

## Health and Wellbeing Board

September 2023

### Children and Young People Alliance

#### For discussion

#### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide members of the Health and Wellbeing Board with an overview of the work of the Children and Young People Alliance.
- 1.2 To provide members with an update on the development of a 2040 Children and Young People Strategy aligned to We Are Walsall 2040.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members support the work we are doing with partners through the development of a Walsall Children and Young People Strategic Alliance to secure better outcomes for children growing up in Walsall.
- 2.2 That members are assured the Alliance are making good progress in the development of a meaningful 2040 Children and Young people Strategy that will respond effectively to issues identified for children and young people growing up in Walsall.

#### 3. Report detail

##### What is Walsall's Children and Young People Strategic Alliance?

##### Vision and Purpose

- 3.1 The Children and Young People Strategic Alliance was launched in March 2023. Recognising that **"today's children are upstream adults"**, it is driven through a **"Children First"** vision to create a collaborative space critical to developing new ways of thinking and new ways of working informed by the voice of children, young people and their families.
- 3.2 Partners as part of the Alliance have signed up to working to one moral purpose: ***"to regularly consider how the lived experience of children and young people in Walsall can be improved."***
- 3.3 The Alliance provides an opportunity to develop a good understanding of the needs of children and young people in Walsall and system wide change which needs to take place to enable improved outcomes. As well as using this information to enable partners own organisation change it enables them to influence change for children and young people in other strategic spaces.

##### Membership

- 3.4 Current members of the Alliance include: NHS Walsall, Black Country Integrated Care Board – CYP and Maternity; Primary care and Place development , Walsall Council – resilient Communities, Walsall Council Children's Services; Public

Health, Police, Walsall Together (ICB), Education, WHG, Safeguarding Board, Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust; Wolverhampton University.

The Alliance is supported by The Staff College as a critical friend bringing in in best practice, research evidence and healthy challenge.

- 3.5 There have been key pieces of engagement work undertaken with children and young people growing up in Walsall which have provided the Alliance with valuable and rich qualitative information to understand children's lived experience and the things Walsall Alliance need to consider in ensuring all children in Walsall can be happy, healthy, safe and learning well.

The key pieces of work were:

- An ethnographic Study on 'growing up in Walsall' – commissioned by Public Health - November 2020
- Big Conversation – Summer Daily Conversations programme – undertaking by Children's Services during Summer 2021.
- The Big Ask/ The Big Answer undertaken by the children commissioner for England – September 2021
- We are Walsall 2040 consultation – 2022
- Youth Justice work with Black and Mixed heritage boys around disproportionality.

### **The Children and Young People Strategic Alliance Focus Areas**

- 3.6 Listening to the voices of children and young people the Alliance considered what the issues were that only this group could resolve in the best interest of children and young people living in Walsall? As a result, the Alliance selected two key areas of focus they want to influence system change on as:

- **First 1001 days** – recognising that investing in system wide change which supports children to have the best start in life will lay the foundations to
  - Improve the mental and physical health of the next generation.
  - Reduce risky and anti-social behaviour and the cost they bring.
  - Build skilled workforce to support a thriving community and create a compassionate society
- **Exclusions** – in selecting this priority the Alliance recognised that:
  - It's not OK to fail Children
  - Exclusions is a system failing a child – collective responsibility
  - Therefore we need to find system solutionsThe Alliance defined exclusions as the act of leaving someone out or the act of being left out and have an ambition of influencing a system change that focus' on increased sense of 'belonging'.

### **The development of a 2040 Children and Young people Strategy**

- 3.7 After a comprehensive public consultation, Walsall has set itself an ambitious vision for where it wants to be by 2040. The We are Walsall 2040 Strategy seeks to make Walsall the most improved borough in the region, a vibrant place where people are proud to live and residents in all neighbourhoods have the same life chances. The key ambitions underpinning this strategy are that we want to be Healthy and Well, Thriving and Happy, Prosperous and Innovative, and Proud of Our Borough. The We are Walsall 2040 Strategy seeks to make Walsall a child-friendly borough and sets out six key outcomes to make this a reality:



- 3.8 The Children and Young People Alliance has taken on the responsibility of developing a 2040 Children and Young People Strategy to achieve the above outcomes.
- 3.9 On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June the Alliance held its first 'Children First' Summit, bringing together 55 leaders from across Walsall is to start a collaborative approach in developing a meaningful Children and Young Persons Strategy 2040 for Walsall that will create a compassionate, healthy, economically strong, and successful place that has children and young people at its heart.
- 3.10 The Summit used scenario planning as a strategic planning tool to ensure that the Strategy is setting our flexible long-term plans to achieve our set out goals. Scenario thinking is a group activity which encourages knowledge exchange and development of mutual deeper understanding of central issues important to the future of the way in which we deliver services and specifically in our case, the develop our collective Children and Young People 2040 strategy (see appendix1)
- 3.11 The next step is to take the product of the Summit and develop this in a workshop to engage a wide range of children and young people in the development of the Strategy. The Alliance is collaborating with several voluntary and community organisation to develop these workshops which are going to take place between October half term and end of November 2023.
- 3.12 The information from the Summit and the workshops with children and young people will be incorporated into the Strategy. The aim is to have a draft strategy in place by January 2024 – this will then be 'socialised' through the various partnership boards to inform a final strategy and implementation plan by March 2024.

#### **4. Implications for Joint Working arrangements:**

- 4.1 As a partnership we agreed to focus on making the right connections and maximising opportunities rather than focus on formal governance

arrangements. In order to do this the alliance are joining the dots to ensure they maximise opportunities to advocate and influence the right issues/topics in the right place in relation to children:



4.2 The Alliance recognises that our schools and education settings are an important part of this collective model. The Alliance have therefore secured connectivity with the Walsall Learning Alliance ensuring that wider system issues affecting children’s learning is consistently considered and improved.

## 5. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:

5.1 Although the Alliance is focussing on improving outcomes for children and young people long term it is also delivering on mental health and wellbeing and digital priority as they are key issues impacting on children growing up in the borough and will be a key feature as part of the 2040 Strategy.

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