

25<sup>th</sup> April 2019

8.

Right for Children Transformation programme

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr Tim Wilson, Children’s and Health and Wellbeing

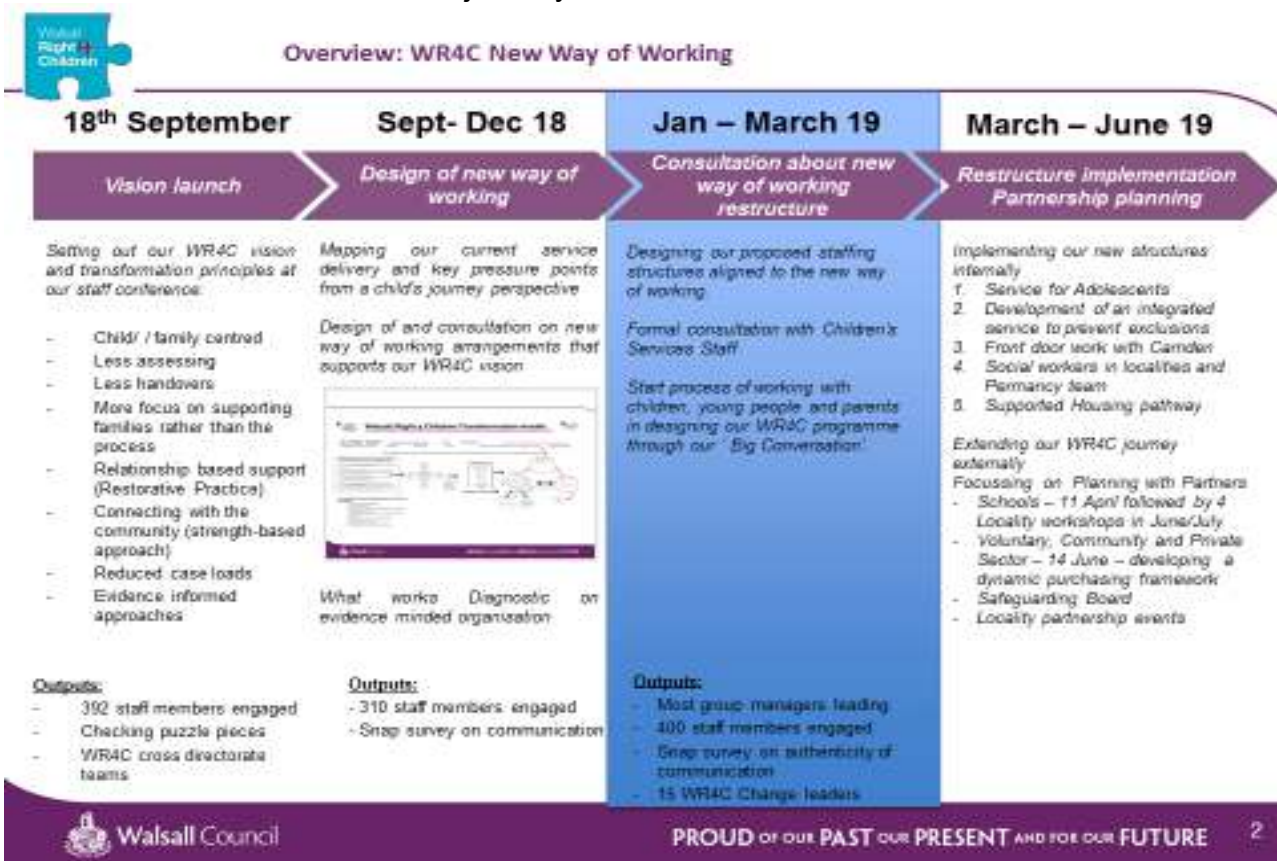
Executive Summary:

This report provides a further update on progress against the activities set out in our Walsall Right for Children (WR4C) transformation programme.

The areas of progress include:

1. Our WR4C Big Conversation - consultation with children, young people and families aimed at informing and co-design our transformation programme.
2. Consultation on our service redesigns based on our new way of working including, where it makes sense to do so, connecting our resources to localities and developing a new service for adolescents.
3. Collaboration with schools to develop an evidence based model that prevents children and young people from being excluded from school.
4. Collaboration with the voluntary sector to provide effective packages of support that secure sustainable outcomes for vulnerable families, reduce the need for children to come into care or the length of time they spend in care.

Overview of our transformation journey to date:



**Reason for scrutiny:**

To provide members with a progress update of our 'Walsall Right For Children' Transformation Programme.

**Recommendations:**

The report to be noted.

**Background papers:**

Scrutiny report presented on 25 September 2018 and 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Attachment 1 – Family Rights Charter  
Attachment 2 Walsall Right for Children newsletter – March 2019

**Resource and legal considerations:**

Not applicable to this report

**Council Corporate Plan Priorities:**

The 'Walsall Right for Children' transformation programme will contribute to a number of our Council Corporate Plan priorities:

1. People: The transformation programme aims 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 focussing 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 main focus of the transformation programme is to ensure that support is in place so children can have the best start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well
4. Communities: Our transformation programme will connect 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:**

We will listen to children, young peoples and their family's current experiences and understand and learn about when services make a difference and when they do not. As users of our service, we recognise that children, young people and families are best placed to tell us what it feels like to live in Walsall and to be in need of help and support. We have an ambition to work in true collaboration with children, young people and families to develop and deliver our transformation programme.

**Environmental impact:**

Not applicable for this report

## **Performance management:**

Project governance of the 'Walsall Right for Children' transformation programme sits within the wider corporate Transformation Programme arrangements.

Within the "Walsall Right for Children" programme, monthly Programme Board meetings, chaired by the Director of Children's Services oversee and monitor progress against key milestones and against the work stream plans, identify risks and take appropriate action to mitigate risk and unblock obstacles. This Board is supported by the corporate transformation team

The Project Board monitors progress, with the Project Lead, identifying resource requirements and ensuring they are in place at the appropriate time based on the project plan. Each work stream has a lead officer responsible for the delivery of the work stream plan of the transformation programme. They are supported in their work by the transformation lead and appropriate stakeholder.

## **Reducing inequalities:**

The aim of our 'Walsall Right for Children' Transformation 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.

## **Consultation:**

18 consultation sessions on our proposed new operating model took place during November and December 2018 engaging workforce and key stakeholders including Education, Public Health and Safeguarding Board.

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## Report

1. Our WR4C Big Conversation – In February we started our programme of consultation, engagement and collaboration with children, young people and families. As part of the first phase of the programme we facilitated 140 individual conversations with children, young people and parents as well as 6 focus groups. During these conversations we have been exploring what their current experience is of services delivered by Children Services and what changes they feel we need to consider as part of our new way of working.

The things parents, children and young people told us needed to change, aligned with our Transformation principles:

- Workers who ‘stick around’ and build relationships with us make a difference
- Provide us with the support at the right time - current experience is that parents and children have to wait too long to get the right support.
- Connect us with resources and support so we can continue to do well as a family
- Children’s Services need to strengthen our communication
  - o who we are and what we do within children’s services. There is a current perception that social services focusses on ‘taking children away’ so the communication needs to promote the support families can expect to receive that will improve outcomes for their children.
  - o Being honest and transparent – tell us what you are concerned about and work with us to support change.

Through The Big Conversation we have identified a group of parents and young people who want to get actively involved in helping design and deliver our future services. We are planning further meetings with them to explore a programme of co-designed activities this may include development of training for practitioners, development of communication material for children, young people and families, our offer of digital access to service etc.

We are planning to work alongside the Family Rights Group, a national charity supporting the rights of parents to implement the Family Right Charter in collaboration with Walsall parents and practitioners. This charter will enable effective, mutually beneficial partnership working between practitioners and families when children are subject to statutory interventions (see attachment 1)

2. We are currently redesigning our social care teams. Following consultation with 400 staff members during January – March we have now agreed the final social care structures based on our Walsall Right 4 Children principles. This includes, where it makes sense to do so, connecting our resources to localities and developing a bespoke service for adolescents to support families to stay together and prevent young people coming into care.

Implementation of the new structures is in process and includes:

2.1 We are currently working with our Partners in Practice Camden (funded through the Department for Education) to strengthen arrangements and practice in our Front Door. Redesign includes:

- Full integration of the Multi Agency Safeguarding hub (MASH) and the Early Help Hub (through one point of contact for advice, guidance and social care referrals)

- Developing the partnership in MASH to enable more effective gathering and analysis of information and making informed decisions together on the right help for children and families.
- Development of a Brief Intervention team which will focus on timely and effective Child in Need intervention aimed at reducing numbers of children re-referred into social care and escalation to child protection.

2.2 We are in the process of developing our Walsall Right 4 Children co - located teams – including deploying social workers in localities based on the demand in each of the 4 localities. By the end of May we will have identified the teams for each of the localities and a workforce development programme will commence to implement our transformation principles as part of locality working. This programme of development will also include work with key partners in each locality. We are aiming for all 4 teams to be fully co-located by December 2019.

We are currently in discussions with Wolverhampton University about a research programme to understand the impact on practice and outcomes for children and families as of this new locality model.

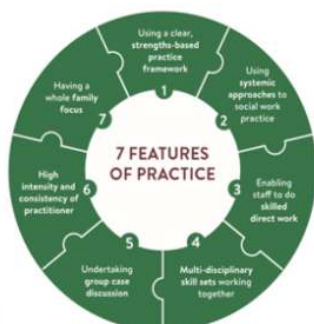
2.3 We are creating of a Permanency Hub based at Fallings Heath Centre. This team will comprise a team of social workers and contact workers who will undertake therapeutic interventions with children, young people and families going through court proceedings. This service will provide families with intensive and specialist opportunities to effect change, where this is possible to do so or to ensure that for the right children and young people, timely decisions can be made to come into the care of the local authority. This team will be fully in place by the beginning of June.

2.4 Responding to our needs analysis, we are developing a more effective response to young people who have complex need and are at risk of coming into care by developing a specialist service for adolescents.

The service will be focussing work with young people and their families on preparation for life, supporting family strengths and relationships, challenging and disrupting harm to children in and outside the family home. We are currently recruiting to the team and are aiming to launch this provision in the Summer.

The delivery model for the service for adolescents:

DfE finding as a result of innovation programme evaluation



- Integrated Service for adolescent (10 – 18 and responsive support post 18) with complex need who are on the edge of care
- Multi Disciplinary team using Metallisation as their agreed practice stance (through the AMBIT model)
- Co-work with social worker or Early Help worker (front Door, SFS, Permanency hub) who will continue to be the lead professional
- Being there when families need support (8.00-10.00 and on call response 10.00- 8.00am)regular case clinical group supervision days for staff and professional network

3. We are developing an evidence based collaborative approach with schools to prevent children and young people from being excluded from school.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> April we started a process of co-designing future support for vulnerable pupils who are at risk of missing out of education (e.g. exclusion or reduced time tables). The workshop was attended by 89 schools leaders (head teachers, Academy trust CEO's and governors) representing early years, primary, secondary and special school settings.

The information gathered through this workshop will be taken forward by an operational design group (with representation from schools, the local authority and health) to develop an evidence based service to test out in September.

In addition, 4 locality events have been scheduled in June to further develop relationships between the Walsall Right for Children co-located teams and schools to ensure a more integrated response to vulnerable children and young people

4. Collaboration with the voluntary sector in providing effective packages of support and secure sustainable outcomes for vulnerable families, reducing the need for children to come into care or reducing the time in care. We are continuing to test a new dynamic purchasing approach with 4 young people and their families who are at risk of care. We will be working with the Local Government Association (LGA) in June to evaluate this test and inform future upscaling.