Walsall Council

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on: **Thursday, 11 March 2021 at 6.00 pm**

Meeting to be held via: **Microsoft Teams Digital Meeting**

Public access to meeting via: **https://youtu.be/Mv8YA8V2Xkg**

MEMBERSHIP	Chair	Councillor Lee Jeavons
	Vice-Chair	Councillor Sarah Jane Cooper
		Councillor Gazanfer Ali
		Councillor Daniel Barker
		Councillor Rose Burley
		Councillor Brian Douglas-Maul
		Councillor Sat Johal
		Councillor Pard Kaur
		Councillor Farhana Mazhar
		Councillor Saiqa Nasreen
		Councillor Lorna Rattigan
NON-ELECTED VOTING MEMBERS	Lichfield Diocesan Representative	Vacancy
	Archbishop of Birmingham's Representative	Mrs Philomena Mullins
	Parent Governors	Mrs Heena Pathan
		Vacancy
		Vacancy
NON-ELECTED NON-VOTING MEMBERS	Primary Teacher Representative	Ms Sharon Guy
	Secondary Teacher Representative	Ms Wendy Duffus
PORTFOLIO HOLDER	For Education & Skills	Councillor Chris Towe

AGENDA

1	**Apologies** To receive apologies for absence from Members of the Committee.	
2	**Substitutions** To receive notice of any substitutions for a Member of the Committee for the duration of the meeting.	
3	**Declarations of interest and party whip** To receive declarations of interest or the Party Whip from Members in respect of items on the agenda.	
4	**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)** 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	**Minutes** To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee that was held on 5 January 2021.	Enclosed
	Scrutiny	
6	**Special Report: COVID Update** To receive and consider an update on Covid-19 guidance for schools, attendance and opening of schools, remote learning and digital devices, and data on Covid cases in schools.	Enclosed
7	**Response to the report and recommendations of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Working Group on Access and Inclusion** To receive and consider a report on the progress made to date to address the recommendations outlined in the Working Group's report.	Enclosed
8	**Update on School Organisation – Pupil Place Planning** To receive and consider an update on pupil place planning on primary and secondary education in Walsall.	Enclosed
9	**Update: SEND Strategy** To receive and consider an update on the SEND Strategy 2020 – 2025.	Enclosed
10	**Right for Children Transformation Programme** To receive and consider an update on progress being made on the Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C) Transformation Programme.	Enclosed
11	**Corporate Financial Performance – Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Position for 2020/21** To receive for information the Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Position report for 2020/21.	Enclosed

Overview		
12	**Work Programme 2020/21** To receive and consider the Committee's work programme for 2020/21.	Enclosed
13	**Forward plans** To receive the Cabinet and the Black Country EJC forward plans.	Enclosed
14	**Date of next meeting** To note that the date of the next meeting of the Committee will be approved by the Council in May 2021.	

The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Specified pecuniary interests

The pecuniary interests that 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	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. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Regulations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	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: (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
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	Any tenancy where (to a member's knowledge): (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where: (a) that body (to a member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either: (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (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.

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.

EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 5 January 2021 at 6.00 pm

Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution.

Committee Members present:	Councillor Lee Jeavons (Chair) Councillor Gazanfer Ali Councillor Daniel Barker Councillor Rose Burley Councillor Brian Douglas-Maul Councillor Sat Johal Councillor Pard Kaur Councillor Farhana Mazhar Councillor Saiqa Nasreen Councillor Lorna Rattigan
Portfolio Holders present:	Councillor Chris Towe – Education & Skills
Non-elected voting Members present:	Mrs Philomena Mullins – Archbishop of Birmingham's Representative
Non-elected non-voting Members present:	Ms Wendy Duffus – Secondary Teacher Representative
Officers present:	Mrs Sharon Kelly, Director – Access & Inclusion Mr Andy Crabtree, SEND Improvement Lead Ms Trudy Pyatt, Head of Inclusion Mr Rob Thomas, Head of Access Dr Paul Fantom, Democratic Services Officer

1/21 WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, and explaining the rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers, which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information system (CMIS) webpage.

Members and officers confirmed that they could both see and hear the proceedings.

2/21 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sarah Jane Cooper.

3/21 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions.

4/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or party whip for the duration of the meeting.

5/21 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 (AS AMENDED)

There were no agenda items that required the exclusion of the public.

6/21 MINUTES

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 was submitted [Annexed].

Resolved (unanimously by roll call):

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

7/21 INCLUSION STRATEGY

A report was submitted to the Committee to provide an update on the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025. Also appended to the report were the Walsall Accessibility Strategy and the Walsall SEN Strategy 2025 [Annexed].

In opening the discussion, and further to the statement that had been made by the Prime Minister on 4 January 2021, the Portfolio Holder – Education & Skills, Councillor Chris Towe, provided the Committee with an update on the steps being taken by the Authority and by Walsall's schools and educational settings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Towe confirmed that early years' settings, including nurseries and child minders, remained open. Vulnerable children and the children of key workers were continuing to use registered child care, child minders and other child care activities, including wrap-around care. Colleges, primary schools – from the reception class upwards, secondary schools, special schools, pupil referral units, and all alternative provision were open for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. All other children and young people would be learning remotely until the February half term, and help with remote learning was being provided, with schools being able to obtain lap top computers and other devices directly via the relevant DfE portal. Further information on the types of devices was awaited. Oak National Academy, a national online platform funded by the DfE, was providing sequenced plans of lessons and curriculum resources, including videos, work sheets and quizzes - all of which were compiled by teachers, and would provide further support to parents and schools during the lockdown.

It was noted by Councillor Towe that due to the present circumstances, the Government had stated that the examinations due to be held in the summer would not now go ahead as had been previously planned. Accordingly, the Government was working with Ofqual to consult rapidly and put in place alternative arrangements to enable students to progress fairly. It was anticipated that detailed Ministerial guidance to support schools and settings in this regard would be released shortly.

Councillor Towe concluded his statement by taking the opportunity to thank all of the staff in Walsall's schools and educational settings who always put the needs of children and young people first, and had done all that they could to support them through the difficult circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chair thanked Councillor Towe for his statement and reiterated his comments by thanking all school and educational setting staff for their work at this difficult time. He noted the work that was being carried out to prepare lessons, deliver virtual teaching, and for the schools to be open for vulnerable children and the children of key workers.

Further to questions concerning the plans being developed for mass testing in schools, consultation with schools on testing and the assurances being given to parents with respect to the exposure of their children to risk in schools, the Director – Access & Inclusion, Mrs Sharon Kelly, reported that mass testing in schools was already planned. The testing kits were being delivered from January 2021 onwards and the roll-out of testing to primary schools was due to commence on 18 January 2021. For secondary schools, this would be for vulnerable children and the children of key workers, then for years 11 and 13, followed by a rolling programme as children returned to school. Further to the Prime Minister's statement, it was anticipated that this could be subject to change, however. In relation to consultation with schools, this was being led by the DfE – with information and training via online webinars having been provided. It was noted that it was not possible to provide 100 per cent assurance regarding transmission in schools, and that testing was not mandatory. Nevertheless, the assurance processes that had been put in place were very rigorous, and all schools had been supported by colleagues from the Health & Safety and Public Health teams on completing risk assessments in line with the guidance provided by Public Health England. Mrs Kelly also pointed out that since September 2020, the Authority had been a part of the HSE's national audit programme, which had given additional assurance that risk assessments have been rigorous and no issues had been identified by the HSE on any of the risk assessments in Walsall schools.

With reference to questions regarding parental consent for testing and the provision of tablet devices to children, Mrs Kelly indicated that as a part of the roll-out of the programme for testing a template consent form and letter developed by the DfE and Public Health England had been introduced in schools to enable parents and children of decision-making age to give their consent to testing. However, it was also noted that whilst consent was required for testing to take place, neither consent nor testing were mandatory. Working proactively with schools, social workers and carers, and in accordance with the eligibility criteria, the Authority had been able to procure and distribute digital devices for children eligible for the devices. This was being done via the schools and additional devices had been distributed to the Early Help service and also provided to care leavers. Reference was made to the DfE portal, the use of which would enable schools to procure any further digital devices, and the DfE guidance concerning the distribution of additional devices above that allowed for in the initial quota, which was awaited.

Further to this, Councillor Towe added that the Government proposed to offer a significant number of digital devices, and that the Committee would be kept informed of what was happening and the steps being taken to ensure that Walsall children and young people received their fair entitlement.

In response to a question from the Chair on whether the Government had issued any recent guidance regarding risk assessment, Mrs Kelly reported that this had been updated by the DfE and Public Health England. The guidance, together with additional support and resources, was being sent out to schools. In addition, the Authority had recommended that all schools should review their risk assessments in the light of the national lockdown and the possibility of new strains of the Covid-19 virus emerging.

Turning to the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy, Councillor Towe stated that this document articulated the Council's corporate vision for all Walsall children to have the best possible start, to be safe from harm, happy and learning well, and that the Council was committed to that goal. The Inclusion Strategy set out the aims and responsibilities of all those concerned with educational outcomes and the unlocking of learners' potential, whatever their abilities and needs. Councillor Towe emphasised how this was being put into practice, to deliver quality teaching and to challenge school leaders to promote good behaviour, positive relationships, resilience, emotional well-being and engagement in learning. Delivering results by school improvement and specialist provision review, but recognising that there would still be challenges to be addressed, he noted that the majority of schools had embraced this approach.

The Head of Inclusion, Ms Trudy Pyatt, informed the Committee that this was the second iteration of the Inclusion Strategy, and that there had been significant development since its introduction in 2018/19. She outlined the key principles as set out in the report, detailed the current position concerning the rolling-out of the programme to all head teachers and principals, and referred to the programme of continuous professional development and support. The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic had interrupted this but had also meant that all in education were facing the same issues, which facilitated partnership working via the RADY (Raising Attainment of Disadvantaged youngsters) concept, and the Inclusion and School Improvement teams were working proactively to close the attainment gap. A specialist provision review had been conducted to ensure that the needs of all learners were being met, with there being support around the issues of SEN and accessibility. In order to deliver programmes of training and support, it was noted that the Authority had also been working with the Educational Endowment Foundation.

During discussion by the Committee, particular reference was made to paragraph 3.3 of the report, which referred to the Authority as a 'champion of educational transformation with a strong moral purpose and democratic mandate to ensure good outcomes and a shared vision for our children, families and communities'. This was especially welcomed by Members as conveying a clear vision and sense of the actions to take place regarding the belief that schools are self-improving, as also indicated in paragraph 3.6 of the report, and in the transformation of attitudes towards capabilities and aspirations in Walsall. Furthermore, Members felt that these points should be more explicitly reflected in the narrative of the Inclusion Strategy document itself, and that this would be beneficial to all educational stakeholders in Walsall.

In response to a question regarding whether there was the capacity to ensure this could be implemented in all Walsall schools, Mrs Kelly stressed that the Inclusion Strategy related to how schools are led and operated daily, affecting all schools and school staff in Walsall, and that there was the resource to work closely with partners to achieve this. It was also noted by the Committee that the Inclusion Strategy could also be used as the basis for training to enlighten and strengthen vision and practice across schools.

Both the Chair and Councillor Towe reminded the Committee that the relationships between the Authority and the schools in Walsall were very good, having improved considerably during the last decade, and that there was a strong commitment to achieve the goals as set out in the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy.

Resolved (by roll call):

1. That the Committee's comments in relation to paragraphs 3.3 and 3.6 of the report be noted and that these be reviewed and explicitly incorporated into the narrative of the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025;

2. That the contents of the report be noted and, subject to the incorporation of the Committee's comments as referred to in resolution 1, that the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025 be adopted and endorsed.

8/21 SEND LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME AND EHCPs

A report was submitted to the Committee to provide an update on the SEND Local Area Improvement Programme, delivery on the Written Statement of Action and the progress in improving the quality and timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans [Annexed].

The report was presented by the SEND Improvement Lead, Mr Andy Crabtree, who informed the Committee that a virtual monitoring visit to review the actions taken on the Written Statement of Action had been undertaken by advisers from the DfE and NHS England on 20 November 2020. The feedback received on the progress made and handling of risk was very positive and confirmed that robust monitoring was being undertaken by the Authority. Mr Crabtree advised that since the Committee's last meeting, the SENDIAS contract had been awarded and that representatives from Family Action now attended Local Area Improvement Board meetings.

Mr Crabtree updated Members on performance with respect to EHCP processing and timeliness, and the reduction of the backlog, as reported to the Committee previously. It was noted that in June 2020 there had been approximately 370 EHCPs in progress (including the backlog) and that this had now been reduced to 170. He outlined the steps taken via sustainable processes and weekly case load and performance management reviews to eliminate the backlog, and confirmed that this now contained only three cases, which were of a complex nature, but they were being dealt with and closure was near. There had been some difficulties because of the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic on, for example, the completion of assessments by educational psychologists. However, these issues had been overcome and the commitment to deliver on the completion of EHCPs and to eliminate the backlog had been fulfilled, with the Authority now being in line with the national average and aspiring to improve on this.

With reference to the challenges around placements, the Committee was advised that the high need funding review consultation had now been undertaken and had closed. In due course, the outcome of this would be reported to the Schools Forum and the Cabinet.

Both the Chair and Councillor Towe requested that their appreciation for all of the work done by Mr Crabtree and his team in reducing the backlog be recorded in the minutes. This was endorsed by all other Members of the Committee. In terms of aspiring to improve on the national average, Councillor Towe added that the Authority had the resources and processes in place to ensure that this was achieved, and he hoped that it would be beneficial to the Authority's grading when the next inspection was undertaken.

Resolved (by assent):

That the report be noted.

9/21 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

A report was submitted to the Committee to provide an update on Elective Home Education, to summarise the law around EHE, explain how Walsall met its statutory responsibilities, and to present and explain data on EHE [Annexed].

Councillor Chris Towe introduced this item to explain the monitoring and support provided by the Authority. He noted that the numbers of children being electively home educated had risen significantly, both locally and nationally, during the recent lockdown and had continued to increase since the start of the current academic year.

The Head of Access, Mr Rob Thomas, presented the report by setting out each of the three main sections. He stated that EHE was a positive choice that some parents made to provide education for their children by themselves, by tutors or via flexi-schooling. He reported that EHE had risen by approximately 20 per cent in each year over the last five years, with the total number of children receiving EHE having increased from 211 to 450 during this period. He also noted that the increase during the current academic year had been significant when compared with the increases in previous years. In terms of the Authority's duties for monitoring, pre-meetings with parents and children, schools and other agencies had been introduced to alleviate any difficulties that might then remove the need for a child to be home schooled or allow a child to be placed in another school via the Fair Access Protocol. Where EHE was the preferred option for parents and children, however, processes were in place to ensure that children received a suitable education and to support families through annual plans and visits.

During discussion, the Committee expressed its appreciation of the steps that had been introduced to ensure that by regular monitoring and visits home schooled children were receiving an education that was appropriate. This was also endorsed by Councillor Towe, who reminded the Committee of the tragic case of Victoria Climbié, and referred to the developments that had subsequently been introduced to ensure that if children were being home schooled then they were appropriately looked after and educated.

In response to a question from a Member regarding whether there was a trend with EHE being chosen by the parents of those children who had attended particular schools, Mrs

Sharon Kelly advised the Committee that the Authority's Schools Causing Concern Protocol was instrumental in monitoring the numbers of EHE cases affecting each school setting. If necessary, the matter could be escalated and statutory guidance used to allow the Authority to intervene. Mr Thomas pointed out that the Education Inclusion and SEN teams work with parents and schools to identify any unmet needs that could be addressed through, for example, the production of an EHCP for the child.

The Chair described a virtual meeting that he had recently attended in which he had heard about the experiences of a young person who was now a youth advocate. This included the issues of bullying, and the failure on the part of a school to prevent this were mentioned by this young person. It was felt that should parents perceive that a school was not a safe environment for their children then this could have an impact on the increased numbers of home schooled children. The Chair enquired whether there was a difference between primary and secondary sectors regarding EHE and asked for a breakdown to be circulated by email to the Committee.

Resolved (by assent):

That the report be noted.

10/21 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received and considered the Committee's Work Programme [Annexed].

It was noted that an additional item had been added to the Work Programme, namely that a report to provide an update on the implementation of the Access and Inclusion Working Group's recommendations would be made to the Committee's meeting on 11 March 2021.

A Member requested that the Committee consider returning to a fuller programme of meetings, with a meeting to consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic to be held prior to the next meeting of the Cabinet. It was noted that as a response to the pandemic, a reduced programme of virtual meetings was introduced from 1 September 2020 and this was to be reviewed to allow Council and committee business to be reset with a new programme of meetings to be introduced for the forthcoming municipal year.

In the course of discussion, it was suggested by Members that a briefing note should be circulated in approximately four weeks and that an item on this should be placed on the agenda for the Committee's meeting on 11 March 2021. It was requested that the briefing note deal with the following matters:

- Update on Covid-19 guidance for schools, testing and the Council's strategy.
- Attendance at and the opening of schools, together with learning and what action the Council is taking to ensure that this is being carried out.
- Remote learning and the roll out of digital devices.
- Data concerning the number of schools where there have had been Covid-19 cases, so that the trends could be discerned.

Resolved (by assent):

1. That as requested by the Committee, a briefing note on the Covid-19 pandemic with reference to the four areas above, be circulated to the Members of the Committee in four weeks;

2. That an item on this matter be placed on the agenda of the meeting of the Committee to be held on 11 March 2021.

11/21 FORWARD PLANS

Members received and considered the Forward Plans of the Council and the Black Country Executive Joint Committee [Annexed].

Resolved (by assent):

That the Forward Plans be noted.

12/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 11 March 2021 at 6.00 pm.

13/21 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET FEEDBACK AND DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2021/22 TO 2023/24

A report was submitted dealing with the draft revenue budget feedback and the draft capital programme for 2021/22 to 2023/24 [Annexed].

As Portfolio Holder, Councillor Towe introduced this item and referred to the second report that had been made to the Cabinet on 9 December 2020. He informed the Committee that the capital programme allocations relating to the remit of the Committee for the next three financial years were as contained in the report, adding that externally funded schemes were being funded by the DfE.

The Head of Access, Mr Rob Thomas, reiterated the comments of Councillor Towe, adding that Appendix 1 of the report set out the corporate funding provided by the Council and Appendix 2 showed the externally funded schemes, which were mostly funded by the DfE. He noted that 2021/22 was committed and confirmed funding, whereas 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 were indicative funding based on the figures remaining the same. Accordingly, there might be some adjustment in the figures if, for example, there was a change in a school's status due to academisation, and in which case the funding would go directly to the responsible body/Academy Trust rather than to the Local Authority.

There were no further comments or questions from Committee Members.

Resolved (by roll call):

1. That the draft capital budget proposals attached that relate to the remit of this committee was noted;

2. That consultation continued on all revenue policy proposals previously reported, and that feedback would be presented to the Cabinet on 10 February 2021, along with further revenue options to close the gap to ensure a balanced budget was set for 2021/22, was noted.

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 7.50 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Agenda Item No. 6**

11 March 2021

Special Report: COVID Update

Ward(s) All

Portfolio: Councillor Chris Towe – Education and Skills

1. Aim

To provide Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on:

- Covid-19 guidance for schools, including schools testing
- Attendance and opening of schools
- Remote learning and digital devices
- Data on Covid cases in schools

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the contents of the report and to request further information, if required.

3. Report detail – know

3.1 The Education and Overview Scrutiny Committee met on 5 January 2021 and requested an additional report to update the Committee on the current schools position during the COVID pandemic. The Committee requested that the report covers the following 4 areas:

- Covid-19 guidance for schools including schools testing
- Attendance and opening of schools
- Remote learning and digital devices
- Data on Covid cases in schools

The Committee requested the report was circulated within 4 weeks and would be discussed as an agenda item at the next meeting in March.

3.2 Covid-19 guidance for schools including schools testing

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 4 January 2021, only children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people should attend school or college. All other pupils and students will receive remote education. Early years settings (including nurseries and childminders) remained open. The definitions for vulnerable children and Critical workers can be found here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Access and Inclusion staff have worked in partnership with Public Health and other areas of the Council, including Health and Safety and Human Resources (HR), to produce daily updates and resources to support our schools and settings and weekly virtual heads meetings through Teams.

All guidance provided for schools and parents can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19

Testing in schools

To safeguard the health of the teaching workforce and keep as many staff and pupils in school and college as possible, the DfE made rapid-result coronavirus (COVID-19) tests available to schools and colleges in the New Year. This will help identify asymptomatic cases – which make up a third of all cases – limiting the spread of the virus. This program is led directly by the DfE in partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner.

From January, rapid-result tests were be provided to schools and colleges, starting with secondary schools and FE colleges, including special schools and alternative provision:

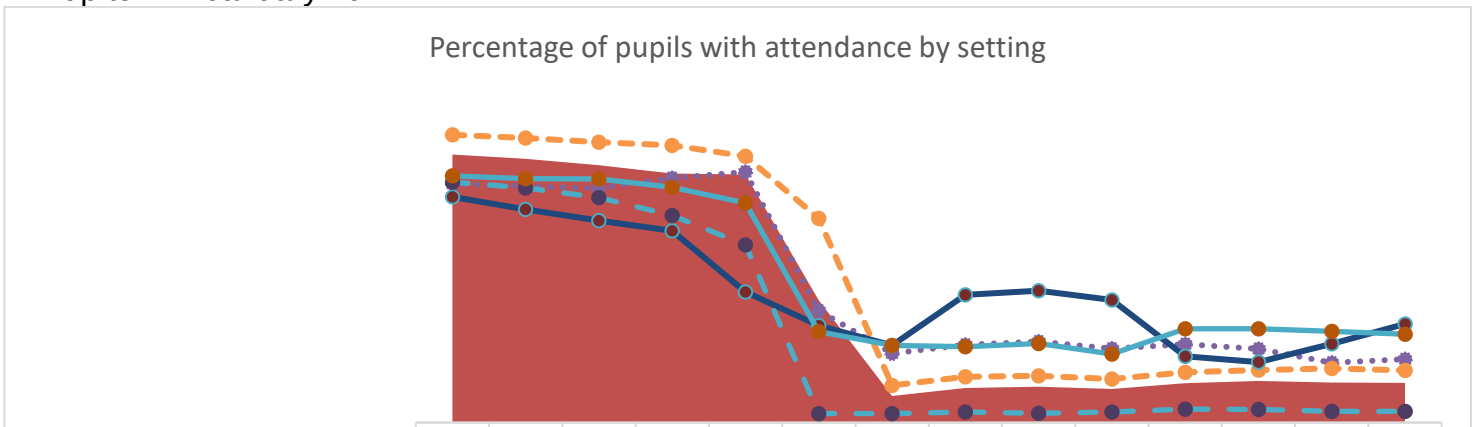
- For the school and college workforce to conduct weekly testing – this will help identify those who are carrying the virus without displaying symptoms, reducing the risk of transmission.
- For students and pupils as well as the school and college workforce to conduct daily testing for those identified as close contacts of workforce colleagues, students or pupils that have tested positive – this ensures that they do not need to isolate and are able to continue to benefit from high quality, face to face education.

For every group, testing is voluntary but those who are eligible for tests are strongly encouraged to participate to reduce the risk of transmission within schools and colleges.
In line with routine infection control practice, close contacts who decide not to be tested daily will need to self-isolate in line with guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

Schools in Walsall were supported by our local Public Health team and are rolling out the testing programme. The mass rollout of Covid testing for primary school teachers and support staff will begin from 18th January. Primary teachers and support staff will be able to self-administer the tests at home, with the Government providing a £78 million support package.

3.3 **Attendance and opening of schools**

The table below shows the percentage of pupils attending pre-Christmas, for comparison, and up to 14th January 2021:



	14/12/20	15/12/20	16/12/20	17/12/20	18/12/20	04/01/21	05/01/21	06/01/21	07/01/21	08/01/21	11/01/21	12/01/21	13/01/21	14/01/21
Total Pupil attendance %	82.9	81.6	79.6	77	76.7	37.8	8.2	10.7	11.1	10.4	12.2	12.9	12.4	12.3
Nursery setting %	73.9	73.1	72.5	75.6	77.5	34.7	21.4	24.1	25.1	22.9	24.3	22.8	18.5	19.6
Primary setting %	89	88	86.7	85.7	82.4	63.2	11.5	14.2	14.5	13.5	15.5	16.2	16.7	16.1
Pupil Referral Unit setting %	69.8	65.9	62.5	59.3	40.4	30	23.9	39.5	40.8	37.9	20.5	18.7	24.4	30.5
Secondary setting %	74.4	72.6	69.6	64.1	54.9	2.8	2.8	3.3	2.9	3.3	4.2	4.1	3.5	3.5
Special setting %	76.3	75.4	75.3	72.8	67.9	28.1	23.9	23.5	24.5	21.2	29	29	28.2	27.3

National attendance is currently broadly in line.

Pupil Attendance percentage	National %	Walsall %
Total	**14**	**12.3**
Primary	**20**	**16.1**
Secondary	**4**	**3.5**
Special	**29**	**27.3**
Pupil Referral Unit	**23**	**30.5**

In response to the national lockdown and the new strain of the virus schools were supported to reviewing their risk assessments. We have done this in partnership with Public Health, Health and Safety, HR and also the unions.

3.4 Remote learning and digital devices

The procurement and distribution of laptops is now directly through the school setting from the Department for Education (DfE).

All schools in England have now been invited to order their full allocation of laptops and tablets. If they have not ordered their full allocation they will receive a DfE email inviting them to order. Alternatively, they can sign in to the get help with technology service and follow the instructions to check their allocation and place their order.

DfE are also providing internet connections through free mobile data increases or 4G wireless routers for students who meet all 3 of these criteria. The student:

- does not have fixed broadband at home
- cannot afford additional data for their devices
- is experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education

Please note that only schools can place orders. Parents, carers and pupils cannot order devices or internet access through the DfE service.

In addition, the DfE has set out requirements for schools to provide high-quality remote education when children are unable to attend school.
OFSTED will look at how well schools are educating pupils in the current circumstances – which for most pupils means being educated remotely. They will also consider complaints made by parents about remote education to help resolve issues and make sure children are being well served.

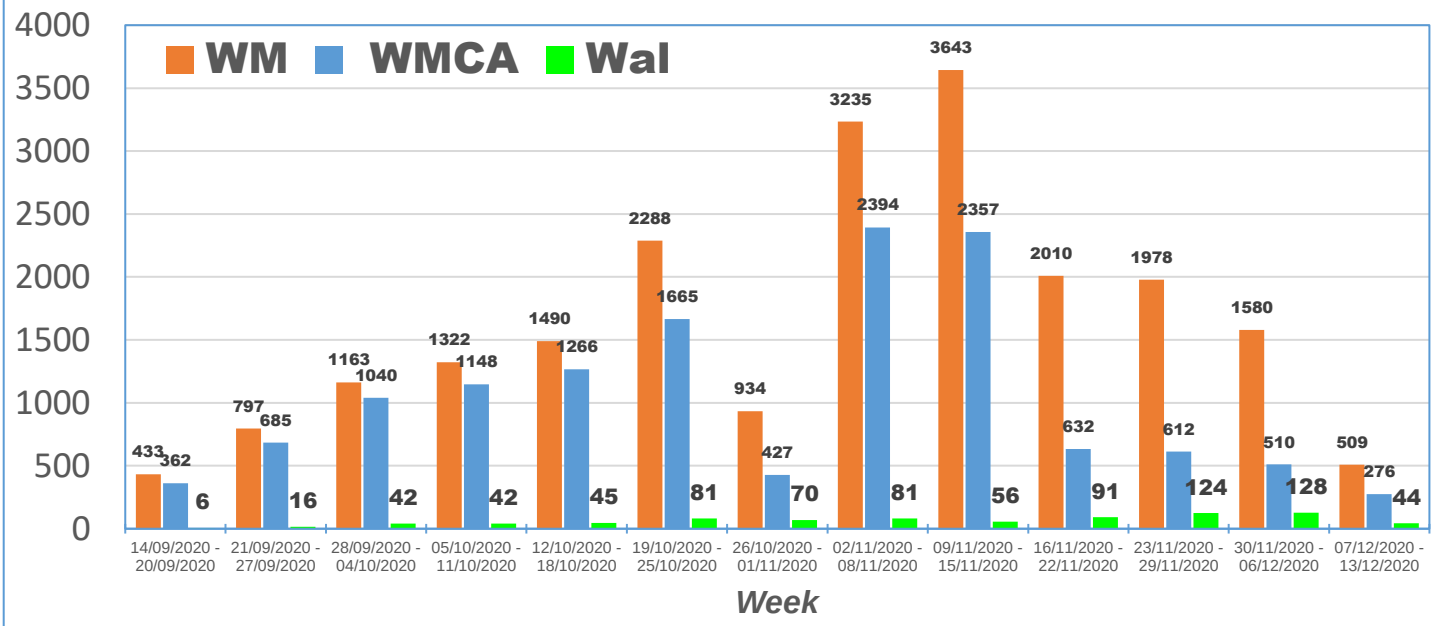
If parents feel their child's school is not providing suitable remote education, they should first raise their concerns with the teacher or head teacher. If issues are not resolved, parents can report the matter to Ofsted.

3.5 Data on Covid cases in schools

The most recent Covid data for schools is below
This shows confirmed cases in pupils and staff for the period from 14 September to 13 December 2020.

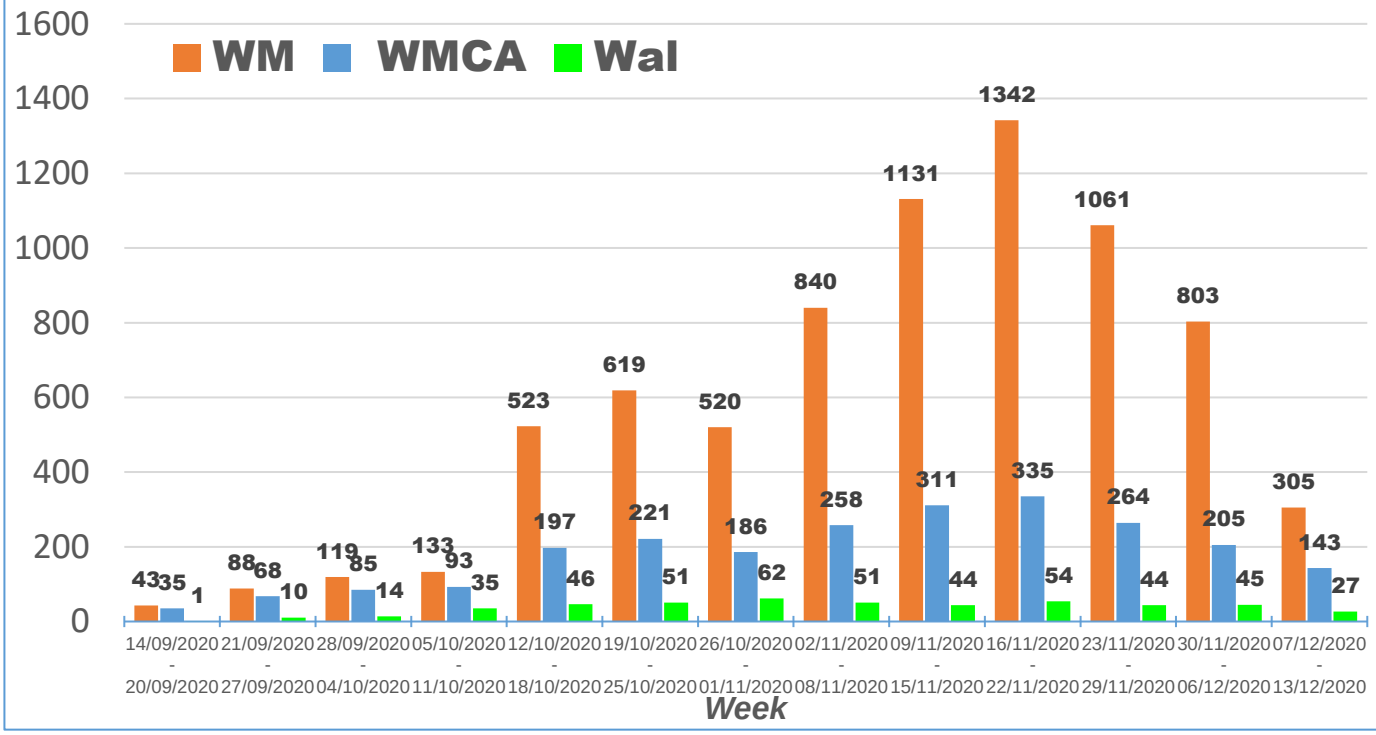
Weekly Trends: Pupil Covid Cases in Schools

LA Comparison: Region 14th September to 13th December



Weekly Trends: Staff Covid Cases in Schools

LA Comparison to Region 14th Sept to 13th Dec



4. Financial information

4.1 There are no financial implications set out in this report.

5. Reducing Inequalities

5.1 Services consider and respond to equality issues in all delivery of services. Equality issues were considered during the risk assessment process by schools.

6. Decide

6.1 To note the information set out in this report. To decide if there is any further information required.

7. Respond

7.1 The Committee will identify any further information they require and will add to the work program.

8. Review

8.1 Regular updates can be provided if requested.

Background papers: None.

Contact Officers:

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Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Agenda Item No. 7**

11 March 2021

Response to the report and recommendations of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Working Group on Access and Inclusion

Ward(s): **All**

Portfolios: Councillor Chris Towe – Education and Skills

1. Aim

This report has been produced to inform the Committee of the Portfolio Holder's response to the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee's working group's report on pupil exclusions and to update on progress.

2. Recommendations

That the Committee note the activity that is in place and the progress made to date to address the recommendations outlined in the working group's report.

3. Report detail – know

At its meeting on 18 June 2019, the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from officers on the proposed areas of focus for 2019/20 and Members discussed what were to be the Committee's main priorities for the municipal year. This facilitated the preparation of the Committee's work programme, including the establishment of a working group, which was approved at the meeting on 3 September 2019. In establishing a working group for 2019/20, the Committee agreed that the principal area for review should be access and inclusion in relation to Walsall's primary, secondary and special schools. This review would build on the foundations of the work undertaken in 2018/19 and conduct an in-depth examination of these issues.

The group held five meetings in total, the first of which took place on 26 September 2019. Terms of reference, key areas for review, the people who were to be invited to meet with the group and the data that would be required were agreed at the first meeting.

The Working group identified the following key areas for review:

- The Local Authority's responsiveness to meeting the demands of parents and schools with reference to the exclusion of pupils from schools in Walsall.
- The effectiveness of the policies and procedures of schools and the Local Authority in relation to the issue of exclusions.
- An assessment of the main reasons for exclusion of children from schools and the practice of 'off-rolling'.

The aim of the review was for the working group to provide an insight into these issues and the impact that they are having on children, families, teachers and school leaders.

In carrying out the review, the working group was informed by the engagement it had with the relevant professionals, including staff from the Walsall Council Children's Services Directorate, head teachers of Walsall schools and a number of parents whose children have been excluded from school. The working group were grateful for this and the particular perspectives and views that were provided because it enabled councillors to frame and set out their findings systematically and to formulate appropriate conclusions.

The review produced a number of recommendations that it is believed would assist in alleviating some of the problems being encountered:

1. That Walsall Council's local offer to schools should be developed to ensure that more resources are readily available to equip schools to cope better with difficult behaviour from children with special needs.

2. That Walsall schools and their HR providers should be encouraged to ensure that their policies support the recruitment and retention of high quality members of staff to address most effectively the particular needs of Walsall children.

3. That further guidance and support be given to schools to ensure that when they are dealing with uncooperative parents, the powers available to the schools are fully understood and used effectively and appropriately.

4. That the Fair Access Protocol, which is co-ordinated by the Local Authority but which has to be agreed by and owned by the schools adhering to it, should have a true consultation period.

5. That via the local offer to Walsall schools, which are able to buy in the service from the Local Authority, support for SENCO and training on autism and anxiety issues should be increased so that both teachers and professionals have a better understanding of Walsall children.

6. That the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process should be speeded up as far as is practicable, be made easier to understand, and be more responsive/flexible and accountable to the wishes of parents and carers.

Work is already progressing in some of these areas including:-

Recommendation 1 and 5: We have established a working group to develop the Local Offer consisting of officers, school staff, parents, children and young people and other partner professionals. This group audited all Local Area SEND inspections and identified those that had been commended as having exemplar Local Offers. All these sites were reviewed and our own local offer audited against them. The group also reviewed a variety of platforms that are used to host these Local Offers and have designed a new user friendly platform for Walsall, in partnership with parents, children and young people to ensure it holds the content that is needed and is user friendly. The platform is currently being developed and trialled and will go live in Spring Term 2021.

Recommendation 2: Training is being developed and rolled out to all schools covering good practice guidance, practice and policy for teacher recruitment. This is delayed slightly due to COVID and is currently being delivered virtually.

Recommendation 3: Due to the COVID pandemic, all support to schools with parental engagement has focused on supporting the reopening of schools, addressing parental anxieties and supporting pupil and parent mental wellbeing. Future work will include support for schools and parents, as identified in the recommendation, once schools are fully reopen.

Recommendation 4: The Fair Access Protocol, which is co-ordinated by the Local Authority but which has to be agreed by and owned by the schools adhering to it, has had a true consultation period with secondary heads and a protocol has been agreed. This was fully adopted and implemented by the secondary heads in December 2020.

Recommendation 6: The EHCP assessment and review process is being streamlined, simplified and developed to be more responsive, flexible and accountable to the wishes of parents and carers through the implementation of an online EHCP Hub. This system will be open for all users including parents, carers, children and young people and will provide a real time overview of the progress of assessments, support the contribution of professionals, parents, carers, children and young people to their assessments and reviews and enable finalised plans to be accessed at any time.

A working group was established to review a variety of online platforms and consisted of professionals from the Local Authority, schools, parents and carers. The working group recommended the Open Objects EHC Hub which was procured.

A project team was instigated to implement the EHC Hub and ensure it meets the needs of all users. The EHCP Hub was trialled from June 2020 until November 2020. From spring 2021, all new EHCP assessments will be managed on the Hub. Existing EHCPs will be transferred to the Hub at the point of their annual review over the next 12 months. This means all EHCPs will be managed via the HUB by April 2022.

4. Financial information

EHCP hub funded through Directorate budget.

5. Reducing Inequalities

It is often the most vulnerable learners who struggle to access education that meets their needs or suffer from inequalities as a result of poor systems and processes. Ensuring that these learners across the borough have access to high quality educational provision that meets their needs will raise standards and improve outcomes for all of Walsall's children.

6. Decide

Scrutiny to acknowledge current progress and developments.

7. Respond

The recommendations from the working group will be actioned by council officers as part of the ongoing SEND and inclusion improvement work.

8. Review

Progress against the recommendations will be reviewed within 6 months through the Education Scrutiny Committee.

Author: Sharon Kelly
Director Access and Inclusion

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Agenda Item No. 8**

11 March 2021

Update on School Organisation – Pupil Place Planning

Wards(s): All

Portfolios: Councillor Chris Towe – Education and Skills

1. Aim

The aim of this report is to:

- Summarise the role of the School Organisation Service
- Update on Pupil Place Planning for Primary and Secondary in Walsall
- Provide background information on the capital funding and school expansion schemes.

2. Recommendations

That the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the contents of his report and decides whether there should be further information or updates.

3. Report Detail – Know

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places for resident children who want a school place. A local authority has a general duty, under section 14 of the Education Act 1996, to secure that there are available, in its area, sufficient schools 'in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education'.

To meet its statutory responsibilities Walsall Council needs to ensure it has an understanding of where the pressures on school places will come from, these pressures include changes in the population, housing developments, and cross border migration.

The projections of future demand are based on birth data sourced from the Office of National Statistics; historical pupil retention data from the school census, pupil yield from housing developments obtained from the council's planning department and inward and outward migration data.

For mainstream pupil place, planning purposes the Borough has been divided into planning areas. There are 11 Primary Planning Areas and 4 Secondary Planning Areas. These areas were drawn up taking account of ward

boundaries, geographical features (such as major roads and housing developments), and patterns from historical school admissions data. (See Appendix A & B).

In order to plan pupil places effectively the Council must be open and transparent communicating the details on the pressures on school places in each planning area. The Council must also manage expectations and avoid any adverse impact on schools regarding school development proposals. When new capacity is needed, it is important to establish guidelines to ensure that this new capacity is provided appropriately and in the right place:

- We should seek to meet demand locally to allow children a school place within a reasonable walking distance from their home.
- Our planning of school places should reflect our school improvement strategy: we should work to make all schools good or outstanding. When seeking to expand schools, we should favour the expansion of schools where there is proven demand and well-established and successful leadership and management at a good or outstanding school.
- We should consider the impact of any changes on the viability and standards at existing schools. Where necessary we should work with schools to provide optimum forms of entry appropriate to the capacity of the school site and the level of demand for that school. On occasions, over time, it may be appropriate to reduce the capacity of some schools as others grow in size.
- The guidelines set out above will need to be balanced against the need to make best use of scarce capital resources and the physical practicalities of available sites.

The Local Authority adopts an annual cycle to school organisation and place planning, linked to the Department for Education School Capacity (SCAP) survey for mainstream schools. This survey is submitted in July each year and comprises four parts:

- capacity of schools
- forecasts of pupil numbers per national curriculum year group by planning area
- additional places due to be created by planning area
- place planning commentary by planning area of local circumstances, e.g. migration, changes of school category

The school organisation service prepares and submits this survey and its component parts, and during the yearly planning cycle updates its core data including changes to school capacity data following alterations and expansion of the school estate, planning department data on housing completions in each planning area, school census numbers and school admission application numbers and preferences.

The outcome of the validated and moderated submission by the DfE is an allocation of funding known as basic need funding. This capital grant is allocated to all LAs who have a forecasted demand for places above their existing capacity to help in meeting the statutory duty in making sure there are enough school places for children in our area.

3.1 Primary Pupil Place Planning

Primary school intakes are forecast based on the number of births in a given planning area. However, not all children born in a particular area will stay to attend a school in that area and others may move in to the area. To account for this, a 'loss / gain' factor is applied to each area to account for inward and outward migration as well as children attending schools outside of Walsall or in the non-maintained sector. Finally, movement between planning areas is accounted for by comparing where children live and where they have recently attended school.

In recent years, an upward trend in births in Walsall, as in many other areas, resulted in a corresponding increase in demand for Reception school places and this increased demand is expected to continue for September 2021. This increased demand for school places resulted in the need for primary school expansions and the Council has successfully delivered a number of projects creating much-needed additional places across the Borough.

Since 2016, birth numbers have begun to reduce, which will lead to forecasted reduction in demand for corresponding Reception places from September 2022 onwards. Over the coming years, it may be that there will be too much capacity in some planning areas, so careful consideration will need to be given to removal of some places.

School place planning forecasts have to be agile and robust and will need to align to the Council's wider housing and regeneration plans and those of our neighbouring local authorities to ensure the impacts of new housing developments and cross border movement of pupils continues to be sufficiently planned for.

The table below shows the projected number of Reception places required against the capacity in terms of Published Admission Number (PAN) for Walsall as a whole: the planning area breakdown is provided at Appendix C to this report.

Measure	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Reception Capacity (PAN)	3,997	3,997	3,997	3,997
Projected Intake	3,963	3,750	3,706	3,609
Surplus / Shortfall	34	247	291	388
Surplus %	1%	6%	7%	10%

Planning a sufficiency of school places requires a balance between two conflicting objectives. The first is to provide enough places to meet need along with a margin to allow some exercise of parental preference; the second is to ensure that there is not an excess of places overall or in any particular school or planning area. A 1% working surplus across the whole Borough will cause some operational difficulties for in-year admissions and ability to meet parental preference, so there are some ongoing conversations to increase the number of Reception places available through consideration of bulge classes. Initial conversations have started to take place and these will continue as part of the school organisation service role in ensuring sufficiency for school places.

3.2 Secondary Pupil Place Planning

Secondary intakes are forecast in much the same way as primary school intakes. For each secondary planning area, the number of Year 6 pupils attending Walsall schools living in that planning area is compared against the next year's figure for Year 7 pupils attending Walsall schools living in that planning area to arrive at a 'loss / gain' factor. This is applied to projected future Year 6 figures for each planning area to predict how many Year 7 pupils there will be in Walsall schools living in each planning area. Movement between planning areas is calculated in a similar way as for the primary schools.

The Borough's secondary schools are starting to be impacted by the upturn in births that led to primary schools needing to be expanded. In order to increase the number of places available a review of all secondary school capacities has been carried out and the possibility of those schools admitting higher numbers has been identified. A number of schools have since been admitting above their PAN, making use of any spare capacity they had available. This means that these schools will be operating at maximum capacity and are likely to become very full over the next few years as projected intakes continue to grow. Despite this, projections indicate that there will still be a shortfall of places across the Borough. The overall picture is shown in the table below and a breakdown by planning area in Appendix D.

Measure	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26	Sep-27	Sep-28
Year 7 Capacity (PAN)	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894
Projected Intake	3762	3897	3935	3906	3911	3931	3925	4052
Surplus / Shortfall	132	-3	-41	-12	-17	-37	-31	-158
Surplus %	3%	0%	-1%	0%	0%	-1%	-1%	-4%

The localised pressures of places are in Secondary Planning Area 4, the schools within this planning area are:

- Walsall Academy,
- Bloxwich Academy
- Pool Hayes Arts & Community
- Willenhall e-ACT Academy
- St Thomas More Catholic – Business & Enterprise College

Secondary intakes forecast that there will be sufficient places for September 2021 but shortages thereafter and that additional capacity will be needed. Options for additional capacity are:

1) Existing capacity at secondary schools:

   The Local Authority is reviewing all the secondary school Net Capacity Assessments that have determined the admission capacity that each school can admit. This will establish which schools have underutilised capacity that is not reflected in their current PANs and allow opportunities for discussion with schools for either temporary bulge classes or a permanent increase in admission numbers from September 2022.

2) Review of existing school provision – Expansions

   The Local Authority may consider expanding schools through building projects – either extensions to the existing buildings or construction of new blocks. Feasibility studies will need to be commissioned where schools have parental demand and the school site is able to accommodate further development. Any expansions will need to consider the additional classroom teaching spaces together with non-teaching spaces such as dining facilities, halls, staff rooms and welfare areas required to make the increase in pupil numbers sustainable across the whole school environment. Sport England, planning and highways assessments will also need to be considered to avoid adverse impacts on local communities.

   Consideration of satellite sites for schools would also be considered as part of any feasibility for expansion of an existing school where the local authority could identify any surplus sites or assets that could be suitable for educational provision.

3) Consideration of new provision – Free School

   The Local Authority is working with the DfE to determine the viability to deliver the pre-approved Free School within the Borough. Validation of pupil demand within planning areas is ongoing together with consideration of potential sites.

   For a secondary school, a large site would be required: based on Building Bulletin 103 government guidelines it should be around 80,000 square metres, although nationally some Free Schools have opened in much smaller premises perhaps with sporting provision offered off-site. The DfE will continue to work with the local authority as part of site identification as part of the formal approval process for the Free School.

Moving Forward

Discussions of the above options with schools through Walsall Association of Secondary Heads (WASH) and their responsible bodies (Governors, Trusts etc.) is needed to agree a secondary school place strategy for providing additional capacity for the Borough.

These discussions will form the focus for the remaining part of the 2020/21 academic year.

3.3 School Expansion Projects

As part of the school expansion proposals, the table below shows the most recent projects that have been completed or are currently planned.

Name of School	Reception Places created	Total place creation across school	Scheme Status
Old Church Primary School	15	105	Completed
Rosedale Infant School & Short Heath Junior School	30	Infant School – 90 Junior School – 120	Ongoing – due for completion September 2021 intake
Manor Primary School	15	105	Ongoing – due for completion September 2021 intake
St Michael's CE (C) Primary School	15	105	Ongoing – due for completion September 2021 intake
Christ Church CE (C) Primary School	15	105	Ongoing – due for completion September 2021 intake
Sunshine Nursery & Infant School & Blakenall Heath Junior School	30	Infant School – 90 Junior School – 120	Ongoing – completion tbc
Total	120	840	

4. Financial

The expansion projects will be funded from the Basic Need Capital Fund. The capital grant is allocated by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to local authorities, based on pupil place number forecasts, to deliver the additional places in schools to meet expected demands.

Monies allocated to the schemes are as follows:

- Old Church Primary School - £1,712,000
- Rosedale Infant School & Short Heath Junior School - The Short Heath Federation - £3,795,000
- Manor Primary School - £1,512,000
- St Michael's CE Primary School - £1,914,000
- Christ Church CE (C) Primary School - £1,800,000
- Sunshine Nursery & Infant School & Blakenall Heath Junior School - £300,000 & £1,800,000
  Total Spend/Allocated Funds = £12,833,000

5. Decide

The Committee may decide to note the current position.

The Committee may decide to request that a further briefing on place planning be offered to all elected members.

6. Respond

The committee may decide to request further information as pertains to individual planning area and school expansions.

7. Review

The pupil projections are annually reviewed in line with Office of National Statistics Data, Live Birth Data and the census information reviewed from schools.

The SCAP survey is moderated and validated by the DfE after submission in July each year. This validation leads to capital grant allocation for provision of addition school places.

Authors:

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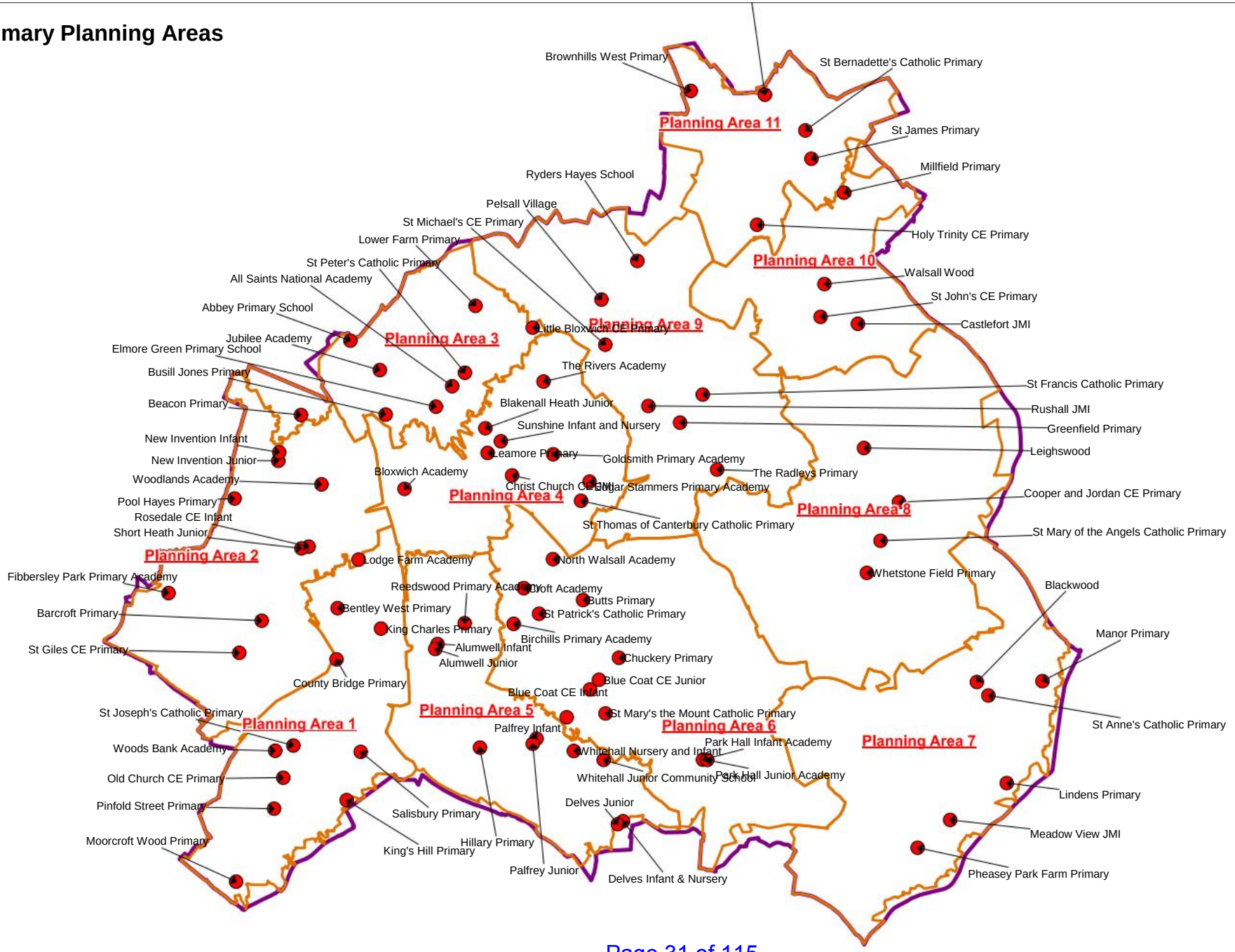
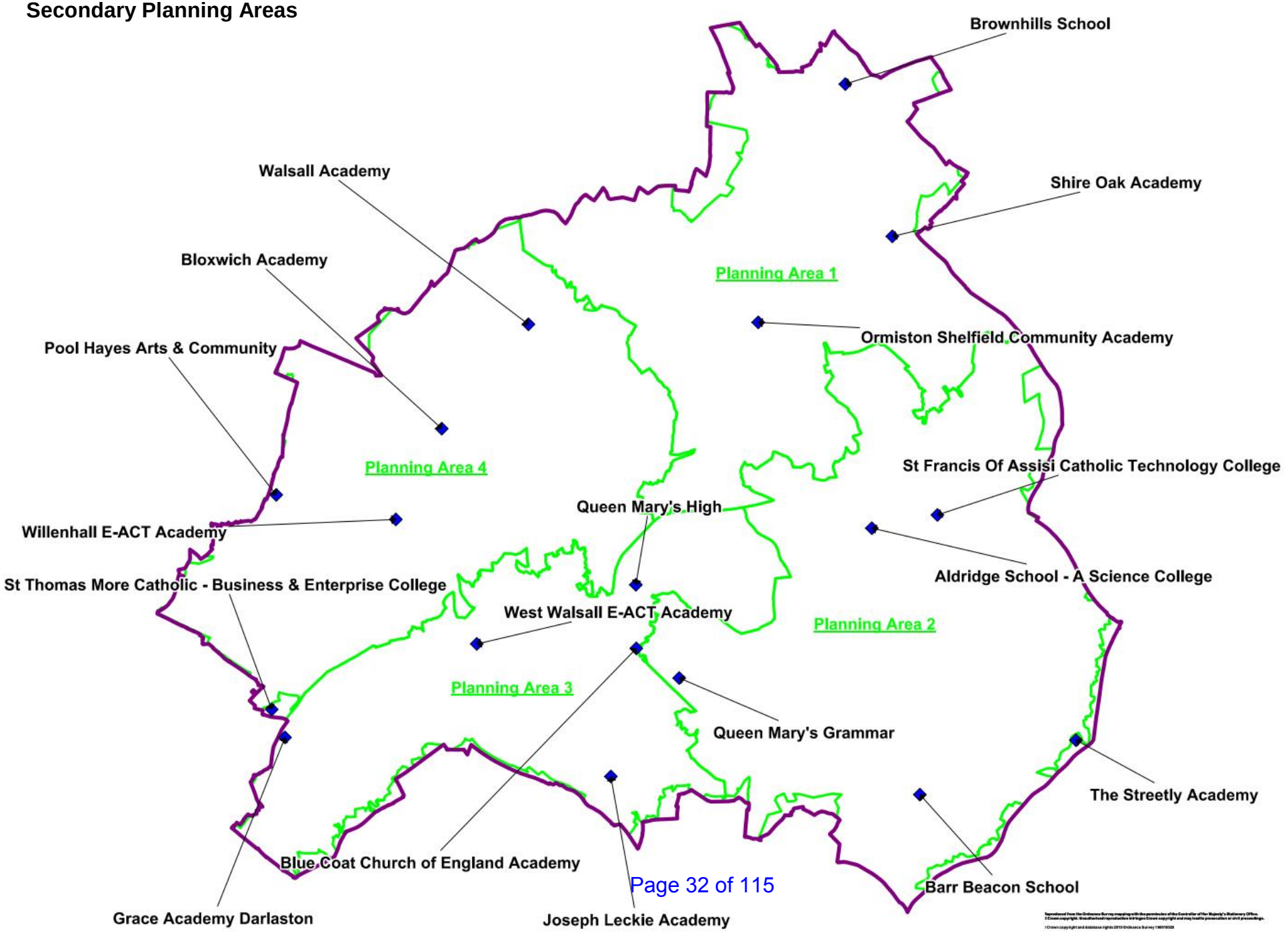
Primary Planning Areas



Secondary Planning Areas



Appendix C: Primary Intake Place Requirements by Planning Area

Planning Area	Measure	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Planning Area 1	PAN	487	487	487	487
	Projected Intake	504	456	464	437
	Surplus / Shortfall	-17	31	23	50
Planning Area 2	PAN	525	525	525	525
	Projected Intake	510	462	468	451
	Surplus / Shortfall	15	63	57	74
Planning Area 3	PAN	375	375	375	375
	Projected Intake	379	346	341	336
	Surplus / Shortfall	-4	29	34	39
Planning Area 4	PAN	435	435	435	435
	Projected Intake	444	404	410	383
	Surplus / Shortfall	-9	31	25	52
Planning Area 5	PAN	510	510	510	510
	Projected Intake	520	473	451	437
	Surplus / Shortfall	-10	37	59	73
Planning Area 6	PAN	510	510	510	510
	Projected Intake	510	493	470	466
	Surplus / Shortfall	0	17	40	44
Planning Area 7	PAN	390	390	390	390
	Projected Intake	354	365	363	368
	Surplus / Shortfall	36	25	27	22
Planning Area 8	PAN	180	180	180	180
	Projected Intake	198	185	202	216
	Surplus / Shortfall	-18	-5	-22	-36
Planning Area 9	PAN	300	300	300	300
	Projected Intake	267	296	268	266
	Surplus / Shortfall	33	4	32	34
Planning Area 10	PAN	105	105	105	105
	Projected Intake	109	106	104	82
	Surplus / Shortfall	-4	-1	1	23
Planning Area 11	PAN	180	180	180	180
	Projected Intake	166	158	160	166
	Surplus / Shortfall	14	22	20	14
Total	PAN	3,997	3,997	3,997	3,997
	Projected Intake	3,961	3,744	3,701	3,608
	Surplus / Shortfall	36	253	296	389
	Surplus %	1%	6%	7%	10%

Appendix B: Secondary Intake Place Requirements by Planning Area

Planning Area	Measure	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26	Sep-27	Sep-28
Planning Area 1	Agreed Intake	675	675	675	675	675	675	675	675
	Projected Intake	623	664	611	631	619	629	601	630
	Surplus / Shortfall	52	11	64	44	56	46	74	45
Planning Area 2	Agreed Intake	1153	1153	1153	1153	1153	1153	1153	1153
	Projected Intake	1088	1120	1158	1141	1138	1176	1153	1135
	Surplus / Shortfall	65	33	-5	12	15	-23	0	18
Planning Area 3	Agreed Intake	950	950	950	950	950	950	950	950
	Projected Intake	900	927	961	938	956	964	999	1002
	Surplus / Shortfall	50	23	-11	12	-6	-14	-49	-52
Planning Area 4	Agreed Intake	1116	1116	1116	1116	1116	1116	1116	1116
	Projected Intake	1149	1183	1204	1196	1197	1161	1176	1251
	Surplus / Shortfall	-33	-67	-88	-80	-81	-45	-60	-135
Total	Agreed Intake	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894	3894
	Projected Intake	3760	3894	3934	3906	3910	3930	3929	4018
	Surplus / Shortfall	134	0	-40	-12	-16	-36	-35	-124
	Surplus %	3%	0%	-1%	0%	0%	-1%	-1%	-3%

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Agenda Item No. 9**

11 March 2021

Update: SEND Strategy

Ward(s): **All**

Portfolios: Councillor Chris Towe – Education and Skills

1. Aim

To update the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the SEND Strategy 2020-2025. To consult with the Committee as key stakeholders.

2. Recommendations

That the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the contents of this report and feedback views and supports the principles of the SEND Strategy 2020-2025.

3. Report detail – know

3.1 The SEND Strategy articulates the vision that all children deserve the best start in life, and for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), this requires us to identify learning needs early, to have the right level of collaboration with parents, carers and our providers, and to have the provision we require to meet the diverse range of needs for our children and young people. The SEND strategy also aligns with the Council's corporate plan 2018-2021 which states 'Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.'

3.2 We are committed to enabling, challenging and supporting all schools to be inclusive so that the best outcomes are achieved for all pupils and we will be regularly sharing our progress through the Walsall Council Local Offer.

3.3 The SEND strategy is implemented in line with the significant Government reforms to education, health and social care for children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. The principles of these reforms were to facilitate better outcomes for children and young people by combining the support provided across health, education and social care from birth to 25, ensuring early intervention, and to make sure children, young people and parents are at the centre of the decision making.

3.4 Walsall adopts a graduated approach, illustrated in the diagram below to identify and support children and young people with SEND. A graduated approach means that we expect reasonable adjustments to be made, ensuring that the majority of children and young people with SEN are able to have their needs met within a mainstream provision, thus allowing them to enjoy the same opportunities as their peers whilst being fully included within their communities.

3.5 We envisage a well-planned continuum of provision from birth to age 25, which meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families. Integrated services across education, health and social care work collaboratively with children, young people, parents and carers, to ensure that individual needs are met without unnecessary bureaucracy or delay. This means that we are dedicated to supporting early intervention and prevention which allows support to be implemented in a timely manner to ensure children's and young people's needs do not increase.

3.6 The Aim of the SEND strategy is to turn high aspirations for all of our learners with SEND into a reality. The strategy outlines our vision, principles and priorities to ensure that we are working collaboratively to identify and meet the needs of Walsall's children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) from birth to the age of 25. This strategy does not exist in isolation and builds on the 'Getting it Right for Walsall' Strategy and the outcomes of our Ofsted local area inspection in February 2019. We acknowledge that our vision cannot be implemented and our priorities cannot be delivered by professionals alone. We are committed to working together with children and young people, as well as parents and carers to provide support to them and create an environment and conditions which will enable them to thrive and achieve their personal goals and aspirations.

3.7 Our values will help us to achieve the Council's SEND vision and priorities. Our values underpin the way we operate as an organisation. They influence our choices and our behaviours - they are the thread running through everything we do. The values we will work on throughout this strategy are:

- Person centred – ensuring the child and their family are at the centre of what we do, all decisions are 'Done with' and not 'Done to'
- High expectations and aspirations – creating and nurturing a culture which raises everyone's expectations for children and young people with SEND
- Trust – between families and services
- Collaboration – children, young people, families and services working together

3.8 The SEND Strategy needs to be read in conjunction with our Inclusion Strategy and our Accessibility Strategy.

4. Decide

Scrutiny to feedback views and support the principles of the SEND Strategy.

5. Respond

Any recommendations made by the Committee will be assessed against the Inclusion Strategy and our SEND and Accessibility Strategies and incorporated, where appropriate, into the final SEND strategy.

6. Review

The final report will be brought back to the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the summer of 2021.

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Walsall Council

PROUD OF OUR PAST OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

Walsall SEN Strategy 2020 - 2025

Walsall Council

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Introduction

All children deserve the best start in life, and for our children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), this requires us to identify learning needs early, to have the right level of collaboration with parents, carers and our providers, and to have the provision we require to meet the diverse range of needs for our children and young people.

The Children and Families Act 2014 brought in fundamental changes in relation to SEND. In particular, it aimed to:

- Get education, health and social care services working together
- Ensure accurate and useful information is available to children or young people with SEND and their families
- Give children and young people and their parents more of a say about the help they receive
- Give children or young people one plan for meeting their education, health and care needs that focuses on and gives time for getting ready for adulthood.

We are committed to enabling, challenging and supporting all schools to be inclusive so that the best outcomes are achieved for all pupils and we will be regularly sharing our progress through the Walsall Council Local Offer.

What are Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

Section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and Section 312 of the 1996 Education Act, states that a child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions; or
- are under compulsory school age and fall within one of the definitions above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Special educational provision means:

- for children of 2 years or over, educational provision additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools

maintained by the local authority, other than special schools, in the area; or

- for children under age 2, educational provision of any kind

In addition, the SEND Code of Practice sets out four broad areas of need and support which may be helpful when reviewing and managing special educational provision. These are:

- communication and interaction;
- cognition and learning;
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties; and
- sensory and/or physical needs

Further information can be found within Section 6.28 - 6.35 of the 2015 SEND Code of Practice.

SEND in the National Context

This strategy is implemented in line with the significant Government reforms to education, health and social care for children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. The principles of these reforms were to facilitate better outcomes for children and young people by combining the support provided across health, education and social care from birth to 25, ensuring early intervention, and to make sure children, young people and parents are at the centre of the decision making.

The Children and Families Act 2014

The Children and Families Act 2014 took forward the Government's commitment to improve services for vulnerable children and young people. The Act extends the SEND system from birth to age 25 and enables children, young people and their parents or carers to have greater control and choice with decision making.

Walsall Council have implemented these refomrs to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive timely and coordinated support to meet their needs.

SEND Code of Practice 0- 25

The Department for Education published the SEND Code of Practive in 2014, later updated in 2015. The code mirrors the changes introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014. The Code explains the duties of the local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide for those with SEN

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Walsall

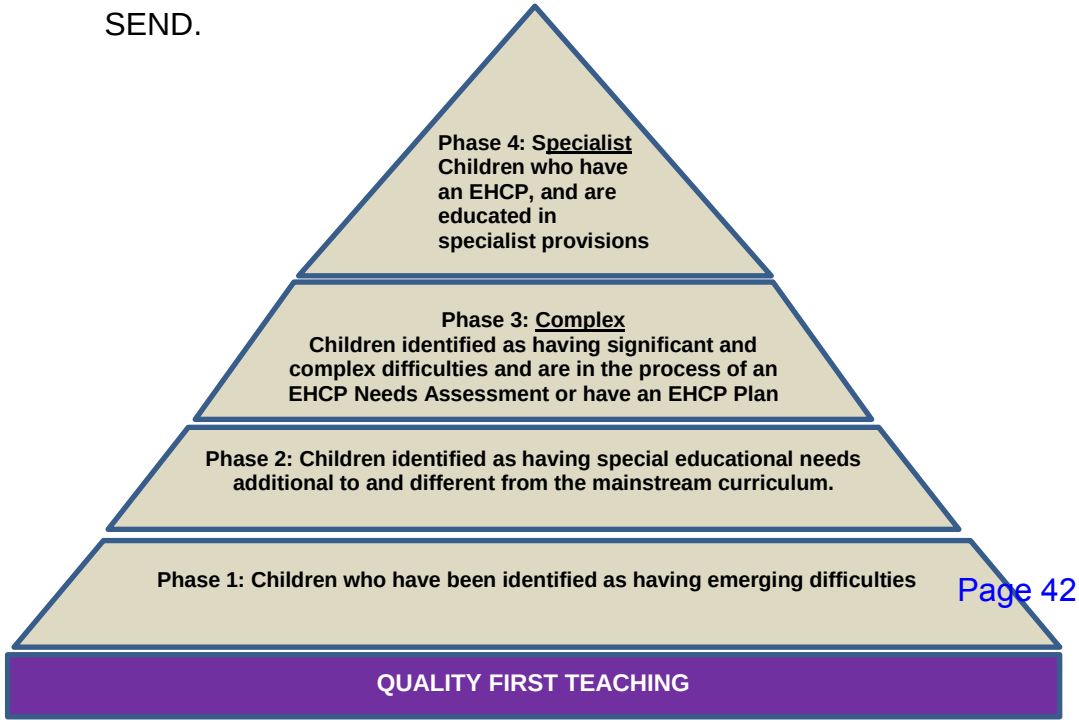
Walsall has an overall school population of [(a)] 45381 pupils. Of this [(b)] 2418 of children are recorded as having an EHCP. SEN support remains at 11.7%, slightly below national of 12.1 %.

(a) Data sourced from January 2020 Census (b) Walsall SEN Key Data August 2020

Walsall local authority has 123 provisions in total. There are 8 Nursery's, 86 Primary Schools, 18 Secondary Schools, 7 Special Schools and 3 Pupil referral Units.

Our approach to supporting SEND

Walsall adopts a graduated approach, illustrated in the diagram below to identify and support children and young people with SEND.



A graduated approach means that we expect reasonable adjustments to be made, ensuring that the majority of children and young people with SEN are able to have their needs met within a mainstream provision, thus allowing them to enjoy the same opportunities as their peers whilst being fully included within their communities.

Within the graduated approach, at the Universal level, needs are met through Quality First Teaching and Learning (QFT). Additionally, health and social care services can be provided at this level. QFT is provided to all children and young people, including those with SEND; all teachers are teachers of children and young people with special educational needs.

Support at the upper levels is tailored to meet the needs of the individual child or young person. For example, implementing the use of assistive technology, or using small group or individual interventions.

However it is recognised that some children and young people may require more complex specialist intervention to support their needs. Where children and young people require specialist support, we conduct a multi-agency assessment (Education, Health and Care needs assessment) to determine what additional support they may require. If these assessments reveal that the child or young person requires a provision that is significantly different from that provided for other children or young people of their age, and Education, Health and Care Plan

(EHCP) will be written. The EHCP outlines what support they need within the areas of education, health and care

The Walsall Vision for SEND

It is our vision that Walsall will be an inclusive borough where all partners work together to ensure that children and young people get the right support at the right time. Regardless of their learning needs or abilities, all children and young people in Walsall will be able to gain the skills and confidence to succeed.

We envisage a well-planned continuum of provision from birth to age 25, which meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and their families. Integrated services across education, health and social care work collaboratively with children, young people, parents and carers, to ensure that individual needs are met without unnecessary bureaucracy or delay. This means that we are dedicated to supporting early intervention and prevention which allows support to be implemented in a timely manner to ensure children's and young people's needs do not increase.

Walsall believe that every child and young person should have their needs met in their local community wherever possible. This includes local early year's settings and schools, further education colleges and work places. We believe that SEND Provision is NOT about a building; rather, identifying and implementing the most effective **inclusive** approaches to promoting the best outcomes for our children and young people. We expect all early years, post 16 providers, mainstream schools and academy's to make effective provision for children with SEND, in order for them to make good educational progress, which allows them to easily transition to the next stage of their education, employment and independent adult life.

It is our vision that all educational, health and care provisions have the capacity, skills and confidence to deliver high quality provision for children and young people with SEND, to improve their educational and health outcomes and access to wider opportunities within their local community.

We expect education, care and health services to be delivered in an integrated way so that the experience of families accessing services is positive and children's and young people's learning and development, safety, well-being and health outcomes are well promoted alongside their educational progress and achievement.

Aims

The Aim of this SEND strategy is to turn high aspirations for all of our learners with SEND into a reality. The strategy outlines our vision, principles and priorities to ensure that we are working collaboratively to identify and meet the needs of Walsall's children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) from birth to the age of 25. This strategy does not exist in isolation and builds on the 'Getting it Right for Walsall' Strategy and the outcomes of our Ofsted local area inspection in February 2019. We acknowledge that our vision cannot be implemented and our priorities cannot be delivered by professionals alone. We are committed to working together with children and young people, as well as parents and

carers to provide support to them and create an environment and conditions which will enable them to thrive and achieve their personal goals and aspirations.

The Walsall borough will:

- promote a spirit of co-production and partnership with parents, their children and young people with SEND, involving them in all key decisions
- work collaboratively with schools and partner agencies to deliver an effective SEND system which ensures effective early identification of need
- have high expectations for all children and young people with SEND, ensuring that their local educational settings are inclusive and meet their needs
- commit to promoting and celebrating strong leadership and inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND across all phases of Walsall's schools and settings
- ensure a rigorous focus on the preparation for adulthood outcomes

Values

Our values will help us to achieve the Council's SEND vision and priorities. Our values underpin the way we operate as an organisation. They influence our choices and our behaviours - they are the thread running through everything we do. The values we will work on throughout this strategy are:

- **Person centred** – ensuring the child and their family are at the centre of what we do, all decisions are 'Done with' and not 'Done to'
- **High expectations and aspirations** – creating and nurturing a culture which raises everyone's expectations for children and young people with SEND
- **Trust** – between families and services
- **Collaboration** – children, young people, families and services working together

This strategy supports the values behind Part 3 of the Children and Families Act, the SEND Code of Practice and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which state a commitment to inclusive education of disabled children and young people, and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.

Our Priorities for 2020 – 2025

In line with our vision, we have identified 4 key priorities which we will focus on to shape the future direction of SEND services in Walsall. We recognise that these priorities cannot be delivered by individual organisations alone and we have a commitment to working together in partnership to achieve collective goals and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

1. **Effective early identifications of needs with appropriate assessment across education, health and care**
2. **Provide a wide range of Education, health and Care Services which meet the needs of our children and young people**
3. **Ensure schools and other educational settings embed inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings**
4. **Ensure a clear transition across education, health and care at development stages, including effective transition into adulthood**

1. **Effective early identifications of needs with appropriate assessment across education, health and care**

Objectives:

- Identify children and young people as early as possible so they get the right support at the right time
- Ensure health services and early years education providers work collaboratively to make sure needs are identified and the appropriate support is put in place as soon as possible
- Use data to prioritise how we allocate and use the resources we have available to get the right skills, knowledge and funding in place to identify and assess needs in a timely manner
- Assess children and young people based on their individual needs and work collaboratively with families to understand what works and what needs to change
- Have clear assessment and review processes which describe who does what and when on an ongoing basis
- Have EHC Plans which are high quality and have a focus on long term aspirations and outcomes

2. **Provide a wide range of Education, health and Care Services which meet the needs of our children and young people**

Objectives

- Review existing provision and analyse data to predict future demand, adapting provisions as required
- Ensure there are sufficient high quality specialist schools, integrated resource and alternative provisions
- Provide and commission sufficient and effective advice services to identify and support the needs of children and young people in Walsall
- Work with schools to develop models of funding which allows them to implement identified support at the SEN Support and EHCP level
- Work to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions of learners with SEND
- Provide additional support to schools to access mental and emotional wellbeing support for children and young people
- Identify gaps in areas of need to upskill our workforce so that they have the expertise to identify and meet the needs of children in the borough

3. **Ensure schools and other educational settings embed inclusive practice for children and young people with SEND in mainstream settings**

Objectives:

- Provide a borough wide approach to inclusion in schools so that all children are made to feel welcome.
- Ensure that services are of high quality and meet young people's needs.
- Monitor and quality assure the impact of services. If issues with the quality of adequacy of services, we will take the appropriate action to ensure children and young people's needs are being met.
- Ensure schools are supported to make the physical learning environment as inclusive as possible.

4. **Ensure clear transition across education, health and care at development stages, including effective transition into adulthood**

Objectives:

- Develop pathways of support and intervention for young people from age 2, age 9 and age 14.
- Provide clear support to parents and carers to support their child at key transition stages, ensuring they are at the centre of the process
- Ensure that early intervention and social care teams work with education and health services to begin transition planning early
- Ensure clear pathways for children and young people as they move through education stages into adult life, ensuring services and processes across education, health and care are joined up
- Use available data and information from listening to children and young people, and their families to inform commissioning, in order for the right provision is implemented in line with the needs of the child/young person
- Work with employers to develop employment opportunities for young people with SEND, including supported internships, work experience and volunteering

The SEND Partnership

The SEND Inclusion Board brings together key stakeholders including: FACE (Parent and Carer forum), head teachers, leaders and service managers in education, health, social care and commissioning. The Board is responsible for providing strategic direction and joint commissioning to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND. Collaboration between Walsall council, Walsall CCG and wider partners provide strategic oversight to:

- Identify all children and young people with SEND
- Assess and meet their needs
- Improve their outcomes

We believe that children, young people and their families are in the best position to shape the services and support they receive. The Board is committed to working with all stakeholders to ensure co-design and production, creating a future which is inclusive and positively impacts lives.

FACE

FACE Walsall, is the Parent Carer forum for the borough of Walsall is led by parents for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with additional support needs and disabilities in Walsall. They work in partnership with commissioners and service providers across health, social services and education.

The aim of the Parent Carer Forum is to enable parents and carers to share their knowledge of what works and what does not work so well; and to help service providers and commissioners focus their efforts on effective, high quality support.

More details can be found here:
https://facewalsall.wordpress.com

Strategy Implementation

In order to deliver the aims and priorities within this strategy, we will put in place a robust action plan which details how we will ensure delivery and implementation of the SEND strategy.

The action plan will cover all areas of the SEND strategy and will include:

- SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) outcomes
- Resource implications, including funding
- Timescales for delivery

This action plan will be reviewed, updated and be published accordingly via the local offer.

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Agenda Item No. 10**

11 March 2021

Right for Children Transformation Programme

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr Chris Towe

Executive Summary:

This report provides an update on progress against our Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C) Transformation Programme and plans for further development over the next 3 years to achieve the benefits as set out within our Council's Proud Programme.

Our 3 year Transformation Plan is focussed on 3 strategic priorities to enable us to realise our vision and secure the associated benefits, these are:

(1) Reducing our demand

- Stopping failure demand - (when we are not the right organisation to provide help we currently end up being the default position – this leads to delay and not the right help for families with complex needs) Our transformation plan aims to re-direct this demand through self-help and outline clear roles and responsibilities relating to the partnership offer of support.
- Preventing escalation of demand (demand avoidance) – helping the right families through a graduated response of evidence-based programmes (from targeted help to placement support).
- Avoidance of high cost help and support – strategic commissioning that provides the right, most cost-effective placements for our looked after children and the right packages of support for our children with SEND.

(2) Developing a highly skilled/stable workforce

- Developing our profile as an employer.
- Making the job do-able and enabling our workforce to do the right thing.
- Supporting our staff with an effective workforce and wellbeing strategy.
- Developing a clear career pathway and succession planning.
- Having a clear recruitment and retention strategy.

(3) Co-ordinating and influencing the establishment of a mature WR4C partnership platform to drive the delivery of the WR4C vision

Reducing our demand and preventing children, young people and families from needing costly statutory interventions will require a strong and mature partnership approach.

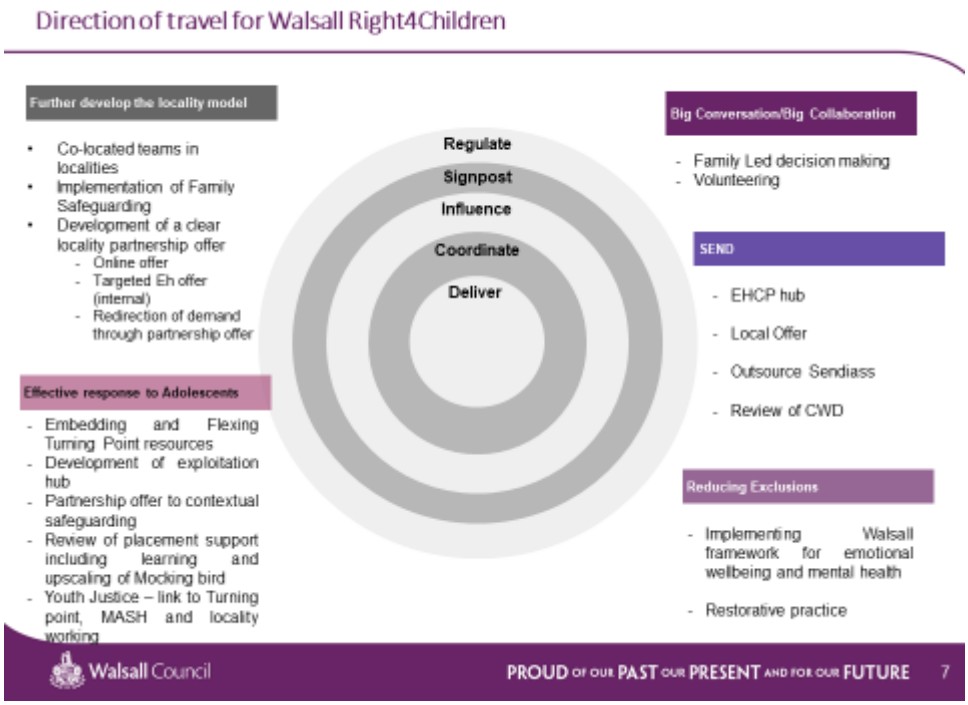
Connecting up transformation across Walsall in the interest children and families will be key including integrating services around our children and families where this makes sense for them , strategies , processes , adopting the same thresholds, removing duplication between partners and co-producing with families and the community

This work will need to link with

- Walsall Together

- Safeguarding Partnership
- Walsall for all
- Safer Communities
- Resilient Communities
- Youth Justice Partnership Board
- Regional Violence Prevention
- Troubled Families

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



Reason for scrutiny:

To provide members with a progress update of our 'Walsall Right For Children' Transformation Programme, outline our priorities and plans for the next 3 years in line with PROUD transformation benefits.

Recommendations:

For progress to be noted.
For priorities and plans to be supported.

Background papers:

Scrutiny reports presented on October 2019, February 2020
Appendix 1 - WR4C outcomes framework
Appendix 2 – briefing paper on Holiday and Activity Food Programme

Resource and legal considerations:

Transformation programme set out for the next 3 years is projected to secure £11.742M benefits.

Council Corporate Plan Priorities:

The 'Walsall Right for Children' Transformation Programme contributes to a number of our Council Corporate Plan priorities:

1. People: throughout the programme we have and will continue to work with children, young people and their families to ensure they have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities.
2. Internal Focus: The programme is focussed on a whole system change to ensure that within Children's Services we are as efficient and effective as we can be.
3. Children: The primarily objective of the programme is to ensure that the right support is in place so that children can have the best start and are safe from harm, happy, health and learning well.
4. Communities: Our transformation programme will connect and strengthen relationships with Walsall communities and ensure that they are resilient with all housing needs for children and young people being met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion.

Citizen impact:

Our WR4C transformation contributes towards the Council's target to increase Customer satisfaction from 67% to 77% through:

- Children, young people and families' voices help shape our service design and development through our WR4C Big conversation programme.
- Our restorative approach means we work with families and therefore families understand better why we are involved and will feel that they play an active part in the plan of support
- Our work through the CAM work stream should ensure information easier to access and therefore customers will be able to self-service where relevant.
- We will be providing timely, relevant and seamless support from WBC

Environmental impact:

Not applicable for this report

Performance management:

We developed a WR4C outcome framework (see appendix1) - This framework sets out the five key priorities and the individual outcomes within each of them alongside the indicators that will be used to measure progress against each of the outcomes and ultimately whether they have been achieved and the quality assurance questions that need to be asked alongside the data to fully understand progress.

The framework aims to utilise existing service KPI's but view them through a cross directorate lens to measure our system wide success in achieving our transformation priorities.
We also recognise that our WR4C transformation can only be achieved through collaboration with partners internally and externally and this document sets out how the WR4C transformation programme links in with the wider aims of the Walsall Together partnership and Walsall Council's Corporate priorities and PROUD Transformation Programme. It also outlines how the monitoring of the outcomes will be governed in line with the existing performance and quality governance arrangements.

Reducing inequalities:

The aim of our 'Right for Children' programme is to ensure that all children have the right support, in the right place, at the right time, for as long as it is needed to enable them to be safe from harm, happy and learning well with self-belief, aspiration and support to be their best.

Our Outcome framework has a cross focus on equality and inlcudes the following:

a) To incorporate equality monitoring into existing processes considering all applicable 'protected characteristics'.
b) To monitor interventions/activities to progress towards improved equality of access and opportunity.
c) To monitor interventions/activities to progress towards improved equality of outcomes.
d) To use equality monitoring to develop and improve interventions/activities and to act where inequalities exist.

Consultation:

Throughout the transformation programme there has been consultation with our workforce, children, young people and their families and partners most notably , our Big Conversation.

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Report

1. Building on our transformation successes

1.1 The WR4C Transformation Programme, launched in September 2018, drives forward our Children's Services vision to ensure that the right children are in the right place with the right support for as long as it's needed to ensure that they are safe from harm, happy and learning well.

In order to do this we identified that we need to:

- move away from the current process driven practice model which 'does to and for' to a more collaborative model that 'works with' families and partners.
- move away from silo working to a more integrated approach internally (across the directorate and council) and across partners.
- focus on creating resilience in families and managing risk more supportively

To realise our WR4C vision we need to do things differently:

- move to a locality model, where it makes sense to do so
- focus on connecting practitioners with communities and local resources
- get to know our children and families well to enable them to become more resilient and stay together.

1.2 Key progress between September 18 and now:

- We have undertaken our restructure within social care to implement locality working (implementing via a phased approach from January 2020) and have secured external funding to help us to implement an evidence-based model as part of our locality working.
- We have refocussed resources to create a bespoke evidence-based service to support adolescents who are at risk of coming into care.
- We have implemented Mocking Bird, an evidence-based model to support placement stability for young people in Foster Care.
- We have restructured our Access and Inclusion resources and published our revised inclusion strategy.
- We have held and continue to hold the 'Big Conversation' with our children and families to ensure that their views are listened to and that our transformation is co-produced with them rather than done to them.
- We are implementing Restorative Practice as our unified approach across the directorate and with partners to enable change in culture and leadership in the development of a strength-based approach with children, young people and families.
- We have implemented Right Help Right Time guidance across the partnership
- We have had a drive on Social Work recruitment and have significantly reduced our reliance on agency social workers.
- We have developed our relationship with schools as a key stakeholder, partner and deliverer of provision and services.
- We have rolled out our restorative training to schools ensuring a unified approach in working with children and families
- We have developed an effective holiday wrap around offer for our most vulnerable children including our Keep in Touch Team

2. Priorities driven by evidence

At the start of 2020 we set out 5 key cross directorate priorities as part of our next phase of our transformation programme. These 5 priorities are driven by evidence from our performance framework, Ofsted Improvement plans and our 'Big Conversations' with children, young people and families:

2.1 Further develop our locality model to:

It has been recognised for some time that needs of children and families differ across Walsall. While Walsall is one of the most deprived areas of the country overall, there are some areas that are more affluent whereas others suffer with huge levels of deprivation. The central approach of children's services mean that these differing needs are not always well met or understood.

Workers who are handling caseloads across the whole borough aren't able to build sufficient knowledge of or relationships with community groups and services that are active in local areas that may be able to provide support to children and families within the locality. It is also difficult for workers to fully understand the levels of need that may be based on the particular demographics of an area which can lead to a less than ideal response to need.

Moving to a locality model has already worked well in Early Help and will enable and support a more localised approach to need and relationship building, improving outcomes for children and families across Walsall.

Our key activities to achieve this are:

2.1.1 Co- locate teams across the 4 localities
Build on the success of the four Family Support Early Help hubs seeking further opportunities to co -locate teams, connecting practitioners with each other, with community resources and the families they work with.

2.1.2 Develop Family Safeguarding in Walsall
Family Safeguarding Model was launched on the 1st September in Walsall and brings a whole-system change approach in Children's Social Care to tackle the impact of the 'trio of vulnerabilities' (domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental ill-health) on children's lives. Adults and children's specialists work in a unified team to share information, to provide support and prevent families reaching crisis stage. This provides better outcomes for children by keeping families together, addressing root causes and preventing children from entering the care system, and there is a wealth of evidence available externally which supports this.

The council and its partners have been given an initial investment by the DfE of £2.4M over 3 years to fund the adult specialist workers in the model with a requirement to make this model sustainable by year 4.

2.1.3 Develop an effective locality partnership offer (linked to Resilient Communities)
Working Together guidance sets out a clear partnership responsibility of identification and action to effectively support children, young people and their family's needs to prevent

issues from escalation and prevent invasive social care involvement where possible. The WR4C vision is to support development of community resilience to enable us to meet the needs of children and young people preventing or avoiding repeat entry into statutory services (social care and / or youth justice).

We are seeking to move from a reactive partnership model ie waiting for need for support has been identified either by a professional or the family themselves to proactive targeting through the use of data (from the HUB) to predict more accurately which families or communities would benefit from targeted EH and make that offer and in a more proactive way earlier and as a graduated response.

This partnership offer will need to strategically align to the Resilient Communities work stream within the PROUD programme and Walsall Together as well as to the Public Health 'Best Start' strategy and programme and seek opportunities for influencing wider partnership delivery through these two strands.

2.2 Develop an effective response to Adolescents

An inspection of Youth Justice Services in June 2019 found that assessments for youths involved in criminal activity were not joined up or robust enough and that risk of harm was not fully understood. It also found that there was significant disproportionality in the system which had an impact on the outcomes, in particular for boys from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

There is a high number of adolescents on child protection plans or becoming looked after in Walsall and education outcomes are poor. Existing services to support adolescents are being reviewed and strengthened including a review of Turning Point and Safeguarding Partnership work to develop and implement an all age Exploitation Pathway overseen by the Children's Exploitation Panel.

Improved support for adolescents will not only reduce the risk of Walsall's youth becoming involved in or the victims of crime, but will also improve the possibility of the remaining safe at home and achieving better educational outcomes and improving their future employment and health prospects.

Our key activities to achieve this are:

2.2.1 Embed our Turning Point service

Turning Point was established at the end of 2019. The service is a multi- disciplinary team using an evidence-based model called AMBIT to support young people at risk of coming into care.

We will embed the approach as well as explore how we can flex Turning Point resource to increase capacity and extend services being provided across Children's Services benefitting more young people. We will also support the service in developing better relationships with SEND, housing support services and voluntary youth provision.

2.2.2 Develop an effective partnership offer around contextual safeguarding and exploitation.

Development of a multi-agency Exploitation Hub that is supported by an Exploitation Pathway, Risk Assessment Tool and an Exploitation Panel to promote the early

identification and support of those young people at risk of exploitation . Internally this will include developing clear pathways between Youth Justice and the Exploitation Hub Secondly, we will work with partners to develop a comprehensive offer across localities to respond effectively to demand related to contextual safeguarding/exploitation

2.2.3 Develop an effective offer of support focused on securing placement stability for young people

Firstly, we will consider the potential upscaling of Mockingbird (from 3 to 6 constellations) A pilot was implemented in 2018 in Walsall and is an innovative method of delivering foster care using an extended family model which provides sleepovers and short breaks, peer support, regular joint planning and training, and social activities.

The programme improves the stability of fostering placements and strengthens the relationships between carers, children and young people, fostering services and birth families. Evidence from the evaluation of this pilot will inform our plans for upscaling including the potential development of Mockingbird for connected carers.

Secondly, we will consider developing an in-house foster care support team with additional support made to mainstream foster carers – movement of 2 p/t CAMHS SW's. Identification of 1 Targeted Youth Worker and 1 FSO.

To support carers, reduce foster placement breakdown and children moving to higher cost placements.

In addition, we will work with Walsall independent placement providers to ensure all meet at least good Ofsted standards and we secure placements for Walsall young people enable to keep them close.

Lastly, we will undertake a review of our internal Residential Review to ensure we have good placement sufficiency, which meets local need.

2.2.4 Maximise resource to prevent young people from offending

We will explore how we can flex Youth Justice resources to increase capacity and extend specialist crime reduction and intervention knowledge and expertise being provided across Children's Services benefitting more young people.

Review of the Youth Justice/Social care working protocol to ensure pathways are effectively aligned (including MASH, exploitation Hub and Turning Point) and effective working practice is in place for those young people who touch both services.

Explore the development of effective partnership work with key voluntary sector providers to maximise locality resources though supporting them to secure additional funding to deliver on the crime prevention agenda (aligned to Resilient Communities).

2.3 Reduce exclusions

Exclusions from Walsall schools were significantly higher than statistical, regional and national comparators and attendance rates were lower.

Relationships between schools and the Local Authority were not robust and exclusion rates, feedback from parents and inspection evidence demonstrated that schools were not inclusive places for children with additional support needs or behavioural issues.

Professionals in schools did not feel supported and parents were unable to access the right support to ensure that their children remained in education.

Supporting and challenging schools to be more inclusive and supporting children and parents to remain in education will ensure better educational outcomes and improve future employment and health prospects for Walsall's young people.

Our key activities to achieve this are:

2.3.1 Consultation with schools during April and May identified that schools are absolutely committed to being inclusive, but confused about what is available or how to access the right support to meet the needs of their pupils.

The Walsall emotional and wellbeing framework was developed in collaboration with education settings and partners and provides a consistent approach to communicate the strategies and menu of support available that schools can access to ensure they can create he best conditions to for every child to thrive and ensure no child misses out of education.

2.3.2 We will also continue to develop Restorative Practice to ensure an inclusive response internally and across the partnership to meeting the needs of children and young people at risk of exclusion.

2.3.3 Building on our Summer Partnership programme, including our keep in Touch team we will continue to offer a wraparound support during School holidays to continue to provide positive engagement opportunities for our most vulnerable pupils and families. This will include the implementation of the Holiday Activity and food programme funded by the DfE (see appendix 2 for detailed information on the programme)

2.4 SEND offer

In February 2019 Walsall received an Ofsted / CQC joint Local Area Inspection of SEND services. This inspection found significant weaknesses in Walsall's delivery of services for children, young people and families with SEN and the areas implementation and adherence to the SEN Code of Practice.

As a result were required to develop a written statement of action (WWSoA) to outline how improvements would be implemented to ensure that children, young people and families with SEN receive the services and support that they need.

10 Areas of concern (AoC) were identified including the quality of EHCP provision, the quality of the Local Offer, the way in which parents and children were involved in co-production of services and poor outcomes for children with SEND.

Improving the identification of and services for children and families with SEND will not only ensure families receive the support that they need, but will improve the outcomes for children with SEND, giving them the most opportunity to move into an independent adulthood or transition into appropriate adult services.

Our key activities to achieve this are:

2.4.1 Publishing a Local Offer is a LA statutory requirement and provides information

for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and their parents or carers in a single place. It shows families what they can expect from a range of local agencies including education, health and social care. An effective Local Offer contributes to a graduated response to support children with SEND.

2.4.2 Implementation of the Education Health and Care plan (EHCP) hub
Use of the Connected Working Programme and the implementation of an effective electronic system will assist us to increase performance and provide timely plans of support for children who meet the threshold for an EHCP

2.4.3 Outsourcing of SENDIASS
Outsourcing has provided an effective and impartial service for parents, set out in the SEND code of practice and a requirement in our WWsoA

2.4.4 Review of Social Care – Children with Disability team and Short Break provision
Review will include:
Thresholds to ensure the right children receive the right packages of support
Improve transition planning with Adult Social Care
Staffing structures to enable effective practice
Packages of support interlinked with other parts of the council (SEND/Short break)
Establishment of an All Age Disability Service

2.5 Big Conversations/Big Collaboration

The 2017 Children's Services Inspection found that children did not have a sufficient voice in the development of services. Data that is collected in relation to children's participation in their child protection planning and looked after children's reviews shows that children do not actively participate enough in the development of their care plans and decision that are made about the support that they will receive but we know that there is more work to be done in this area.

The 2019 SEND Local Area Inspection found that co-production between the LA and parents and carers was weak and was a key area for improvement.

In 2019 Walsall began the 'Big Conversation' with children and families – this enabled children and families to provide feedback about how they felt about services and the way that they were treated. This led to some immediate changes in the way that professionals interacted with children and families and also demonstrated the power of supporting children and families to have their voices heard.

Our Child Journey Audit process now considers the views of parents, carers and children where appropriate to inform service improvement. For children and in care and care leavers, we have worked with young people to develop a series of commitments and are implementing our care leaver's local offer.

Giving children and families a voice in service design and development will provide assurance that the services that are in place are the right ones to meet the needs of families in Walsall. By ensuring that children, young people and families have a say in and contribute to the development of their plans, interventions will be more effective and outcomes more positive and robust.

Our key activities to achieve this are:

2.5.1 Develop volunteering opportunities for parents to deliver parenting support - linked to Resilient Communities and Public Health

2.5.2 Development of Family Led decision making as part of early help and social care planning to empower families to drive through the change needed and secure better outcomes for their children.

3. PROUD capabilities and enablers

Our WR4C programme will be depending on the PROUD cross cutting capabilities to support us to deliver the transformation and securing the benefits:

- A cross-cutting customer capability (**CAM**) that will help our customers (families, partners and external people) to access quality information easier and enable them to self-service where appropriate.
- A **Hub**, bringing together strategy, insight and data, commissioning and procurement helping us to drive evidence-based decision-making.
- More consistent business support capabilities able to provide both strategic and transactional support.
- Investment in enabling technology to continue the learning from COVID19 and develop effective and efficient practice.

4. How will we know we have made a difference?

Our newly developed outcomes framework sets out how we will provide assurance of delivery against the outcomes via a combination of:

- quantitative indicators to provide information about demand, performance and outcome and
- qualitative assurance of practice via audit activity and feedback from children, young people and families.

All available information will be drawn together and analysed in order to present a rounded view of whether outcomes are being met and provide the information needed to enable evidence informed decision making.

Indicators have been categorised into three distinct categories:
How Many – these are indicators that relate to demand and enable us to monitor whether the demand for services is in the right place and reducing or increasing where expected.
How Well – these are indicators that relate to performance and look at whether children, young people and families are receiving services and support on time.
So What – these are indicators which measure outcomes for children, young people and families. As outcomes are often difficult to measure on a quantitative basis, qualitative data from audit activity and in particular feedback from children, young people and families will provide additional evidence of outcomes.

Walsall Right 4 Children Outcomes Framework

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	Governance
	Priorities and Outcomes
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	How we will know we are achieving our outcomes?
	Equalities Framework
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	Our response to vulnerable adolescents is effective
	Children with SEND are identified and supported effectively
	Children at risk of exclusions can access effective support
	Our services in are developed and delivered in collaboration with children, young people and families

Change Control			
Version	Date	Name	Description
V0.1(Draft)	July 2020	Helena Kucharczyk	Initial draft
V0.2(Draft)	August 2020	Helena Kucharczyk	Amendments made following input from transformation lead
V0.3 (Draft)	September 2020	Helena Kucharczyk	Further amendments made following feedback

Overview

Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C) is Walsall Services transformation programme to improve outcomes for children, young people and families and ensure that they receive the right help, at the right time for the right amount of time.

At the start of 2020 we set out five key cross directorate priorities that the WR4C programme aims to achieve. These five priorities are driven by evidence from our performance framework, Ofsted Improvement plans and our 'Big Conversations' with children, young people and families.

This framework sets out the five key priorities and the individual outcomes within each of them alongside the indicators that will be used to measure progress against each of the outcomes and ultimately whether they have been achieved and the quality assurance questions that need to be asked alongside the data to fully understand progress. The framework aims to utilise existing service KPI's but view them through a cross directorate lens to measure our system wide success in achieving our transformation priorities.

We also recognise that our WR4C transformation can only be achieved through collaboration with partners internally and externally and this document sets out how the WR4C transformation programme links in with the wider aims of the Walsall Together partnership and Walsall Council's Corporate priorities and PROUD Transformation Programme. It also outlines how the monitoring of the outcomes will be governed in line with the existing performance and quality governance arrangements.

How our outcomes link to Corporate Priorities

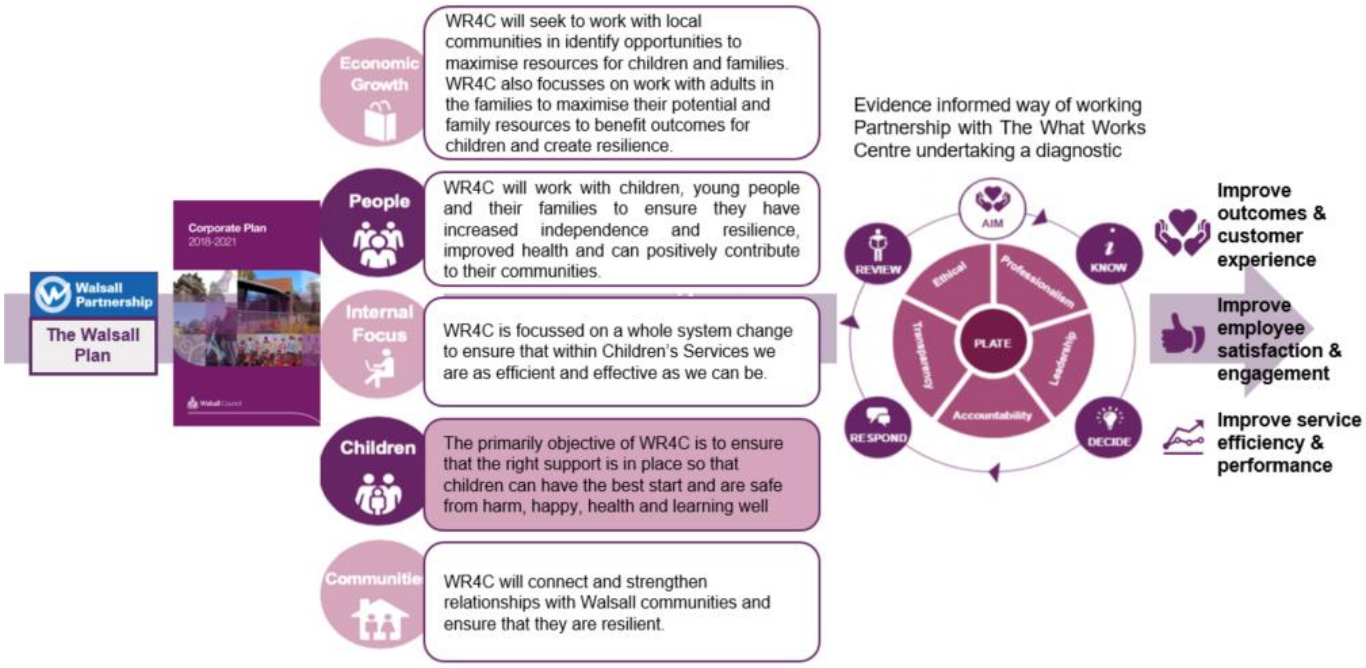
The overarching priorities for children in Walsall, as set out in the 2018-2021 Walsall Council Corporate Plan are:

- Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.
- Children thrive emotionally, physically, mentally and feel they are achieving their potential.
- Children grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere.

However, this does not mean that Children's Services are delivering against these priorities in isolation. Children's Services and the Walsall Right 4 Children transformation programme also contribute to the Council's other priorities in relation to Economic Growth, People, Internal Focus and Communities.

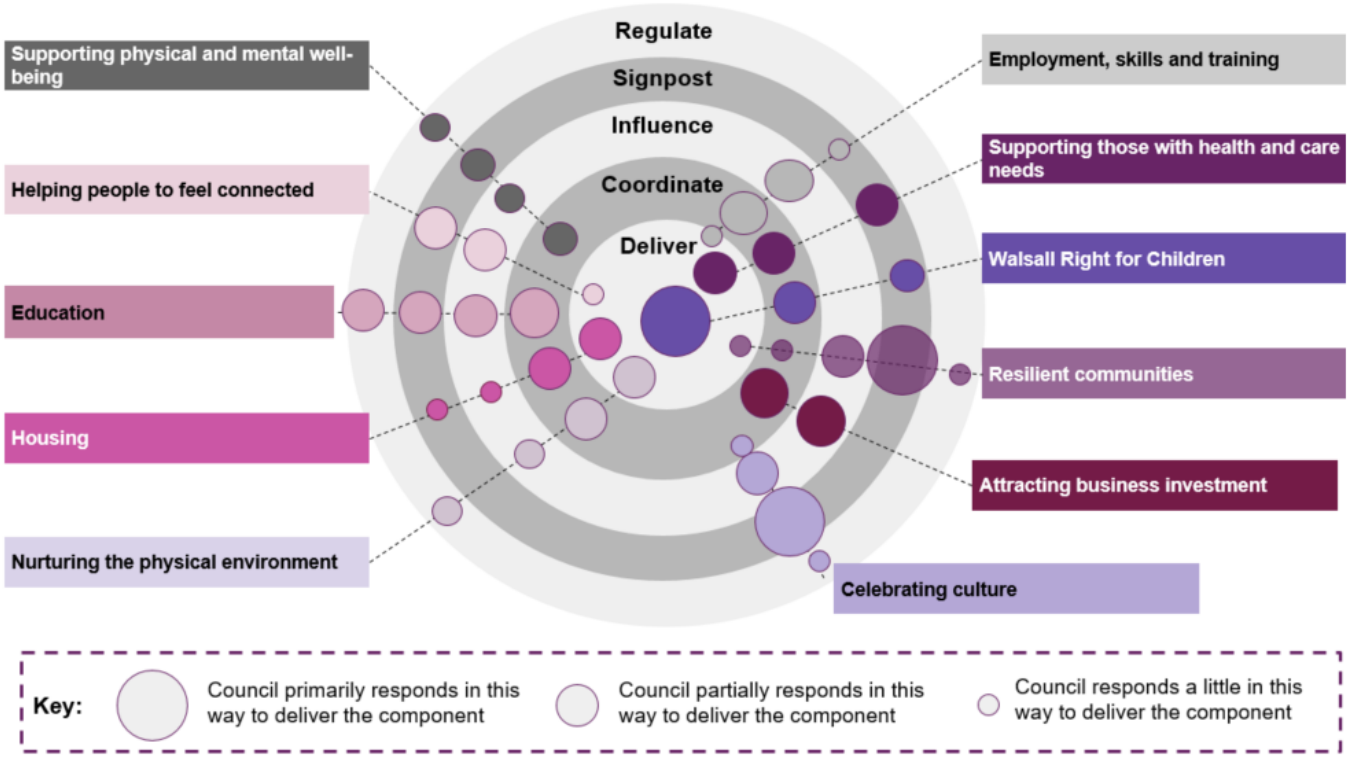
The way in which the services for children are delivered will also be in line with the Council's PLATE values (Professionalism, Leadership, Accountability, Transparency and Ethical).

The graphic below shows how the different elements link together.

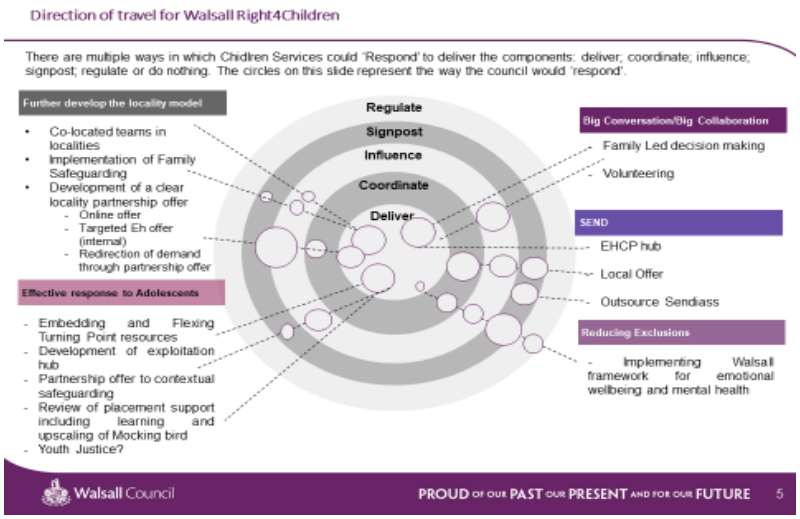


As we develop our response to achieving the outcomes set out in the corporate plan, we recognise that the role of the council is not to deliver everything, but also to co-ordinate delivery among partners and the voluntary and private sectors, influence how others provide delivery of services as well as influencing the behaviours of citizens, signpost citizens to appropriate services and regulate the services that others provide where it is our statutory duty to do so.

These 'ways of thinking' and response of the council in relation to achieving the outcomes set out in the corporate plan are outlined below:



Similarly we recognise that in response to the delivery of our corporate priorities and WR4C outcomes, it will not be up to Children's Services alone to deliver all of the improved outcomes, but to co-ordinate, influence, signpost and regulate where required. The 'ways of thinking' graphic which sets out the response to the WR4C outcomes is below



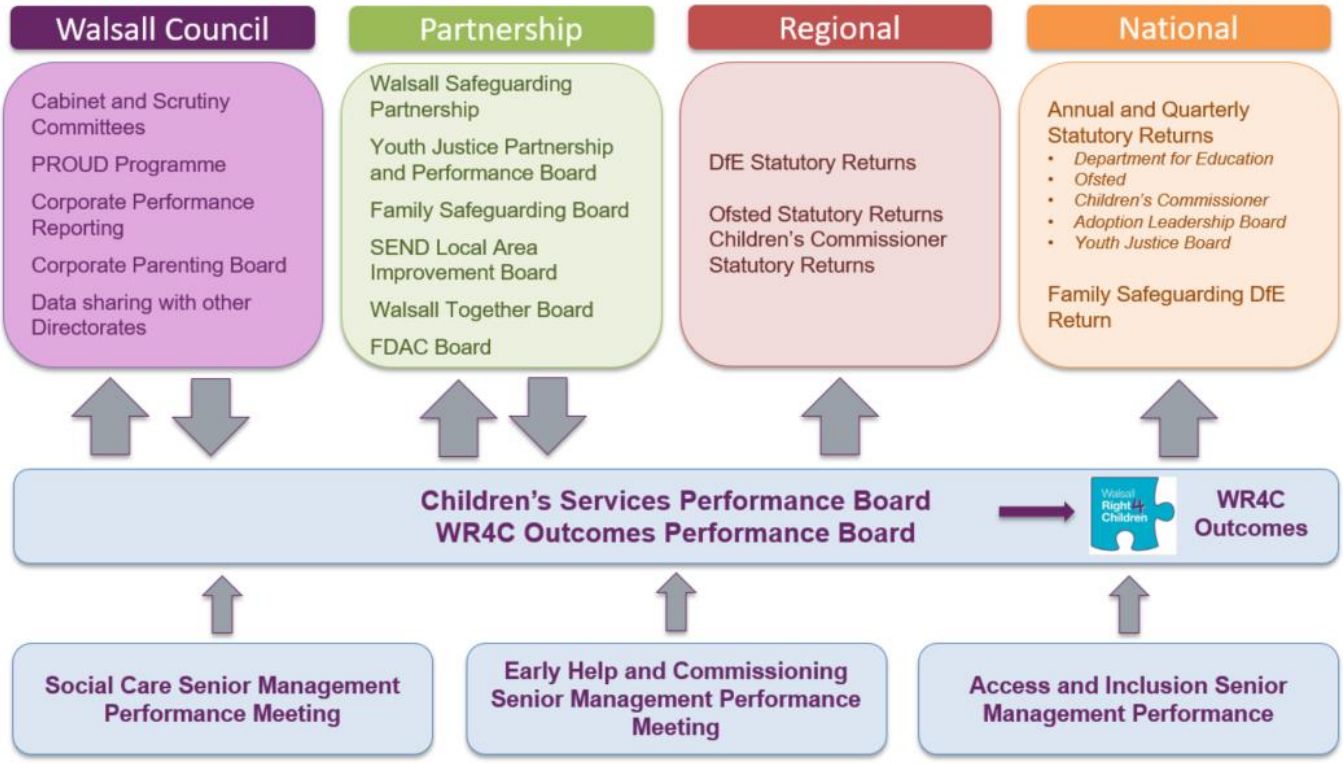
Governance

In order to determine whether the Children's Services priorities are being met and whether the stated aims and outcomes for Walsall Right 4 Children transformation programme are being achieved, there must be oversight of performance against the identified indicators alongside a qualitative assessment of progress. This will sit within Children's Services existing framework of Performance and Quality Assurance.

All of the indicators listed against the outcomes are in existing individual service KPI frameworks, are reviewed monthly with senior managers, alongside qualitative findings from audit activity and presented and discussed at the Children's Services Performance Board by exception to provide assurance around service performance and outcomes for children, young people and families.

To ensure that there is a holistic view of the WR4C Transformation Programme, every quarter the monthly Children's Services Performance Board will focus specifically on reviewing and assessing performance against and progress towards achieving the WR4C Outcomes. These discussions will inform strategic decision making about the direction of the WR4C Transformation Programme, identifying where things are going well or where additional or remedial actions and plans my need to be made.

Performance that is reviewed at the Children's Services Performance Board feeds into other bodies that require oversight of data and performance indicators that measure outcomes for children, young people and families.



Priorities

Walsall Council has identified three priorities for children, young people and families on which it will focus

Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.
Children thrive emotionally, physically, mentally and feel they are achieving their potential.
Children grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere.

Equalities Framework

a) To incorporate equality monitoring into existing processes considering all applicable 'protected characteristics'
b) To monitor interventions/activities to progress towards improved equality of access and opportunity
c) To monitor interventions/activities to progress towards improved equality of outcomes
d) To use equality monitoring to develop and improve interventions/activities and to act where inequalities exist

Walsall Right 4 Children Outcomes

Our services and support is responsive to needs of different communities (locality model)	Our response to vulnerable adolescents is effective	Children with SEND are identified and supported effectively	Children at risk of exclusions can access effective support	Our services in are developed and delivered in collaboration with children, young people and families
1) The needs of children and families are well understood in each locality 2) Partners are proactive in responding to these needs (graduated response) 3) Children and families have easier access to services 4) Children and families are better connected with community resources to enable them to build resilience	1) The response in meeting the needs of vulnerable adolescents is local and proactive 2) More vulnerable young people are engaged in education 3) More young people are supported in their family home 4) Fewer young people enter the Criminal Justice system	1) Children who have SEND are identified effectively 2) Children who have a SEND need receive a high quality, graduated response to their needs. 3) Children with SEND are supported through a robust local offer of support and services to reach their full potential 4) Families find it easier to access the right help	1) Children and young people feel supported to engage with education 2) Root causes of exclusions are understood. 3) Schools are more inclusive 4) Professionals and families find it easier to access the right support to ensure children remain in education	1) Children, young people and families are involved in service design and development 2) Children, young people and families are involved in developing and implementing their plans 3) Children, young people and families feel more resilient 4) Children, young people and families can provide regular feedback

Why these five priorities?

These five priorities identified are driven by evidence from our performance framework, Ofsted Improvement plans and our 'Big Conversations' with children, young people and families.

Priority	Rationale
Our services and support is responsive to needs of different communities (locality model)	It has been recognised for some time that needs of children and families differ across Walsall. While Walsall is one of the most deprived areas of the country overall, there are some areas that are more affluent whereas others suffer with huge levels of deprivation. The central approach of children's services mean that these differing needs are not always well met or understood. Workers who are handling caseloads across the whole borough aren't able to build sufficient knowledge of or relationships with community groups and services that are active in local areas that may be able to provide support to children and families within the locality. It is also difficult for workers to fully understand the levels of need that may be based on the particular demographics of an area which can lead to a less than ideal response to need. Moving to a locality model has already worked well in Early Help and will enable and support a more localised approach to need and relationship building, improving outcomes for children and families across Walsall.
Our response to vulnerable adolescents is effective	An inspection of Youth Justice Services in June 2019 found that assessments for youths involved in criminal activity were not joined up or robust enough and that risk of harm was not fully understood. It also found that there was significant disproportionality in the system which had an impact on the outcomes, in particular for boys from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. There is a high number of adolescents on child protection plans or becoming looked after in Walsall and education outcomes are poor. Existing services to support adolescents are being reviewed and strengthened including a review of Turning Point and Safeguarding Partnership work to develop and implement an all age Exploitation Pathway overseen t=by the Children's Exploitation Panel. Improved support for adolescents will not only reduce the risk of Walsall's youth becoming involved in or the victims of crime, but will also improve the possibility of the remaining safe at home and achieving better educational outcomes and improving their future employment and health prospects.
Children with SEND are identified and supported effectively	In February 2019 Walsall received an Ofsted / CQC joint Local Area Inspection of SEND services. This inspection found significant weaknesses in Walsall's delivery of services for children, young people and families with SEN and the areas implementation and adherence to the SEN Code of Practice. As a result were required to develop a written statement of action (WWSoA) to outline how improvements would be implemented to ensure that children, young people and families with SEN receive the services and support that they need. 10 Areas of concern (AoC) were identified including the quality of EHCP provision, the quality of the Local Offer, the way in which parents and children were involved in co-production of services and poor outcomes for children with SEND. Improving the identification of and services for children and families with SEND will not only ensure families receive the support that they need, but will improve the outcomes for children with SEND, giving them the most opportunity to move into an independent adulthood or transition into appropriate adult services.

Priority	Rationale
Children at risk of exclusions can access effective support	Exclusions from Walsall schools were significantly higher than statistical, regional and national comparators and attendance rates were lower. Relationships between schools and the Local Authority were not robust and exclusion rates, feedback from parents and inspection evidence demonstrated that schools were not inclusive places for children with additional support needs or behavioural issues. Professionals in schools did not feel supported and parents were unable to access the right support to ensure that their children remained in education. Supporting and challenging schools to be more inclusive and supporting children and parents to remain in education will ensure better educational outcomes and improve future employment and health prospects for Walsall's young people.
Our services in are developed and delivered in collaboration with children, young people and families	The 2017 Children's Services Inspection found that children did not have a sufficient voice in the development of services. Data that is collected in relation to children's participation in their child protection planning and looked after children's reviews shows that children do not actively participate enough in the development of their care plans and decision that are made about the support that they will receive but we know that there is more work to be done in this area. The 2019 SEND Local Area Inspection found that co-production between the LA and parents and carers was weak and was a key area for improvement. In 2019 Walsall began the 'Big Conversation' with children and families – this enabled children and families to provide feedback about how they felt about services and the way that they were treated. This led to some immediate changes in the way that professionals interacted with children and families and also demonstrated the power of supporting children and families to have their voices heard. Our Child Journey Audit process now considers the views of parents, carers and children where appropriate to inform service improvement. For children and in care and care leavers, we have worked with young people to develop a series of commitments and are implementing our care leavers local offer. Giving children and families a voice in service design and development will provide assurance that the services that are in place are the right ones to meet the needs of families in Walsall. By ensuring that children, young people and families have a say in and contribute to the development of their plans, interventions will be more effective and outcomes more positive and robust.

How we will know we are achieving our outcomes?

Assurance of delivery against the outcomes will be provided via a combination of quantitative indicators to provide information about demand, performance and outcome and qualitative assurance of practice via audit activity and feedback from children, young people and families. All available information will be drawn together and analysed in order to present a rounded view of whether outcomes are being met and provide the information needed to enable evidence informed decision making.

Indicators have been categorised into three distinct categories:

How Many – these are indicators that relate to demand and enable us to monitor whether the demand for services is in the right place and reducing or increasing where expected.

How Well – these are indicators that relate to performance and look at whether children, young people and families are receiving services and support on time.

So What – these are indicators which measure outcomes for children, young people and families. As outcomes are often difficult to measure on a quantitative basis, qualitative data from audit activity and in particular feedback from children, young people and families will provide additional evidence of outcomes.

The indicators listed are not an exhaustive list of the data that will be used to evidence outcomes, but are identified as the key performance indicators which will give the best indication of progress. Due to the cross cutting nature of the WR4C transformation programme, some indicators may be repeated across outcomes. Each outcome also has a series of quality assurance questions outlined which indicate the key questions which should be asked of the data in order to confirm that the outcomes stated are being met.

Additionally, broad based targets will be established to support the identification of a baseline and to track progress. These are outlined below:

Priorities	Year 1 Targets	Year 2 Targets	Year 3 Targets
Our services and support is responsive to needs of different communities (locality model)			
Our response to vulnerable adolescents is effective			
Children with SEND are identified and supported effectively			
Children at risk of exclusions can access effective support			
Our services in are developed and delivered in collaboration with children, young people and families			

Equalities Framework

a) To incorporate equality monitoring into existing processes considering all applicable ‘protected characteristics’
b) To monitor interventions/activities to progress towards improved equality of access and opportunity
c) To monitor interventions/activities to progress towards improved equality of outcomes
d) To use equality monitoring to develop and improve interventions/activities and to act where inequalities exist

Indicators

Data for analysis should include protected characteristics of children needing help and accessing services compared to the characteristics of the population in Walsall.

Data in relation to staff should also be considered – do the protected characteristics of staff reflect those of the communities that they serve and support?

Quality Assurance Questions

Are groups who are more disadvantaged more or less safe than those that are less disadvantaged?
Do all groups have the same access to services?
Is there disproportionality in relation to services, interventions and outcomes and how is this being addressed?
Are interventions being tailored to the needs of different groups rather than a ‘one size fits all” approach?
Is the workforce reflective of the communities which it supports?
What impact does deprivation have on children and families in Walsall?
What is the impact of major events (e.g. Covid-19) on the people of Walsall?

Our services and support is responsive to needs of different communities (locality model)		
1) The needs of children and families are well understood in each locality 2) Partners are proactive in responding to these needs (graduated response) 3) Children and families have easier access to services 4) Children and families are better connected with community resources to enable them to build resilience		
Indicators (to be broken down by locality where possible)		
How Much?	**How Well?**	**So What?**
Number of requests for Early Help Number of contacts Number of social care referrals Number of children open to Early Help Number of Children in Need Number of Children subject of a Child Protection Plan Number of Children who are Looked After Type of need by locality	% of requests for Early Help completed in timescales % of Early Help Assessments completed in timescales Lead professionals by agency % of Contacts completed in timescales % of Contacts that are NfA % of assessments completed in timescales Average length of time children are subject of a CP Plan Partner engagement at ICPCs and RCPCs	% of requests for Early Help that result in support being offered % of Early Help interventions that lead to a positive outcome Outcome Star – direction of travel data % of repeat referrals Step up / step down data % of children who are subject of a CP Plan for a second or subsequent time. Educational outcomes for young people in each locality (reducing the gap)
Quality Assurance Questions		
What is the level of demand across the four localities – how does this link with population and deprivation data? Is demand increasing or decreasing in each area – what might be impacting on this? Is it as expected? Are the needs different in each locality – how is this being addressed? Are there inequalities in service levels in different localities – is this due to demand or something else? Are there inequalities of outcome in different areas? Are children in one locality more likely to have a positive outcome that children in a different locality? Is this due to need or other factors? Are partners engaging in providing and leading on effective Early Help services? Are partners making appropriate referrals to statutory services? Are partners effectively engaging in CP Planning processes?		

Our response to vulnerable adolescents is effective		
1) The response in meeting the needs of vulnerable adolescents is local and proactive 2) More vulnerable young people are engaged in education 3) More young people are supported in their family home 4) Fewer young people enter the Criminal Justice system		
Indicators		
How Much?	**How Well?**	**So What?**
Number of young people that are CME Number of young people that are CMfE or on part-time timetables Number of young people that are excluded from school. Number of new referrals for young people aged 12+ Number of young people aged 12+ who are EH, CiN, CP, LAC Number of young people aged 12+ who start EH, CiN, CP, LAC Number of young people supported by Turning Point Number of young people accessing CAMHS Number of young people at risk of exploitation (by risk level) Number of young people who go missing	% of young people excluded from school who are back in school by the 6th day % of Care Leavers with up to date Pathway Plans % of Care Leavers in touch with the LA % of looked after children aged 12+ who are placed 20 miles + away from home and outside of the LA boundary Young people admitted to hospital for substance misuse or mental health issues Reduction in risk levels for young people who are exploited Proportion of return home interviews completed within 72 hours. % of young people supported by Turning Point that do not enter the care system.	Number of first time entrants into the criminal justice system Number of repeat offences by young people Number of young people that are in Education, Employment and Training (inc care leavers) Number of young people that are homeless Care Leavers in suitable accommodation Educational outcomes for young people Teenage pregnancy rate Placement Stability for looked after children aged 12+
Quality Assurance Questions		
Are services meeting the needs of young people and are they effectively targeted? Are young people attending school and receiving a full time education when there? Are their educational outcomes improving? Are the rates and numbers of young people becoming looked after reducing? Where young people are looked after are they supported to keep in touch with their communities? Are Care Leavers supported within their communities? Are young people in Walsall with substance addiction or mental health issues adequately supported? Do young people in Walsall have good health? Do young people have opportunities and support to reduce the risk of them becoming involved in criminal activity? Where they do become involved in criminal activity are they supported to rehabilitate so re-offending is reduced? Are young people in Walsall at risk of exploitation? When young people are exploited, are they adequately supported and their risks reduced?		

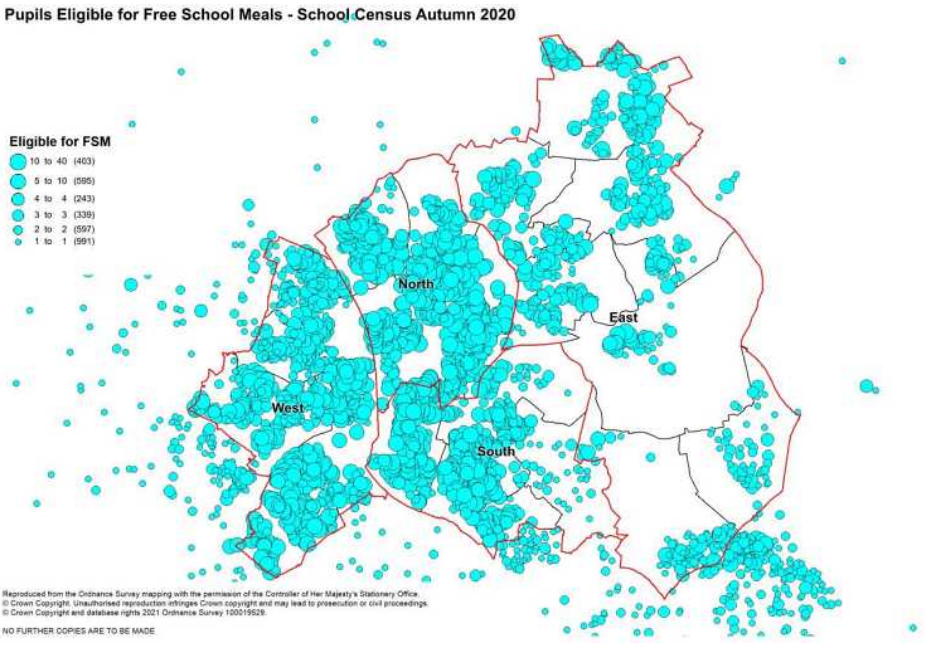
Children with SEND are identified and supported effectively		
1) Children who have SEND are identified effectively 2) Children who have a SEND need receive a high quality, graduated response to their needs. 3) Children with SEND are supported through a robust local offer of support and services to reach their full potential 4) Families find it easier to access the right help		
Indicators		
How Much?	**How Well?**	**So What?**
Proportion of children in Walsall schools with an identified SEN need (SEN Support and EHCP) Number of children with SEN by educational settings Number of EHC Plans maintained by Walsall council Number of requests for EHC assessment Number of 'hits' on the Local Offer.	Proportion of children with SEN who attend good or outstanding schools. % of decisions to assess made within 6 weeks % of requests for assessment that are refused % of advices from professionals that are received on time % of advices from professionals that are deemed to be good quality % of EHC Plans issued within 20 weeks Number of complaints Number of Mediations and % that lead to tribunal Number of Tribunals as a % of appealable decisions % of parents and carers who say that it is easy to find information about SEND services in Walsall	% of children and young people with SEN that are excluded from schools % of children and young people with SEN that are in education, employment or training Educational outcomes for children and young people with SEN
Quality Assurance Questions		
Do the numbers of children with SEN in Walsall reflect what is expected – is SEN under identified or over identified? Are children with SEN receiving support at the right level and in the right setting? Are parents and carers of children with SEN able to access information about the services that are available easily Are children, young people and families able to access support when it is needed/ Are outcomes for children with SEN? Are they being supported through transition?		

Children at risk of exclusions can access effective support		
1) Children and young people feel supported to engage with education 2) Root causes of exclusions are understood. 3) Schools are more inclusive 4) Professionals and families find it easier to access the right support to ensure children remain in education		
Indicators		
How Much?	**How Well?**	**So What?**
Number of young people that are CME Number of young people that are CMfE or on part-time timetables Number of young people that are excluded from school. Number of referrals to the school inclusion team Number of children who are Electively Home Educated (by reason) Number of children and young people accessing alternative provision.	% of children who get their 1st / 2nd / 3rd place choice of schools Number and % of children who attend good or outstanding schools RAG ratings of schools as per the schools causing concern protocol % of imports into / exports out of Walsall schools % of young people excluded from school who are back in school by the 6th day Number of exclusions that are prevented % of EHE children whose education is deemed to be acceptable % of parents who have submitted EHE reports	% of children and young people with SEN that are excluded from schools Educational outcomes for children in Walsall schools % of children in education, employment and training
Quality Assurance Questions		
Are parents in Walsall choosing to send their children to Walsall schools? Is the quality of education in Walsall schools good? Are Walsall school inclusive, in particular to children with additional needs? Are children attending school when they should? Where children need support because they are at risk of exclusion, is that support effective? What are the underlying reasons that children are excluded from school? Are parents supported to appeal exclusions where appropriate? Where alternative provision is needed, is it of good quality? Are educational outcomes for children in Walsall good?		

Our services in are developed and delivered in collaboration with children, young people and families		
1) Children, young people and families are involved in service design and development 2) Children, young people and families are involved in developing and implementing their plans 3) Children, young people and families feel more resilient 4) Children, young people and families can provide regular feedback		
Indicators		
How Much?	**How Well?**	**So What?**
Number of referrals to CAMHs Number of parents and carers accessing the SEND Zoom meetings Number of children, young people and families engaged in consultation Number of children engaged in C4K	Number of complaints and compliments % of children and young people who contribute to their CP conferences % of children and young people who attend their CP conferences % of children and young people who contribute to their LAC review % of children and young people who attend their LAC review Outcomes of monthly child journey audits and thematic audits	SDQ score for children who are Looked After SEND 'You Said, We Did' WR4C Big Conversation % of Early Help interventions that lead to a positive outcome Outcome Star – direction of travel data
Quality Assurance Questions		
How are we ensuring that children, young people and families are involved in service design and development Are children and families fully engaged in developing their plans? Are their voices heard? How is this evidenced? Do children, young people and families feel more resilient? How do we know? What opportunities are there for children, young people and families from provide regular feedback? How are we responding to the feedback? How do we assure children, young people and families that their voice is being heard? How are we engaging with harder to reach children, young people and families? Do minutes from Corporate Parenting Board demonstrate young people's involvement? Are the improvements identified through the audit process implemented in a timely way and monitored for impact?		

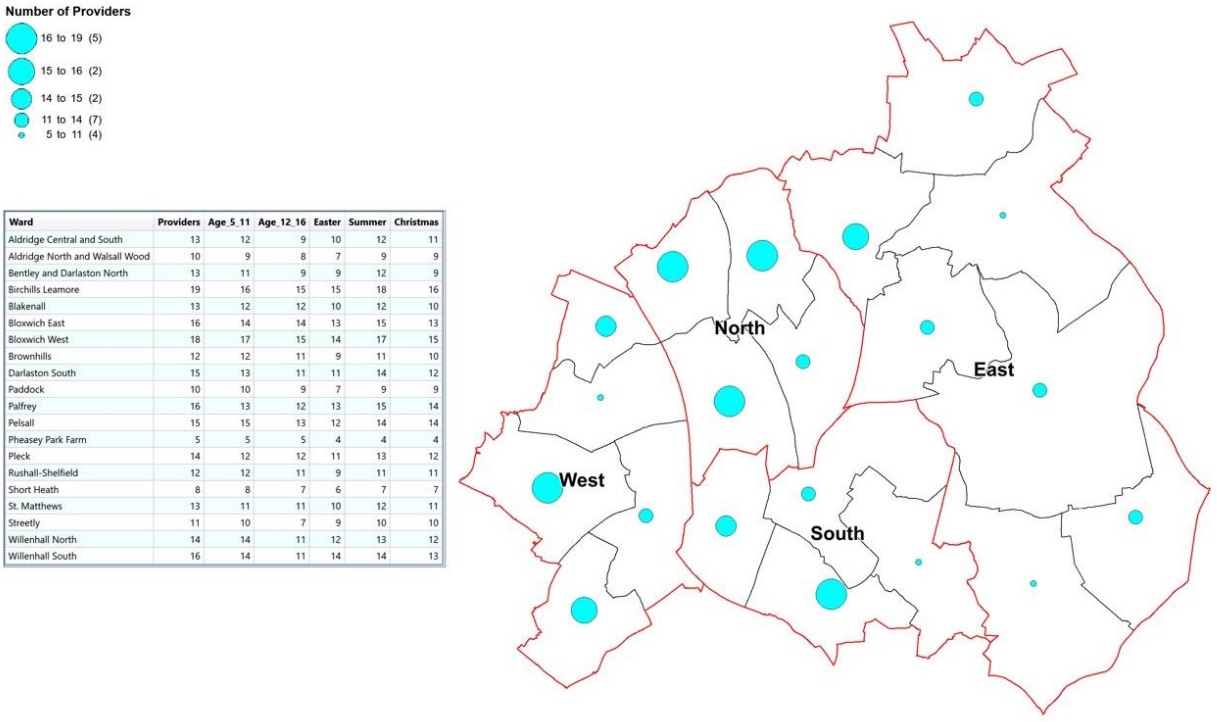
Title	Holiday Activity and Food Programme delivery in Walsall		
Prepared by	Isabel Vanderheeren	**Internal** ☒ **External** ☐ **Confidential** ☐	
Prepared for	Education and Skill Overview and Scrutiny Committee	**Date**	19/02/2021

1.	**Aim**
	Provide a update on the effective development and implementation of the Holiday Activity and Food programme in Walsall
2.	**Context**
	National research tells us that • School holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs and reduced incomes. • Some children are more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health and • some children from lower-income families are less likely to access fun activities Walsall will receive an investment of £ 1,799,290 from the Department for Education to develop and coordinate the Holiday Activity and Food programme. This programme is aiming to provide healthy food and enriching activities during key holidays to children who receive benefits-related free school meals. It will offer valuable support to families on lower incomes, giving them the opportunity to access rewarding and active activities alongside healthy meals over the school holidays and enhance the holiday provision that has already taken place over the last years. Walsall will be expected to deliver an activity programme over Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays in 2021: • to all children (5 - 16 years) entitled to free school meals in the local authority • A programme that is inclusive and accessible provision (e.g. SEND, young carers, etc) • The offer will need to consist of least 4 hours for 4 days a week per child. For 4 weeks in the summer, and for one week at Easter and Christmas. £180,940 – relates to the delivery of Easter programme and will be paid in the form of a grant to the LA in March. The rest will be in financial year 21/22 following submission of the monitoring reports.
3.	**Governance** The Local Authority is the lead organisation for this programme and is directly accountable to the DfE that sets the requirement for the delivery of the programme. Walsall is in a peer network with Cheshire East, Wolverhampton, Telford, Sandwell, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Stock-on-Trent (as allocated by DfE). In Walsall the programme is led through a collaboration between Children's Services and Resilient Communities. A Holiday Activity and Food Steering group has been established (using the Summer working group as a base.) The steering group comprises Children Services (Early Help, Social Care, Access and Achievement), Voluntary Sector, WHG, One Walsall, Money Home Job, , Walsall for All, Police, Leisure facilities, Public Health, Resilient Communities and Economy and Environment. The role and responsibility of the steering group is to oversee the effective implementation of the programme, find solutions for any issues or barriers, identify resources, links and add value to the programme, monitor and report on impact.

	The impact of the HAF programme steering group reports through to Walsall Together and the Early Help Steering group to ensure that the learning influences future services and sustainability of key impactful components of the programme beyond DfE funding
4.	**Project Team** The project team will be driving forward operational actions in the delivery plan as agreed by the steering group. We have identified in kind resources across the partnership; - Isabel Vanderheeren and Sarah Oakley – joint project leads on behalf of the Local Authority - Mark Hannon – providing data analysis and advice on the evaluation framework to ensure we collate the right information using the right systems - Keri Lister – communication/publishing lead - Donna Rickets – Early Help project lead ensuring alignment with the Early Help offer - David Benge – communication with Vol and community sector - Alice Bridgewater – finance lead **We are recruiting dedicated resources to aid the coordination of the programme** This programme is substantial in terms of coordination, communication and getting effective processes in place to ensure effective delivery starting Easter, so will not be able to be delivered on top of everyone's current workload. To ensure we deliver a successful programme we propose to recruit to following dedicated project resources from the 10% funding allocated for administration and coordination: - HAF project coordinator - HAF business support apprentice - HAF communication apprentice The project team will initially be meeting on a weekly basis to ensure planning for Easter delivery is on track
4	**Mapping of need and delivery** In Walsall we have 14,197 children who are on role in Walsall schools , whose parents claim free school meals. Of these 13,592 live in Walsall. We have undertaken a mapping exercise to understand where children entitled to FSM live as well as where potential provision in place currently to be part of the HAF programme 

Provider map

45 providers submitted an EOI to become part of the HAF provision in Walsall. Below is a map showing the reach across these providers.



Ward	Providers	Age_5_11	Age_12_16	Easter	Summer	Christmas
Aldridge Central and South	13	12	9	10	12	11
Aldridge North and Walsall Wood	10	9	8	7	9	9
Bentley and Darlaston North	13	11	9	9	12	9
Birchills Leamore	19	16	15	15	18	16
Blakenall	13	12	12	10	12	10
Bloxwich East	16	14	14	13	15	13
Bloxwich West	18	17	15	14	17	15
Brownhills	12	12	11	9	11	10
Darlaston South	15	13	11	11	14	12
Paddock	10	10	9	7	9	9
Palfrey	16	13	12	13	15	14
Pelsall	15	15	13	12	14	14
Pheasey Park Farm	5	5	5	4	4	4
Pleck	14	12	12	11	13	12
Rushall-Shelfield	12	12	11	9	11	11
Short Heath	8	8	7	6	7	7
St. Matthews	13	11	11	10	12	11
Streetly	11	10	7	9	10	10
Willenhall North	14	14	11	12	13	12
Willenhall South	16	14	11	14	14	13

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5 Delivery

Because of the context around COVID and the related restrictions, we will be delivering most of our activities virtual and providing a small element of face to face provision for those children who have not got access to the internet or are identified as most vulnerable (through communication with schools, early help and social care professionals).

We have identified 9 providers who have experience of delivering face-to-face activities across the localities following COVID guidelines. Across the two weeks this will give a capacity of delivering face to face provision to around 200 of our most vulnerable children.

The other 36 providers will be delivering online activities across the two weeks of Easter Holiday; this will consist of activity packs delivered to the home, complimented with online workshops. Workshops will offer a range of engaging, enriching and fun opportunities for children and young people including sports challenges, arts and crafts, creative writing workshops, dance, cooking, graphic designing, illustrating, etc.

We are working with 3 big food suppliers (Blakemores, Co-op and MKG Foods) in Walsall to develop and deliver to all children signing up for the programme a 'Healthy Meal Kit' box. This box will contain

- Ingredients to cook 4 healthy meals on a budget.
- Additional essential food items all families should have in their cupboard to create healthy easy meals on a budget
- Recipe cards on how to cook these meals (recipes used are designed by children in Walsall through a school project with the Co-op)
- Information on nutrition provided through Public Health
- Opportunity to attend online cooking sessions

All providers will be delivering added value through delivery of free food and online cooking sessions.

	In addition families accessing the programme will, where appropriate, be provided with extra support through sign posting to key agencies (e.g. school health, CAB, parenting, emotional wellbeing support).
5.	**Communication** Communication about the programme and how to access it will be going out to all eligible children r during w/c 22nd February. 69815 Walsall Right 4 Children Holiday Ac At the same time we will be communicating with key professionals and community organisations about the offer to children and their families during Easter, the benefits of the programme and the how families can access The aim of this communication is to get key professionals and community members to promote the uptake of the programme. We are also organising an online information session for professionals on the 4th March 2021. We will also be communicating our offer using social media.
6	**Measuring impact** Our central registration and booking system will allow us to effectively monitor the uptake, engagement and feedback from children and young people. For children engaged in the programme, we will be measuring the following key impact measures as set as part the programme: - To eat more healthily over the school holidays; - To be more active during the school holidays; - To take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and well-being along with their wider education attainment; - To be safe and not to be socially isolated; - To have greater knowledge of health nutrition; and - To be more engaged with school and other local services The evaluation of the Easer programme, including feedback from children and parents will help us to inform the Summer and Christmas Programmes.

Welcome to
WALSALL RIGHT 4 CHILDREN

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Transformation Overview

11 March 2021

Walsall Council

PROUD OF OUR PAST OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

Transformation overview

Taking stock

Our vision and achievements to date

Looking ahead

Our Transformation priorities and activities for the next 3 years

So What?

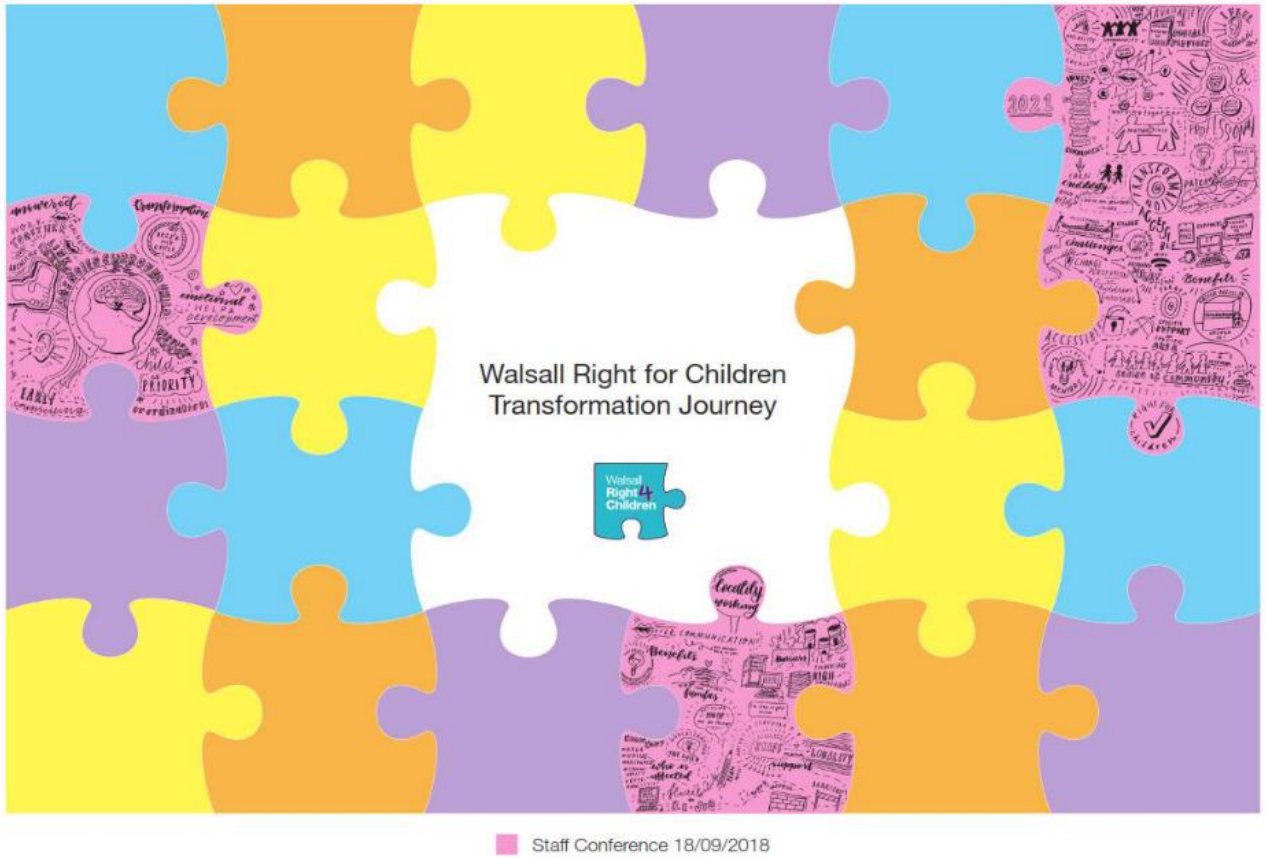
Our outcomes framework

Taking stock: Our Walsall Right 4 Children Journey so far

We launched our WR4C vision on the 18th Sept 2018

Walsall Council
PROUD OF OUR PAST OUR PRESENT AND FOR OUR FUTURE

In September 2018 we created our first key pieces of our transformation journey with you based on key principles:



1. move away from silo working to a more integrated approach internally (across the directorate and council) and across partners

2. move away from the process driven practice model which ‘does to and for’ to a more collaborative model that ‘works with’ families and partners.

3. move to a locality model, where it makes sense to do so

4. focus on connecting practitioners with communities and local resources

Since then we have build our WR4C transformation Journey driven by our core principles

Strengthened our local offer

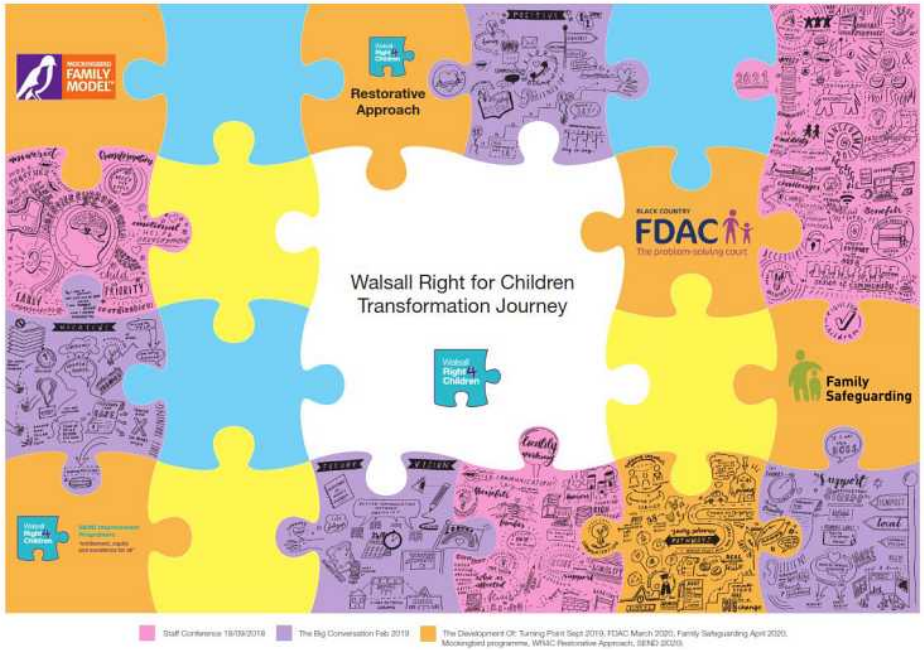
Our Big Conversation

co producing our plans with children, young people and families – especially progressing around SEND

Revised Inclusion and SEND accessibility Strategy

Developed our EHCP Hub

Outsources our SENIASS – to support placement stability of adolescents in foster care



Implementing Restorative Practice with schools

To have a unified approach to supporting children

Partnership Summer Offer – including our **Keep in Touch Team** supporting or most vulnerable children during 6 week summer break

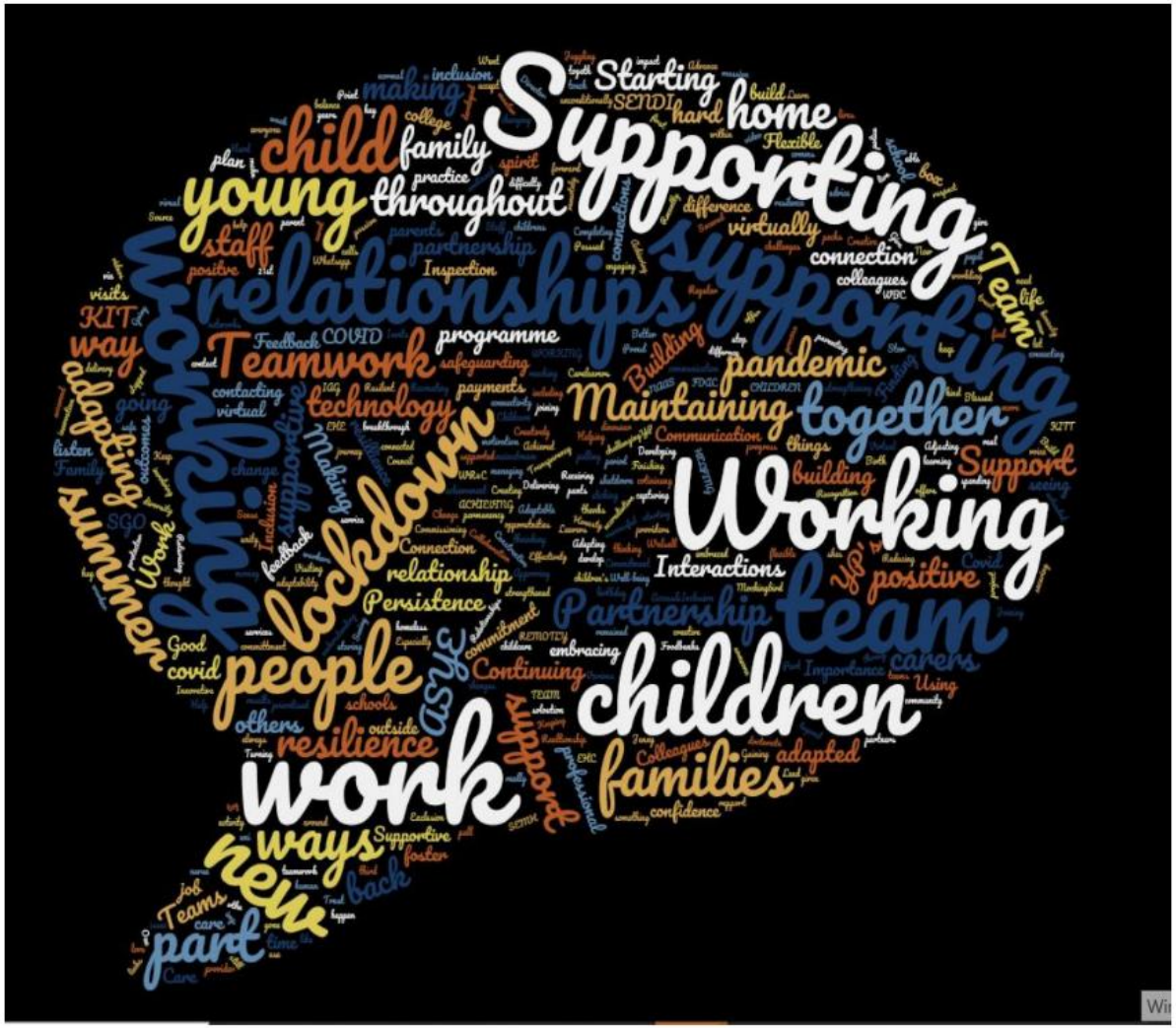
Developed the emotional and wellbeing framework with school and partners

Implementing Right Help Right Time

With partners and application of threshold training

CELEBRATING

At our virtual staff conference
we asked our staff
“what is your proudest achievement of the last 12 months?”



SO WHAT –
Remember our feedback from children and families through our

BIG CONVERSATION 2018

appreciated
achieve
check
took
difference
listened
Moms
makes
deliverance
social
Family
gold
thanks
really
worth
experiences
provider
meetings
one
bought
greatly
quickly
timely
proud
immensely
early
provide
help
god
invaluable
trust
kept
weeks
role
contacted
also
wonderful
excellent
supporting
child's
clean
rang
meaningful
although
gift
dependent
felt
children
throughout
shared
appointments
miss
says
advise
meant
experience
support
need
plan
centred
approach
time
step
best
work
full
methodical
made
touch
place
important
voices
toes
will
long
earth
direct
efforts
live
easier
embraced
assessments
went
evident
child
way
managed
perseveres
lives
asked
truly
relationship
feedback
compassion
insight
everything
extra
somebody
update
like
workers
just
offers
autism
sure
fantastic
much
upon
amazing
receives
every
equally
uncertain
determined
taken
can
thank
note
capacity
storms
virtual
unable
grateful
blessing
suits
job
voice
parent
allowed
adjust
forum
trusting
two
sacrifices
always
term
positively
compassionate
listen
welcomed
quick
years
carried
families
last
weight
memories
say
expect
alone
making
couple
many
especially
aspire
days
keeping
happen
questions
given
children's
words
agreed
needs
people
beyond
supported
praise
appreciates
response
built
setting
identifying
Furthermore
wanted
common sense

Looking ahead

3 Strategic Aims to secure the Right Help at the Right TIme

Reducing our demand

- Stopping failure demand
- Preventing escalation of demand (demand avoidance)
- Avoidance of high cost help and support

Developing a highly skilled/stable workforce

- Developing our profile as an employer
- Making the job do-able and enabling our workforce to do the right thing
- Supporting our staff with an effective workforce and wellbeing strategy
- Developing a clear career pathway and succession planning
- Having a clear recruitment and retention strategy

Co-ordinating and influencing the establishment of a mature WR4C partnership platform to drive the delivery of the WR4C vision.

This work will need to link with

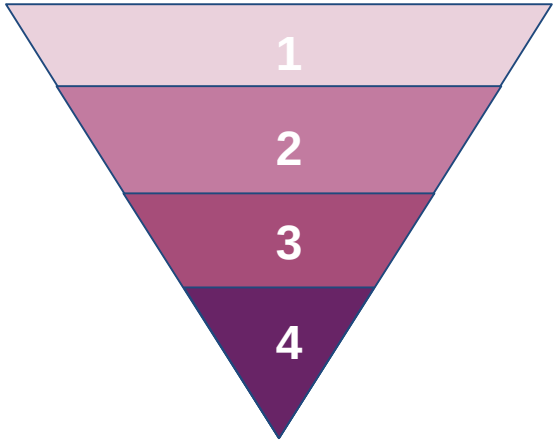
- Walsall Together
- Safeguarding partnership
- Walsall for all
- Safer Communities
- Resilient Communities
- Youth Justice Partnership Board
- Regional Violence Prevention
- Troubled Families

Direction of Travel – Overall Theme

Overall Theme

As the direction of travel for each component has been developed, drawing on good practice and Walsall context, a number of themes have been identified which are common to all components. The themes can help to build a picture of the direction of travel for the council as a whole, in order to best deliver the set of ten outcomes.

1. **Using effective marketing and communications to change behaviour.**
2. **Using local assets and empowering communities to deliver outcomes.**
3. **Partnering in an effective way where a council-only response is not enough.**
4. **Providing one, clear, unified offer for council-only delivered services.**



Activity towards the top of the triangle is light touch for the council and tends to reach the population universally. Activity towards the bottom of the triangle requires more resource and expertise from the council and tends to be targeted to specific groups or cohorts within the population.

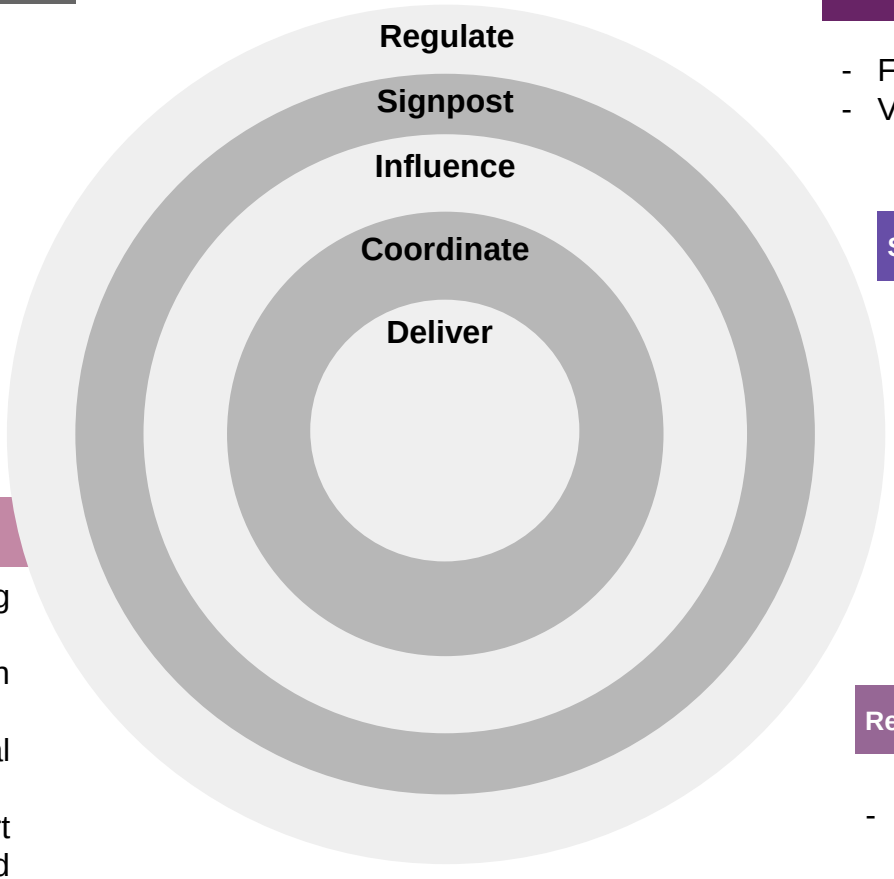
WR4C our 20/22 priorities

Further develop the locality model

- Co-located teams in localities
- Implementation of Family Safeguarding
- Development of a clear locality partnership offer
  - Online offer
  - Targeted Eh offer (internal)
  - Redirection of demand through partnership offer

Effective response to Adolescents

- Embedding and Flexing Turning Point resources
- Development of exploitation hub
- Partnership offer to contextual safeguarding
- Review of placement support including learning and upscaling of Mocking bird
- Youth Justice – link to Turning point, MASH and locality working



Big Conversation/Big Collaboration

- Family Led decision making
- Volunteering

SEND

- EHCP hub
- Local Offer
- Outsource Sendiass
- Review of CWD

Reducing Exclusions

- Implementing Walsall framework for emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Restorative practice

DfE HAF programme?

- School holidays can be pressure points for some families because of increased costs and reduced incomes
- Some children are more likely to experience 'unhealthy holidays' in terms of nutrition and physical health
- Some children from lower-income families are less likely to access fun activities
- Free holiday clubs are a response to this issue. They can work best when they provide consistent and easily accessible activities, for more than just breakfast or lunch
- Investment of up to £220 million will be delivered through grants to all local authorities to provide free activities and food to all children eligible to free school during Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday

Requirement of the Programme

- Provision offered to all FSM children in the local authority
- Inclusive and accessible provision (e.g. SEND)
- At least 4 hours for 4 days a week. For 4 weeks in the summer, and for a week at Easter and Christmas.

Minimum standards

- Healthy food
- Enriching activities
- Physical activities
- Nutritional education
- Policies and procedures

provision

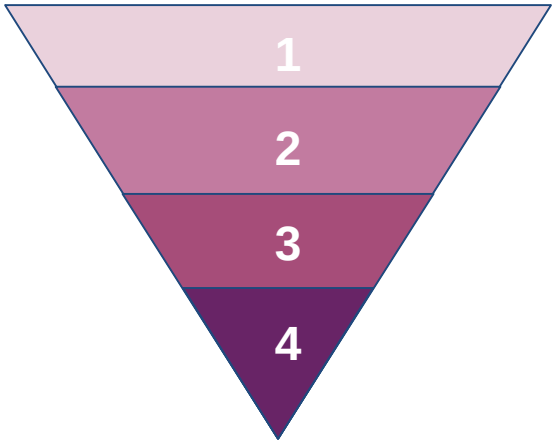
Impact we are looking to achieve

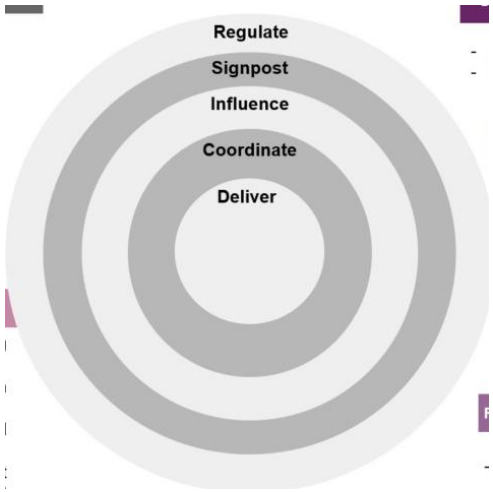
We want children attending clubs/activities to:

- Eat more healthily
- Be more active
- Take part in engaging and enriching activities
- Be safe and not isolated
- Have greater knowledge of health and nutrition
- Be more engaged with school and other services
- Have greater knowledge and awareness of holiday club provision

Walsall

- **Walsall will receive £1,799,290 investment across 20/21 and 21/22 to develop an offer to 13,500 children**
- **Building on successes from the previous provision e.g. summer partnership provision learn from what works, what we can do better**
- **<u>Wide partnership maximising opportunities</u> to get this programme to enhance exciting plans and ensure wide reach and uptake of eligible children**
- **Use this as an opportunity to develop our resilient communities work stream for children - to build understanding and capacity, develop a local offer that can support <u>preventative work around the key needs in Walsall</u>**





HAF Steering group – collaborative approach

Led by LA: Children's Services and Resilient Communities
Steering group members to date: One Walsall, WHG, Money Home Job, Walsall for All, Police, Leisure Services, Public Health, Resilient Communities and Economy and Environment, Education

MAP NEED AND PROVISION

COMMISSION PROVISION TO FILL GAPS - AWARD FUNDING

SUPPORT PROVIDERS

PROMOTE PROVISION

WORK WITH OTHERS TO MAXIMISE OPPORTUNITIES

DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE APPROACHES

Our Easter Provision

Working with 36 partners to deliver:

- **Healthy Meal Kit' box.** This box will contain
  - Ingredients to cook 4 healthy meals on a budget.
  - Additional essential food items all families should have in their cupboards to create healthy yet easy meals on a budget
  - Recipe cards on how to cook these meals (the recipes used have been designed by children in Walsall through a school project with the Co - op)
  - Information on nutrition provided through Public Health
  - An opportunity to attend an online cooking sessions
- **Access to free, fun and enriching activities** during Easter which will help

  Beat boredom

  Create opportunities for children to develop skills and knowledge that will support their education

  Connect children with activities and organisations that provide activities outside school holidays

  Most of the activities/workshops will be accessed online just now because of Covid restrictions, but we do have capacity to deliver some face to face activities for those children with no access to the internet or who are very vulnerable and where face to face would be beneficial.

- Access to **extra support** through sign posting to key agencies (e.g. School Health, CAB, Parenting) for those families who need it

So What?

Our outcomes framework

Our outcomes framework published in September 2020 will measure indicators in 3 categories:

How Many – these are indicators that relate to demand and enable us to monitor whether the demand for services is in the right place and reducing or increasing where expected.

How Well – these are indicators that relate to performance and look at whether children, young people and families are receiving services and support on time.

So What – these are indicators that measure outcomes for children, young people and families. As outcomes are often difficult to measure on a quantitative basis, qualitative data from audit activity and, in particular feedback from children, young people and families will provide additional evidence of outcomes.

Walsall Right 4 Children Outcomes

Our services and support is responsive to needs of different communities (locality model)	Our response to vulnerable adolescents is effective	Children with SEND are identified and supported effectively	Children at risk of exclusions can access effective support	Our services in are developed and delivered in collaboration with children, young people and families
1) The needs of children and families are well understood in each locality 2) Partners are proactive in responding to these needs (graduated response) 3) Children and families have easier access to services 4) Children and families are better connected with community resources to enable them to build resilience	1) The response in meeting the needs of vulnerable adolescents is local and proactive 2) More vulnerable young people are engaged in education 3) More young people are supported in their family home 4) Fewer young people enter the Criminal Justice system	1) Children who have SEND are identified effectively 2) Children who have a SEND need receive a high quality, graduated response to their needs. 3) Children with SEND are supported through a robust local offer of support and services to reach their full potential 4) Families find it easier to access the right help	1) Children and young people feel supported to engage with education 2) Root causes of exclusions are understood. 3) Schools are more inclusive 4) Professionals and families find it easier to access the right support to ensure children remain in education	1) Children, young people and families are involved in service design and development 2) Children, young people and families are involved in developing and implementing their plans 3) Children, young people and families feel more resilient 4) Children, young people and families can provide regular feedback

Questions

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Agenda Item No. 11**

11 March 2021

Corporate Financial Performance – Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring Position for 2020/21

Ward(s) All

Portfolio: Councillor Towe – Education and Skills

1. Aim

To provide the budget monitoring position for Period 9 2020/21. The Chair requested that this item be considered by the Committee.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the revenue and capital forecast for the financial year end 2020/21 for the services under the remit of the committee.

2.2 To note the mitigating actions being taken to address the overspend.

3. Report detail – know

3.1 The current net revenue forecast position, after the net use of reserves, would be an overspend of **£801k**, which results from pressures within Home to School transport. After mitigating actions of (£364k) the forecast position is an overspend of **£437k.**

3.2 Regular reports are prepared during 2020/21 for both Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee. For services under the remit of this committee the forecast revenue position is an overspend of £437k as at Period 9 (December 2020). For completeness, the forecast revenue overspend for services under the remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is a net nil position. This gives a total overspend position of **£437k** for Children's Services directorate as at 31 December 2020.

3.3 Reasons for the current position are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1- Explanations of overspend	
	£k
Home to school transport pressure, £801k resulting from additional children requiring transport both in and out of borough.	801
Use of central action plan to mitigate overspends detailed above	(364)
Total	**437**

3.4 The forecast revenue position by service is shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2- Forecast Revenue Outturn 2020/21						
Service	**Annual Budget**	**Year End Forecast**	**Use of Reserves**	**Transfer to Reserves**	**Action Plan**	**Variance after Reserves & Action Plan**
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Access & Inclusion	2.98	4.40	(1.61)	0.18	0.00	0.00
Home to School Transport	3.59	4.39	0.00	0	(0.36)	0.44
Children's Services Sub Total	**6.57**	**8.79**	**(1.42)**	**0.18**	**(0.36)**	**0.44**
Education funding - accountable body	(0.53)	(0.07)	(0.46)	0.00	0.00	(0.00)
Total Children's Services	**6.04**	**8.72**	**(2.07)**	**0.18**	**(0.36)**	**0.44**

3.5 Reserves

The total allocated reserves in 2020/21 are £5.02m, of which £2.07m (41%) has been used or committed to date. To note, this includes reserves of £0.13m relating to one off Covid-19 funding.

Table 3 below details the current net use of reverses included within the forecast.

Table 3 - Summary of use of reserves and transfer to reserves				
Reserve Details	**Allocated reserve**	**Use of reserve**	**Transfer to reserve**	**Balance of reserve**
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Education funding-accountable body	2.81	(0.46)	0.00	2.35
Access & Inclusion	2.21	(1.61)	0.18	0.78
Total Reserves	**5.02**	**(2.07)**	**0.18**	**3.13**

3.6 Risks

For the services under the remit of this committee, there is a risk of **£40k** which is not included in the above forecast. At this stage the risk is not a certainty and as such is not included in the monitoring position. There are no high risks. If the risk became a certainty, it 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 4 below.

Table 4 – Revenue Risks 2020/21				
Risk	**Value £k**	**Ongoing £k**	**One Off £k**	**Actions to manage risk**
High	0	0	0	
Medium	0	0	0	
Low	40	40	0	Potential increase EHCP requests adding pressure to the team could lead to an increase in agency costs relating to Educational Psychologists - no mitigating actions needed.
Total	**40**	**40**	**0**	

3.7 Capital Summary

The total capital programme relating to this portfolio is £40.40m. The projected forecast spend for 2020/21 as at Period 9 is £12.01m. The remaining £28.39m is committed to future year projects and therefore will be carried forward to 2021/22. This is detailed in Table 5 below:

Table 5 - Forecast Capital Outturn 2020/21					
Service	**Annual Budget £m**	**Actual Year to Date £m**	**Forecast £m**	**Year End Variance £m**	**Proposed carry forward to 2021/22 £m**
Council Funded					
School Estate Condition Survey	0.25	0.08	0.08	(0.17)	(0.17)
School Temporary Classrooms	0.25	0.25	0.25	(0.00)	0.00
2 Year Old Capital Funding - DSG RCCO	0.24	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.00
SUB-TOTAL	**0.74**	**0.33**	**0.57**	**(0.17)**	**(0.17)**
Externally Funded					
Devolved Formula Capital	2.16	0.42	2.16	0.00	0.00
Capital Maintenance*	4.23	1.94	3.00	(1.23)	(1.23)
Basic Need**	30.84	3.01	4.20	(26.64)	(26.64)
Universal Infant Free School Meals	0.01	0.00	0.00	(0.01)	(0.01)
Academies – Darlaston	0.35	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.00
Healthy Pupil Capital Fund	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.00	0.00
Special Provision Fund	1.63	0.00	1.63	0.00	0.00
Section 106	0.38	0.04	0.04	(0.34)	(0.34)
SUB-TOTAL	**39.66**	**5.47**	**11.44**	**(28.22)**	**(28.22)**
TOTAL - EDUCATION	**40.40**	**5.80**	**12.01**	**(28.39)**	**(28.39)**

* Children's services and Integrated Facilities Management have a 5 year rolling programme for projects to be funded from the Capital Maintenance grant. Therefore, a request will be made to carry the remaining funds forward to next financial year.

** Regarding further Basic Needs allocations, it should be noted that the DfE have confirmed they will not be able to announce the allocations for places needed beyond September 2022 due to lack of clarity around school capital budgets from Central Government. Historically, the DfE have tried to announce allocations 3.5 years ahead of when places are needed in order to allow local authorities sufficient time to plan ahead and complete works in time for when additional pupil places are required.

Details of proposed capital carry forwards are detailed in Table 6 below:

Table 6 - Proposed Capital Carry Forwards to 2021/22		
Capital Schemes	**Amount to be c/f (£m)**	**Comments**
Basic Need	26.64	Carry forward is committed to future Basic Need school expansion schemes.
Capital Maintenance	1.23	Carry forward will be used to further improve the School Estate in Walsall.
School Estate Condition Survey	0.17	Carry forward will be used to form part of the budget in the 2021/22 financial year.
Section 106	0.34	Carry forward will be used to support future school expansion schemes.
Universal Infant Free School Meals	0.01	Carry forward will be used to part fund the kitchen refurbishments at St Michael's Primary School.
Total	**28.39**	

3.8 Capital risks

For the capital programmes under the remit of this committee, there are a number of risks identified totalling **£2.13m**. These are detailed in Table 7 below.

Table 7 – Capital Risks 20/21				
Risk	**Value (£m)**	**Ongoing (£m)**	**One Off (£m)**	**Actions to manage risk**
Medium	0.50	0.00	0.50	Potential increase in school expansion costs. For previous school expansion schemes, final costs have been higher than previously expected. This was included in the Quarter 3 reported risks but has since been resolved.
Medium	1.63	0.00	1.63	Special Provision Fund expenditure is dependent on the review of the SEN Strategy. This was included in the Quarter 3 reported risks but has since been resolved.
TOTAL	**2.13**	**0.00**	**2.13**	

4. Financial information

4.1 The financial implications are as set out in the main body of this report. The council has a statutory responsibility to set a balanced budget and to ensure it has an adequate level of reserves. The council will take a medium term policy led approach to all decisions on resource allocation.

5. Reducing Inequalities

5.1 Services consider and respond to equality issues in setting budgets and delivering services. Irrespective of budgetary pressures, the Council must fulfil equal opportunities obligations.

6. Decide

6.1 To approve the recommendations as set out in this report.

7. Respond

7.1 The Executive Director for Children's Services, with finance in support will be working with Directors and Heads of service to review the forecast, to continue to implement mitigating actions for any further forecast overspends and to consider these financial implications in line with the council's budget setting process.

8. Review

8.1 Regular monitoring reports are presented to Cabinet to inform them of the impact of Covid-19 and the financial forecast for 2020/21, including an update on risks and impact on the budget for 2021/22 and beyond.

Background papers: Various financial working papers

Contact Officers:

Ross Hutchinson, Interim Head of Finance
☏ 07415 308513, ✉ ross.hutchinson@walsall.gov.uk

Tanya Collier, Lead Accountant – Children's Services
✉ tanya.collier@walsall.gov.uk

Sally Rowe
Executive Director, Children's Services

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work programme 2020/21

Priority Areas	10 September	3 November	5 January	11 March
Access and Inclusion Working Group report	X			
Update on SEND Local Area Improvement Plan and EHCPs	X			
COVID Support for Schools	X			
Work Programme 2020-21	X	X	X	X
Exclusions in schools		X		
Ofsted and Schools – Initial visits feedback and new inspection regime		X		
Update on the Jane Lane School		X		
Six monthly financial update 2019/20		X		
Draft revenue budget		X		
SEND Written Statement of Action & EHCPs			X	
Children Missing Education and Electively Home Educated			X	
Inclusion Strategy			X	
Pupil placed planning				X
SEND Strategy				X
Walsall Right for Children Update				X
Update on implementation of Access and Inclusion Working Group's recommendations				X
Covid 19 Update				X

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Council House,
Lichfield Street,
Walsall, WS1 1TW
www.walsall.gov.uk

1 February2021

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 1TWhelen.owen@walsall.gov.uk and can also be accessed from the Council’s website at 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.

Cabinet responsibilities are as follows

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bird
Deputy Leader, Regeneration – Councillor Andrew
Deputy Leader, Resilient Communities – Councillor Perry
Adult social care – Councillor Martin
Children’s– Councillor Wilson
Clean and green – Councillor Butler
Education and skills – Councillor Towe
Health and wellbeing – Councillor Craddock
Personnel and business support – Councillor Chattha

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 (helen.owen@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 £250,000.

(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.

Dates of meetings

2020 28 October
9 December

2021 10 February
17 March
21 April

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

MARCH to JUNE2021(1.2.21)

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**
8/20 *(3.2.20)*	**Black Country Transport Team Collaboration Agreement**: To approve the agreement to facilitate the delivery of a strategic transportation function across the four Black Country local authorities	Cabinet (Nonkey decision)	Matt Crowton 01922 654358 matt.crowton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal	Councillor Andrew	17 March2021
43/18 *(8.10.18)*	**Lighting Invest to Save:** To consider proposals for a major investment in the highway lighting infrastructure by replacing all existing lighting with energy efficient LED lighting	Cabinet (Key decision)	Paul Leighton 07831 120871 paul.leighton@walsall.gov.uk	Public, Walsall Public Lighting Ltd., industry companies, internal	Councillor Andrew	17 March2021
6/21 *(4.1.21)*	**Black Country Tenancy Strategy**: To approve the strategy to enable a uniform approach across the Black Country for Fixed Term Tenancies and Affordable Rents by registered providers of social housing	Cabinet (Key decision)	Neil Hollyhead Neil.hollyhead@walsall.gov.uk	Internal	Councillor Andrew	17 March 2021
7/21 *(4.1.21)*	**Community Sponsorship:** To approve a process to enable the community to	Cabinet	Neil Hollyhead Neil.hollyhead@wals	Internal	Councillor Andrew	17 March 2021

	house and support refugees	(Key decision)	all.gov.uk			
9/21 *(1.2.21)*	**West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan Settlement and Transport Capital Programme 2021/22:** For approval	Cabinet (Key decision)	Matt Crowton Matt.crowton@walsall.gov.uk	Internal	Councillor Andrew	17 March 2021
8/21 *(1.2.21)*	**Regional Materials Recycling Facility** (MRF): To approve the revised Business Case and additional funding. .	Cabinet (Key decision)	Cabinet Report dated 04 September 2019. Joint Working Agreements and Initial Business Case. Stephen Johnson Service Manager - Strategy Tel. 01922 654227	Internal	Councillor Butler	17 March 2021
62/20 *(2.11.20)*	**Appointment of Major works technical advisor**: To provide services such as architects, quantity surveyors, engineers, etc. for a period of 2 + 1 + 1 years for corporate landlord.	Cabinet (Key decision)	Derwyn Owen 01922 650747 derwyn.owen@walsall.gov.uk	Internal	Councillor Chattha	17 March 2021
9/21 *(2.1.21)*	**Adult Social Care Call Electronic Call Monitoring System:** Approval of the extension to the Electronic Call Monitoring Contract for an additional year and delegate authority to make any variations as a result of statutory	Cabinet (Non-key decision)	HardeepKainth 01922 658387 Hardeep.kainth@walsall.gov.uk.	Internal	Councillor Martin	17 March 2021

	requirements					

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE
FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
Published up to July 2021 (for publication 01/03/2021)

Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
04/01/2021	Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – National Innovation Centre	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to enter into a Grant Agreement with Dudley Council to deliver the Local Growth Deal Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – National Innovation Centre project with delivery to commence in the 2021/22 financial year.	Papers TBC – Helen Martin Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk	Dudley Council	31/03/2021
04/01/2021	Getting Building Fund – Capital and Revenue Funding Approval	1. Approval for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to use the revenue funding and capital contingency funding for: • Walsall Council to carry out its role as Accountable Body to the Getting Building Fund programme, and • Walsall Council to cover the costs of the external legal and technical fees in support of managing the programme. 2. Approval for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to enter into a Grant Agreement with the Black Country Consortium for the Management and Administration functions of the Getting Building Fund. 3. Approval for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to re-profile the Getting Building Fund (GBF) projects Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Innovation Centre (Dudley Council), and the National Brownfield Institute Phase 2 - Construction and Delivery (University of Wolverhampton).	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	31/03/2021

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE
FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
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Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
04/01/2021	Land & Property Investment Fund – Programme Extension	Approval for the Black Country Land and Property Investment Fund programme (LPIF), be re-profiled to allow expenditure and outputs to be claimed up to March 2025. Approval for the programme management costs, within this fund be reprofiled to March 2026, to ensure that the expenditure and outputs are audited in line with the Black Country Assurance Framework.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	31/03/2021
08/02/2021	Wolverhampton Canalside – Change Request	Approval for Sandwell Council to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Growing Places Fund (GPF) funded elements of the Wolverhampton Canalside project with delivery to conclude in the 2021/22 financial year.	Papers TBC – Richard Lawrence Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk	Wolverhampton City Council	31/03/2021
05/10/2020	Dudley Advanced Construction Centre – Change Request	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Dudley College, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Dudley Advanced Construction Centre project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.	Papers TBC – Helen Martin Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk	Dudley Council	28/04/2021
07/09/2020	Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills – Change Request	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with the University of Wolverhampton, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.	Papers TBC – Richard Lawrence Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk	Wolverhampton City Council	28/04/2021
08/02/2021	Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Dudley Council to deliver the Local Growth Deal Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Hub to Home Transport	Papers TBC – Helen Martin Helen.Martin@dudley.gov.uk	Dudley Council	28/04/2021

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE
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Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
	and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track 1 Project Change Request	Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track 1 project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.			
04/01/2021	Black Country LEP Assurance Framework	Approval of the revised Black Country LEP Assurance Framework, following the implementation requirements of the new Black Country Executive Joint Committee Governance arrangements, and the programme of continuous improvement to further enhance the BC LEP governance and transparency above and beyond published government standards, included as Attachment 1 to this report.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Bilston Urban Village Change Request	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Bilston Urban Village project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.	Papers TBC – Richard Lawrence Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk	Wolverhampton City Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Goscote Lane Corridor Change Request	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Walsall Housing Group Limited, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Goscote Lane Corridor project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson simon.neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Transport Major Road Network (MRN) Development	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council, to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the Accessing Growth Transport	Papers TBC – Richard Lawrence Richard.Lawrence@wolverhampton.gov.uk	Wolverhampton City Council	28/04/2021

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE
FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
Published up to July 2021 (for publication 01/03/2021)

Date first entered into the plan	Project Name	Key Decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside of the Council)	Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer	Main consultees	Date Item to be considered
	Change Request	Major Road Network (MRN) Development project with delivery to continue in the 2021/22 financial year.			
01/03/2021	Growth Hub – Peer Networks Programme	Approval for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to enter into a grant agreement with the Black Country Consortium Ltd to deliver the Growth Hub Peer Networks Programme for 2021/22.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Growth Hub Grant Funding Agreement Approval 2021/22	Approval for the Accountable Body for the Black Country Growth Hub (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement, with the Black Country Consortium Ltd, to deliver the Black Country Growth Hub Funding for 2021/22.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	28/04/2021
01/03/2021	Parallel 9/10 **PRIVATE SESSION - Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act1972 (as amended)**	Approval for Walsall Council to enter into a Grant Agreement with Cayborn Limited to deliver the Black Country Enterprise Zone (BCEZ) funded elements for the Parallel 9/10 project, with delivery to commence in the 2021/22 financial year. Approval that business rates from the wider BC EZ can be utilised by Walsall Council to repay borrowing costs, with Parallel 9/10 being confirmed as the next priority project in respect of the allocation of business rates, after Categories 1 – 6 as set out in the BCJC Collaboration Agreement.	Papers TBC – Simon Neilson Simon.Neilson@walsall.gov.uk	Walsall Council	28/04/2021