

Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on: **Monday 13 March 2023 at 6.00 p.m.**

Meeting at: Walsall Council House.

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

MEMBERSHIP:

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

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Councillor S. Elson

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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 of the previous meeting To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting that took place on 30 January, 2023.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<u>Scrutiny</u>		
6.	Child Neglect Strategy To provide an update on the child neglect strategy.	<u>Enclosed</u>
7.	Walsall Children and Young People Strategic Alliance To provide an update on Walsall Children and Young People Strategic Alliance.	<u>Enclosed</u>
<u>Overview</u>		
8.	Recommendation Tracker To review progress with recommendations from previous meetings.	<u>Enclosed</u>
9.	Areas of Focus 2022/23 To agree the Committees Work Programme and review the Forward Plans for Walsall Council and the Black Country Executive Committee.	<u>Enclosed</u>
10.	Date of next meeting To note that the date of the next meeting will be 18 April 2023.	

The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Specified pecuniary interests

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

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

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

Access to information: Exempt information

Part 1

Descriptions of exempt information: England

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

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

Monday 30th January 2023 at 6.00 p.m.

Committee Members Present

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

Portfolio Holder

Councillor S. Elson - Children's Services

Officers Present

Colleen Male - Director (Childrens Social Work)
Isabelle Vanderheeren - Director (Early Help)
Tanya Collier - Lead Accountant
Rita Holmer - Head of Safeguarding and Localities
Nikki Gough - Democratic Services Officer

41/22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Rattigan and Councillor Garcha.

42/22 Substitutions

There were no substitutions.

43/22 Declarations of interest and party whip

There were no declarations and no party whip of interest.

44/22 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no items to be considered in private session.

Minutes

45/22 The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 were considered by the committee.

Resolved

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 December be approved as a true and accurate record.

46/22 Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7 month position ended 31 October 2022

The Lead Accountant presented the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed). The Committee were informed of the updated forecasted financial position for 2022/23 based on the position to October 2022, as reported to Cabinet on 14 December 2022, to allow the scrutiny of the financial performance of the council, and specifically for services within the committee's remit.

Further detail was provided on the movement in financial position (table 3), Members were informed that the total allocated reserves for 2022/23 for services under the remit of this committee were £6.15m, of which £3.3m had been used or committed to date and £0.35m would be transferred to reserves at the year-end, ring-fenced for expected spend in 2023/24. The Lead Accountant stated that included within the budget for 2022/23 for services within the remit of the Committee was £5.46m of approved savings. The capital forecast programme for services under the remit of the committee was £1.34m and it was expected that this would be fully spent in the financial year – with the list of schemes included in table 8.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the budget overspend needed to continue to be managed, with action taken to rectify this which would have an impact in the future and would reduce the overspend in time.

The Director (Children's Services) informed the Committee that a range of mitigating actions had been put in place, with the biggest risk being placement sufficiency with the average weekly cost being significantly higher. The residential market is complicated, with children being placed in both registered and unregistered settings. A drive to increase the number of foster carers would mean better outcomes for young people and it would be more cost effective for the Council.

A discussion was held on the proposal for two new residential children's homes and the benefits were acknowledged. The Director confirmed this and stated that when a child was in crisis, placements were often high cost and children were placed at a distance away from Walsall. If beds were available in our own residential homes, then intensive work could be done with the family to return the child home or time could be taken to identify a suitable placement.

In response to a Member question relating to fostering, the Director explained that there would be a range of publicity, webinars, and information on the council website.

In response to challenge relating to the financial overspend, the Director stated that there had been unprecedented circumstances, the increase in costs to the council was significant and if complex children were taken into care in the future, this could have an impact on the councils financial situation.

The Committee questioned what action was being taken to reduce the number of agency staff (which were higher cost). Officers confirmed that the reliance on agency staff had been significantly reduced which was against the national and regional trend. The Authority was successful at attracting new social workers but found it more challenging to recruit experienced social workers. Therefore, there was a focus on staff retention – but there was a continued need for agency social workers. The Director stated that a new model was being developed which introduced a Consultant Social Worker to provide additional capacity and support to newer members of staff. In response to questions, Officers confirmed that local universities provided the majority of student placements.

A discussion was held on the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC), the Committee further explained that this project worked with parents to bring about change, to keep families together and achieve permanence more quickly. The project had been extended for a year, and work was taking place on a model of sustainability alongside Dudley and Sandwell.

The Committee noted their thanks to staff for their hard work.

Resolved

That the Corporate Financial Performance 2022/23 – 7 month position ended 31 October 2022 report be noted.

47/22 Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services introduced the report. She highlighted investments, cost pressures, saving proposals, and the proposed draft capital programme spending. The Chair invited the Lead Accountant (Children's Services) to present the report, who outlined the attached appendices.

Members discussed the overspend position and were assured that this had been taken into account within the budget proposals.

Further detail was sought by the Committee in response to reference 38 – additional Looked after Children demand/cost pressures. The Committee was informed that the investment figure for 2023/24 was higher than that of future years, in order to account/adjust for the current financial position, however this would be reviewed as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process to ensure the level of investment continues to reflect the changes in cost and demand.

It was concluded by the Committee that the programmes developed by children's services such as locality hubs, the family safeguarding model, the family drug and alcohol court, and the Daisy project were all aimed at improving outcomes for children and families and reducing costs to the authority.

The Committee Resolved:

That the Committee noted the draft revenue budget proposals and draft revenue capital scheme.

48/22 Locality Working and Family Hubs

The Director (Early Help) introduced the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed). The Committee was informed that the report provided an overview of the progress to date and on-going planning for the blended 'hybrid' model of delivery for the co-location of Children's Social Care, Early Help and key locality partners within the North, West, Central South, and East Locality. The report provided an overview on the alignment to the Family Hub model and implementation.

The benefits of delivering a community based model of working were described, included the reducing the chances of poor outcomes for children, young people and their families through access to a range of local services and support networks, increased community capacity, and resilience.

The Committee considered further information on the areas for development as detailed within the report. In response to questions from the Committee, Officers stated that a hybrid way of working was being developed to allow some colocation whilst challenges were experienced with space. It was confirmed that this had not impacted outcomes of the service. In response to questions, it was also confirmed that translators were used when needed by families.

A discussion was held in relation to the models, and it was stressed that this was a relationship strength based model. The biggest challenge was capacity and demand – resource was allocated according to demand. Officers explained that dependent on needs of the locality, Social Workers developed specialisms in each locality.

Resolved

That

1. The direction of travel to date to be supported.
2. That the report be noted.

49/22

Family Hubs

The Director (Early Help) introduced the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed) providing an overview of the Department for Education and Department for Health and Social Care Family Hubs and Start for Life programme which aimed to provide families with the integrated support they need to care for their children. Information was provided on how the programme would be delivered in Walsall and the progress made to date.

Family hubs were described as:

- Locality based.
- Support for families.

- A universal front door for families.
- Accessible services through a building, outreach or virtual means.
- Aimed at improving access and connections to services.

The Committee was informed that Government funding was made available to 75 local authorities, of which Walsall was included, for the Family hub and Start for Life programme funding package for the period 2022-2025. There were specific areas of action – which local authorities were required to commit to implementing.

The governance structure of the programme was described, and it was noted that it aligned with the local health and wellbeing strategy and its three priority areas, with the Board receiving annual assurances on the delivery of the programme. It was confirmed that the council remained the accountable body for the overall funding and delivery of the programme.

In response to questions from Members, Officers confirmed that regular surveys would be carried out to analyse feedback on the programme. Members were informed that although similar to the SureStart programme there were differences such as the whole family working and that family hubs were not just centred around ‘buildings’.

Officers stressed that early family help would be strengthened in order to meet need. The report provided detail on lots of different strands of work and national reviews to provide an indication of the direction of travel. Members asked further questions on training provided, and Officers confirmed that practitioners received mandatory training which was expanded on in the programme. Members stated that it was important to gain families confidence and trust.

Resolved

1. The direction of travel for the implementation of the Family Hub & Start for Life Programme was supported
2. The implantation plan and partnership in driving forward the model and embedding across the borough was supported.

50/22

Recommendation Tracker

The Committee considered the recommendation tracker.

Resolved

1. That the recommendation tracker be noted.
2. That the recommendation relating to the visit to the Mayors parlour be removed from the tracker.

51/22

Areas of Focus 2022/23

Resolved

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

Date of next meeting

52/22

The date of the next meeting was noted as 13 March 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business this meeting was terminated at 7:52 p.m.

Signed:

Date:

/22

13th March 2022

6.

Child neglect strategy

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Cllr Stacey Elson
Portfolio Holder

1. Aim

- 1.1 This report is to update members on Walsall's Child Neglect Strategy.
- 1.2 Child Neglect is a strategic priority for the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership and this multi-agency Neglect Strategy is aiming to drive development and improvement. We know that experience of neglect in childhood can have significant and long-term consequences, affecting many areas of a child's development and their life into adulthood. It is the most common type of abuse experienced by children in Walsall, as it is nationally.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members support the work we are doing with partners through the safeguarding partnership board around the prevention and support of mitigating against the impact of child neglect.

3. Report detail – know

- 3.1 Three priorities were identified across the adult and children's Safeguarding Partnership agenda in 2021, with Neglect and All Age Exploitation being key for the Children's Partnership. These priorities were determined through the review of partnership data, our understanding of practice from case reviews and audits and wider partnership discussion about issues which require a joint spotlight.
- 3.2 A child neglect steering group was established in January 2021 to coordinate the development, delivery and impact of Walsall's Neglect Matters Strategy. The Subgroup is made up of key leaders from: • Health • Public Health • Police • Early Help • Primary school rep. • Secondary school rep. • Adult Social Care • Children's Social Care • Housing providers • LA Customer Services • Healthwatch • One Walsall.

Multi-agency engagement and involvement is strong within the steering group as well as having developed strong links with key partnership boards like Walsall

Together has been essential for the implementation of this strategy and ensuring we can maximise impact on children, young people and families in Walsall.

3.3 The Steering group worked collaboration with our children and young people to develop the guided principles that would drive the strategy. Children and young people identified that the following key principles would be key in effectively supporting children who experience neglect at the earliest moment possible:

- **Training** – so everyone in Walsall understands what neglects means, understands the impact it has on children and the role they can play in preventing neglect or supporting children who experience neglect.
- **Seeing and Hearing Children** – listening to children in every way possible – by talking with them, listening to them and seeing them.
- **Taking Action** – children identified that having at least one adult or a network of adults that listen; that they can trust and that offer support is key to good help

3.4 A comprehensive needs assessment and extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders identified the 4 key Strategic priorities. Each priority has an allocated lead partner to strengthen the shared accountability in implementing the strategy:

Priority One (sponsor - One Walsall): to improve the awareness and understanding of neglect and the delivery of effective preventative support

Priority Two (sponsor Health): to improve the recognition and assessment of children and young people living in neglectful situations before statutory intervention is required, including the use of appropriate assessment tools.

Priority Three (Sponsor LA): improve the effectiveness of interventions and reduce the impact of neglect

Priority Four (Sponsor Chair of the child neglect steering group): strategic commitment and leadership that drives good practice and improvement in tackling neglect.

3.5 Practitioners told us through the consultation that it would help them if where appropriate we aligned key strategies and communications across key areas of their work. We therefore launched the Child Neglect Strategy together with the refreshed Early help Strategy and the Domestic Abuse Strategy in November 2021 helping us to develop a more robust joined up partnership response around key demands.

4. Financial information

4.1 There are no financial information related to this development.

5. Reducing Inequalities

- 5.1 The aim of the strategy 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.
- 5.2 Most parents want to meet the needs of their children, but at times need help to do so. Research shows that parents and caregivers who have support—from family, friends, neighbours, and their communities—are more likely to provide safe and healthy homes for their children. When parents lack this support or feel isolated, they may be more likely to make poor decisions that can lead to neglect.

6. Decide

- 6.1 In our first year the partnership has focussed on raising awareness around the neglect strategy and developing our outcome framework so we could understand the outcomes we collectively wanted to achieve.
- 6.2 The steering group is currently planning a practitioner “Neglect matters” event in May to continue to raise awareness, take stock on progress and refresh the action plan.

7. Respond

- 7.1 Since the launch of the strategy we have:
- developed a multi-agency action plan setting out SMART key actions across each of the priorities.
 - developed our multi-agency neglect outcome framework so we can measure our collective impact. This will be implemented as of April 2023.
 - continued to develop our training offer to deliver awareness, understanding and response to neglect. In the last 12 months we have focussed on Early Year providers and Voluntary and Community Sector.
 - utilised the Early Help ACTION campaign (Aware, Care, Think don't Ignore or do Nothing) to ensure we action on the guiding principles children and young people identified.
 - maximised opportunities through big programmes like Holiday Activity and Food programme to ensure we maximise opportunities to identify and support children and families early.
 - In order to strengthen practice across partnership, we have secured partnership resource to recruit a Neglect Practice Improvement Coordinator. This post will be directly responsible to work across the partnership in developing a resource hub, training programmes, practice reflection sessions that will support practitioners in implementing effective practice in working with families where neglect is a identified need. This will include the consistent use of the Grade Care Profile (an evidence based tool in identification and working with families in addressing neglect). This post will be in place by June 2023.
 - We are working with the police to see how there AWARE (a mobile based app) can be used to better identify neglect and can be up scaled to be used by a wide range of agencies.

- We have embedded a 'Think Family' approach as part of the adult neglect strategy to ensure we identify effectively any children who maybe impacted by adult self-neglect.
- The partnership has considered how the development of the Family Hubs can provide opportunities for effective support to families to prevent child neglect especially in those areas were we currently see low uptake of preventative programmes.

8. Review

8.1 The joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) undertaken by Ofsted, Care Quality Commission and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services in November 2022 found that -

“Children who need help and protection receive a coordinated and effective multiagency response at the ‘front door’ in Walsall. Senior leaders ensure that there is a culture of continuous and shared learning across the partnership, which is successfully disseminated to staff. This helps to support identification of risk and needs for children, at the earliest opportunity, and promotes improvements in services for children and their families.”

8.2 The outcome framework will be implemented as off 1st April 2023 which will enable us to collectively measure the local impact of the neglect strategy and inform future decision making.

Background papers

Appendix A - Neglect strategy [Neglect Strategy 2021 - 2024 \(walsall.gov.uk\)](https://www.walsall.gov.uk)

Appendix B – Neglect Outcome framework



NeglectStrategyOutcomesFramework.docx

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Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Agenda
Item No.**

13th March 2022

7.

Walsall Children and Young People Strategic Alliance

Ward(s): All

Portfolios: Cllr Stacey Elson
Portfolio Holder

1. Aim

- 1.1 This report is to update members on the development of The Children and Young People Alliance.
- 1.2 The Children and Young People 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.

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.

3. Report detail – know

- 3.1 Walsall Right 4 Children (WR4C), launched in September 2018, is a whole system forward thinking transformation programme of which the first phase focussed on transformation across Council delivered Children's Services in ensuring we were supporting the right children, at the right time, in the right place for as long as it is needed. The outcome of this transformation leading to outstanding practice and improved outcomes for children and young people in Walsall was recognised by Ofsted in November 2021 and Local Area SEND inspection in 2022.
- 3.2 As we were embedding our internal services it was also important to focus on co-ordinating and influencing the establishment of a mature WR4C partnership platform to drive the delivery of the WR4C vision.
- 3.3 In January 2021 we undertook a review of strategic partnership working around the agenda of children, young people and families. This review was undertaken in collaboration with the CCG, Walsall Health Trust, the Safeguarding Partnership

and the Safer Walsall Partnership and raised some critical issues around the effectiveness of the partnership as well as some drivers for change, opportunities and solutions.

- 3.4 As a result all partner collectively agreed to a series of externally facilitated strategic partnership workshops to explore more effective strategic collaboration and decision making across the partnership in relation to children, young people and family business.

The workshop raised following key reflections that guided the thinking in the development of the children and Young People Strategic Alliance:

- Meeting the needs of children, young people and family's needs a mature strategic partnership approach. It recognised that this work is complex, especially with ongoing regional and local organisational change agenda's driven by budget reductions, national change agenda's e.g. academisation, Social Care review, Supporting People, integrated care agenda, etc
- The pandemic had enabled partners to come together with a common purpose, find solutions to get us through the challenges and support communities impacted by COVID19, establishing new ways of working that connects us better and make decisions in a timely way to support the most vulnerable. As we reset our activities in the context of the new normal it has given us lots of challenges as a partnership to reflect, check our moral compasses and rethink:
 - What is important?
 - What are we leaving behind?
 - What are we retaining and why, i.e. to what purpose?
- Partners agreed that we needed to work towards collective accountability through developing a systems leadership using an Alliance framework achieved through:
 - influence and 'nudge', not formal power
 - alignment around common vision or purpose: improved outcomes for service users
 - a focus on the outcomes and results, no the process
 - strong but robust and honest relationships
 - a mind-set, rather than specific actions and behaviours

- 3.5 The Children and Young People Alliance was launched on the 4th March 2022.

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

- 3.6 The Children and Young People Strategic Alliance recognises that **"today's children are upstream adults"** and is driven through a **"Children First"** vision to create a collaborative space critical to developing new ways of thinking and new ways of working driven by the voice of children, young people and their families.
- 3.7 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."

- 3.8 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

- 3.9 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.

Children and young people’s voice at the Centre of Strategic thinking and doing

- 3.10 There have been key pieces of engagement work undertaken with children and young people growing up in Walsall providing 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 – 2022
- Regular inviting children and young people stories to the Board

The Children and Young People Strategic Alliance Focus Areas

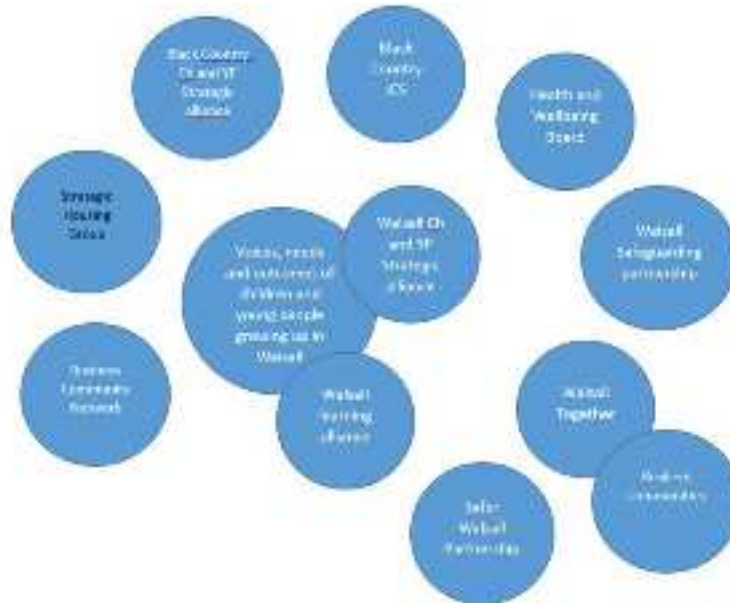
- 3.11 Listening to the voices of children and young people the Alliance considered what the issues were that ONLY this group could resolve in the best interest of children and young people living in Walsall? As a result the Alliance selected two key areas of focus:

- **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 solutions

The 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'.

Governance

- 3.12 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 we will be joining the dots to ensure we maximise opportunities to advocate and influence the right issues/topics in the right place:



- 3.13 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.



4. Financial information

4.1 There are no financial information related to this development.

5. Reducing Inequalities

5.1 The aim of our Strategic work with partners 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.

5.2 As part of its strategic thinking the Alliance has invited Youth Justice to share the work they have done around disproportionality of young men in the youth justice system and has listened to young people's story to enable to identify the system changes that need to put in place.

As part of the Alliance 1001 days needs assessment it has also undertaken a Walsall Maternity Ethnicity needs assessment to understand the areas (place and issues) we needed to focus on to reduce inequalities.

6. Decide

6.1 The Alliance is currently developing its Walsall Children and Young people Strategy 2023 – 2040 based on following principles:

- Children First - driven by our understanding of current lived experience and our ambition for children in the future
- Long term system change – aligned to our We are Walsall 2040 vision
- Use of our organisational and partnership levers
- Widening our influence to include private sector and communities

7. Respond

7.1 The Alliance continues to mature and has already led to significant change including.

- Walsall together are implementing a Children First priority.
- Some of our Alliance members are considering how they can become a foster friendly employer.
- -The commitment in the development of the Family Hubs at a fast pace has been down to the strength of the Alliance.

7.2 The Alliance will be organising a Children and Young people Alliance submit on the 23rd June 2023 to work with wider stakeholders to develop the 2023-2040 strategy and secure wider stakeholder commitment

8. Review

- 8.1 Following the summit the Alliance will be launching its Strategy in September 2023. The impact of this will be reviewed annually through consultation and engagement with children and young people by asking questions around their lived experience of growing up in Walsall and whether it is improving.

Background papers

Appendix A - Alliance way of working



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f%20working%20final

Authors

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Committee Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Action/Recommendation	Officer responsible	Status	Target Completion Date	Notes
	Areas of Focus	The glossary and summary data in relation to children in care, starters and leavers to be shared with the committee via e-mail	Colleen Male	Complete		
		A work programme for the municipal year be produced containing agreed areas of focus, for agreement by the Committee.		Complete	26 September 2022	
27 September 2022	Areas of Focus	A progress report on the Youth Justice Service be heard at future a meeting.	Philip Rutherford	To be scheduled July 2023	July 2023	Pushed back due to delay in competition of video.
3 November 2022	Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Position	A draft letter, to the Department of Education, be considered by the Committee at its next meeting which highlights the financial challenges faced by Children’s Services.	Clerk	Complete	8 December 2022	Sent

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

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