



## 75 **Walsall as a Families First Pathfinder**

The Director spoke to the presentation (annexed) and highlighted the salient points. Members were informed that as a wave 2 pathfinder, Walsall would design and test wide-ranging reforms to family help and children's social care. This would enable the government to understand the delivery implications of reforms ahead of a national rollout.

The ambition for multi-agency safeguarding arrangements was to establish clear, equitable and shared safeguarding arrangements, and embed a clear line of sight between strategy and practice. It was stressed that families should be able to access the right help at the right time from the right people, so that they could overcome challenges, and stay together. The Committee was informed that establishing family help would result in a new approach to the way families accessed and received support. This was alongside family networks to support families to stay together and thrive. The next steps for the pathfinder were described.

A series of questions ensued; Officers explained how families were supported, particularly if they were reluctant to accept help. Members were informed that the number of Looked After Children would be reduced through the pathfinder project and ensuring that support was delivered at the earliest opportunity.

In response to challenge about the ambition of the scheme, Officers stated that Directorates worked well together, and this hard work would be continued to achieve desired outcomes.

### **Resolved that:**

**The Walsall as a families first pathfinder presentation was noted.**

## 76 **Walsall Right for Children (WR4C) Refresh**

The Director presented the report and highlighted the salient points (annexed) and informed the Committee that the Walsall Right for Children transformation programme was developed in 2018 and set out its original vision to ensure that the right children were in the right place with the right support for as long as it was needed to ensure that they were safe from harm, happy and learning well.

Members were advised that the WR4C vision, foundation and priorities were reviewed in December 2023 to ensure alignment to both the current Plans and the 'Child Friendly Borough' and 'Feel Safe' themes within We are Walsall 2040.

A Member questioned how the success of summer activities would be measured, the Director stated that performance indicators would be monitored – and provided the example of measures relating to anti-social behaviours and young people at risk of exploitation. Officers responded to stated that the Marmot principles were vitally important and would drive how services would be delivered.

In response to challenge the Portfolio Holder stated that she was confident that success would be achieved and informed the Committee that she had confidence in her team and the Council's Partners.

### **Resolved**

- 1. That the Walsall Right for Children Refresh be noted.**
- 2. That an update on the Holiday Activity Fund and summer programme be provided at the Committee in November/December.**

### **77 Areas of Focus – 2024 – 2025**

The Directors presented an overview of the Children's Services directorate (annexed). Members considered the report and potential agenda items.

### **Resolved**

**That, the following items be included in the work programme for the municipal year 2024 – 2025:**

- HAF and Youth Summer Programme.**
- Young Carers.**
- Pathfinder Update.**
- Children at Risk of Exploitation.**
- Family Hubs – Sustainability.**
- Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report.**
- Complaints Report.**
- Child Sexual Abuse within the family environment.**
- Youth Justice.**
- Budget consultation.**
- Private Fostering Annual Report.**
- Update on Children's Alliance and Children and Young People 2040 Strategy.**

### **78 Forward Plans**

The Forward Plans were considered by the Committee.

### **Resolved**

**That the forward plans were noted.**

### **79 Recommendation Tracker**

The Committee received the tracker of recommendations from previous meetings, including progress made and outstanding items.

[Annexed]

**Resolved:**

That the recommendation tracker be noted.

80 **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be 24 September 2024.

There being no further business this meeting was terminated at 8.55 pm.

Signed:

Date: