.<sup>10</sup>



**20.1%** of Walsall babies were born to Black and Minority Ethnic mothers\*.<sup>7</sup>

\*BAME Mothers - The Infant Feeding Survey 2010 found that mothers from all minority ethnic groups were more likely to breastfeed compared with White mothers.<sup>8</sup>

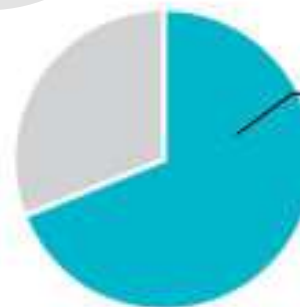
# Healthy Start



Breastfeeding initiation – **52.2%** of babies born in Walsall in 2018/19 had a first feed of breastmilk.<sup>4</sup>



Almost **1 in 3** children under 5 years old experience visually obvious dental decay.<sup>12</sup>



**69%** uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers by eligible people in Walsall.<sup>13</sup>

## Vaccinations:



**90%** of eligible children in Walsall have received one dose of the MMR vaccine by age 2 in **2020/21**, lower than the national ambition of **95%**.<sup>14</sup>

**94.1%** of 2 year old children in Walsall have received the DTaP/IPV/Hib vaccine in **2020/21**, higher than the national average (93.8), but lower than the ambition of **95%**.<sup>14</sup>



The rate of A&E attendances for **0-4** year olds in Walsall was **562.8** per 1000 population, which is lower than the national rate of **659.8**.<sup>15</sup>

# Healthy Development

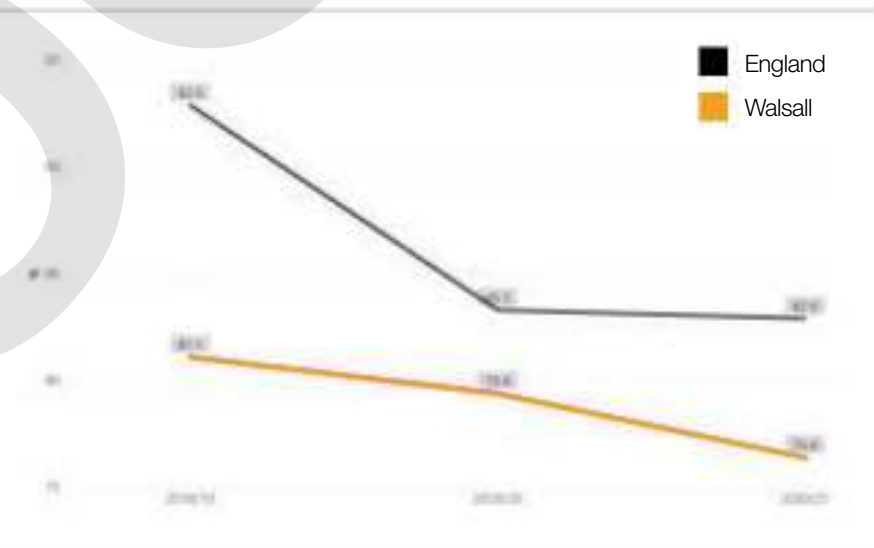


Disparities in child development are recognisable in the second year of life and have an impact by the time children enter school. If left unsupported, these children are more likely to fail to achieve their full potential. All children in England are eligible for development review around their second birthday as part of the national Healthy Child Programme.

The domains of development which are tested include communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving and personal-social skills. These indicators measure important outcomes which will drive school readiness and longer-term outcomes in later life such as education, employment and life chances.

In 2020/21, **82.5%** of children received a 2-2.5 year development review. However, this means that there were **556** children in Walsall who did not receive this development review in 2020/21.<sup>17</sup>

**The percentage of 2-2.5 year olds children reaching the expected level of development:**



  
**Communication Skills:** 89.8%  
(England 86.8)

  
**Social/Personal Skills:** 86.4%  
(England 90.2%)

  
**Fine Motor Skills:** 91.8%  
(England 92.0%)

  
**Problem Solving Skills:** 94.5%  
(England 91.9)

  
**Gross Motor Skills:** 93.5%  
(England 91.8)

Page 56 of 112



# Living Well



## Where children live – the condition, location and stability of their accommodation – has a wide ranging impact on their early health and development.<sup>18</sup>

Childhood poverty can lead to premature mortality and poor health outcomes for adults. Reducing the numbers of children who experience poverty should improve these adult health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy. There is also a wide variety of evidence to show that children who live in poverty are exposed to a range of risks that can have a serious impact on their mental health.



Around **1 in 3** (32%) children and young people in Walsall live in **Low – Income families**.<sup>19</sup>

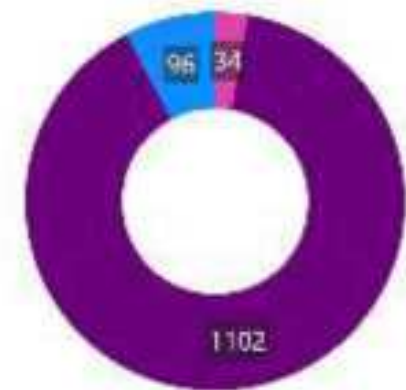


In 2021, **8** in every **1000** children in Walsall are **Homeless\***, which is a significantly lower rate than nationally (11).<sup>20</sup>

## Number of Families with under 2's claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefits in Walsall

### Benefit Type

- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Reduction
- Both

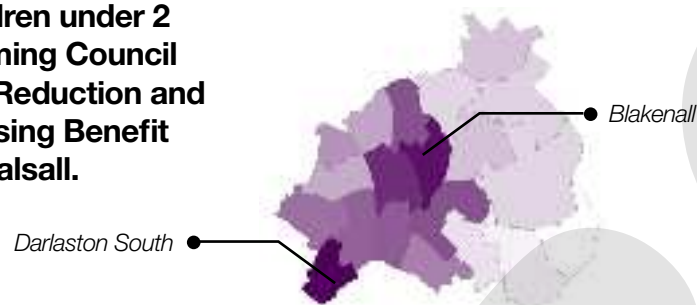


There are **1232** Walsall families with children under 2 in the household who are low-income and claiming Housing Benefit and or Council Tax Reduction, which is around **4.5%** of the total number of people in receipt of these benefits.<sup>21</sup>

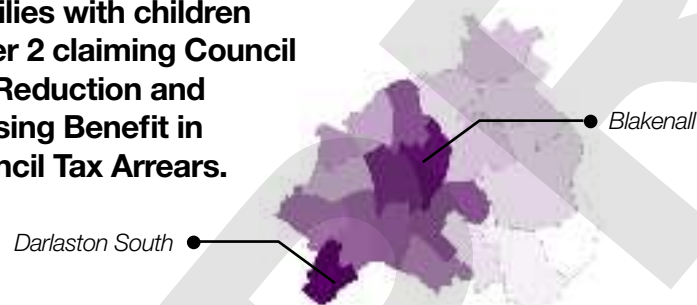
\*Homelessness –defined as households with dependent children owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act

# Living Well

**Families with children under 2 claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit in Walsall.**



**Families with children under 2 claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit in Council Tax Arrears.**



© Crown Copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100019529

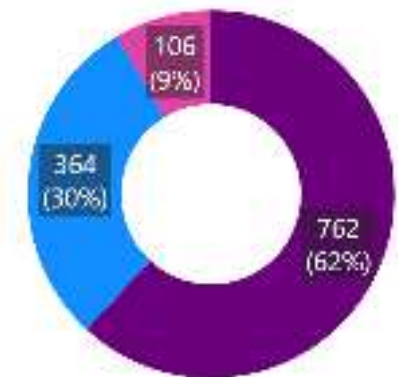
**Darlaston South and Blakenall** have the highest number of families with children aged 2 and under claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit in Walsall.

The **highest number** of families claiming these benefits who are in Council Tax Arrears, are also in **Darlaston South** and **Blakenall**.

**Account Status of Families with under 2's claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefits in Walsall**

**Account Status**

- In Arrears
- Paid
- In Credit



Of those **1232** families with children 0-2 who are claiming these benefits, 762 (62%) are in Council Tax Arrears, at an average of £615.

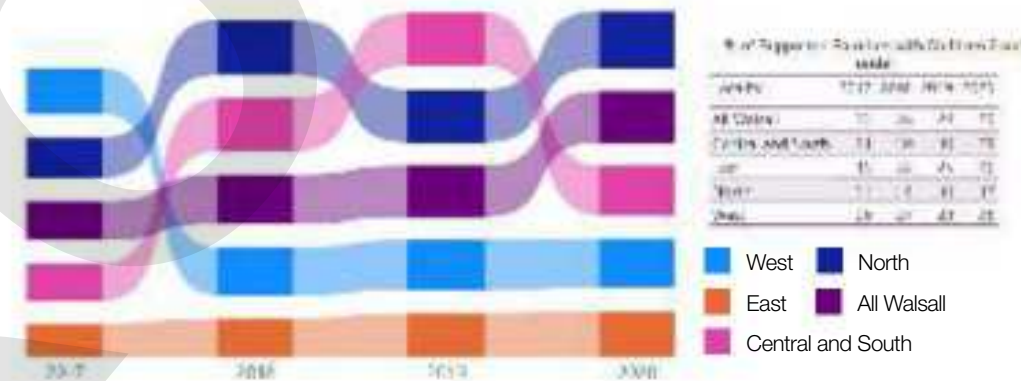
# Vulnerable Children

The Supporting Families programme focusses on building the resilience of vulnerable families.



It uses multi-agency local partnerships to identify families in need and provide the right support at the right time, using a **“whole-family”** approach. Evidence shows that this programme reduces the number of children who need to be taken into care.<sup>22</sup>

**Proportion of Supported Families with children aged 2 or under by Locality**



In Walsall, the proportion of Supported Families with children aged 2 and under increased from **22-29%** between 2017 and 2020.

Over this time period, this proportion was consistently **highest** in the Central & South and North Localities.

The **East** and **West** localities have a lower proportion of supported families with children 2 and under than the Walsall average.

Between 2017-2020, around **33%** of **families** who achieved sustained change\* as part of the supported families programme, were those with at least one child under 2 years old.

\*Sustained change is defined as the point when the family has made sufficient improvement in accordance with the Supporting Families Outcomes Plan, and a successful claim made to Government for Payment by Results. It generally takes a minimum of 12 months from identification to claim.

# Vulnerable Children

There are currently **107** 0-2 year old Children in Care in Walsall, which represents **16%** of the total cohort of Children in Care.<sup>23</sup>

## Children in Need:

**330** Children in Need in Walsall are 0-2 years old, which **18%** of the total cohort of Children in Need.

There has been a **24% decrease** in the number of (CiN) between 2019 and 2022, although there has been a significant increase in 2022 compared to the previous year.

## Children in Care:

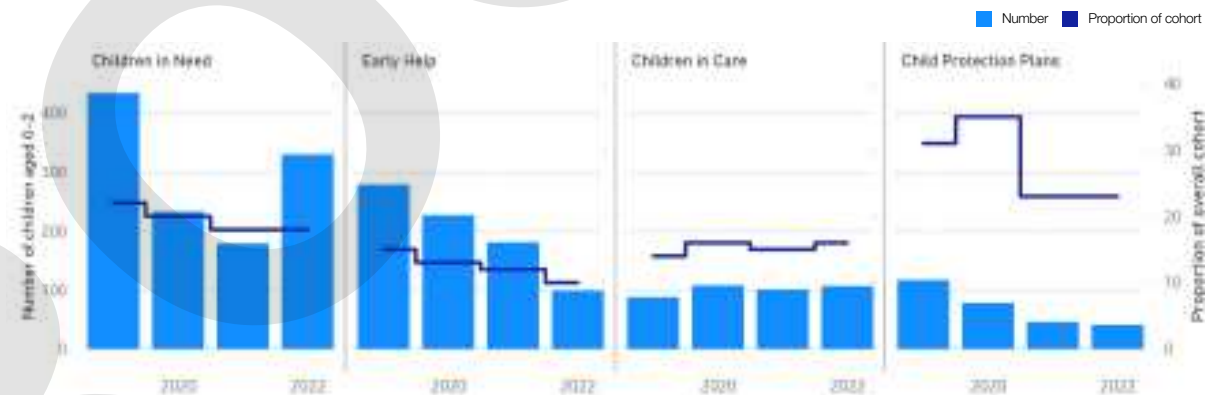
There was a **22.7%** increase in the number of 0-2 year olds in care between 2019 and 2020 (from 88 to 108), however, this number, as well as the proportion of the overall cohort (14-16%), has remained stable since.

## Early Help:

There are currently **99** children open to Early Help in 0-2 year olds in Walsall, which is 10% of the total Early Help Cohort.

There has been a **65% decrease** in 0-2 year old Early help Children between 2019 and 2022, with the proportion of the total cohort also decreasing from **15 to 10%**.

## Trends in Children's Services



## Child Protection Plans:

There are **41** 0-2 year old children in Walsall with a Child Protection Plan, which is 23% of the overall cohort.

There has been a **65% decrease** in the number of 0-2 year olds with a (CPP) between 2019 and 2022, with the proportion of the total CPP cohort also decreasing from 31% to 23% in this period.

# Vulnerable Children

In **2022**, in each of the different types of support programmes in Walsall Children's services, the most common presenting need was **abuse** and **neglect**, in both the 0-2 and the overall cohorts.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, in every one of the support programmes, abuse and neglect needs accounted for a **higher proportion of 0-2** year old cohort when compared to the overall cohort.

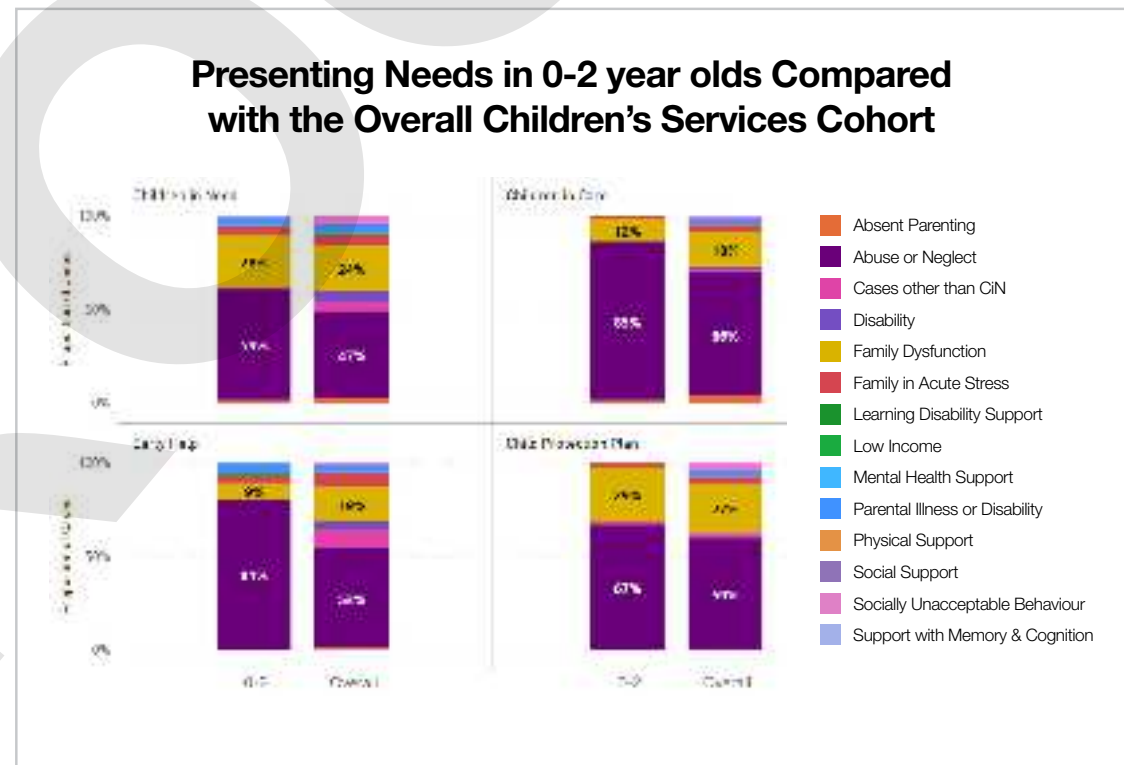
In fact, in Children in Care and in Early Help, more than **8 in 10** children presented with abuse and neglect needs.

Family Dysfunction was the 2nd most common presenting need in each of the different support programmes, in both the 0-2 and the overall cohort. Family Dysfunction is a particularly prominent need in the Children in Need and the Child Protection Plan programmes.

In the Early Help and Children in Care programmes, family dysfunction represent a **higher proportion** of the overall cohort than in 0-2 year olds.

In each of the different type of support programmes, **Abuse** and **Neglect** and **Family Dysfunction** have been the 2 most common presenting needs in every year between 2019 and 2022.

**Presenting Needs in 0-2 year olds Compared with the Overall Children's Services Cohort**





# Vulnerable Children

In 0-2 year olds, the percentage of children with Abuse or Neglect needs has shown an **increasing** trend in 2022 compared with the previous year. This increase has been particularly apparent in Early Help – with a **21%** increase (from 60-81%) since last year. This trend is not reflected in the overall cohort.<sup>23</sup>

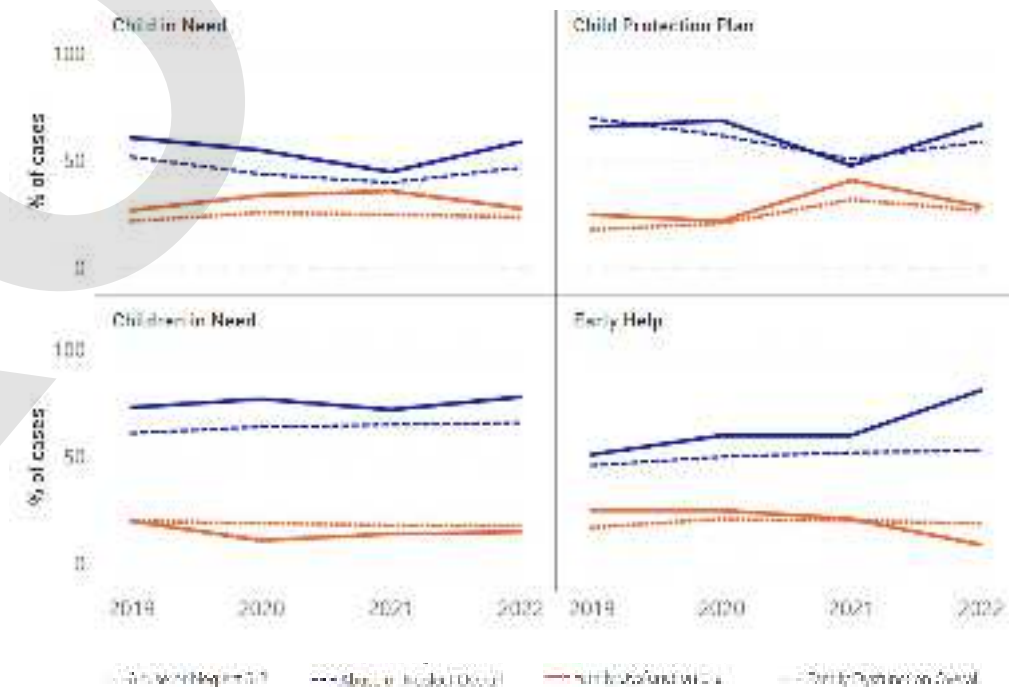


**Family dysfunction** in both 0-2s and the overall cohort have remained stable since 2019 in each of the service types, with a slight decreasing trend between 2021 and 2022.<sup>23</sup>



This potentially suggests a proportional increase in more acute needs i.e abuse and neglect in this younger cohort which is not seen in the cohort overall.

## Trends in presenting Needs in Children's Services



# School Ready



In 2022, **72%** of eligible 2 year olds in Walsall were benefiting from funded early education. This is a 16% increase from the previous year when and is now the same as the national rate.<sup>24</sup>

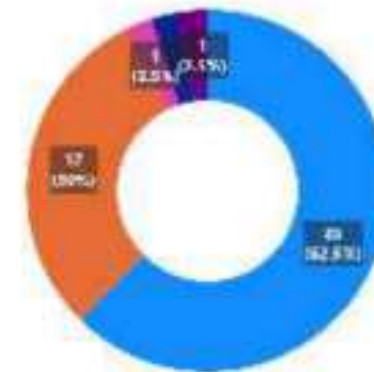
There are currently **1063** Walsall 2 year olds are attending early years provision in Walsall, 23 of whom are eligible for the funding due to being Children in Care or adopted from care.

**40** children aged 2 or below currently receive SEN Support in Walsall.



Of those 0-2 year olds in Walsall receiving SEN support, **30%** need support with speech, language or communication.

## Needs of 0-2 year old Children Receiving SEN Support



- No recorded need
- Speech, Language & Communication
- Hearing Impairment
- Moderate Learning Disability
- Other Difficulty/Disability

# References

**1. Office for National Statistics, Mid-year population estimates, 2020.**

Ward-level population estimates (Experimental Statistics) - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

**2. Office for National Statistics, Population Projections, Local Authority based by single year of age.**

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/ppsyoala>

**3. NHS Digital, Maternity Services data set (MSDS) v1.05**

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-collections-and-data-sets/data-sets/maternity-services-data-set/accessing-maternity-services-data>

**4. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Fingertips, Child and Maternal Health Profile.**

Child and Maternal Health - OHID (phe.org.uk)

**5. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Pregnancy and complex social factors: a model for service provision for pregnant women with complex social factors**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg110>

**6. NHS Digital, Infant Feeding Survey 2010.**

<http://content.digital.nhs.uk/article/3895/Infant-Feeding-Survey-2010X>

**7. Office for National Statistics: Birth characteristics in England and Wales: 2020**

Birth characteristics in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

**8. Office for National Statistics, Births by parents' characteristics, England and Wales; 2020.**

**9. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Fingertips, Local Health Profile.**

Local Health - OHID (phe.org.uk)

**10. Office for National Statistics, Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales; 2020.**

Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

**11. Office for National Statistics, Child and infant mortality in England and Wales: 2020**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/childhoodinfantandperinatalmortalityinenglandandwales/2020>

**12. Dental Public Health Epidemiology Programme for England: oral health survey of five-year-old children.**

Oral health survey of 5-year-old children 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



# References

## 13. NHS Healthy Start Scheme

England-Uptake-Data.xlsx (live.com)

## 14. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Cover of Vaccination Evaluated Rapidly (COVER)

Childhood Vaccination Coverage Statistics - NHS Digital

## 15. NHS Digital, Hospital Episode Statistics

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) - NHS Digital

## 16. Department for Health and Social Care, Healthy Child Programme: Pregnancy and the First 5 Years of Life.

HCP - Pregnancy and the First Five Years of Life (publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 17. Office for Health Inequalities and Disparities, Interim Reporting of Health Visiting Metrics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-and-maternal-health-statistics#child-development-outcomes-at-2-to-2-and-a-half-years-metrics>

## 18. The Institute of Healthy Equity, "Fair Society Healthy Lives" (The Marmot Review), 2010.

Fair Society Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review) - IHE (instituteofhealthequity.org)

## 19. Department for Work and Pensions / HM Revenue and Customs: Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014/15 to 2018/19

Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

## 20. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Statutory homelessness in England: April to June 2021.

Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2020-21 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

## 21. Internal Correspondance with My Money, My Home, My Job, Walsall Council, 2022.

## 22. Department for Education and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Supporting Families Programme Guidance.

Chapter 1: Introduction and objectives - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

## 23. Internal Correspondance with Children's Services, Walsall Council, 2022 (as of 31st May 2022)

## 24. Department for Education, Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT), June 2022.

Local authority interactive tool (LAIT) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

## Acknowledgements

Produced by Dr Claire J. Heath

Contributions from Lynsey Bissell, Scott Degville, Ross Capp, Lucy Hoyle, Charley Rogers, Adele Horton & Frances Evans

Design by Print and Design Services

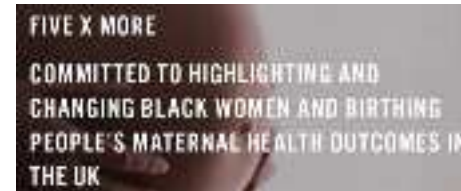
# Walsall Maternity Ethnicity Findings

By Carol King-Stephens

Equality and Inequality Lead  
Midwife

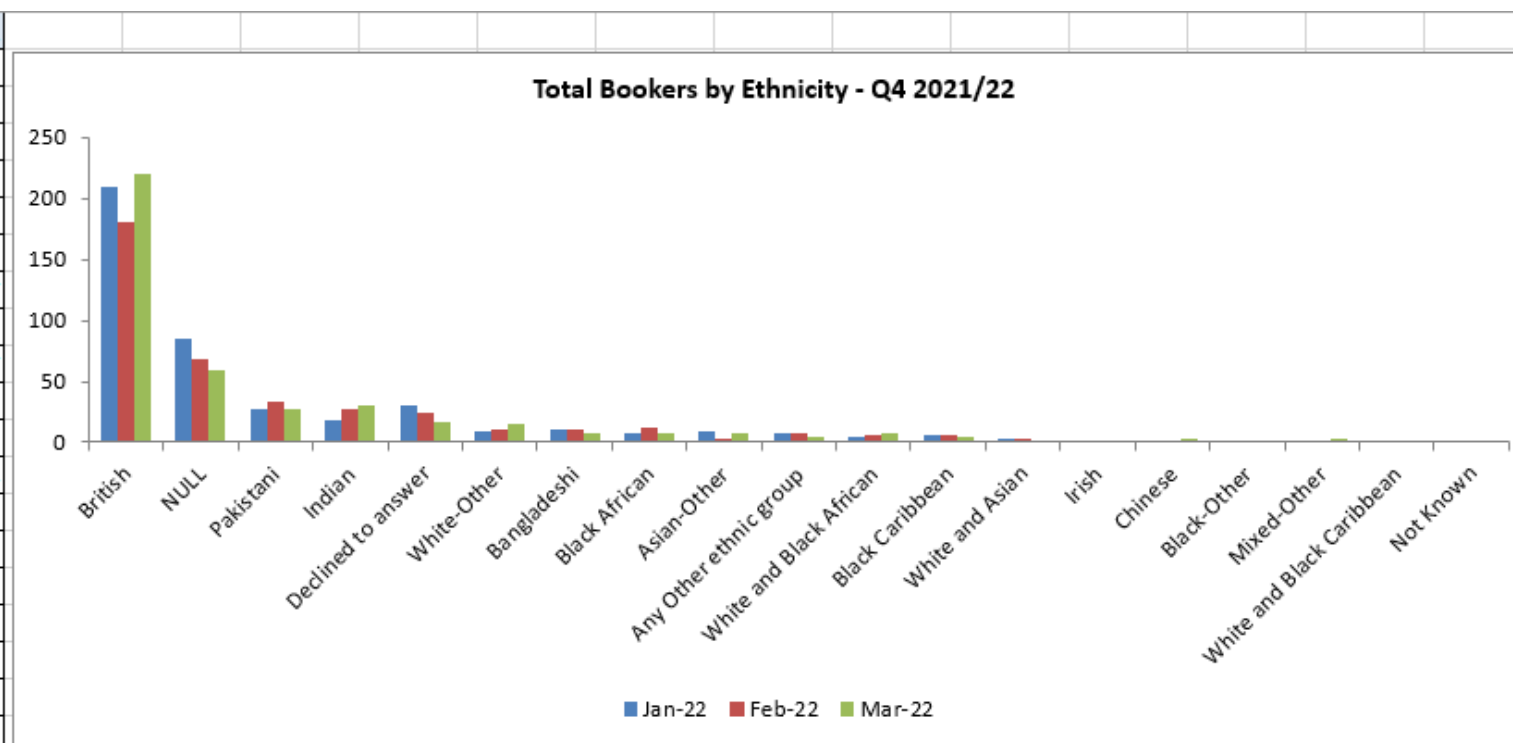


NHS England and NHS Improvement



# Total bookers during January, February and March 2022 split out by ethnicity recorded in Badgernet

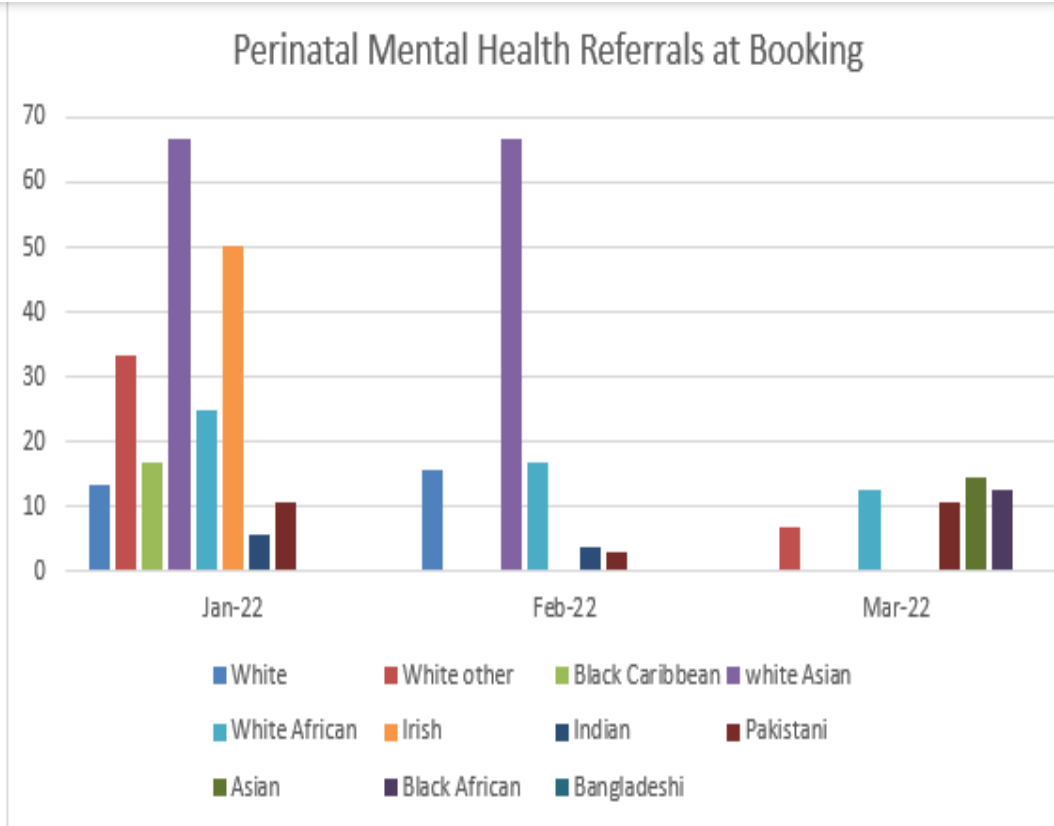
Ethnicity	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
British	209	181	220
NULL	85	69	59
Pakistani	28	34	28
Indian	18	28	30
Declined to answer	31	24	16
White-Other	9	10	15
Bangladeshi	11	11	7
Black African	8	12	8
Asian-Other	9	3	7
Any Other ethnic group	7	7	5
White and Black African	4	6	8
Black Caribbean	6	6	4
White and Asian	3	3	2
Irish	2	2	2
Chinese	2		3
Black-Other	2	1	2
Mixed-Other	1	1	3
White and Black Caribbean	2	1	1
Not Known		1	1



Capture  
information at  
Dating Scans  
to improve  
missing  
Ethnicity and  
next of Kin  
information

<b>Your Name</b> .....	<b>Your date of birth</b> .....
<b>Confirm Family Origins:</b>	
<b>White</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
White other.....	
<b>Mixed</b>	
White and Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	
White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/> White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	
Mixed other.....	
<b>Asian</b>	
Indian <input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/>
Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/>	
Asian other.....	
<b>Black</b>	
Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	Black African <input type="checkbox"/>
Black other.....	
<b>Other Ethnic Groups</b>	
Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>	
Any other ethnic group.....	
<b>confirm Next of kin:</b>	
<b>NAME</b> .....	
<b>Address</b> .....	
.....	
Postcode.....	
<b>Home Telephone number</b>	
<b>Mobile Telephone number</b>	
<b>work Telephone number</b>	

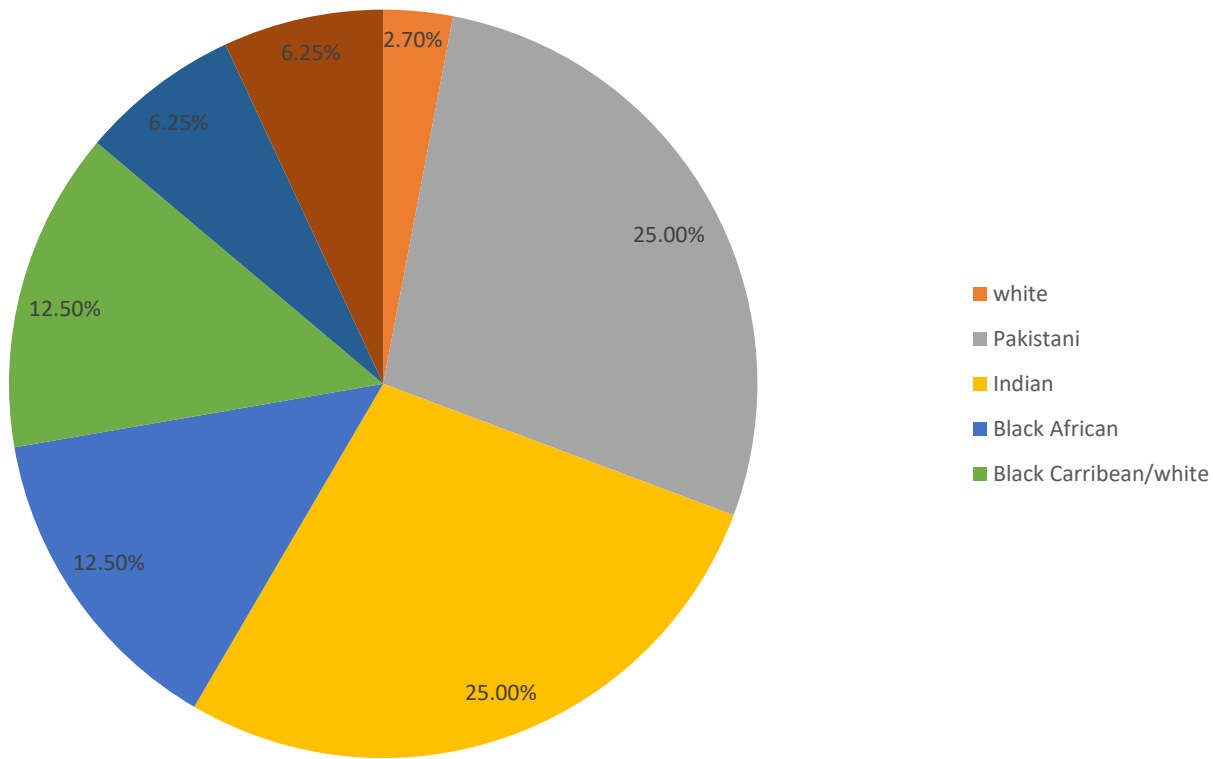
# Perinatal Mental Health Referrals at booking



	White	White other	Black Caribbean	white Asian	White African	Irish	Indian	Pakistani	Asian	Black African	Bangladeshi
Jan-22	13.39	33.33	16.66	66.66	25	50	5.55	10.71	0	0	0
Feb-22	15.46	0	0	66.66	16.66	0	3.57	2.94	0	0	0
Mar-22	16.36	6.66	0	0	12.5	0	0	10.71	14.28	12.5	0

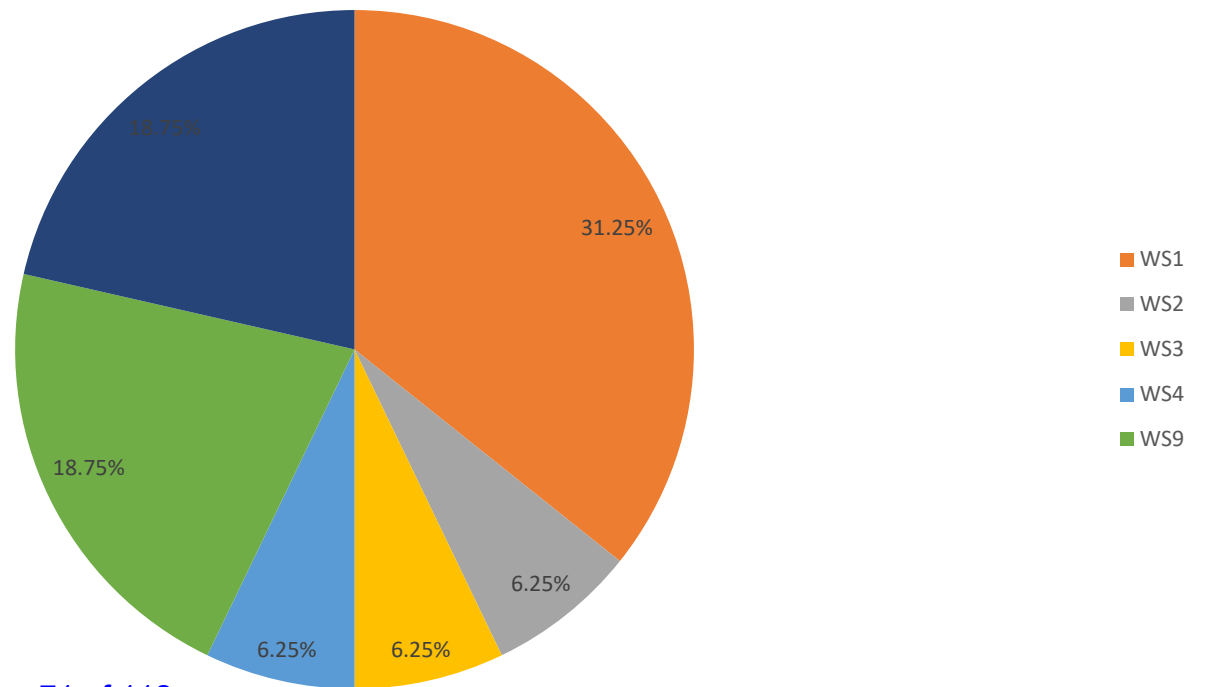
# ATAIN Admission during January & February 2022

white	2.70%	
Pakistani	25.00%	
Indian	25.00%	
Black African	12.50%	
Black Carribean/white	12.50%	
chinese	6.25%	
Asian/white	6.25%	
Mexican/white	6.25%	

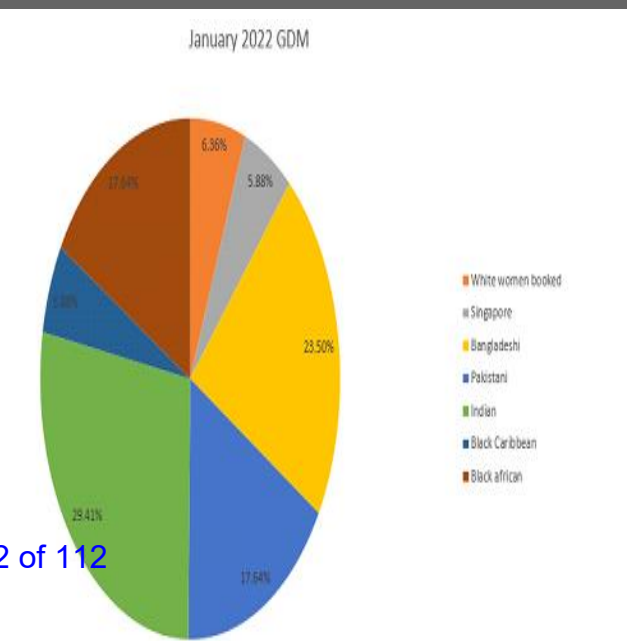
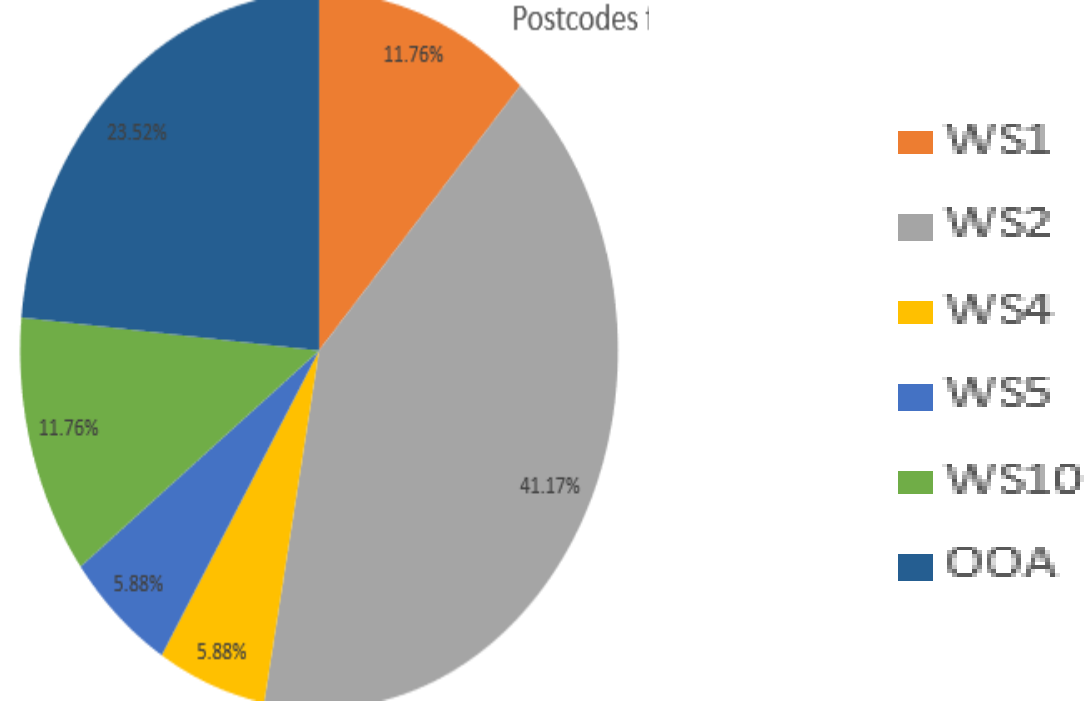


# ATAIN admission based on Walsall Postcode

Postcode ATAIN Jan/Feb 2022	
WS1	31.25%
WS2	6.25%
WS3	6.25%
WS4	6.25%
WS9	18.75%
OOA	18.75%

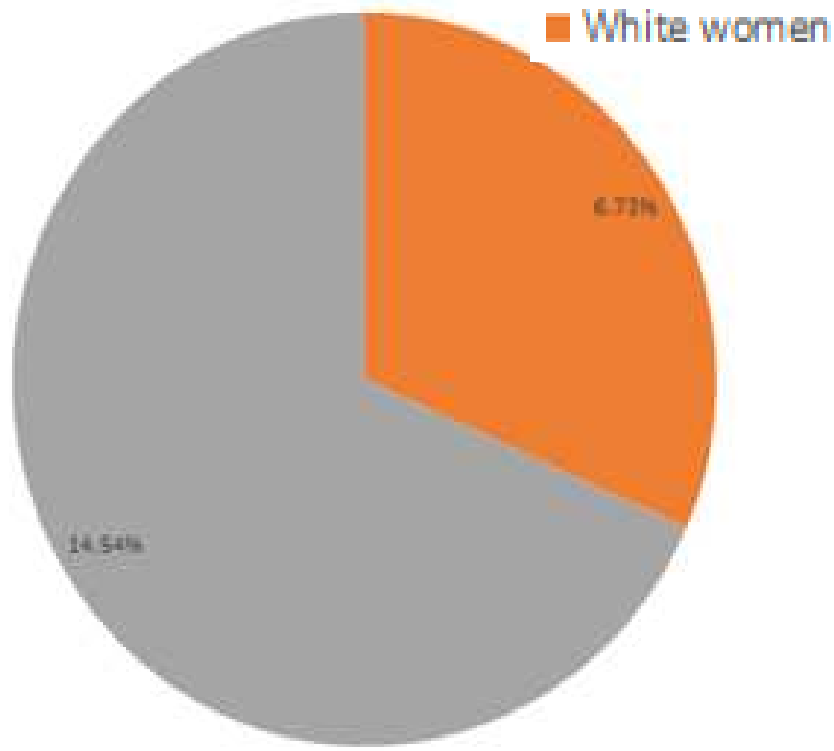


Gestational Diabetes January 2022 including postcode

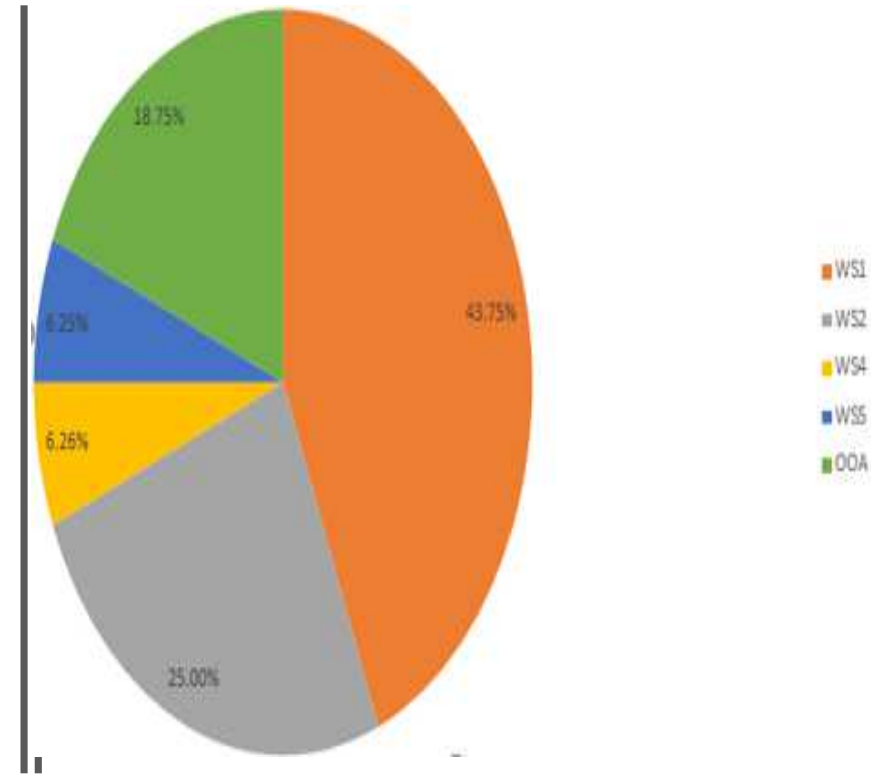


White women booked	6.36%
Singapore	5.88%
Bangladeshi	23.50%
Pakistani	17.64%
Indian	29.41%
Black Caribbean	5.88%
Black african	17.64%





WS1	43.75%
WS2	25.00%
WS4	6.26%
WS5	6.25%
OOA	18.75%

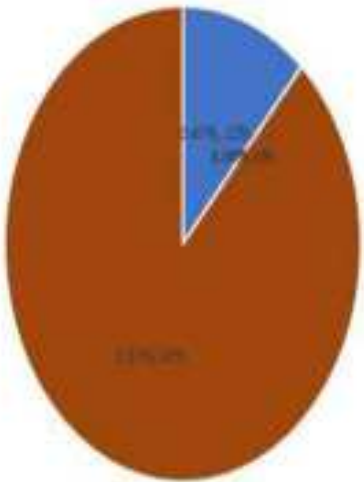


## February 2022 Gestational Diabetes based on Black Asian and ethnic Minorities

Including Postcode

# Type 1 Diabetes

January 2022 Type 1 Diabetes			
women booked			437
White	0.47%		1
Bangladeshi	0.00%		0
Black Caribbean	0.00%		0
Pakistani	3.57%		1



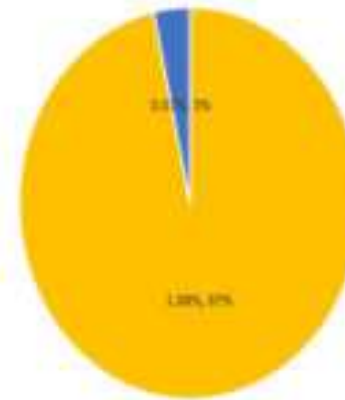
January 2022 Type 1 Diabetes - women booked - White - Bangladeshi - Black Caribbean - Pakistani

February 2022 Type 1 Diabetes			
women booked			400
White	0.01%		1
Bangladeshi	0.00%		0
Black Caribbean	0.00%		0
Pakistani	0.00%		0



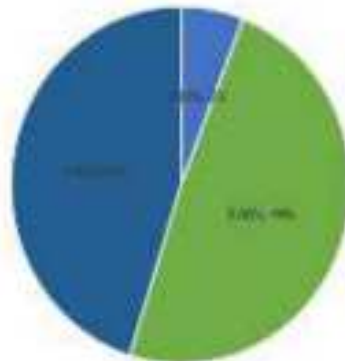
February 2022 Type 1 Diabetes - women booked - White - Bangladeshi - Black Caribbean - Pakistani

# Type 2 Diabetes



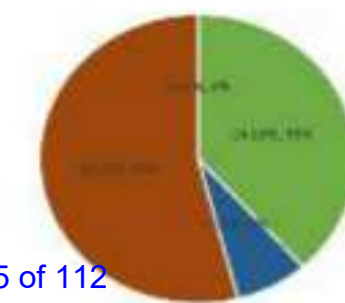
January 2022 Type 2 Diabetes

January 2022 Type 2 Diabetes		
women booked		437
Type 2 diabetes	1.98%	2
Pakistani	0.07%	2



February 2022 Type 2 Diabetes

February 2022 Type 2 Diabetes		
women booked		400
White	1.10%	2
Bangladeshi	9.00%	2
Black African	8.30%	1



March 2022 Type 2 Diabetes

March 2022 Type 2 Diabetes		
women booked		421
White	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi	14.20%	2
Black Caribbean	2.77%	1
Afganistan	20.00%	1

# TRIAGE ADMISSION

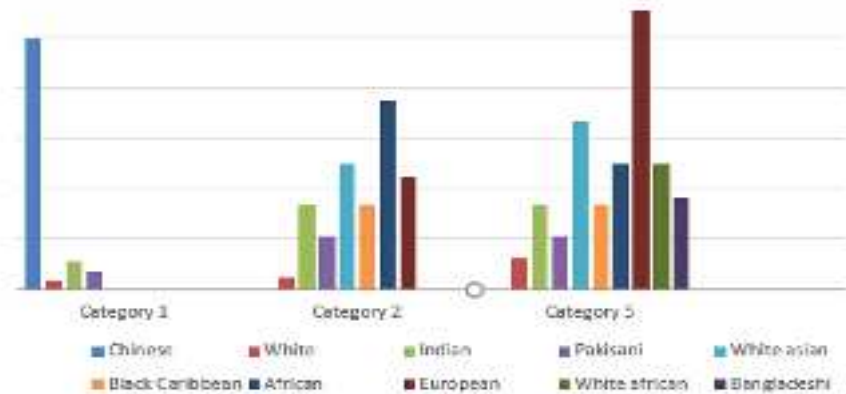
## (December, January, February& March 2022)

WHITE	5.23%	650	34
BLACK AFRICAN	9.3%	28	4
PAKISTANI	0.42%	90	5
INDIAN	9.21%	76	7
BANGLADESHI	10.25%	29	4
ASIAN OTHER	4.34%	19	1
BLACK CARIBBEAN	12.50%	16	2
BLACK OTHER	0%	5	0
MIXED WHITE & BLACK CARIBBEAN	50%	4	2
NOT STATED	50%	2	1
MIXED WHITE & BLACK AFRICAN	0%	18	0
MIXED OTHER	16.6%	4	1

# Robson 10 Category

• JANUARY 2022

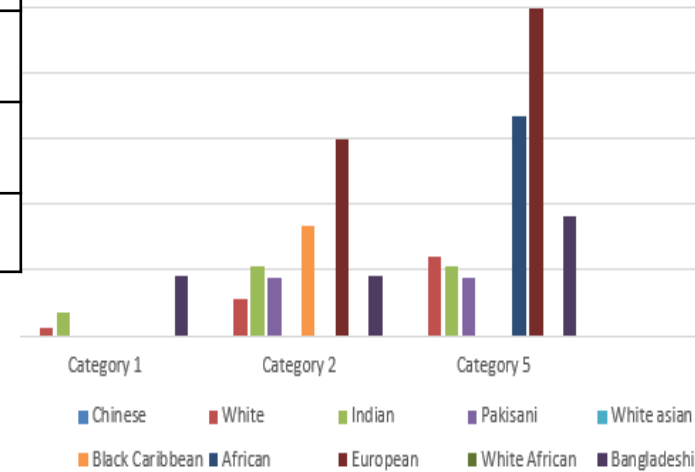
Robson 10	Chinese	White	Indian	Pakistani	White Asian	Black Caribbean	African	European	White African	Bangladeshi
Category 1	50	1.91	5.55	3.57						
Category 2		2.39	16.66	10.71	25	16.66	37.5	22.22		
Category 5		6.22	16.66	10.71	33.33	16.66	25	55.5	25	18.18



# Robson 10 Category

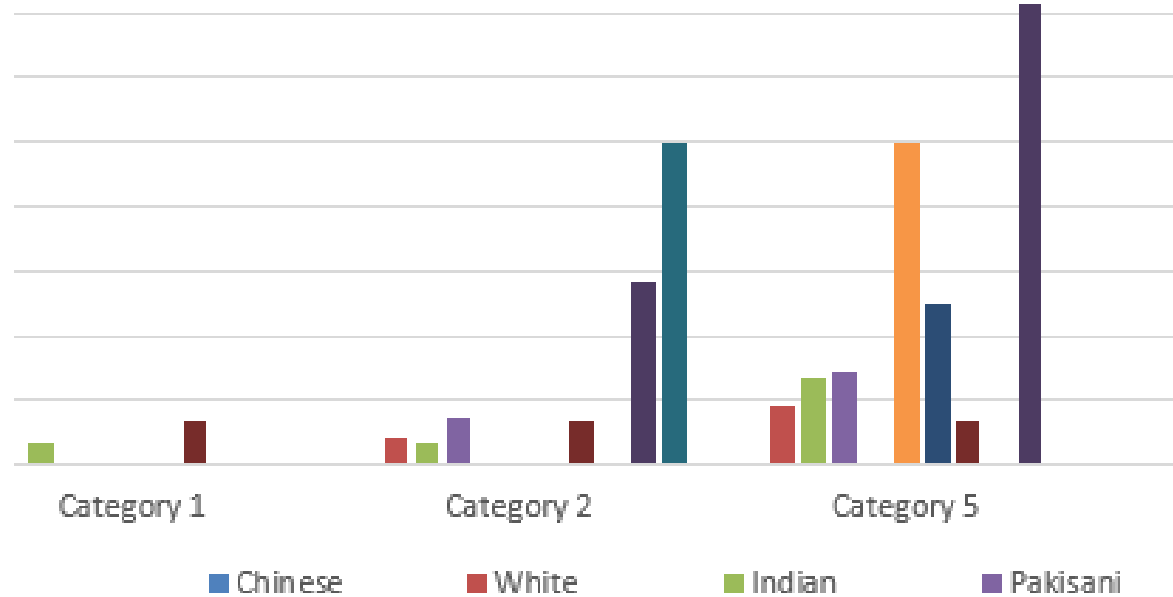
- February 2022

Feb 2022 Robson 10	Chinese	White	Indian	Pakistani	White Asian	Black Caribbean	African	European	White African	Bangladeshi
Category 1	0%	1.1	3.47	0	0	0	0	0	0	9.09
Category 2	0	5.52	10.71	8.82	0	16.66	0	30	0	9.09
Category 5	0	12.15	10.71	8.82	0	0	33.33	50	0	18.18



# Robson 10 Category

March 2022



Robson 10	Chinese	White	Indian	Pakistani	White Asian	Black Caribbean	African	European	White African	Bangladeshi	Irish
Category 1	0	0.45	3.33	0	0	0	0	6.66	0	0	0
Category 2	0	4.09	3.33	7.14	0	0	0	6.66	0	28.57	50
Category 5	0	9.09	13.33	14.28	0	50	25	6.66	0	71.42	0



# FETAL LOSS and STILLBIRTH

In **January 2022**, 11% of the white other/European women had a neonatal death. There were **no** stillbirths.

**No** other ethnic groups had a neonatal death in **January 2022**.

There were **no** neonatal deaths in **February 2022**. the data showed that the only ethnic group to have a stillbirth was Indian and out of this ethnic group 33% had a stillbirth during February 2022

In **March 2022**, 0.9% of white women had a neonatal death. **No** other ethnic groups had a neonatal death in **March 2022**.

# January 2022 BFI -Based on women booked

100% Indian, mixed White and African

33.33% Black Caribbean

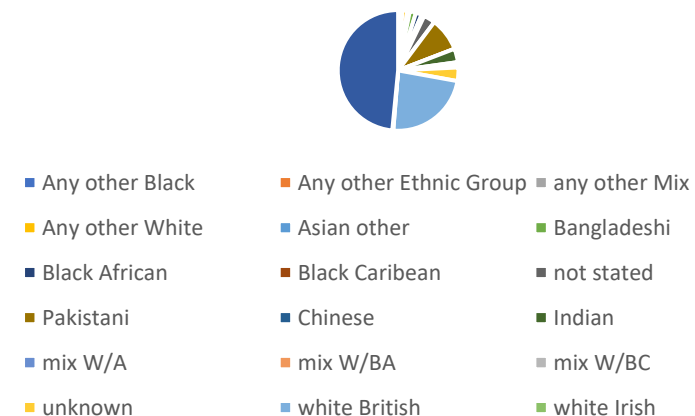
37.5% Black African

31.5% white British

# February 2022 BFI by ETHNICITY

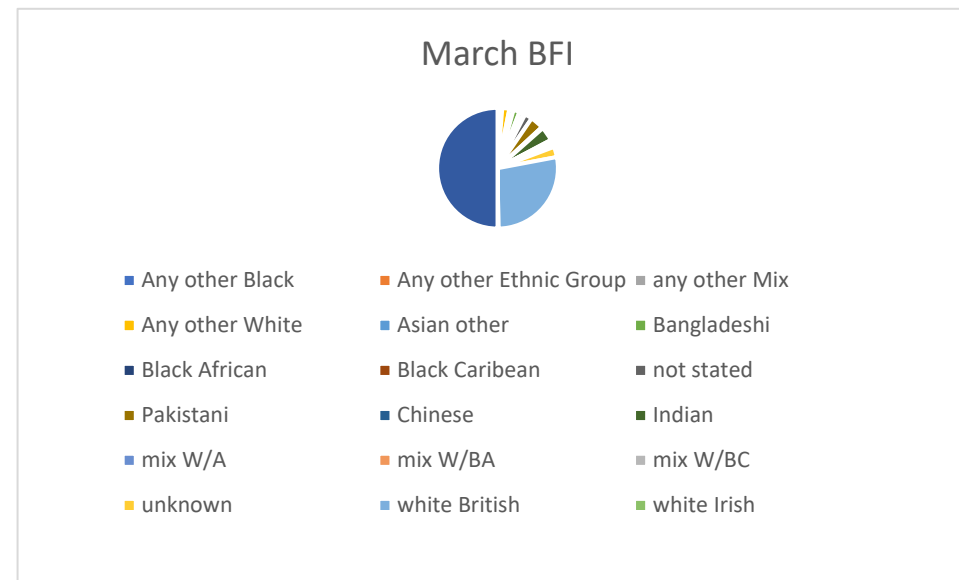
February Ethnicity	Booked	BFI	BFI%
Any other Black	1	0	0%
Any other Ethnic Group	7	2	28.50%
any other Mix	1	1	100%
Any other White	10	6	60%
Asian other	5	5	100%
Bangladeshi	13	13	100%
Black African	12	6	50%
Black Caribbean	6	3	50.00%
not stated	24	22	92%
Pakistani	69	18	26%
Chinese	0	0	0.00%
Indian	28	8	28.50%
mix W/A	3	2	66.60%
mix W/BA	6	1	17%
mix W/BC	2	2	100%
unknown	28	28	100.00%
white British	181	63	35%
white Irish	2	0	0%
TOTAL	374	180	48.10%

February BFI



# March 2022 BFI by Ethnicity

March Ethnicity	Booked	BFI	BFI%
Any other Black	2	0	0%
Any other Ethnic Group	5	3	60%
any other Mix	3	0	0%
Any other White	15	5	33.30%
Asian other	9	9	100%
Bangladeshi	13	13	100%
Black African	9	9	100%
Black Caribbean	4	4	100%
not stated	16	16	100%
Pakistani	28	21	75%
Chinese	3		0%
Indian	30	18	60%
mix W/A	2	0	0%
mix W/BA	8	0	0%
mix W/BC	6	6	100%
unknown	22	22	100%
white British	220	92	41.80%
white Irish	2	0	0%
TOTAL	397	218	54.90%



# Staff by Pay Band

Staff In Headcount as at 25/04/2022				
Pay Band	WHITE staff	Black Asian & Ethnic staff	ETHNICITY UNKNOWN	Black Asian & Ethnic staff %
<b>Overall</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>32.9%</b>
Apprentice	4	1	0	20.0%
Band 1	0	1	0	100.0%
Band 2	123	47	1	27.5%
Band 3	40	9	0	18.4%
Band 4	34	14	0	29.2%
Band 5	94	36	3	27.1%
Band 6	156	54	4	25.2%
Band 7	71	22	0	23.7%
Band 8A	22	13	0	37.1%
Band 8B	5	5	0	50.0%
Band 8C	2	2	0	50.0%

Low representation of Black Asian and Ethnic staff at Apprentice level and Band 3 level.

There is an equal representation at band 8B and Band 8C

Service  
user B's feedback

**A – Identifies as  
Black African- Low  
level mental health.  
Previous loss of a  
baby early in  
pregnancy. High  
Risk pregnancy.**

- MW contact minimal – little time to ask
- Communication around labour was 'poor' - left feeling 'confused & anxious'
- postnatal wards - felt 'left' and 'unseen'.
- No support to breastfeed, wound not being checked – on discharge & emphasis was on baby.
- 'left, with little help apart from the HiPs team' and struggled to contact maternity & health visiting teams.
- care received in labour 'good and supported'.
- Felt 'person of colour - wasn't approached' – on postnatal ward v other women.
- 'I was anxious - previous loss' it was 'forgotten and dismissed'.
- special 'commendation' to the diabetic team – 'amazing, well informed and supported'. Continuity of Care support via HiPS offered 'reassurance, coping strategies, considering cultural needs and previous loss'

## B – Identifies as Black Caribbean British – Low level mental health – low risk pregnancy

- Preference for paper notes as well as digital, concern if stolen/lost phone
- Majority of help through HiPs team – lost without them.
- Labour care ‘amazing’ ‘cared for’ and ‘supported’ MW advocated well - CS
- Individualised needs and birth not discussed.
- Postnatal Com Care – ‘good care’ CMW ‘especially good’ – with a CS & lived in a flat
- Postnatal Ward - ‘little support’.
- HiPs support ‘offered to all’. ‘Face to face’ with midwives ‘offered more’.
- Cultural needs ‘forgotten/not considered’ in care. COC via HiPs ‘vital in maternity journey’
- ***‘unheard’***



**C – Identifies as  
British Asian – Low  
level MH – High risk  
pregnancy –  
Previous traumatic  
birth.**

- 'scared' due to her previous experience 'dismissed' many times so referral took time for support (HiPs). 'Not listen to about concerns' and 'no time' at antenatal appointments to discuss 'needs', 'very matter of fact', moving from 'pillar to post' 'no continuity so repeating needs to staff'
- It was a 'battle for choice – CS' 'helpless' HiPs worker 'advocated for birth to feel safe' MW 'little discussion about choices for birth'.
- Positive birth experience support via HiPs. 'Amazing' theatre team. Felt 'a burden' – PN Ward & Antenatally. 'Poor communication, no warning or sensitivity' - catheter removal' Painful for 6 months. Breastfed babies are a 'problem' baby removed AF 'to make baby sick up his mucus' – no consent gained. Investigated & resolved by Infant Feed MW.
- 'Wanted and found hard' to given feedback with a new baby and 'happy to feedback' via a phone call with 'someone she knew'.
- some staff were 'caring' many were 'cold, rough and judgemental' towards choice of EL CS. No 'consideration of culture' 'previous traumatic birth – dismissed', 'care wasn't compromised due to ethnicity, 'very upset as witnessed a lady who spoke no English being ignored, not assessed for 7+ hours with missed catheter care, shouted at and talked about by staff'.

## D – Identifies as Asian British – Low level mental health – high risk pregnancy – previous losses.

- 'lack of support and information' - early weeks 'listened to' 12 week assessment with HiPs. No face to face - CMWs. 'no continuity' – midwife/doctor, miscarriages 'not mentioned/known'
- 'left for long periods in labour' due to no staff, but staff repeatedly moaning about 'no staff available'.
- 'good care' - postnatal ward. Expected to 'know it all and be ok' with second baby.
- 'loved' antenatal classes via HiPs and CMWs. 'Liked' COC via HiPs and 'culturally aware' of her needs. 'more time and contact with CMW' in early days for 'reassurance. No cultural 'enquiry' made by staff. Care 'lacking'. 'Unsensitivity' – re previous loss – 'god's wish' – 'very upsetting'.
- 'staff to read previous history' before appts – Maternity staff to 'link' with HiPs for 'awareness' of their service to avoid 'repeating' needs/choices of women and families.

# E-Identifies as Mixed Caribbean

- ‘Good’ service, some MW’s ‘lacked empathy’ towards pain. More community services needed.



## F-Identified as Pakistani

- ‘Good care throughout’ – CS. ‘Prefer’ longer stays after birth.



# Student Midwife Feedback



- A 3<sup>rd</sup> year student Midwife stated that she had learnt so much in one hour with the Equality & Inequality Lead Midwife regarding equality and Ethnic women compared to her whole 3 years of her degree programme. She felt that it would be beneficial for all students to have either a talk or lecture by the Equality and Inequality Lead to fully understand the reasonings behind the Equality and Inequality Lead Midwife's role.

She believes starting with the next generation of midwives can make a start into changing the discrimination and inequalities that they see daily in practice. She highlighted that they are taught to treat women the same but the care we provide should be individualised and compassionate towards all women by thinking about risk factors e.g. higher stillborn rate/ higher morbidity and mortality rates.

She stated that she will take what I've learnt forward, and this will make her a better midwife.

- When obtaining feedback from students in their second year of training they confirmed that they had been taught about the EMBBRACE Report throughout their training but identified a need for decolonising learning.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student highlighted that her training did teach about the EMBBRACE Report but confirm that there was not training related to darker skin Women. She felt a need for this training.

# Recommendations

- To have a Black, Asian & Ethnic Minority Continuity of Carer Team in the high-risk areas of Walsall & To reduce ATAIN Homer et al (2017) found that COC team had positive outcomes where 95% had an Apgar score of 8 or above at 5 minutes. She also highlighted that they had a reduction in neonatal admission to 6%.
- To work closely with MVP to develop a Focus group where Black Asian and Ethnic service users feel they have a safe space to talk about their experience and provide recommendations for improving outcomes
- . To have a Systematic approach to teaching staff across the Black country.
- . To work with the local University to include colourisation in training.
- To improve the Perinatal Mental Health referral amongst the women from Black, Asian and ethnic minority service users as recommended by (NHS England 2022) there will need to be a focus on the Bangladeshi Community by working with the secondary sector and the specialist Perinatal Mental Health Midwife to improve the access to Perinatal mental health support.
- To work with other EDI Leads and HIPs team to provide an Early Parent Education session/Information leaflet-rationale and research based in different languages
- To work with other EDI Leads, Community Lead and Hips teams to have a parent education session in different languages

Committee Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Action/Recommendation	Officer responsible	Status	Target Completion Date	Notes
	Areas of Focus	The glossary and summary data in relation to children in care, starters and leavers to be shared with the committee via e-mail	Colleen Male	Complete		
		A work programme for the municipal year be produced containing agreed areas of focus, for agreement by the Committee.			26 September 2022	
27 September 2022	Areas of Focus	A progress report on the Youth Justice Service be heard at future a meeting.	Philip Rutherford	Date to be agreed by committee		Committee to agree date against the Work Programme 2022/23
3 November 2022	Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Position	A draft letter, to the Department of Education, be considered by the Committee at its next meeting which highlights the financial challenges faced by Children's Services.	Clerk		8 December 2022	Completed, with the Chair for sign off.
8 December 2022	Young Carers	That the Group Manager contact the Mayor's Office to arrange for the young carers to group to have tea with the Mayor.	Julie Jones		April 2023	



## Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022/23

Committee date	27 September	3 November	8 December	30 January	13 March 2023	18 April 2023
Report Deadline	16 September	25 October	29 November	19 January	2 March	5 April
Budget setting process						
Locality Hubs and working						
Early Help Strategy						
Social Worker recruitment and retention						
Private Fostering						
Youth Justice priorities and disproportionately						
Children at Risk Exploitation and Safeguarding Annual Report 2021/22						
Family Hubs update and progress and Early Help Update						
Children and Young People Alliance						
Young Carers						
Placement Sufficiency						
Child Neglect Strategy						
Transition from Children's Services into Adult Services - Update						

**Black Country Executive Joint Committee**  
**Forward Plan of Key Decisions Published up to April 2023**

<b>Date Created</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Main consultee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>
	<b>Black Country Executive Joint Committee Governance</b>			
09/05/2022	<b>Future working arrangements of the Black Country Executive Joint Committee</b>  Consider the future working arrangements in light of the receipt of Government correspondence dated 31 March 2022: Integrating Local Enterprise Partnerships into local democratic institutions.	Sarah Middleton <a href="mailto:Sarah.Middleton@blackcountryconsortium.co.uk">Sarah.Middleton@blackcountryconsortium.co.uk</a>	Dudley MBC Sandwell MBC Walsall MBC City of Wolverhampton Council	01/02/2023
06/06/2022	<b>Governance Principles: Enterprise Zones</b>  Approval of the amended Supplemental Deed of Governance Principles: Enterprise Zones, relating to the Black Country Executive Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement.	Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	<b>Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF)</b>			
03/10/2022	<b>Willenhall Garden City - Phase 1 (Moat Street and Villiers Street)</b>  Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into internal Grant Agreement with Walsall Council, to deliver the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership funded elements of the Willenhall Garden City – Phase 1 (Moat Street and Villiers Street) with delivery to commence in the 2022/23 financial year.	Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023
03/10/2022	<b>Dudley Brownfield Land Programme</b>  Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into a Grant Agreement with Dudley Council, to deliver the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF), funded elements of the Dudley Brownfield Land	Helen Martin <a href="mailto:Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk">Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk</a>	Dudley Council	01/02/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	Programme with delivery to commence in the 2022/23 financial year.			
07/11/2022	<p><b>Wolverhampton Stowheath Redevelopment for Housing</b></p> <p>Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into a Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF), funded elements of the Stowheath Redevelopment for Housing project with delivery to commence in the 2022/23 financial year.</p>	<p>Richard Lawrence  <a href="mailto:Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk">Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a></p>	City of Wolverhampton Council	01/02/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	<b>Growing Places Fund</b>			
05/12/2022	<p><b>Delegated Authority for Noting – Non-Key Decision</b></p> <p><b>Dudley Zoo Visitor and Education Centre Development Phase Project</b></p> <p>To note that the Executive Director for Economy, Environment and Communities within Walsall Council in his role as Chair of the Working Group has used his Delegated Authority to approve the Accountable Body for the Growing Places Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with the Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Ltd, to deliver the Growing Places Fund (GPF) funded elements of the Dudley Zoo Visitor and Education Centre Development Phase project with delivery to commence in the 2022/23 financial year.</p>	<p>Simon Neilson  <a href="mailto:Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a></p>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	<b>Black Country Growth Hub</b>			
05/12/2022	<b>Black Country Growth Hub – For Noting</b> To note that the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) is requesting via Walsall Council’s Cabinet on 14 December 2022 approval to proceed to a Grant Agreement with the Black Country Consortium Ltd to deliver the Black Country Growth Hub Funding for 2022/2023.	Simon Neilson <a href="mailto:Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk">Simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Walsall Council	01/02/2023
	<b>Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF)</b>			
05/12/2022	<b>Music Institute - Cable Plaza Site (Main Scheme)</b>  Approval for the Accountable Body for the Land and Property Investment Fund (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending its Grant Agreement with Dudley Council, to deliver the Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF), funded	Helen Martin <a href="mailto:Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk">Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk</a>	Dudley Council	19/04/2023

Date Created	Key Decision	Contact Officer	Main consultee	Date of meeting
	elements of the Music Institute - Cable Plaza Site (Main Scheme) project with delivery to continue in the 2022/23 financial year.			





## **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

**Council House,  
Lichfield Street,  
Walsall, WS1 1TW**  
[www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk)

**5 December 2022**

## FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan sets out decisions that are termed as “key decisions” at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken by the Executive (Cabinet). Also included on the plan are other decisions to be taken by the Cabinet (“non-key decisions”). Preparation of the forward plan helps the Council to programme its work. The purpose of the forward plan is to give plenty of notice and an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The plan is updated each month with the period of the plan being rolled forward by one month and republished. Copies of the plan can be obtained from Democratic Services, Walsall MBC, Council House, Walsall, WS1 1TW [craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk) and can also be accessed from the Council’s website at [www.walsall.gov.uk](http://www.walsall.gov.uk). The Cabinet is allowed to make urgent decisions which do not appear in the forward plan, however, a notice will be included on the agenda for the relevant Cabinet meeting which explains the reasons why.

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change. Please contact the above addressee if you wish to check the date for a particular item.

The Cabinet agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public 7 days prior to the meeting of the Cabinet on the Council’s website. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Cabinet and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they are confidential. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer. These details can also be found in the forward plan.

Meetings of the Cabinet are open to the public. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are confidential and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting. The forward plan will show where this is intended and the reason why the reports are confidential. Enquiries regarding these reasons should be directed to Democratic Services ([craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:craig.goodall@walsall.gov.uk)).

“Key decisions” are those decisions which have a significant effect within the community or which involve considerable expenditure or savings. With regard to key decisions the Council’s Constitution states:

- (1) A key decision is:
  - (i) any decision in relation to an executive function which results in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant, having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates or
  - (ii) any decision that is likely to have significant impact on two or more wards within the borough.
- (2) The threshold for “significant” expenditure/savings is £500,000.
- (3) A decision taker may only make a key decision in accordance with the requirements of the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

Page 102 of 112

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS  
JANUARY 2023 TO APRIL 2023 (5.12.22)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reference No./ Date first entered in Plan	Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside the Council)	Decision maker	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Contact Member (All Members can be written to at Civic Centre, Walsall)	Date item to be considered
110/22 (6.6.22)	<b>Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27:</b>  To provide an updated medium term financial outlook, draft revenue budget and capital programme for 2023/24 to 2026/27, including savings proposals, and to set out the process and timescales for setting a legally balanced budget for 2023/24.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Vicky Buckley  <a href="mailto:Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk">Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Public  Internal Services	Cllr Bird	14 December 2022
121/22 (8.8.22)	<b>Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23:</b>  To report the financial position based on 7 months to October 2022, including the impact of Covid-19.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Vicky Buckley  <a href="mailto:Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk">Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	14 December 2022
123/22 (8.8.22)	<b>Treasury Management Mid Year Position Statement 2022/23:</b>  The council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce a mid-year position statement reviewing	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Lloyd Haynes  <a href="mailto:Lloyd.Haynes@walsall.gov.uk">Lloyd.Haynes@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	14 December 2022

	treasury management activities and prudential and treasury indicator performance.					
135/22 (10.10.22)	<b>Renewal of the Council's insurance arrangements from 1st April 2023:</b>  To seek delegated authority to renew the Council's insurance arrangements from 1 April 2023	Cabinet Key Decision	Cabinet Report 14 February 2018 - Renewal of the Council's Insurance Arrangements from 1 April 2018  Marc Cox <a href="mailto:Marc.Cox@walsall.gov.uk">Marc.Cox@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	14 December 2022
157/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Streamlining Black Country Ways of Working – Black Country Consortium:</b>  To provide an update on finalising an agreed way forward for streamlining ways of working across the Black Country, many of which have historically been coordinated through and by Black Country Consortium Ltd (BCC Ltd). The report builds from the agreements to date on the transition of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership and the collaborative Black Country based approach for the future accountability of LEP legacy funds utilising Association of Black Country Authorities as a mechanism if and when required.  <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet Key Decision	Sarah Middleton (Chief Executive, Black Country Consortium Ltd.)  <a href="mailto:Sarah_Middleton@blackcountryconsortium.co.uk">Sarah_Middleton@blackcountryconsortium.co.uk</a>	Association of Black Country Authority Leaders	Cllr Bird	14 December 2022

136/22 (10.10.22)	<b>Black Country Enterprise Zone-Gasholders Site:</b>  To update on the direction of travel and seek approvals in relation to the preferred delivery approach, project funding and next steps to bring forward the site for employment generating uses.  <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet  Key decision	Caroline Harper  <a href="mailto:Caroline.Harper@walsall.gov.uk">Caroline.Harper@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	14 December 2022
137/22 (10.10.22)	<b>Willenhall Framework Plan: Phase 1 Developer Partner Procurement Approach and Funding Update:</b>  To provide an update on the preferred developer partner procurement approach and funding position.  <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet  Key Decision	Kauser Agha  <a href="mailto:Kauser.Agha@walsall.gov.uk">Kauser.Agha@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	14 December 2022
144/22 (7.11.22)	<b>UK Shared Prosperity Fund:</b>  To authorise officers to accept a funding allocation for UK Shared Prosperity Fund to utilise for project activity aligned with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Philippa Venables  <a href="mailto:Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk">Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Cllr Andrew	14 December 2022
158/22 (07.11.22)	<b>Walsall Economic Strategy</b>  To approve an economic strategy for the borough.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Philippa Venables  <a href="mailto:Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk">Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Cllr Andrew	14 December 2022

126/22 (8.8.22)	<b>Strategic acquisition of a freehold heritage building in Walsall Town Centre:</b>  To seek approval to the freehold acquisition of a heritage property in Walsall Town Centre to support the preservation of the property.  <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet  Key Decision	Nick Ford  <a href="mailto:Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk">Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk</a>  Bryte Legister  <a href="mailto:Bryte.Legister@walsall.gov.uk">Bryte.Legister@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	14 December 2022
161/22 (5.12.22)	<b>Responses to Local Plan Consultations:</b>  To agree responses to Local Plan consultations from Birmingham City Council, Stafford Borough Council and South Staffordshire District Council.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Neville Ball  <a href="mailto:Neville.Ball@walsall.gov.uk">Neville.Ball@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	14 December 2022
125/22 (8.8.22)	<b>Housing First contract award:</b>  To approve the contract award enabling the continuation of flexible support to former rough sleepers housed through the Housing First initiative.  <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet  Key decision	Neil Hollyhead  <a href="mailto:Neil.Hollyhead@walsall.gov.uk">Neil.Hollyhead@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services, service users, external stakeholders	Cllr Ali	14 December 2022
146/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Home Upgrade Grant (HUGs) Round 2 Procurement and Update:</b>  To approve the use of a Framework to appoint contractors to deliver government funds to help residents with	Cabinet  Key decision	David Lockwood  <a href="mailto:David.Lockwood@walsall.gov.uk">David.Lockwood@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Public, Internal Services	Councillor Ali	14 December 2022

	retro-fit works where they are not on the gas network.					
138/22 (10.10.22)	<b>Food for Life Contract:</b>  Cabinet is asked to delegate authority to the Director of Public Health to enter into appropriate contractual arrangements from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 until 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024, and subsequently authorize the sealing or signing of associated contracts, deeds or other related documents for the Food for Life contract.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Esther Higdon  <a href="mailto:Esther.Higdon@walsall.gov.uk">Esther.Higdon@walsall.gov.uk</a>  Paul Nelson  <a href="mailto:Paul.Nelson@walsall.gov.uk">Paul.Nelson@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Cllr Flint	14 December 2022
130/22 (6.9.22)	<b>Sexual Health and 0-19 Contracts:</b>  To approve the extension of the integrated sexual health service, contract delivered by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.  To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care, Public Health and Hub in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing to extend contracts on behalf of the Council and to subsequently authorise the variations to the contractual arrangements for the services should this be required at any time during the term, in line with Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules to 31 March 2024.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Tony Meadows  <a href="mailto:Tony.Meadows@walsall.gov.uk">Tony.Meadows@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	14 December 2022



147/22 (7.11.22)	<b>We Are Walsall 2040: Consultation Feedback:</b>  To note the key findings from the consultation activities carried out over summer/autumn 2022, which will inform the We Are Walsall 2040 strategic borough plan.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Karen Griffiths  <a href="mailto:Karen.Griffiths@walsall.gov.uk">Karen.Griffiths@walsall.gov.uk</a>  Policy & Strategy Unit  <a href="mailto:policyandstrategy@walsall.gov.uk">(policyandstrategy@walsall.gov.uk)</a>	Internal Services, Local partners/ stakeholders	Cllr Perry Cllr Wilson	14 December 2022
148/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Food Law Service Plan:</b>  The Food Standards Agency (FSA) requires all local authorities to prepare an annual service delivery plan to reflect the work required of food authorities by the FSA, under the requirements of the Food Standards Act 1999 and the framework agreement on local authority enforcement. In accordance with this requirement a Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2022/23 has been prepared. Cabinet are asked to forward the Plan to Council for approval.	Cabinet  Council  Non-key decision	Paul Rooney  <a href="mailto:Paul.Rooney@walsall.gov.uk">Paul.Rooney@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	14 December 2022  Council 9 January 2023
149/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Electronic Calls Monitoring Contract Extension:</b>  To approve the extension of the ECM contract with Access UK Ltd.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Tracy Simcox  <a href="mailto:Tracy.Simcox@walsall.gov.uk">Tracy.Simcox@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Pedley	14 December 2022
124/22 (8.8.22)	<b>Schools Mainstream Local Funding Formula 2023/24:</b>  That Cabinet approves the Mainstream Local Funding Formula, to be used for	Cabinet  Key Decision	ESFA – Schools revenue funding operation guide.  Richard Walley  <a href="mailto:Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk">Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services  Schools Forum	Cllr M. Statham	14 December 2022

	the allocation of mainstream funding to schools in Walsall					
159/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Secondary School Sufficiency</b>  To approve funds for the creation of an additional 150 places in three Secondary Schools.	Key Decision	Alex Groom <a href="mailto:Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk">Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services  Local partners/stake holders	Cllr. M. Statham	14 December 2022
160/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Special School Sufficiency</b>  To begin feasibility works to create to additional places in SEN Schools to meet additional demands.	Key Decision	Alex Groom <a href="mailto:Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk">Alex.Groom@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services  Local partners/stake holders	Cllr. M. Statham	14 December 2022
141/22 (10.10.22)	<b>Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23:</b>  To report the financial position based on 9 months to December 2022, including the impact of Covid-19.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Vicky Buckley <a href="mailto:Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk">Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Corporate Management Team and Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023
142/22 (10.10.22)	<b>Corporate Budget Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27, incorporating the Capital Strategy and the Treasury Management and investment Strategy 2023/24:</b>  To recommend the final budget and council tax for approval by Council.	Cabinet  Key decision	Vicky Buckley <a href="mailto:Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk">Vicky.Buckley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Council tax payers, business rate payers, voluntary and community organisations, Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2022  Council 23 February 2023
150/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Payments Project Contract Award:</b>  To award a contract to Capita/Pay360 Ltd (soon to be Access Group Ltd) for	Cabinet	Janice Freeman-Phillips  <a href="#">Page 109 of 112</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023

	the provision of Pay 360 Licences and Capita/Pay360 Ltd services.	Key Decision	<a href="mailto:Janice.Freeman-Phillips@walsall.gov.uk">Janice.Freeman-Phillips@walsall.gov.uk</a>			
155/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Council Plan: Review of Achievements 2021/22:</b>  To note the Review of Achievements for 2021/22, highlighting successes and progress towards achieving our Council priorities.	Cabinet  Non-key decision	Meresh Kumari  <a href="mailto:meresh.kumari@walsall.gov.uk">(meresh.kumari@walsall.gov.uk)</a>  Elizabeth Connolly  <a href="mailto:elizabeth.connolly@walsall.gov.uk">(elizabeth.connolly@walsall.gov.uk)</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Bird	8 February 2023
107/22 (6.6.22)	<b>Procurement of Corporate Landlord Strategic Partner:</b>  To seek approval to the appointment of a strategic partner to support the programme of capital schemes related to the council's property portfolio.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Nick Ford  <a href="mailto:Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk">Nick.Ford@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2023
145/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Town Centre Theatre Project:</b>  To agree next steps for the Town Deal Theatre project, setting out funding implications and options.  <i>This will be a private session report containing commercially sensitive information.</i>	Cabinet  Key Decision	Philippa Venables  <a href="mailto:Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk">Philippa.Venables@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Cllr Andrew	8 February 2022
129/22 (5.9.22)	<b>Update on Resilient Communities Safer Streets Programme:</b>  To report back on Safer Streets activity and recommend any adjustments/additions to the programme.	Cabinet  Non-key Decision	Paul Gordon  <a href="mailto:Paul.Gordon@walsall.gov.uk">Paul.Gordon@walsall.gov.uk</a>  <a href="#">Page 110 of 112</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Perry	8 February 2023

151/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Introduction of Council Tax Premium on unoccupied but furnished properties:</b>  Levy the premium on properties that are unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 12 months. Effective from 1 April 24	Cabinet to make recommen dation to Council	Mark Fearn  <a href="mailto:Mark.Fearn@walsall.gov.uk">Mark.Fearn@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Part of budget consultation	Cllr Ali	8 February 2023
156/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Healthy Lifestyles Contract and Smoking Cessation Contract Extensions:</b>  To delegate authority to the Director of Public Health and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing. This will allow them to extend contracts on behalf of the Council and to subsequently authorise the variations to the contractual arrangements for the services should this be required at any time during the term, in line with Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Contract Rules.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Joe Holding  <a href="mailto:Joe.Holding@walsall.gov.uk">Joe.Holding@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services	Cllr Flint	8 February 2023
140/22 (10.10.22)	<b>High Needs Funding Formula:</b>  To approve changes to the High Needs Funding Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used for the allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block to schools in Walsall for the 2023/24 financial year	Cabinet  Key Decision	Richard Walley  <a href="mailto:Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk">Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal Services, Schools Forum	Cllr M. Statham	8 February 2023
152/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Renewal of the Council's Oracle Cloud Licenses:</b>	Cabinet  Key Decision	Ian Tuft  <a href="mailto:Ian.Tuft@walsall.gov.uk">Ian.Tuft@walsall.gov.uk</a>  Page 111 of 112	Internal Services	Cllr Bird  Cllr Ferguson	22 March 2023

	To renew the Council's Oracle cloud Licenses required for the operation of the Council's One Source system for HR, Payroll, Finance and Procurement from May 2023					
162/22 (5.12.22)	<b>Approval of the Black Country Joint Committee Collaboration Agreement:</b>  Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Resources and transformation to enter into legal agreements with WMCA relating to BC LEP Legacy funds.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Kelly Valente  <a href="mailto:Kelly.Valente@walsall.gov.uk">Kelly.Valente@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services	Cllr Bird	22 March 2023
153/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Walsall's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 to 2027:</b>  To approve Walsall's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, 2022 to 2027.	Cabinet  Key Decision	Neil Hollyhead  <a href="mailto:Neil.HollyHead@walsall.gov.uk">Neil.HollyHead@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Internal services, service users, external stakeholders	Cllr Ali	22 March 2023
154/22 (7.11.22)	<b>Early Years Funding Formula:</b>  That Cabinet approves the Early Years Formula, as agreed by Schools Forum, to be used for the allocation of funding to early years providers in Walsall	Cabinet  Key Decision	Richard Walley  <a href="mailto:Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk">Richard.Walley@walsall.gov.uk</a>	Schools Forum  Internal Services	Cllr M. Statham	22 March 2023