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To:

Councillors: Mike Allport, Janet Axworthy, Marion Bateman, Sian Braun, Geoff Collett, Paul Cunningham, Andy Dunbobbin, Carol Ellis, David Healey, Gladys Healey, Patrick Heesom, Cindy Hinds, Andrew Holgate, Dave Hughes, Kevin Hughes, Rita Johnson, Tudor Jones, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Hilary McGuill, Ian Smith, Martin White, David Williams and David Wisinger

Co-opted Members

Lynn Bartlett, David Hytch, Rita Price and Rebecca Stark

18 May 2018

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Joint Education & Youth and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee which will be held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 24th May, 2018 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA to consider the following items

A G E N D A

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

To appoint a Chair for the meeting

2 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

4 CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY (Pages 3 - 14)

Report of Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To review and endorse a refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy for Flintshire

5 EDUCATION ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN FLINTSHIRE (Pages 15 - 22)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education

Purpose: To receive the Annual Education Attainment report of Looked After Children

6 SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION (Pages 23 - 34)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Education, Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To receive information in relation to Safeguarding for Children and young people

7 ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018 (Pages 35 - 40)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth) - Cabinet Member for Education

Purpose: To provide an update on implementation plans arising from the Additional Learning Needs Bill Legislation.

8 FLINTSHIRE EARLY HELP HUB (Pages 41 - 74)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Education, Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To provide an overview of the operation and effectiveness of the Early Help Hub

9 CHILDCARE OFFER FOR WALES, FLINTSHIRE (Pages 75 - 80)

Report of Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services) - Cabinet Member for Education, Cabinet Member for Social Services

Purpose: To provide an update on the rollout of free childcare provision

Yours faithfully



Robert Robins
Democratic Services Manager



JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 24 th May 2018
Report Subject	Corporate Parenting Strategy
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Social Services.
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the collective responsibility of the Council towards looked after children and care leavers. Corporate Parenting is founded on the principle that we have the same aspirations, and wish to provide the same kind of care, that any good parent would provide for their own children.

The report outlines the ongoing work that is being undertaken to form a new Corporate Parenting Strategy within the context of the Social Services and Well-Being Act and national developments relating to Corporate Parenting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members scrutinise and endorse proposed actions to publish a new Corporate Parenting Strategy.
2	Members endorse proposed action for all Flintshire County Council staff to be responsible for delivering on the Strategy.
3	Members endorse proposed action to develop and implement a cross-portfolio action plan to deliver on the statements outlined in the strategy.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	Children in the care of a local authority are often referred to as Looked After Children. They are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. No child or young person is the same, they enter the care system for a variety of reasons and at different points in their lives. These can range from family breakdown, abuse or neglect, to voluntary arrangements to support children and young people's welfare whilst work is undertaken to rebuild relationships or parenting capacity.
1.02	As a Corporate Parent, our role is to offer 'authoritative parenting', which recognises that children and young people want to be listened to, to be loved, to be supported, to be helped, to be respected, to be safe and to be given boundaries.
1.03	Throughout the year the number of looked after children fluctuates with children entering, and leaving, the 'looked after' system. We currently have 225 looked after children in Flintshire.
1.04	On 5 October 2017, Scrutiny Committee endorsed the development of refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy which sets out Flintshire's commitment to looked after children and care leavers.
1.05	As part of the work programme for the National Fostering Framework (NFF), it was agreed that best practice in corporate parenting across Councils and other public services would be reviewed in 2016/17, with a view to improving outcomes for children and increase the resilience of foster carer placements. Voices from Care and AFA Cymru were commissioned to co-design and host 3 regional events on Corporate Parenting. In addition two young people's residential events were held for young people looked after and care leavers. This work fed into a National Corporate Parenting Event held in March 2017. The event brought project findings together and provided an opportunity to hear from innovative projects across Wales. The national event was chaired by the Service Manager, Children and Workforce, Flintshire.

2.00	PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING FLINTSHIRE'S CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY
2.01	The need to develop effective and meaningful approaches to Corporate Parenting has been recognised at a national level. This is welcomed as it provides an opportunity to ensure that we can learn from, and shape good practice. In developing our local approach to Corporate Parenting we have been mindful of national developments to ensure that we are consistent and ambitious in our undertaking for Flintshire children.
2.02	Locally, we have taken the findings and themes arising from national events focussing on Corporate Parenting and brought these together with the information already given to us by looked after children, and care

	leavers, through our Participation Group and Children's Services Forum. The information helped shape a set of statements which we have used to in open discussions with looked after children and care leavers in Flintshire. These statements helped us to explore what is important to them and what they would like to see in a Corporate Parenting Strategy.
2.03	We have produced a brief and informative Corporate Parenting Strategy that centres on what is important to children and young people in our care. An Action Plan is now being created to set out in further detail how Flintshire will deliver our Corporate commitments across a number of portfolios.
2.04	Drawing on the national, and local work, the Strategy sets out Flintshire's Corporate commitments under the following themes (these are the statements referred to above):
2.05	<p><u>Home</u></p> <p>To provide looked after children with good quality, stable placements where they feel safe, value and cared for by excellent carers. Flintshire will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to ensure that looked after children are able to sustain the family and personal relationships most important to them, where appropriate. • Give children the opportunity to become involved and become a part of the local community. <p>As part of commitment to ensure that children and young people have stable, loving places to live we will set out in our action plan how we will support young people aged 14-18. This age group can often present with very challenging circumstances and can result in a number of different placements in short succession. We also set out how we will enhance our accommodation offer to care leavers.</p>
2.06	<p><u>Education and learning</u></p> <p>Looked after children will have the best possible educational outcomes and have opportunities to fulfil their potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the stability of the educational setting is paramount for looked after children, a new school environment can be intimidating. • Flintshire will work to strengthen understanding between social services staff and educational settings to best support looked after children in their educational placements. • Looked after children have the right to aspire to receive further education and training just as any other child. Financial support and information will be available to support children to achieve these goals. • Ensuring that 100% attendance to education is encouraged and supported at all times, by both staff and carers. • Ensuring that you people have the skills needed for independent living as they move to adulthood

2.07	<p><u>Health and well-being</u></p> <p>To improve the health outcomes of looked after children in Flintshire and to provide them with appropriate health care and advice. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking care of children’s physical, mental health and emotional well-being • Ensuring all looked after children have a clear and central voice in how their health needs are met. • We know that looked after children share many of the same health risks and problems as their peers, but they frequently enter care with poorer health due to the impact of poverty, abuse and neglect. National research also suggests that looked after children are more likely to have mental health problems. As part of the underpinning action plan we will work with • CAMHS to set out their plans and commitments to supporting looked after children and care leavers.
2.08	<p><u>Leisure</u></p> <p>Supporting and encouraging looked after children to enjoy a wide experience of leisure, cultural, sport and social activity to fulfil their potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give looked after children information on ways to engage in the local community and become involved. • To provide ample opportunities to play. • Enable looked after children to become involved in local sport and leisure activities. • Create a friendly environment to support them to form and develop strong social relationships.
2.09	<p><u>Employment Opportunities</u></p> <p>We will provide opportunities to help looked after children and care leavers develop the skills and experience to pursue employment. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering apprenticeships within the Council and within the business that we work with • Offering work experience and ‘taster’ sessions for young people • Providing support to ensure that young people are ‘work ready’ including building their confidence and self esteem • These commitments are important in ensuring that we attend to the social and economic well-being of our looked after children, which includes taking measures to ensure that they do not live in poverty.
2.10	<p><u>The Next 12 Months</u></p> <p>Over the next 12 months, it is Flintshire’s ambition to complete a number of tasks to develop, and deliver our, Corporate Parenting Strategy. The key tasks ahead are to:</p>

2.11	<p><u>Publish the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan</u></p> <p>This strategy has been created in conjunction with the views of the looked after population as well as Elected Members. The strategy will be in place for at least the next 5 years to ensure consistency and giving a manageable timeframe to make a positive difference for looked after children and care leavers. The strategy can be seen in the attached documents</p> <p>It will also serve to further recognise the responsibility that elected members and Flintshire staff have in supporting looked after children.</p> <p>The Strategy will be made available to all members of staff across the council, looked after children, care leavers and foster carers.</p>
2.12	<p><u>Develop a strategy for the engagement and participation of the looked after population</u></p> <p>This strategy will be closely linked to the Corporate Parenting Strategy and will lay the foundations for Flintshire's aims to engage with the looked after population. This work will be closely supported by Flintshire's Participation Officer to ensure that we are able to best capture the views of our looked after children and to develop feedback mechanisms to reflect that their voice is valued.</p>
2.13	<p><u>Review of existing Participation Forums</u></p> <p>It is paramount that the voice of the children is at the heart of what we do, and we need to continuously ensure that we listen to, hear, and act on what children and young people are telling us.</p>
2.14	<p>Flintshire has a well-established Participation Forum that provides an important opportunity for looked after children and care leavers to meet together, to share experiences, and speak out with a group voice about their care and aspirations.</p>
2.15	<p>A review of the Participation Forums will take place to ensure that we are working in a way that meets the needs of children and young people, and that our approach provides a range of ways that are effective in enabling a voice for all looked after children. The review will be in conjunction with looked after children currently engaging in the group as well as their Foster Carers and Social Workers.</p>
2.16	<p><u>Review of the Children's Services Forum</u></p> <p>Flintshire has a well-established Children's Services Forum, with strong links to the Participation Forums. A review of the Children's Services Forum will complement the review of Participation Forums as the two approaches are inter-dependent. This approach will ensure that the Children's Services Forum is well placed to maintain its effectiveness in listening to the experiences and views of looked after children and holding agencies accountable for their responsibilities, commitments and</p>

	approaches in supporting looked after children and care leavers.
2.17	<p><u>Participation Officer</u></p> <p>Flintshire has recently recruited a new Participation Officer, Laura Wright, who is acting as a bridging professional between the Children’s Services Forum and the Participation Group. The officer currently organises and chairs the participation group and supports children to attend the Children’s Services Forum. This role is essential in supporting our children to have a clear voice in how they are supported in Flintshire. The officer will have a central role in reviewing the existing participation Forums and supporting in the formulation of the engagement strategy.</p>
2.18	<p><u>Review of Pride of Flintshire</u></p> <p>Pride of Flintshire is a highlight in the calendar for Flintshire’s looked after population. The event has proven to be a great success for Flintshire in recognising the achievements of looked after children in Flintshire and their carers. It is vital that this event continues to be adaptable and is able to evolve and grow to continue reflecting the desires of the looked after population, and how they wish to be recognised.</p>
2.19	<p><u>Links with services</u></p> <p>Greater links with Statutory and Third Sector Partners is vital for involving looked after children in community based initiatives. This will ensure that looked after children have a number of opportunities to become a part of their local community. These links can be built up through the participation officer as well as being the responsibility of the corporate parent to advocate for looked after children’s rights to engage in leisure and community activities.</p>
2.20	<p><u>Flintshire Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-2023</u></p> <p>The proposed final version of the document has been designed in conjunction with the Double Click design and print services. The document is in an easily accessible format and is designed to be appealing for children and young people. It is both English and Welsh. A limited number of copies of the document will be printed so that hard copies can be given out if requested. The document will be made available online for ease of access.</p>

3.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
3.01	Corporate Parenting is a core responsibility of everybody who works for the Local Authority. Delivering the commitments contained within the report are within existing human and financial resources.
3.02	Resources will be used to design and print the strategy in a limit number of copies, using local social enterprise.

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	The statements developed to initiate consultation on the Corporate Parenting Strategy were developed on from the themes that emerged from national work and engagement on Corporate Parenting, as well as the issues that local children have raised.
4.02	Consultation and engagement in developing these statements into a Corporate Parenting Strategy, has taken place with looked after children in Flintshire through our participation group, members of the Children's Services Forum and Senior Managers of Flintshire Social Services.
4.03	The Children's Services Forum will have a specific role in overseeing the Strategy and the delivery of the commitments.
4.04	The underpinning action plan is currently being created in partnership with Education and Health and consultation and engagement work in regards to the actions will be take place with looked after children and care leavers.

5.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
5.01	There are no specific risks arising from this report and subsequent actions.

6.00	APPENDICES
6.01	Appendix 1 - Draft design of Corporate Parenting Strategy

7.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
7.01	None. Contact Officer: Neil Ayling Telephone: 01352 702500 E-mail: Neil.J.Ayling@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Care Leaver: Any adult who spent time in care as a child (i.e. under the age of 18). This care would have been approved by the state through a court order or on a voluntary basis. Such care could be in foster care, residential care (mainly children's homes) or other arrangements outside the immediate or extended family. The care could have been provided directly by the state (mainly through local authority social services

departments) or by voluntary or private sector organisations. It also includes a wide range of accommodation. For example, it would include secure units, approved schools, industrial schools and other institutions that have a more punitive element than mainstream foster or residential care.

National Fostering Framework (NFF): The National Fostering Framework is a collaborative framework aimed at ensuring greater service quality, more consistency of outcomes, greater transparency about performance, increased collaboration and co-operation by all key stakeholders. This includes economies of scale where appropriate and better links to evaluation and research. There is no intention of creating a national fostering service, managed by any one sector or organisation. The approach is to maximise and enhance All-Wales, Regional and local approaches to Fostering. It is about sharing and developing the best Fostering service for Wales.

Voices from Care: Voices from Care are a charity who support and promote the views and experiences of those who are or have been looked after in Wales.

AFA Cymru: The Association for Fostering and Adoption Cymru (AFA Cymru) is a Welsh charity working to improve outcomes for children and young people in all types of permanency arrangements – rehabilitation, kinship care, Special Guardianship, fostering and adoption.

Neglect: Neglect means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being (for example, an impairment of the person's health).

Permanence: Achieving 'permanence' will be a key consideration from the time a child becomes looked after. Permanence includes emotional permanence (attachment), physical permanence (stability), and legal permanence (who has parental responsibility for the child). Together these give a child a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity.

Wellbeing:

The following areas embody the notion of wellbeing:

- Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Protection from abuse and neglect
- Education, training and recreation
- Family and personal relationships
- Involvement in the local community
- Securing rights and entitlements
- Social and economic well-being, including not living in poverty.
- Living in suitable accommodation.

Corporate Parenting Strategy

2018-2023



Why have a Corporate Parenting Strategy?

'Corporate Parenting' is a phrase used to describe Flintshire's responsibility for children who become looked after. This responsibility doesn't just sit with Social Services though, it's shared between all council staff, local councillors as well as the other people in a child's life who support them. When a child comes into care, even though they may live with foster carers, Flintshire County Council is ultimately responsible for them. It is our responsibility to make sure that children who are looked after are kept safe and get the support they need.



Corporate parenting is based on the idea that Flintshire County Council officers and its Members have the same hopes and goals, and want to provide the same kind of care, that any good parent would provide for their own children.

Looked after children have lots of skills and talents that can benefit society. Sometimes the circumstances that lead to a child coming into care can mean that they need some extra support to maintain their development in order to reach their potential.

This strategy shows what steps Flintshire County Council will take to ensure that the needs of looked after children who are under our care get the support that they need and deserve.

I am a looked after child, what can I do with this strategy?

This strategy is Flintshire's commitment to all looked after children, showing how they will be supported. If you feel that you are not being properly supported to meet your potential, you can use this document to show the professionals who you work with, that Flintshire wants all of its looked after children to feel safe and to be supported.

The support and pledges in this strategy are to support looked after children of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

Our Pledge

Flintshire County Council is dedicated to providing excellent care for children who become looked after.

Our pledge to children who come under our care is that we will work closely with our own staff and other services to keep our children safe and support looked after children in our area. This applies whether they live in or outside of the council border.

Every good parent wants the best for their child, to see their child be healthy, to be safe and happy, to do well at school, and to have good relationships with their friends. We want our looked after children to be able to get involved in their own hobbies and interests, be supported to engage in sport and exercise, and to grow towards being an adult who is ready to be independent and have a successful life. We want our children to feel ready to have further training, support them through apprenticeships or access higher education, get good careers and jobs, and be financially secure.

Flintshire County Council has the same goals for the children it looks after as those of every good parent, and we take seriously the moral and legal responsibility that we have to make sure children in our care experience happy, safe and fulfilling lives.

Quote from Neil Ayling

Quote from Cllr. Christine Jones

Quote From Craig Macleod

Group photograph of members in order to give 'faces to names' of the members responsible as corporate parents and give a personal feel to the strategy.

Alternatively, a photograph of Cllr Christine Jones, Neil Ayling and Craig Macleod with Job Titles to go alongside the quotes. IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THIS IS A COUNCIL WIDE OBJECTIVE AND NOT A SOCIAL SERVICES SPECIFIC STRATEGY.

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 24 th May 2018
Report Subject	Educational Attainment of Looked After Children in Flintshire
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report informs Members on the academic attainment of Flintshire Looked After Children (LAC) for the academic year 2016 - 2017. The data relates to the LAC cohort identified in line with the definition below:

‘A child of statutory school age, i.e. between 5 and 16 years, who was looked after during the academic year 2016 - 2017, for at least one year prior to 31st August 2017.’

For the purposes of the report, children looked after under Short Breaks/Respite Care are not included in the statistical analysis. The data has been grouped into four age groups corresponding to the National Curriculum Key Stages.

Primary	School Year	Age	School Stage
Group 1	Reception	4 - 5	FOUNDATION PHASE
	Year 1	5 - 6	
	Year 2	6 - 7	
Group 2	Year 3	7 - 8	KEY STAGE 2
	Year 4	8 - 9	
	Year 5	9 - 10	
	Year 6	10 - 11	
Secondary	School Year	Age	School Stage
Group 3	Year 7	11 - 12	KEY STAGE 3
	Year 8	12 - 13	
	Year 9	13 - 14	
Group 4	Year 10	14 - 15	KEY STAGE 4
	Year 11	15 - 16	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	For Members to actively engage as Cooperate Parents for LAC, promoting awareness and challenging provision within Flintshire educational settings.
2	For Members to actively encourage all educational staff to promote the educational welfare of LAC within Flintshire establishments at a 'whole school level'.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN FLINTSHIRE								
1.01	<p>The LAC cohort within Flintshire is fairly stable in terms of overall annual number (approx. 220) however, the individual circumstances and resulting needs vary from year to year. The following table gives an overview of numbers within each key stages for 2016–17 accounting for 170 individuals of statutory school age.</p> <table border="1"><tr><td>Group 1 - Foundation Phase</td><td>37</td></tr><tr><td>Group 2 - Key Stage 2</td><td>48</td></tr><tr><td>Group 3 - Key Stage 3</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>Group 4 - Key Stage 4</td><td>50</td></tr></table> <p>As can be seen there is a fairly even spread across the key stages. The Average age at becoming LAC in 2016 - 17 was 7 years.</p>	Group 1 - Foundation Phase	37	Group 2 - Key Stage 2	48	Group 3 - Key Stage 3	35	Group 4 - Key Stage 4	50
Group 1 - Foundation Phase	37								
Group 2 - Key Stage 2	48								
Group 3 - Key Stage 3	35								
Group 4 - Key Stage 4	50								
1.02	<p>The varying nature of the cohort means that the individuals access their education through a range of educational settings and provision. Many of the children and young people have additional learning needs (ALN) and require targeted support and intervention to enable them to engage with the provision available to them. For the majority of children and young people, this can be accessed within mainstream settings however, for a small minority, specialist provision may be required to ensure their needs are effectively met. The figures below show that in line with this, the majority of Flintshire LAC attended mainstream provision with around 20% of the cohort requiring specialist or small group provision. The majority of placements are accessed within Flintshire however, 9% of pupils accessed their education in other Welsh counties and a further 11% accessed provision in England.</p> <p>Type of provision accessed by Flintshire LAC 2016-17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 79% Mainstream LA Maintained Schools• 9% Pupil Referral Units• 10% Non-maintained day/residential school or hospital• 2% Maintained Special School <p>Further breakdown of the cohort indicates that 31% were identified as having special educational needs (SEN) with approx. 12% of these having a Statement of SEN; this is significantly higher than the average expected</p>								

	<p>across the whole school population where typically 20% of children and young people have SEN, only 2% of which would have a Statement.</p>
1.03	<p>Learner Outcomes: Group 1 - Foundation Phase</p> <p>There were 37 Foundation Phase pupils in the cohort, 12 of which were in Year 2 and subject to the End of Key Stage Assessment which measures progress against the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity (PSD) • Language, literacy and communication skills - English (LCE) or Language, literacy and communication skills - Welsh (LCW) • Mathematical Development (MDT) <p>The general expectation is that the majority of Year 2 pupils will attain Outcome 5 in each of these areas. To achieve the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI), the pupils must achieve Outcome 5 in all 3 areas. Of the cohort of 12, 6 (50%) achieved the FPI. Of this group 3 (25%) had a Statement of SEN.</p>
1.04	<p>Learner Outcomes: Group 2 - Key Stage 2</p> <p>Reports on attainment at Key Stage 2 (KS2)) are based on the national baseline Core Subject Indicator (CSI). To achieve the Core Subject Indicator at KS2 the learner must gain a level 4 assessment in all Core Subjects, i.e. Maths, Science and English (or Welsh).</p> <p>In 2016-17 there were 48 learners within KS2, 11 of which were subject to the End of Key Stage assessment at the end of Year 6. Of the 11, 4 (36%) achieved the CSI. Of this group, 82% were identified as having SEN with 27% of these having a Statement of SEN.</p>
1.05	<p>Learner Outcomes: Group 3 – Key Stage 3</p> <p>To achieve the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3 (KS3) the learner must gain a level 5 assessment in all Core Subjects, i.e. Maths, Science and English (or Welsh). In 2016 - 17 there were 35 learners within KS3, 5 of which were subject to the end of key stage assessment at the end of Year 9, all of which (100%) achieved the CSI. None of the pupils were identified as having SEN.</p>
1.06	<p>Learner Outcomes: Group 4 – Key Stage 4</p> <p>Pupils at Key Stage 4 (KS4) are measured against a number of outcomes including Level 1 threshold (5 GCSEs, grade A*-G), Level 2 Threshold (5 GCSEs, grade A*-C) and Level 2 plus (5 GCSEs A*-C inclusive of Maths and English/Welsh).</p> <p>In 2016 - 17 there were 50 learners within KS4, 15 of which were subject to assessment at the end of Year 11. Of the 15, only 14 underwent formal assessment, with 50% achieving a formally recognised qualification, 1 pupil achieving the Level 1 threshold and none of the cohort achieving Level 2 or Level 2 plus. For this group 26% were identified as having SEN, with 7% having a Statement of SEN.</p>

	<p>Whilst the overall outcomes do not appear to be positive for this particular cohort, it is pleasing to note that of the 15 individuals, 13 of the 15 have overcome the factors affecting their success and have re-engaged in education to improve their outcomes and future prospects.</p>
1.07	<p>Outcomes Summary</p> <p>It is clear that the levels of SEN impact on the outcomes achieved by Flintshire LAC, this was particularly evident at KS3 where 100% of the cohort successfully achieved the expected outcome. It is important to note that as well having SEN, many of the pupils across the key stages have experienced significant levels of trauma which often translates into a range of difficulties resulting in inconsistent behaviours, dysregulated relationship and trust issues, which impact on their ability to form solid foundations within school settings with staff, teachers and/or peers. For this cohort, the outcomes were also significantly impacted on by a range of factors such as repeated placement breakdowns, pregnancy, mental health issues, experience of child sexual exploitation and custodial sentences.</p>
1.08	<p>Attendance Rates</p> <p>Attendance for primary aged LAC was 92.95% and 84.02% for secondary. Whilst below the Local Authority averages of 94.8% and 93.9% respectively, the levels compare well given the very small LAC cohorts in each sector.</p>
1.09	<p>Exclusion Rates</p> <p>There were no permanent exclusions of LAC for 2016-17. During the year, there were 17 fixed-term exclusions, 6 within the Primary Sector, 11 within the Secondary Sector which resulted in a loss of 39 school days. The main reasons for exclusion were physical aggression towards staff or pupils. In all cases, preventative intervention strategies were discussed with the individual, school, LACE coordinator and Social Worker to prevent recurrence and escalation. All schools concerned were supportive at these times, demonstrating their ongoing objective to implement their roles as corporate parents.</p>
1.10	<p>LAC Educational Support, Provision and Coordination</p> <p>The education of looked after children is a high priority in Flintshire and many initiatives have been instigated to improve the outcomes for this group of vulnerable learners.</p> <p>The LAC Strategic Planning Group comprising of a range of professionals who oversee the education of LAC, meet every 6 weeks. Members include representation from the Behaviour Support Service, Primary and Secondary schools, Children's Services, Pupil Referral Units, Education Welfare Service, Education Psychology Service and Independent Reviewing Officers along with the LAC Education Co-ordinator. All areas of LAC education and welfare are discussed with the aim of improving services and influencing policy and procedure. This group has been acknowledged as a model of good practice by Welsh Government, GwE and external auditors. The new Participation Officer for Social Services</p>

will be invited to join the group, ensuring that the voice of the child is conveyed to the forum.

The Strategic Planning Group holds the remit to develop plans for use of the LAC Pupil Development Grant in line with the regional funding model set by Welsh Government in 2015-16. GwE has a lead role in supporting a regional policy approach. The Flintshire LACE Coordinator is a member of the National and Regional groups, disseminating all relevant information to schools and other professionals as and when required.

Training has been identified as a key priority for all Flintshire staff who support LAC learners. Specific training has been provided to 21 key representatives from schools and the Local Authority by 'Touchbase Training' via the University of Brighton; Louise Bomber is nationally recognised in the training of professionals in 'Attachment Theory' and associated best practice. All candidates were offered 15 weeks training at Level 6 to become 'Attachment Leads' within their schools and cluster groups, with a view to sharing and developing good practice across the authority. Flintshire was the first authority in Wales to train staff to level 6 and this has resulted in greater awareness and understanding across schools as a result. A network has been established to disseminate information and share effective practice.

On-going workshops and networking events continue to 'up-skill' staff and develop awareness to all school staff of the needs of children who have difficulties in making positive relationships due to past distress. Child Mental Health and Trauma is a key area of focus which has been identified by Flintshire staff, with the aim to better understand the need of the child and better support the staff who engage with them.

The Pupil Development Grant (PDG) for 2016-17 was allocated to the following areas:

- Play Therapy
- Breathing Space Training (Mindfulness MSBR) for staff to encourage pupils to relax and engage with learning.
- Unearthing Training and resources for all Flintshire Schools
- Residential Trips
- Equine Residential Summer School
- Braveheart Training
- Sensory Room / Nurture Room Resources
- Pets as Therapy (reading dogs)
- Talk About Therapy
- Art Therapy workshops
- Gardening resources and equipment – sensory garden
- Wrexham FC Literacy project
- Science workshops
- Attachment friendly resources and books
- Music Lessons
- Lego Therapy
- Numicon Resources
- Forest School
- After school 1:1 tuition for Key Stage 3 & 4 learners in core subjects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to 1:1 in class support to maintain engagement • Support to access After School Clubs, Breakfast Clubs and other extra-curricular activities • Literacy and phonics, language / communication aids and programmes • Study packs for exams, coursework & specialist text books • 35 laptops and licences issued • Specialist software packages to assist learning • Higher education bursary £2000 for care leavers entering university • Additional Teaching Assistant and Teacher support • Purchase of iPads and relevant software • Letter Box Club (literacy and numeracy materials) resources <p>The Flintshire LAC Education Co-ordinator has focused on strengthening the links between Children’s Services and Education Inclusion Service staff to support better outcomes for LAC. Communication between both services has improved and a greater awareness of the educational procedures has been shared as has knowledge of how schools can support their LAC learners via the LAC PDG.</p> <p>Communication and interaction with a wider range of interventions such as Curriculum enrichment opportunities and personalised support through the European funding stream, TRAC, has also supported a reduction in the number of LAC learners who become NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) as individual cases are identified in a timely manner resulting in referrals to appropriate partners/providers. Of the 2016-17 cohort, 2 individuals were classed as NEET on the census date.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The PDG offers additional funding to schools and LAs to supplement and enhance the provision for LAC. A key role of the LAC Education Coordinator and the Strategic Planning Group is to ensure that schools maximise the use and impact of this at a time of financial pressure, with a view to reducing the need for non-maintained specialist provision.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None required.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	<p>The risks associated with the effective use and allocation of the PDG are managed through the Strategic Planning Group in partnership with GwE.</p> <p>Expenditure on specialist non-maintained ‘Out of County’ provision constitutes an ongoing financial risk to the both the Education & Youth and Social Services Portfolios. This is subject to ongoing review through the</p>

	relevant Programme Boards and a joint project is underway to explore and identify ways of reducing this increasing expenditure.
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5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Jeanette Rock Senior Manager – Inclusion & Progression</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 704017</p> <p>E-mail: jeanette.rock@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>Pupil Development Grant – Welsh Government funding to improve outcomes for learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and Looked After Children (LAC). It is intended to overcome the additional barriers that prevent learners from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving their full potential.</p> <p>GwE: Regional school improvement service</p> <p>TRAC: European grant funded project offering individualised support to prevent young people from disengaging from education</p> <p>Out of County provision: Specialist education/residential provision which is not maintained by local authorities but offered through independent providers.</p>

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 24 th May 2018
Report Subject	Safeguarding of Children and Child Protection
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education & Youth; and Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth); and Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide members with information in relation to the Children's Safeguarding provision and Child Protection process within the county boundaries.

In line with the Council's strategy for developing a systematic Performance Management Framework, Education & Youth and Social Services routinely collate safeguarding activity for all aspects of safeguarding. This report is to inform Members of key statistical and performance related information about children at risk for whom the Authority has significant safeguarding responsibilities.

This report is also to highlight the partnership working between Education & Youth and Social Services portfolios and how this links in with the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Panel., and all portfolios of the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Members accept this report as relevant information in relation to the Safeguarding of Children and Child Protections for the period 1 st April 2017 to 31 st March 2018.
2	That Members take due regard to the partnership working taking place across portfolio areas to protect children and young people from harm.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION
1.01	Background
1.02	<p>The Flintshire Children’s Safeguarding Team are part of the Social Services Safeguarding Unit which comprise of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Protection• Adult Protection• Adults at Risk• Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)• Looked After Children
1.03	<p>The Unit is based in Flint and is part of the Social Services portfolio with the Safeguarding Unit Manager reporting directly to the Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning. The Unit has very close working relationships with the Education and Youth portfolio as with other key partner agencies, both locally and regionally.</p>
1.04	<u>Children’s Safeguarding</u>
1.05	Child Protection Register
1.06	<p>The purpose of the Child Protection Register (CPR) is to keep a confidential list of all children in the local area who have been identified as being at risk of significant harm. The register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows authorised individuals in social work, education, health, police and other partner agencies to check if a child they are working with is known to be at risk• Allows Children’s Safeguarding Managers to ensure that the child protection plans are formally reviewed in accordance with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008
1.07	Numbers on the Register
1.08	<p>The numbers on the register naturally fluctuate as either cases have progressed and the risk reduced and the child therefore removed from the register, or the risk has increased and the child has been taken into care. The Safeguarding Unit have no control over the number of referrals coming through First Contact nor do they have any influence over cases that are brought to conference.</p> <p>There has been a steady increase in line with national fluctuations of the numbers on the Child Protection Register. However we are now showing a downward trend as cases move towards care and support plans on a voluntary basis, closed completely due to a reduction in risk or at the other end of the risk spectrum, move into looked after children processes.</p> <p>Current figures for the end of April 2018 are 148 Flintshire Children on the register. There are 18 temporary registrations making a total of 166 children on the register at the present time.</p>

1.09	Categories of Risk
1.10	<p>The current breakdown of 166 children shows the highest categories for physical and emotional abuse, or emotional abuse alone. Such categories are usually linked to the increase in reported incidents of Domestic Abuse. The next highest category is Neglect. Our lowest number is risk of Sexual Harm showing 7 at the present time with another 12 combined with either Emotional Abuse or Neglect.</p> <p>The majority of cases in Flintshire were previously neglect, while emotional abuse is now more prevalent. However, emotional abuse is considered to be implicit in all types of abuse, and therefore the emotional abuse category will only be used where there is no other abuse indicated. There are currently 63 children registered for emotional abuse only.</p>
1.11	Length of Time on the Register
1.12	<p>Children on the register are reviewed in line with the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 – at 3 months and then every 6 months. Children on the Register reaching their third review are automatically reviewed under the Court and Public Law Outline and are subject to a legal advice meeting to identify whether cases need to move into proceedings. The Children’s Safeguarding Managers undertake a regular reviews of cases that have been on the child protection register for twelve months or more, and report the findings to Senior Managers. This process provides an additional layer of oversight to ensure children are not on the register longer than necessary. On 30th April, 2018 there were 15 Flintshire families who had been on the register for over 12 months.</p>
1.13	<u>Education & Youth and Social Services Priorities for the Safeguarding of Children</u>
1.14	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
1.15	<p>CSE remains a Corporate priority with Corporate agreement to continue funding Flintshire’s Victim Contact team for a further two years to support the victims of CSE.</p> <p>Flintshire is a member of the Regional CSE Board where a Service Manager from Social Services provides progress reports on the work completed locally in relation to CSE. This includes links to the work of Project 84 which has been established by Barnardo’s. This Project provides longer term therapeutic support through a specialist service providing trauma recovery services, interfacing with the Victim Contact Team.</p>
1.15	<p>A case of special interest audit was undertaken in 2017 under the theme of child sexual exploitation. This involved an in-depth multiagency audit where agencies reviewed a case to identify good practice and areas for improvement. For Social Services the case highlighted the need to improve the chronology for the case. This finding was considered in the context of the Jay Report (2014) on child sexual exploitation in Rotherham. The next phase will be to audit a wider range of cases relate to looked after children, and children with care and support plans, to assure ourselves of practice compliance. This work will form part of our planned audit programme for 2018/19.</p>
1.16	<p>The North Wales Police CSE videos have been shared with all Senior Managers in Education & Youth and Social Services as well as other</p>

	portfolios across the Council.
1.17	A CSE Awareness Event was arranged for 16 March 2018 at Coleg Cambria in Deeside. The Event provided information and advice on the broad range of statutory and 3 rd sector support and service provision in relation to CSE. The event was open to the Whole Community including Young People, Parents/Carers & Professionals and was well attended.
1.18	In schools, two training sessions have been held to date delivered by the Lucy Faithful Foundation. Staff attending are provided with key information to be delivered back in the school setting, including a link to the North Wales Police CSE videos which will be continued to be promoted on an ongoing basis with a view that all school staff will have seen the videos before the end of the academic year.
1.19	The same information from the Lucy Faithful Foundation training is shared with Personal and Social Education (PSE) coordinators via the county PSE forum which meets termly. PSE Coordinators were also provided with model lesson plans for CSE delivery and appropriate training: Year 9 - 'Exploited' which was adapted from Adapted from CEOP 'Exploited'. Year 10/11 - 'What's Happening Frankie?' Adapted from Barnardo's 'Hidden' Project.
1.20	Responding to Child Sexual Exploitation continues to be a high priority for Flintshire Youth Justice Service. Flintshire has a specific target in its Youth Justice Plan to explore assessment and intervention pathways for young people who are at risk of criminal exploitation. In 2015-16 the Youth Justice Service secured training for two practitioners on a regional 'Train the Trainers Course' which has allowed them to disseminate the training and learning to the wider staff team. Flintshire Youth Justice Service is attempting to arrange team training for Trafficked young people, Modern Day Slavery Act and the role of the Independent Child Trafficking Advocate.
1.21	Flintshire Youth Justice Service continues to work closely with Social Services for Children regarding our clients who are Looked After. Joint case file audits between Youth Justice Service and Social Services for Children are being undertaken.
1.22	The updated Safeguarding and Child Protection model policy was provided to all schools in Autumn 2017 which reflects national guidance from Keeping Learners Safe and All Wales Child Protection Procedures. All partners were consulted and gave valuable input. The policy is on Flintshire School Improvement Hwb, within a designated safeguarding area which contains up to date guidance, procedures and templates.
1.23	The training offer for schools in relation to safeguarding has been reviewed and a course for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) (full day) piloted in summer 2017 and has since been introduced across all schools during 2017/18. The way in which the Local Authority monitors schools safeguarding has also been reviewed and data will be gathered centrally in a new format at the end of each academic year. Monitoring for staff training undertaken is

	also being reviewed in Education & Youth.
1.24	<p>All Flintshire secondary schools are participating in a pilot for year 7 and 8 pupils with eAware which is funded by the healthy schools scheme and inclusion service. The pilot involves pupils undertaking an online survey to establish their understanding in relation to key aspects of safeguarding including sexting, gaming etc. and thereafter the school utilising resources and lesson plans as an intervention, ahead of undertaking another survey at the end of term to ascertain if the education has raised awareness and increased understanding of the risks, impacted on their decision making.</p> <p>https://www.eaware.co.uk/</p> <p>With an evidence base office we will be in a position to advise schools in terms of their PSE planning and content and target resources, training appropriately.</p>
1.25	Further information regarding the key priorities for the development of the workforce in both Children's Services and Education & Youth portfolio are detailed in Appendix 1, along with information regarding the training courses provided to meet those needs.
1.26	Pupils from School Councils have been involved in the development of two lesson plans for prevent – one for Key Stage 3 pupils and one for Key Stage 4. These have also received a positive response from schools and are age appropriate.
1.27	<u>Corporate Safeguarding</u>
1.28	The Corporate Safeguarding Panel was established in December 2015 in response to a Wales Audit Office (WAO) report 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils' (July 2015).
1.29	The Corporate Safeguarding Panel was set up to ensure the Council provides a framework for all council services to safeguard and protect vulnerable adults and children. Each portfolio has a lead named Officer for Safeguarding in their area.
1.30	Safeguarding is included as a priority under 'Supportive Council' in the Council Plan 2018 - 2023. The Panel is well attended and supported by two Chief Officers and elected members. Each portfolio has an identified safeguarding lead.
1.31	A Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been produced setting out the role of the Panel, defining safeguarding and setting a clear direction that makes safeguarding everyone's responsibility. A presentation on Safeguarding and the work the Panel was delivered through the Change Exchange, a forum for all tier 3 managers within the organisation.
1.32	Safeguarding awareness sessions have also been run for Elected Members for the Health and Social Services Overview Scrutiny and the Scrutiny Committee for Education and Youth. A further session is planned for Licensing Committee.
1.33	The Corporate Safeguarding Panel has recently published the first in a series of News bulletins designed to keep all Flintshire County Council employees and elected member up to date with safeguarding news. The

	links can be found below. http://fcc_systems_01/FCC_News/Attachment/Display/395 http://fcc_systems_01/FCC_News/Attachment/Display/394
1.34	Flintshire Internal Audit have recently completed an audit of Corporate Safeguarding which indicated a numbers of areas considered to be managed well and suggesting some areas for further improvement. This report is shaping the future work programme of the panel.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	There are no financial implications arising from this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	N/A

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	N/A

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Key priorities around safeguarding practice for workforce and training across Children’s Services and Education & Youth.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Jane Davies – Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning Telephone: 01352 702503 E-mail: jane.m.davies@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
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7.01

(1) All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008: All Wales Child Protection Procedures, implemented on April 1st 2008, help safeguard children and promote their welfare. The All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 replace earlier jurisdiction. The procedures combine the shared knowledge and experiences of Wales' 22 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and reflect the changes required as a result of high-profile child protection reports like the Laming Report. They address a wide range of safeguarding issues, including new mediums in which abuse can occur, such as the internet, and incorporate learning from research and practice from other parts of the world.

(2) Corporate Parenting: The Council has a duty to act as a good parent to children and young people in its care and those young people in the process of leaving care. The Council wants these children to have the best possible outcomes. Clear strategic and political leadership is crucial in ensuring that Looked After Children and the Corporate Parenting agenda is given the appropriate profile and priority.

(3) Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.

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Key priorities around safeguarding practice for workforce and training across Children's Services and Education & Youth

Children's Services

Safeguarding Adults and Children Awareness: The basic one-day Safeguarding Adults and Children Awareness course is aimed at front line staff and volunteers from all social care agencies whose work brings them into contact with potentially vulnerable people – Adults, Children and Young People. The rolling programme is delivered monthly in Flintshire.

Safeguarding Awareness Refresher: now delivered every 2 months within a recommended 3 year refresher period.

Safeguarding Children for Professionals: This quarterly half day course is for statutory and non-statutory Children's Services staff who have completed the Safeguarding Adults/Children Awareness Course, is used as a Children's Services equivalent to Safeguarding Adults Level 3. The course was originally developed in response to the needs of Adult Social Work Teams, who had safeguarding knowledge as part of their general SW training, but were as familiar with Children's safeguarding.

s47 Investigation Training: The course is for social workers who are expected to take part in Child Protection investigations, or who are at the end of their first 3 years of practice as part of CPEL. In Flintshire it is based on what was originally a regional North Wales 5-module format known as Joint Investigation Training or JIT, which is currently undergoing a review.

Achieving Best Evidence: This course provides knowledge and skills to work jointly with North Wales Police to gain the effective interviewing and support of vulnerable child witnesses. It aims to improve practice and confidence in Social Workers who need to carry out video interviews of vulnerable & intimidated witnesses & victims. The course involves practicing video interviews and receiving feedback. The course is delivered on a regional basis in partnership with North Wales Police, and is currently under review. It is usually delivered as 5 x one day modules. Participants must have completed the s47 Investigation (JIT) training.

Achieving Best Evidence Refresher: The aim of this one day course is to refresh the knowledge, skills and confidence of Social Workers who feel they need to refresh their ABE skills – e.g. if it has been over 3 years since undertaking the full course, and they apply the skills infrequently.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Training: The e-learning module of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 is the first stage of the VAWDASV National Training Framework, with an expectation that all staff across the Council complete this level. A face-to-face version of the training is available to staff who do not have workplace internet access.

Domestic Abuse (MARAC/DASH): Delivered quarterly in Flintshire. The focus on VAWDASV risks obscuring the need for Social Workers and other professionals to develop and maintain skills in using the MARAC forms and DASH procedures.

Domestic Abuse Awareness: Delivered quarterly in Flintshire, this course highlights a gap in the VAWDASV programme for training for non-statutory sector in all aspects of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

During the year Social Services also delivered bespoke training on:

Emotional Abuse Of Children: Causes, effects and response. The course explored the issues relating to emotional abuse, examining how to identify it, parental and family dynamics, messages from research, and appropriate ways to respond. Emotional abuse is the category with the second highest number of children on Child Protection Registers in Wales.

Did She Know. The one-day course explores cases of child sexual abuse and decisions related to child safety and the ability of a mother or partner to protect. Often, these decisions are made more difficult by a context of silence, whilst inappropriate denial or minimising by the offender involved creates additional difficulties both for the mother or partner, as well as for professionals working with the family. The facilitator draws on research and work by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation with sexual offenders and non-abusing mothers or partners.

Education and Youth Services

Safeguarding Practice: for the Education and Youth workforce has been joined up with the work of other departments which make up the Corporate Safeguarding board. The group meet bimonthly and is chaired by the Chief Officer for Education and Youth. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been established and there is a regular safeguarding newsletter and information on the shared internal website. Photographs of members have been shared with all staff via the newsletter and website.

North Wales Police CSE Videos: these have been shared with all workforce staff. In addition County Lines information is cascaded to all relevant teams and A prevent refresher arranged. These were also cascaded to Education & Youth managers in the portfolio workshop.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Training: The e-learning module of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 is the first stage of the VAWDASV National Training Framework, with an expectation that all staff across the Council complete this level. A face-to-face version of the training is available to staff who do not have workplace internet access.

General Safeguarding Awareness: This now includes school escorts, cooks and cleaners moving forward at a basic awareness level.

Safeguarding Leads Training: Key education staff and governors are invited to attend the schools training programme for safeguarding leads, governors and head teachers. This academic year will include the following:

- 3 dates for Designated Safeguarding Lead training (2 delivered to date) and 1 pilot course = 135 trained
- 3 dates for CSE (2 delivered to date) = 35 trained
- 2 dates for Prevent and County Lines (1 delivered to date) = 39 trained
- 1 date for FGM and Modern slavery (delivered) = 11 trained
- 1 date for Domestic Abuse alongside the roll out of the online programmes.
- 2 courses for Governors with safeguarding responsibility (1 delivered to date) = 15
- 3 dates for level 2 courses (2 delivered to date) = 79 trained
- Ongoing programme of basic awareness level 1 and refresher training for all schools alongside this – all schools (79)

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 24 th May 2018
Report Subject	Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer Education & Youth
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates Members about the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 which makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). This replaces existing legislation surrounding special educational needs (SEN) and the assessment of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) in post-16 education and training. The report also highlights the activity undertaken by the Local Authority in response to the Act to date and highlights the potential impact once the legislation is implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Committee receives and considers the report on the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
2	That Committee commissions an update report on local and regional implementation plans arising from the legislation.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018
1.01	<p>The Welsh Government (WG) gave a commitment to review the legislation and guidance covering children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) following a period of consultation with all stakeholders in 2007. This was followed by a period of research, targeted trials/pilots and further consultation which fed into a white paper in 2014 and resulted in the publication of the draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Bill (2015). Following a pause in process, the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill was passed by the National Assembly for Wales on 12 December 2017 and became an Act on 24 January 2018 after receiving Royal Assent. The anticipated implementation date of the reforms as a result of the Act is September 2020.</p>
1.02	<p>To accompany the Bill, WG produced a draft Code of Practice which provided further information and detail regarding the duties to be placed on schools, local authorities and other stakeholders. Following the progression of the Bill into an Act, this document is being revised and this is due to be published in 2018 for further consultation.</p>
1.03	<p>The purpose of the revised legislation is to transform expectations, experiences and outcomes for children and young people with additional learning needs. To achieve this, WG has developed the ALN Transformation Programme which will transform the separate systems for special education (SEN) in schools and learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) in further education, to create a unified system for supporting learners from 0-25 with ALN.</p> <p>WG states that the transformed system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure that all learners with ALN are supported to overcome barriers to learning and can achieve their full potential;• improve the planning and delivery of support for learners from 0 to 25 with ALN, placing learners' needs, views, wishes and feelings at the heart of the process; and• focus on the importance of identifying needs early and putting in place timely and effective interventions which are monitored and adapted to ensure they deliver the desired outcomes.
1.04	<p>One of the key factors of the unified system is the legislative protection that the Act offers to all children and young people with ALN; this was previously restricted to those who underwent statutory assessment or were in receipt of a Statement of SEN. Individual Development Plans (IDPs) will replace Statements and will have the same legal status. Schools currently have a responsibility to assess for SEN/ALN and identify an appropriate programme of intervention, accessing external advice where required. Within the existing process, this is known as School Action/School Action Plus. Children and young people with significant individual need may be put forward for statutory assessment following School Action/School Action Plus intervention which may result in the issuing of a Statement of SEN. From 2020, any child/young person identified as having ALN, should have an IDP. Depending on the severity of need, this will either remain the responsibility</p>

	<p>of the education provider, e.g. school or college, or will transfer to the Local Authority.</p> <p>It is reasonable to anticipate that the increase in age range from 19 to 25 and the broadening of the legislative cover, will result in a larger number of IDPs as compared to Statements which potentially creates capacity issues both in educational settings and the Local Authority. The revised legislation also provides for the responsibility for the commissioning and funding of Post 16 specialist provision to transfer from WG to LAs; the mechanism for this is yet to be defined.</p>
1.05	<p>The ALN Transformation Programme includes a clear focus on the development of skills across the education workforce to deliver effective support to learners with ALN in the classroom, as well as facilitating easier access to specialist support, information and advice. All educational establishments are required to have an Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) to lead and monitor processes and intervention in relation to ALN. There is also a further requirement for local authorities to have an Early Years ALNCo.</p>
1.06	<p>Four regional ALN Transformational Leads have been appointed to support the implementation of the Transformation Programme. Since taking up their posts at the beginning of March 2018, the Leads have developed an audit tool to support local authorities to identify their current 'state of readiness', the outcomes of which will be used to inform local and regional implementation plans. The Leads also have a remit to ensure that all relevant partners are suitably informed and engaged and that opportunities for sharing/co-constructing are maximised.</p> <p>The audit tool is divided into the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Implementing a unified plan for children and young people with additional learning needs B. Putting in place policies to support the implementation of a single, unified plan for young people aged 0-25 C. Clear and consistent rights of appeal D. Increasing participation of children and young people E. High aspirations and improved outcomes F. Increased Collaboration G. Avoiding disagreements and early disagreement resolution H. A bilingual system <p>Completion of the audit from a Flintshire perspective has been useful and has identified areas of good progress and also a number of factors that need consideration and/or action. The areas of progress include the training and support offered around Person Centred Planning (PCP). This will be an integral part of the new processes and all schools have had the opportunity to engage in initial and refresher training on this. An ongoing training and support programme will be offered through to the implementation date to ensure schools are prepared and able to respond to the reforms once implemented.</p> <p>Communication has been another key area of activity with information being shared regularly at a number of forums at Member, Officer, Headteacher</p>

	<p>and ALNCo level. Whilst the Act is now in place, much of the operational detail will come through the Code of Practice and information channels are established to support dissemination and discussion.</p> <p>WG allocated some financial resource through the Innovation Fund to LAs to support their preparation for the Act. Flintshire worked in collaboration with other North Wales authorities to look at the role of the ALNCo and information acquired through questionnaires and interviews was used to develop and facilitate a range of support mechanisms which included the development of ALNCo cluster meetings where these were not in place, information regarding specialist services and referral processes and the identification and sharing of effective practice amongst others.</p> <p>As indicated above, alongside the areas of progress, the tool has identified areas for targeted focus for the implementation plan which is under development.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>The Act has a number of potentially significant resource implications for both the LA and schools. In a number of small primary schools, the Headteacher has taken on the responsibility of ALNCo as a cost saving measure. It appears from the information gathered to date that the processes involved in the new systems may be very resource intensive in terms of staff time which could impact on the ability for schools to combine the roles effectively and meet the duties placed on them. Employing additional staff to take on the responsibilities will come with additional financial implications.</p>
2.02	<p>As referenced in section 1.05, a requirement of the Act is that LAs must have an Early Years ALNCo. This is not currently a role within the Education & Youth Portfolio and consideration will need to be given as to whether there is any capacity to absorb the duties within the current structure or whether an additional post needs to be created with the associated costs.</p>
2.03	<p>The extension of the age range from 19 to 25 along with the duty to cover further education as well as school-based provision is also likely to have resource implications in terms of officer capacity to implement the revised processes and offer the required specialist intervention. Commissioning specialist Post 16 provision may also create further capacity issues within the Inclusion Service and create further financial pressures.</p> <p>Given the broadening of the legislative protection, the revised process includes dispute resolution as a formal part of the process. This has potential resource implications as does the potential increase in appeals to the Educational Tribunal which becomes an option for all children and young people with ALN under the new Act.</p> <p>The Act also requires services to consider whether a child or young person needs provision through the medium of Welsh. If they do, 'all reasonable steps' must be taken to secure the provision in Welsh. WG have indicated that further duties will come into play that mean the requirement to provide provision for ALN through the medium of Welsh will become a mandatory</p>

	requirement over time which also has associated resource implications in terms of staff skills and available provision.
2.04	It is anticipated that completion of the implementation plan and the information offered through the revised Code of Practice will give insight into the resource requirements around the pre and post implementation stages. These will need to be carefully considered and may result in the need for reorganisation or prioritisation of services and provision.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
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3.01	No formal consultation is currently required in relation to the Act however some consultation has been undertaken with schools around the role of the ALNCo and the identification of effective provision through the WG Innovation Fund projects. Further consultation with stakeholders is being planned to identify where the key areas of need are in relation to ALN and to review whether the resources available are mapped effectively against these.
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4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
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4.01	The potential impact of the Act and its reforms have been identified as a risk both through the Council planning system (CAMMS) and Medium Term Financial Strategy. It has been difficult to quantify the risk to date however, the passing of the Act and the publication of the code of Practice will enable more detailed risk analysis to take place.
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5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	None.
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	<p>Additional information on the Act is available at - https://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/additional-learning-special-educational-needs/transformation-programme/legislation-and-statutory-guidance/?lang=en</p> <p>Contact Officer: Jeanette Rock, Senior Manager - Inclusion & Progression Telephone: 01352 704017 E-mail: jeanette.rock@flintshire.gov.uk</p>
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7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Additional Learning Needs (ALN): The Act replaces the current terms 'special educational needs' (SEN) and 'learning difficulties and/or disabilities' (LDD) with the one term ALN where ALN is defined as:</p> <p>(1) A person has additional learning needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise) which calls for additional learning provision.</p> <p>(2) A child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she—</p> <p>(a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or</p> <p>(b) has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream institutions in the further education sector.</p> <p>(3) A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is, or would be if no additional learning provision were made, likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age.</p> <p>(4) A person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been used at home.</p> <p>Statement of Special Educational Need: A Statement is a document which sets out a child's SEN and any additional help that the child should receive. The aim of the Statement is to make sure that the child gets the right support to enable them to make progress in school.</p> <p>Individual Development Plan: An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a plan created and agreed by those people most closely involved with supporting a child or young person with ALN including parents/carers, which outlines the support and provision that should be made for the individual.</p> <p>Education Tribunal: An independent process that deals with appeals against local authority decisions about a child or young person and their education and also discrimination claims of unfair treatment in schools related to a disability.</p> <p>Code of Practice: WG guidance outlining the statutory requirements and recommended practice in relation to systems and provision for ALN.</p>



JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 24 th May 2018
Report Subject	Flintshire Early Help Hub
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services; and Cabinet Member for Education and Youth
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services) Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Flintshire Public Service Board (PSB) commissioned the establishment of an Early Help Hub (herein the EH Hub). The aim of the EH Hub is to deliver more timely and appropriate early intervention and support to families with greater levels of need. The attached report provides an independent assessment of the story of the EH Hub so far; what we did, why we did it and what we have learned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	For Members to receive the report and provide comments and reflection
2	To support the ongoing work and commitment to the Early Help Hub as part of wider programme to support families experiencing trauma aligned to Adverse Childhood experiences (ACE's)

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE RECOMMENDATIONS
1.01	The development of the EH Hub can be summarised into 3 distinct phases:
1.02	<p>Phase 1. Design</p> <p>A proposed model for the EH Hub was developed collaboratively across agencies. The model brings together resources to target support to families in most need. Existing resources have been complimented by additional capacity secured through the alignment of services commissioned through Families First.</p>
1.03	<p>Phase 2. Soft Launch</p> <p>Over the summer 2017 the EH Hub undertook a 'soft launch' to test proposed procedures and joint working arrangements. From mid July 2017 all families with two or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and whose needs would not be otherwise be met through statutory Children's Services, were offered bespoke information, guidance and support. A review of the soft launch was undertaken which identified positive outcomes as well as process that have now been refined and strengthened to form the final operating model for the EH Hub.</p>
1.04	<p>Phase 3. Implementation</p> <p>There has been a phased approach to the implementation of the EH Hub. Since November 2017 the EH Hub has accepted direct referrals from partner agencies and professionals. The final phase will be on the 8 June 2018 when the Children's Commissioner for Wales will support the public launch of the EH Hub. This will earmark the expansion of the EH Hub to provide direct public access to support for families experiencing 2 or more ACE's.</p>
1.05	The Early Help Hub is a success in terms of offering families advice and assistance when prior to the Early Help Hub the referrals would not have been actioned and there was a high risk of a repeat referral back into Children's Services with more complex need being defined.
1.06	Currently, approximately 94% of cases considered by the EH Hub come as referrals to the Children's Services Front Door, rather than as a direct referral to the EH Hub. In the period July 2017- January 2018, the EH Hub has considered 535 referrals (an average of 76 per month)
1.07	<p>Of these 535 families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80 families have been offered information• 274 families have been offered advice and support from a single agency• 100 families have been offered key worker support to intervene and coordinate multiagency inputs• 5 families are having a safeguarding response

	with the remaining 76 families in process at the point of data collection (i.e. information-gathering and decision-making processes were in progress)
1.08	<p>As with any new initiative there have been challenges in developing and implementing the EH Hub which have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff capacity • Establishing a dedicated budget for staff to be co-located in the EH Hub on an ongoing basis • Senior management commitment not always translating into middle management operationalisation • Different understanding or roles and services aligned to the EH Hub • The time it takes for some EH Hub members to gather information • While all families have had an offer of support, sometimes this has taken longer than expected
1.09	Positively action has been taken during the course of the project to respond and manage these challenges. The soft launch was a key component in this function.
1.10	<p>What is evident is that success of the establishment and delivery of the Hub has been driven by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leaders with a strong commitment; • A strongly committed group of people across the multiagency partnership- where the voluntary and community sector sits as an equal partner with statutory colleagues- who persevered, while managing existing workloads, because of a shared drive and belief in wanting to help improve the life chances and wellbeing of Flintshire children, young people and families more vulnerable to escalating problems and to help reduce demand in the medium to longer term on public services; • Excellent multiagency governance arrangements chaired by senior officers from within the North Wales Police that, together with strategic advisory and project support capacity made available through the Flintshire Public Service Board, helped support excellent partnership working and ensured there was a focus on delivery; • Co-location and high-quality information sharing processes, with effective enabling infrastructure such as a common information management system and bespoke WASPI; • The foresight of relevant senior officers that lead and govern the local Families First programme to help nurture Early Help Hub development and progressively embed the Families First programme within the Early Help Hub which benefits families with evidence of two or more ACEs (and the Early Help Hub and the Families First programme); and Wider workforce communications and awareness raising activities.

1.11	What have been impacts of the Early Help Hub so far?
1.12	<p>The independent assessment of the Early Help Hub identifies that objectives for reduced demand on high cost public services and improved outcomes such as reduced crime and antisocial behaviour, better health, educational attainment, financial literacy and more secure tenancies would not be expected to have occurred within just over nine months from the first operationalisation of the EH Hub. Nonetheless, interviews with staff provided a strong view that these objectives are already starting to be met to varying degrees with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater ability to identify potential vulnerability, enabling more preventative action to be taken, dealing with problems before these become entrenched and building family wellbeing and resilience. • Closer partnership working, clearer accountability and less duplication of effort (fully met in relation to closer partnership working, but too early yet to indicate with respect to clearer accountability and reduced duplication of effort.) • Where better information-sharing within the EH Hub identifies potential safeguarding concerns, these are actioned in line with relevant procedures. (fully met) • Better quality referrals to Children’s Services as measured by reduced child protection referrals and fewer NFAs (no further action) by Children’s Services and NW Police (partly met with some excellent work being spearheaded by the Community and Enterprise EH Hub member to help her Housing Solutions colleagues consider whether a referral is for the EH Hub or statutory Children’s Services and the start of direct EH Hub referrals from police officers and PCSOs as a result of the excellent work of the North Wales Police EH Hub member) • There are signs the EH Hub is contributing to reduced NFAs (down to 34% for October-December 2017) and early and tentative signs that the EHH is contributing to reduced re-referrals of cases to the Children’s Services Front Door.
1.13	Now the EH Hub is established the intention is for agencies to continue to work together, through the Strategic Group, to provide a co-ordinated, and complimentary, approach to responding to the wider ACE agenda to support vulnerable families.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Currently all resource implications are being met through existing service budgets across agencies. However, without the support of the Family First Board and the willingness of Welsh Government to agree to the expenditure for projects the Early Help Hub would not have been as successful.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The EH Hub has been developed in close consultation with partner agencies. Agencies have been involved in the design and development of the EH Hub through an operational project group and a strategic overview group.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Families First funding has been made available to secure key posts within the EH Hub including additional capacity for Team Around the Family (TAF), BCUHB and FLVC. This is funding is time limited and cannot be guaranteed on a reoccurring basis. This risk will remain an item for management through the project group structure.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – The story of the Early Help Hub so far; what we did, why we did it and what we have learned.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Craig Macleod, Senior Manager Telephone: 01352 701313 E-mail: craig.macleod@flintshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Contact Officer: Ann Roberts, Senior Manager - Integrated Youth Provision Telephone: 01352 704112 E-mail: ann.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Public Services Board - Established under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the purpose of Public Services Boards (PSBs) is to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area by strengthening joint working across all public services in Wales. The Flintshire PSB is made up of senior leaders from a number of public and voluntary organisations. Together these organisations are responsible for developing and managing the Well-being Plan for Flintshire.
7.02	Adverse Childhood Experiences - ACE's are traumatic experiences that occur before the age of 18 and are remembered throughout adulthood.

	These experiences range from suffering verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, to being raised in a household where domestic violence, alcohol abuse, parental separation or drug abuse is present.
7.03	Care and Inspectorate Wales (CIW) - CIW has the powers to review Local Authority social services at a local and national level, to inform the public whether services are up to standard, to promote improvement of services and to help safeguard the interests of vulnerable people who use services and their carers.
7.04	Families First Programme - The national programme providing a vehicle for delivering on the child poverty strategy (WG 2010). (£1.67 million approx.)
7.05	Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 - The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.
7.06	Team Around the Family - The Team around the Family offer advice, help and support to families with support needs. TAF bring together the support from people and/or organisations to help families. The support offered is aimed at building a family's resilience and coping mechanisms.
7.07	Flintshire Local Voluntary Council - FLVC is the umbrella and support organisation for over 1200 voluntary and community groups based in Flintshire.

The background is a solid red color. It features several overlapping circles of varying shades of red. On the right side, there are several parallel white lines that curve upwards from the bottom right towards the top right.

Flintshire Public Service Board Early Help Hub: The Story So Far

What we did, why we did it and
what we have learned

April 2018

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Introduction

The Flintshire Public Service Board (PSB) commissioned the establishment of an Early Help Hub (EH Hub) in September 2016. The aim of the EH Hub was to deliver more timely and appropriate early intervention and support for families with evidence of greater levels of need, in line with statutory requirements set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014.

From mid July 2017 when the very first EH Hub information-sharing and decision-making processes started, all families with two or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and whose needs would not be otherwise be met through statutory Children's Services have been offered bespoke information, guidance and support. **In the period July- December 2017, that is 429 families that would previously have had their cases closed with no further action, being offered bespoke advice, guidance and support.** This includes five families for whom EH Hub information-sharing processes have improved understanding of cumulative risk and so a safeguarding response has taken place; and a further 11 families also accessing support through other statutory Children's Services teams.

And yet the EH Hub did not exist in any form until July 2017. This report is about the story of the EH Hub so far; where it came from, key events and lessons from the experience to date and where to next. What is evident is that success has been driven by:

- Senior leaders with a strong commitment;
- A strongly committed group of people across the multiagency partnership- where the voluntary and community sector sits as an equal partner with statutory colleagues- who persevered, while managing existing workloads, because of a shared drive and belief in wanting to help improve the life chances and wellbeing of Flintshire children, young people and families more vulnerable to escalating problems and to help reduce demand in the medium to longer term on public services;
- Excellent multiagency governance arrangements chaired by senior officers from within the North Wales Police that, together with strategic advisory and project support capacity made available through the Flintshire Public Service Board, helped support excellent partnership working and ensured there was a focus on delivery;
- Co-location and high-quality information sharing processes, with effective enabling infrastructure such as a common information management system and bespoke WASPI;
- The foresight of relevant senior officers that lead and govern the local Families First programme to help nurture EH Hub development and progressively embed the Families First programme within the EH Hub which benefits families with evidence of two or more ACEs (and the EH Hub and the Families First programme); and
- Wider workforce communications and awareness raising activities.

Any story of service and cultural transformation is not one without its own challenges- the EH Hub was developed from within existing agency resources which creates difficulties at

different times in different ways for agencies, co-location has been more incremental than planned, there is more work to do with engaging the wider workforce and leveraging the wider resources of agencies, as well as schools and local community organisations and in making processes more dynamic and streamlined (which are set out in this report)- and key learning for the sustainability and impact of the EH Hub into the future is that for statutory agencies particularly, appropriate budgeting for staff to be co-located within the EH Hub is essential.

So, yes there is more to do but there is also a strong sense of an even brighter next chapter for the EH Hub; especially from April 2018 as even more integration with Flintshire Families First takes place. The report details the effects which include:

- A 5-day per week EH Hub will be operational which creates the room for the EH Hub to accept direct referrals from families; and
- A far wider pool of voluntary and statutory services can be actioned to offer support (and significantly more quickly) to families, including a far wider pool of services to offer key worker support (i.e. the type of coordination which has formally been undertaken by the TAF team) in addition to the provision of bespoke interventions.

This will bring more change, more dynamism, more voluntary sector involvement, and enhance knowledge about available services more. It will make for an interesting next chapter in the evolution of the Flintshire EH Hub.

1. Why an Early Help Hub?

1.1 The strategic drivers for the Flintshire Early Help Hub

The EH Hub was commissioned with the aims of addressing key legislative and regulatory requirements and the Flintshire Public Service Board (PSB) ambition for better quality, cost effective services that secure good outcomes for all in Flintshire. Primarily, these concern:

- Requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014) to ensure families have access to relevant information, advice and support as much as possible within their communities to build wellbeing and resilience.
- Flintshire County Council (FCC)'s ongoing response to four of 12 recommendations of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) Inspection of Children's Services (2015). These relate to making available more integrated, early intervention for children and families through closer partnership work and better information-sharing¹.
- From 2014/15 onwards, *Police and Crime Plans* have set clear objectives about reducing repeat offences, including specifically for domestic violence. Moreover, Police and Crime Plans recognise that to reduce domestic violence and child sexual exploitation for example, these *'touch and concern the responsibilities of other agencies involved with public safety and health, and an effective response can only be delivered in partnership with the other agencies. As the focus on these crimes continues to sharpen, the importance of partnership working will also continue to grow'*².
- The impacts of austerity challenging public services to better manage and reduce demand, especially on high cost services. Traditionally many cases for instance were referred and re-referred to the Children's Services front door, but where household and environmental risks do not require statutory intervention, notwithstanding families having persistent needs.
 - For example, Police account for most referrals to Children's Services front doors in North Wales, but about 80% were not appropriate for statutory intervention and so front-door decision makers would close cases with no further action (until the next incident, and then again and so on.) Even though resulting in no action, and where families have needs that gave rise to the police call out, each of these contacts costs Social Service approximately £44 and the Police at least £33³.
- A fresh spotlight on how the cycle of childhood adversity can lock successive generations of families into poor health, poor life chance outcomes and anti-social

¹ CSSIW Inspection of Children's Services, Flintshire County Council, (Sept 2015): Recommendation 1: The Council should progress its commitment to develop an early intervention framework that will deliver integrated services and provide early support for children, young people and families; Recommendation 2: The Council should establish effective systems to ensure that thresholds for assessments are consistent across the service and understood by staff and partners; Recommendation 3: Multi-agency arrangements should be established to review repeat referrals and quality assure decision-making; and Recommendation 5: Children's services approach to risk assessment and risk management to be more effectively shared and understood by partner agencies.

² Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, North Wales, *Annual Report 2015/16* page 10

³ Based on New Economy Foundation costs of a one-off Social Services contact (no referral, assessment etc) and the hourly cost of one PSO (all updated to 2017).

behaviour (all at high cost- to public services) through the growing recognition of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study conducted by Public Health Wales (2015). The focus on preventing and mitigating the impacts of ACEs in future generations was also given extra impetus by new statutory duties arising from the Well-being of Future Generations Act.2015

To support the business case for the EH Hub, local deep dive research about 29 families was conducted by George Selvanera, a strategic adviser (later engaged by the PSB across October 2016- March 2018 to provide expertise and capacity for the design and the development of the EH Hub). Working with key partners from FCC, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and North Wales Police, this research found that:

- In the 29 case studies and with many caveats⁴, on average most families interacted with the Police and Children's Services. There was much evidence of domestic abuse, mental health needs and poor parenting/dysfunctional family dynamics e.g. 21 of 29 families had experienced or were experiencing domestic abuse and more than 24 families had incidents recorded with the Police (with at least 10 households having family members that had been arrested).
- Most families had evidence of complex needs, with 7 of 29 families having evidence of domestic abuse, substance and/or alcohol misuse, mental health needs, crime and antisocial behaviour, family dysfunction/child safety and children not attending school consistently. A further 18 of 29 evidenced at least four of these six indicators.
- This knowledge helps evidence the high cost of not getting the help offered right. Using limited and narrow cost data; the aggregate suggests at least £3.18million of costs to date borne by FCC, North Wales Police, BCUHB and Flintshire schools in relation to these 29 families. **The average cost is £107.5k per family which underestimated the costs borne by FCC, North Wales Police, BCUHB and Flintshire schools⁵.**
- The case studies also made clear that multiple needs generally mean multiple interactions with multiple services; but not typically in ways that address underlying problems or sequence support for families in ways owned by the family and support sustainable improvements in coping skills and family dynamics. After all, families almost always present different levels of risk according to each services' eligibility thresholds. Families may be just below several services' thresholds for intervention but across their different problems cumulatively present significant overall risks.

1.2 Early Help Hub key aims and objectives

In initial work undertaken with multiagency representatives to scope the EH Hub, there was an appreciation that concepts such as 'early help' relate to a wide spectrum of support from preventative advice and guidance (e.g. healthy relationships education in schools and youth clubs) to supporting families with complex needs (e.g. helping a family where a child is at the

⁴ Similarly, the case study analysis is conservative in its estimation so that unless it is clearly discernible that there have been a specific number of domestic abuse incidents or s.47 referrals for example, the estimate will be that there was one only. However, the data is very limited.

⁵ For example, key benefits paid by the State e.g. ESA, JSA benefits and Housing Benefit are excluded. Domestic abuse incidents were solely those that were recorded on systems so tended to underestimate the extent of domestic abuse (and associated mental health needs) and its costs especially for BCUHB.

edge of care, step back from that edge and better manage risk and build coping skills and wellbeing).

In this way, early help is not solely about providing support as potential problems emerge/are recognised in the life of a child, young person or family, but in providing whatever the right support for the family is, as early as possible, before problems escalate or escalate further.

For most families in Flintshire, the availability of universal (such as schools, youth clubs, community activities, GPs, midwifery and health visiting services) and targeted services (such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, family support commissioned by Families First and otherwise available in the local community through the voluntary sector) provides sufficient information and assistance to keep families safe, in good health, enjoy economic and social wellbeing and cope with difficulties that arise.

Given this, the PSB was clear that the EH Hub focus on the cohort of families where there is evidence of greater need and where, without support, the risks of entrenched disadvantage and poor life chances are greater. It was agreed that these should be families where there are two or more ACEs given the strong link between ACEs and poor life chance outcomes. This may include families 'stepped down' from statutory services as part of helping them sustain positive child safety outcomes and to build resilience and wellbeing.

As much as possible, the EH Hub would look to use universal and targeted services to ensure families have support from within local communities; but also given that greater levels of need too often mean multiple interventions with multiple agencies, transforming information-sharing processes so families are supported to access coordinated, properly sequenced interventions was also '*mission critical*' to EH Hub design.

A series of workshops involving diverse statutory and voluntary sector partners and representatives of the EH Hub Strategic and Operational Groups comprising representatives from North Wales Police, FCC, BCUHB and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) was undertaken. Together with research and visits undertaken to other similar initiatives particularly in England, the Strategic and Operational Groups agreed the aim, key objectives and functions for the EH Hub in November 2016.

Table One: Key aim, objectives and functions of the EH Hub

Factor	Key elements
Key aim	<p>Provide the greatest level of knowledge and analysis of all known intelligence and information across the multiagency partnership to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children, young people and families have access to advice and information about relevant early support to build coping skills, improve wellbeing and address any problems before these become entrenched. For families that are at greater risk of escalating problems, access to appropriate multidisciplinary interventions as a matter of priority.
Key objectives	<p>An improved 'journey' for the child and family with greater emphasis on information, advice and assistance provided at the right time in line with statutory requirements set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater ability to identify potential vulnerability, enabling more preventative action to be taken, dealing with problems before these become entrenched and building family wellbeing and resilience. • Closer partnership working, clearer accountability and less duplication of effort. • Better quality referrals to Children’s Services as measured by reduced CP referrals and fewer NFAs (no further action) by Children’s Services and NW Police • Reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, improving educational attainment and financial literacy and more secure tenancies • Where better information-sharing within the EH Hub identifies potential safeguarding concerns, these are actioned in line with relevant procedures.
<p>What will the Early Help hub do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage referrals received • In addition to the referrals received, multiagency colleagues will research information held on professional databases/through engaging colleagues in respective agencies to enable the EH Hub to make informed decisions about the appropriate response to family needs • Provide a secure and confidential environment for multiagency professionals to share information • Identifies repeat referrals which taken in isolation may not appear concerning • Prioritise referrals and responses using a RAG rating system • Where better information-sharing within the EH Hub identifies safeguarding concerns, these concerns activate ‘first response’ social work services to provide immediate protection for a child • Activate TAF or other targeted intervention services to provide support to the child, young person or family e.g. priority for extra support provided by Parenting, Flying Start health visitor, a Families First commissioned service • Activate information and advice provision by appropriate agencies e.g. FIS

2. From an idea to an evolving reality

2.1 From the Public Service Board decision to July 2017

At the outset, three key actions took place. These are:

1. Establishing multiagency governance arrangements both strategically and operationally, chaired by representatives of North Wales Police. These multiagency steering groups have met on a 4-6 weeks basis ever since.
 - *A Strategic Group* chaired by Superintendent Sian Beck which includes FCC (Social Services, Education and Youth, Parenting), North Wales Police, FLVC and BCUHB representatives, and has had support from the strategic adviser. This is a sub-committee of the Flintshire PSB.
 - *An Operational Group* chaired by A/g Superintendent Sharon McCairn (who through 2016 and 2017) was Chief Inspector, Flintshire. This meeting routinely has 10-18 people attend including representatives from FCC (Social Services, Education and Youth, Parenting), Flying Start, North Wales Police, FLVC, BCUHB and the EHH Coordinator, Natalie Woodworth, with support from the strategic adviser and the project support officer, Natalie Moore (January 2017- January 2018).
2. The PSB invested in strategic advisory support and project support, with the strategic adviser engaged approximately 4-5/days per month for the period to March 2018 and the project support officer for 2 days/week for one year to January 2018. The aim of this support was to support strategic and operational leads, permit ongoing review and process improvement and to provide capacity to develop EH Hub infrastructure, processes, information-sharing arrangements including the WASPI and the common information management (IM) system and workforce communications.
3. High level project plans were developed to guide EH Hub development relating to: governance; workforce development, communication and engagement; evaluation; and the directory of services.

In interviews for this report, the first two aspects were described by members of the Strategic Group and Operational Group as especially important to the successful development of the EH Hub (see section 3)

In the period to March 2017, other significant actions included:

4. Agreement across the multiagency arrangements about the scope and processes of the EH Hub, including how the EH Hub interacted with statutory Children's Services to limit the risk of any families not having access to the right support quickly and to give confidence that the focus of the EH Hub is about making available bespoke support to families with two or more ACEs that would otherwise risk not having any support.
5. Developing the bespoke WASPI that enables the sharing of relevant information, both within the EH Hub and with partners. The WASPI was later approved by the relevant

North Wales quality assurance group that brings together information governance leads from statutory agencies in North Wales.

- The WASPI and subsequent bespoke referral form⁶ also comply with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements that takes effect from 25 May 2018.
6. The foresight of the Flintshire Families First programme (with the specific drive of the Senior Manager, Integrated Youth Provision, Ann Roberts, and the unequivocal support of the Flintshire Families First Management Board) to look to integrate as much as possible the future Families First programme with the EH Hub. In practical terms, this would permit families identified through EH Hub processes as likely to benefit from extra support having much speedier access to bespoke support and interventions and better coordinated support for those requiring multidisciplinary interventions.

It would also benefit Flintshire Families First by making more transparent that services are working with families envisaged by the Families First Programme Guidance May 2017 (which shifts Families First towards a more targeted service) and would provide commissioned services with more comprehensive information to guide their approaches to engaging and supporting the children, young people and families they work with.

Through tough decisions already taken by the Flintshire Families First Management Board there was fiscal room to reorganise the Team Around the Family (TAF) team. The TAF coordinator had previously been a 3-day per week role, but a new role of EH Hub coordinator with responsibilities for the TAF Team and the EH Hub coordination and decision-making was made full time (for a pilot period of one year).

7. Agreement across the multiagency arrangements about having a 'soft launch' to test processes and begin a progressive move towards co-location of staff from across multiagency services. Within this, key features included:
- Identifying and making available office space (generously made possible by Community and Enterprise Senior Manager, Katie Clubb), having this fitted out and relocating staff (was finalised by June 2017);
 - Using a single IM for sharing information and recording key elements of the family journey (coordinated by the project support officer and involving IT departments from different partners, the PARIS lead within the Council and other colleagues from within Children's Services) (was finalised by June 2017, with tweaking of processes since that time);
 - Agreement about a single integrated referral form that would encourage referrers to consider ACEs, what matters to the family and would mean all referrals would be initially actioned through the Children's Services Front Door (unless specifically identified as an EH Hub referral) so any safeguarding/care and support needs would be immediately addressed.

⁶ This has also been integrated into the standard referral form for access to support the Early Help Hub in Flintshire or other types of support available through Children's Services directorates in North Wales.

This would also mean that families with needs not likely to be best met by statutory Children's Services and with evidence of two or more ACEs could safely transfer to the EH Hub decision maker to initiate EH Hub processes i.e. families that would otherwise have been NFA would have an offer of bespoke information or other relevant support.

- Agreement for a series of events to enable clear and consistent communication to the wider workforce that interacts with children, young people and families in Flintshire about the purpose of the EH Hub, its benefits for families and professionals and how referrals can be made (these were scheduled for September and November 2017).

2.2 From July 2017- March 2018

From mid July 2017 when the soft launch began, there are **NO** instances where families with 2+ ACEs and where their needs would not be otherwise be met through statutory Children's Services have not been offered bespoke information, guidance and support.

In the period July- December 2017, that is 429 families that would previously have had no further action being offered bespoke advice, guidance and support.

This includes 5 families for whom EH Hub information-sharing processes have enabled a better understanding of risk and so a safeguarding response has taken place; and a further 11 families also accessing support through other statutory Children's Services teams.

2.2.1 What happens at the EH Hub and what does demand look like

The EH Hub currently comprises a full-time coordinator/decision maker managed by FCC Children's Services (who manages the TAF team with key workers that are part of the wider service response for families with multiple needs⁷) and multidisciplinary staff with sufficient seniority to make resourcing decisions on behalf of their service/agency.

In the initial period July 2017- March 2018, there is a mix of staff that are either co-located for some of the week or work remotely (checking the central IM system for new referrals, gathering and sharing intelligence and making recommendations about potential support that could be offered to the family through the IM system and 1:1 with the EH Hub coordinator), then attending a twice weekly professionals meeting to discuss cases where the decision maker would find value in a wider multiagency discussion to inform decision-making.

Currently, approximately 94% of cases considered by the EH Hub come as referrals to the Children's Services Front Door (rather than as a direct referral to the EH Hub). In the period July 2017- January 2018, the EH Hub has considered 535 referrals (an average of 76 per month) and currently has a 11% re-referral rate (i.e. 59 of 535 had been considered

⁷ As noted earlier, this is a one-year pilot post as part of the initial implementation of the EH Hub.

previously). Of these 535 families:

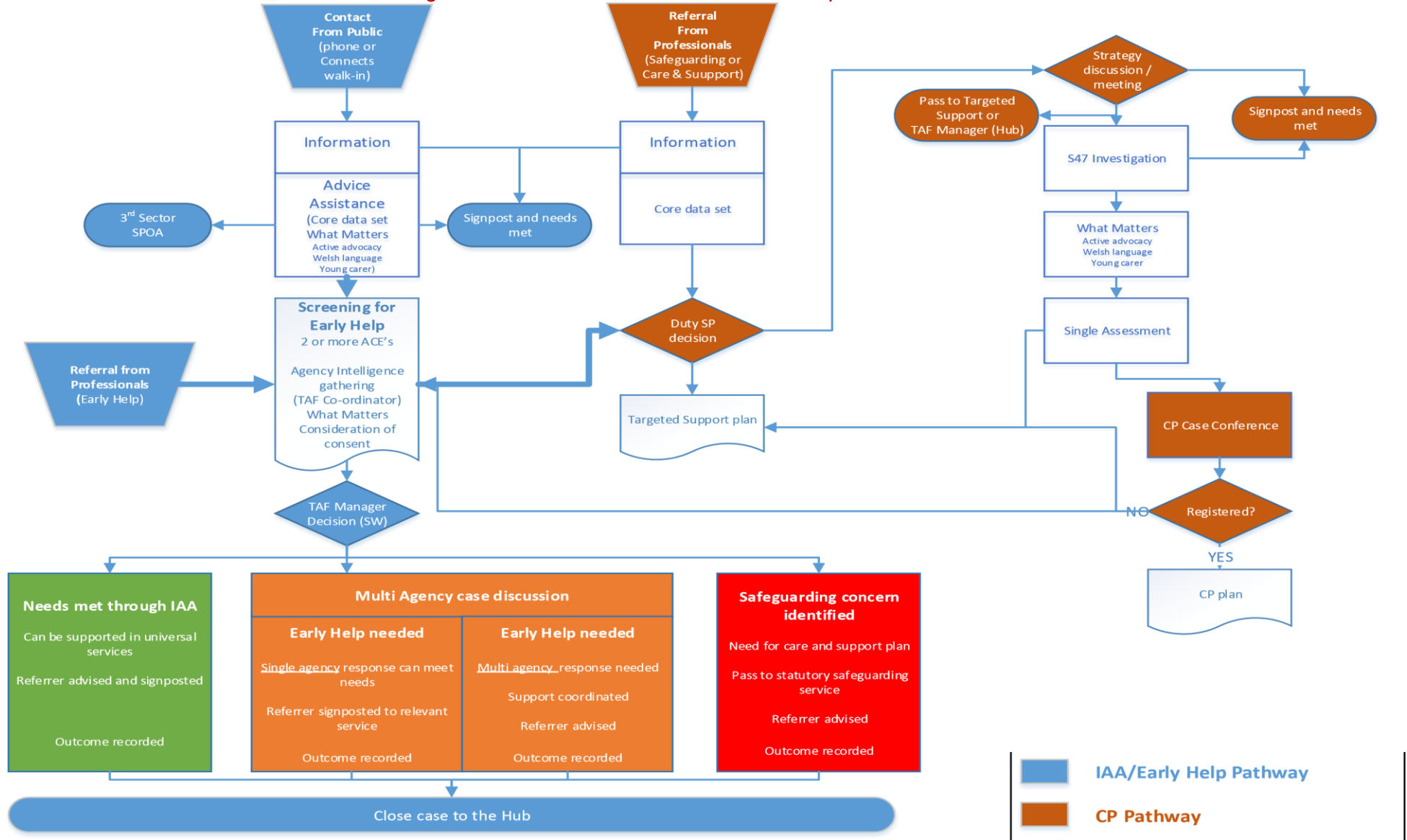
- 80 families have been offered information (on Table Two, this is needs met via IAA)
- 274 families have been offered advice and support from a single agency (on Table Two this is needs met through multiagency discussion)
- 100 families have been offered key worker support to intervene and coordinate multiagency inputs (on Table Two this is needs met through multiagency discussion)
- 5 families are having a safeguarding response, with the remaining 76 families in process (i.e. information-gathering and decision-making processes are in progress)

The profile of services allocated to offer support to the family to date, reflects largely the aim of introducing potential support to the family (given a consequence of referrals mainly coming to the Children's Service Front Door, is that initial consent has generally not been secured by the family). This is changing and by the time of EH Hub professionals' meetings in March 2018, most cases have families who have confirmed consent. Across July 2017- January 2018, the main services allocated to offer support are:

- BCUHB (98 or 14 per month). This is largely health visiting, school nursing and CAMHS, but has included other health services too.
- Education (60 or 8.6 per month). This is mainly support that might be offered through relevant staff at a secondary or primary school.
- Police (59 or 8.5 per month). This relates to following up with families, on cases where the Police had raised an initial CID16 (and no consent to share was provided) and making an offer of support to the family. This is genuinely innovative practice and has included close collaboration with the FLVC information officer so that the North Wales Police offers the family the option of talking through with an independent voluntary sector officer relevant community resources to meet their needs (22 families were followed up by the FLVC information officer from the North Wales Police introduction in the period September 2017- January 2018).
- Teulu Cyfan (46 or 6.6 per month) which offer bespoke parenting support and interventions.
- Housing (36 or 5.1 per month) which has tended to relate to housing officers making the offer of wider support for the family.
- TAF (27 or 3.8 per month) which provides key worker support to coordinate access to support for families with multiple needs.
- Family Information Service (23 or 3.3 per month) which offers wide-ranging information and advice relevant to children, young people and families.

Other services include Women's Aid (13), Parenting/Flying Start (13), Children's First Contact (11), Youth Justice Service (6), Family Support Service (5), Family Group Meetings (5), Action for Children (3) and Active 4-16 (1). There are also 22 'other' allocations made.

Table Two: EH Hub referral, decision-making and information and/or service activation process



2.2.2 Who is at the EH Hub and how support is brokered

There has been a progressive increase through this period of staff co-location. This is a fundamental design principle consistent with the evidence base about what works best⁸. as it helps make processes of information-sharing more dynamic and so permits faster decisions outside of the twice weekly professionals meeting (which given intelligence gathering processes can be more than one week after a referral has been received by the EH Hub coordinator).

Since inception in July 2017, North Wales Police (2-3 days per week), FCC Children's Services First Contact and TAF have been co-located. Since October 2017, staff from BCUHB (part funded by Flintshire Families First in this initial period), Community and Enterprise (covering Supporting People and wider Housing/Revenue and Benefits), Family Group Meetings and the FLVC information officer (funded through Flintshire Families First) who can help broker wider voluntary and community sector support for families have progressively been co-located, for at least some of the week too.

Education, Youth Justice, Flying Start, Teulu Cyfan (funded through Flintshire Families First) and the Family Information Service (FIS) tend to work remotely and attend professionals' meetings, albeit from April 2018 there will be co-location of Education and Parenting (as part of more integration of Flintshire Families First within the EH Hub). From October 2017, review work found it was not necessary for the FIS to participate in professionals' meetings. As a result, the FIS picks up allocations to offer information and advice to families and continue to participate in the Operational Group.

The team expands from April 2018, when the newly commissioned Families First programme is implemented. This will co-locate a minimum of 3 x 0.6 FTE team leaders (delivered over 5 days)- one from each of Parenting, Young People (which includes Education) and Disability workstreams. These team leaders act as focal points for services within each workstream. Their role includes prioritising and activating a service response from across the consortia (and within two working days of decision-making within the EH Hub), as well as making sure that information-sharing, feedback and reporting processes are adhered to (including updating systems in relation to whether engagement with families is successful and the extent to which outcomes are achieved through work with families).

This mirrors the approach taken by existing partners within the EH Hub. For example, a decision may be for a single agency service response where a Supporting People provider that supports victims of domestic abuse is the priority, in which case the EH Hub Communities and Enterprise representative takes that forward with the Supporting People provider to offer the service to the family. Alternatively, a child's school may be better placed to offer support (at least initially) to the family. The EH Hub Education representative shares relevant information and takes that forward with the school. And so on with other agencies linking to other services within their main networks/spheres of influence. The EH Hub members similarly have duties in respect of information-sharing, relevant feedback to referrers and parties sharing information and to update systems.

⁸ See for example Home Office, *Multi-Agency Working and Information-sharing Project Early Findings*, July 2013 and Local Government Association and ADCS, *Integrated Working: Development Demonstrators Briefing Paper 7*, 2013

In this way, the EH Hub is not solely about the agencies that are co-located or attend professionals' meetings; it's about their connections to other services. For example, the BCUHB representative has unlocked support from mental health services and substance and alcohol misuse services.

To support this, a significant workforce development initiative took place in September and November 2017 in which 308 multidisciplinary managers and practitioners participated. This is in addition to bespoke workforce development initiatives that have taken place within agencies (such as briefings for neighbourhood teams conducted by North Wales Police, presentations to the Flintshire headteachers forum by FCC senior managers and the project support officer, presentations by the FLVC CEO to community sector events, team meetings of health visitors and school nurses etc.)

The results of the workforce briefings were largely very positive about understanding EHH purpose, benefits and processes. This is reflected in feedback provided by 74 attendees⁹. In summary:

- Close to 19 in 20 attendees 'definitely' understand how ACEs contribute to poor life chance outcomes;
- Most attendees 'definitely' understand the purpose of the EH Hub, how every family will have a service response, how they can make referrals using the referral form and how to signpost families to the Family Information Service, with 18-19 in every 20 attendees 'definitely' or 'mainly' clear about all these aspects;
- Close to half of all attendees 'definitely' understand how the EH Hub will improve information-sharing and will result in improved access to support for families with 2 ACEs but who do not meet thresholds for a social services intervention. 17 in every 20 attendees are 'definitely' or 'mainly' clear about all these aspects; and
- 2 in 5 attendees 'definitely' feel they can explain the EH Hub to families that might benefit with 4 in 5 attendees 'definitely' or 'mainly' confident.

2.3 And from April 2018

From April 2018: there will be significantly more co-location to inform speedier information-sharing/ decision-making and offers of support to families. As noted above, even more integration with Flintshire Families First will take place. In relation to Families First, the agencies forming part of the consortia are:

Parenting: Y Teulu Cyfan (lead contractor and will co-locate 5 FTE days at the EHH)

- Direct interventions/key working with parents and families, including evidence-based parenting programmes, using whole-family working model by **Y Teulu Cyfan**. The service has partnerships with Action for Children, CAMHS, Active 4-16, Community Parents, CAIS, drug and alcohol team, DASU etc. in relation to support needs a family

⁹ See Appendix Two for more details

may have with domestic violence, mental health, alcohol and substance misuse etc.

- **Y Teulu Cyfan** will also have a specialist post working with parents of adolescents
 - They coordinate the delivery of Challenging Years/Take 3 and will be a direct link for the consortia to provision such as schools, Youth Justice, SORTED and projects funded through the Young People contract.
- **Action for Children** will provide key working, information, advice and assistance and therapeutic interventions to families where emerging difficulties are related to 2 or more ACEs. Action for Children will also provide 1:1 counselling for adults.
- **Family Group Meetings** service
- **Homestart** volunteer staff (**working with Community Parents and Adult Services**) will offer an intensive exit support for parents from key-working done by Y Teulu Cyfan and Action for Children.
- **Parenting Strategy** supports services in their work with parents, to embed the delivery of evidence based and evidence informed practice and interventions.

Young People: Action for Children (lead contractor with a representative who represents 'Education' that will co-locate 3 FTE days across 5 days at the EHH)

- An **Education** worker to be present in the hub for 0.6 FTE for 5 days/ week. This worker will link to Education Welfare Officers and 80 schools within Flintshire and to the rest of the Young People's consortia in relation to the EHH.
- **Action for Children-** targeted 1:1 key working and other group work for young carers and those at risk of/have survived CSE; and targeted 1:1 key working and other group work, including family interventions for young people who live in homes where 2+ ACEs.

Action for Children will also in partnership with NSPCC, train staff in Flintshire in an early intervention model working with young people who are presenting behaviours that could indicate abuse, but where no disclosure has been made. They will fund an additional part-time post in Flintshire for two years to work on this programme to be evaluated by Bristol University.

- **Resilience Project-** 1:1 work with young people (aged to 25) to re-engage with education, volunteering, work experience and employment opportunities via emotional/practical support, C.V. preparation, job applications, interview techniques, plus transport to/from interviews (and clothes for interviews). This includes access to accredited training to re-engage young people with education from Agored Cymru.
- **Aura-** volunteering pathway for young volunteers e.g. coaching and mentoring for other young people, Kidz Fit sessions, 5x60 programme, Dragon Sports, community camps, leisure centres, working as part of holiday programmes, sports events and local clubs.

- **FLVC-** volunteer coordination and volunteer initiation classes/taster sessions, connection to wider voluntary and community sector opportunities/resources.

Disability: Action for Children (lead contractor and will co-locate 3 FTE days across 5 days at the EHH)

- **Action for Children-** 1:1 and group provision for families with disabled children/young people to navigate services, build confidence, understand/take up relevant financial assistance/benefits. This includes targeted key working.
- **Daffodils-** working in a whole family approach, Daffodils offer 1:1, group/peer support and social opportunities for parents, disabled children and young people and families.
- **AURA-** disabled people aged 4-16 accessing sport and leisure opportunities in mainstream settings; and supported volunteering opportunities (as above).
- **FCC Play-** buddy support to disabled children/young people aged 12 -25 years to access summer play scheme and leisure services (and support independence).
- **Groundwork-** disabled young people and their families having opportunities to engage with green spaces and wider peer support and a 1:1 employability mentor.
- **Brokerage Service,** with an officer to help facilitate effective transitions on 1:1 basis for young disabled people moving into adulthood; as well as offer wider support for parents with disabled children to access social opportunities.

3. Key learning

3.1 The Early Help Hub is not just a good strategic fit, it is becoming more so

In interviews, representatives of the Strategic Group and the Operational Group reported that the original conception of the EH Hub as offering an opportunity to drive a more innovative, cost effective approach to early intervention and reduce demand for high cost statutory services remains as relevant as ever; if anything, more so. This is reinforced by:

- The new inspection framework for Local Government Education Services (since September 2017) which explicitly identifies as one of three domains within Section 2, Quality of Education Services, Support for Vulnerable Learners.
- The centrality of strong multi-sectoral partnerships within the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 and in FCC's strategic priorities about 'community resilience' with a specific focus on expectations to increasingly support families build resilience and wellbeing through accessing opportunities within local communities.
- Care Inspectorate Wales (formerly CSSIW) recommendations about establishing more integrated, early intervention support for children, young people and families through greater partnership work and information-sharing in 2015; and how at that time there was limited connectivity between the Children's Services Front Door, statutory provision and the wider early help provision. There is a strong and consistent view amongst interviewees working within statutory Children's Services that the EH Hub is significantly contributing towards addressing that challenge presented by inspectors (and developed further through the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014).
- The *Police and Crime Plan 2017-2022* sets priorities in respect of domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, modern day slavery, organised crime groups and safer neighbourhoods. As Superintendent Sian Beck notes '*focusing on early intervention fits in all those priorities and in the longer term, will help demand reduction.*'
- This has been reinforced by the joint agreement in February 2018, by the Association of Directors of Public Health, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Clinks, College of Policing, Faculty of Public Health, Local Government Association, Nacro, National Association for Voluntary and Community Action, National Police Chiefs' Council, NHS England, Public Health England, and the Royal Society for Public Health to work together and to intervene early to address the common factors that bring people into contact with the police and criminal justice system and which lead to poor health and improve public safety and reduce crime¹⁰

3.2 Key events in the journey so far

Amongst members of the Strategic Group particularly, the extent to which there has been **the support and buy in of senior leaders from across the multiagency partnership.**

¹⁰ See New Policing, Health and Social Care Consensus (Feb 2018)

This was reflected, for example, in:

- The positive support by FCC Cabinet Members;
- The willingness of the PSB to commit to a new approach further to the deep-dive research/ business case involving 29 families;
- The decision of the PSB to invest in strategic advisory support and project support. The support provided by George Selvanera and Natalie Moore was rated in many interviews as essential to *'helping drive the Hub forward'*, *'keeping us on track'* and *'we needed support to make this happen even if the will was there'* given the challenges *'of the day job'* for all partner agencies which could well have risked the project being delivered; and
- Supportive visits to the EH Hub by senior leaders including the Chief Constable, North Wales Police, the Chief Officer-Social Services, the Chief Officer-Education and shortly the Public Health Wales/All Wales Police leads responsible for implementing the £6.87m Police Transformation Fund initiative about transforming the way in which police and partner agencies deal with the most vulnerable people in society¹¹. The Children's Commissioner will also officially launch the EH Hub (as it opens more widely to self-referrals by families) in June 2018.

Across interviews with Strategic and Operational Group members, consistently **the EH Hub becoming operational in July 2017 with an EHH coordinator and the twice weekly professionals' meeting** were identified as 'key events'. The twice weekly meetings were reported as a tangible hook with which to encourage greater co-location and resource alignment to the EH Hub.

Aligned to operationalising the EH Hub, several interviewees highlighted as significant events, **key infrastructure that was implemented to support partnership working**, described by Senior Manager, Children and Workforce, Craig McLeod, as *'quiet enablers that can be massive blockers'*. These include:

- The common IM system for recording elements of the families' journey.
- The WASPI
- Performance monitoring reports that help establish the demand profile and activity of the EH Hub
- Making available administrative support

As noted earlier, **the foresight of the Flintshire Families First programme** (with the specific drive of the Senior Manager, Integrated Youth Provision, Ann Roberts, and the unequivocal support of the Flintshire Families First Management Board) to look to connect the Families First programme with the EH Hub as much as possible.

Several interviewees also reported that **the wider workforce communication and engagement programme**, were key events in helping raise the profile of the EH Hub and

¹¹ <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/news/46584>

'taking a project that people were increasingly hearing about but weren't entirely sure what it meant' with the wider workforce that interact with children, young people and families. This included the events held in September and November 2017 (see Appendix One for findings) as well as briefings to multidisciplinary managers within FCC, the Flintshire headteachers forum and presentations by the FLVC CEO at community sector events

3.3 What has worked well?

The most recurring reflections about what has worked well are:

- As Service Manager, Children's Services, Ray Dickson said **'the personalities'**. Interviewees consistently observe that a strongly committed group of people stayed working at this, notwithstanding the pressures of existing workloads. They did this because of a shared drive and belief in wanting to deliver on a common goal for the benefit of children, young people and families of Flintshire and to help reduce demand in the medium to longer term on public services.

One result of this has been a very clear 'multiagency' focus to the development of the EH Hub. Several interviewees made comments such as *'no one agency took over'*, *'no one was territorial'* and there exists *'a willingness for people to do their bit but feel okay to let it go and let it evolve'*.

- **The multiagency governance arrangements led by North Wales Police**, with consistency of meetings on a 4-6 weeks basis ever since. This evidenced the extent to which the North Wales Police was committed to this initiative and to partnership working more generally; which, in turn, was identified as helping encourage more participation by partners and spurred innovative partnerships such as closer work between Housing and the North Wales Police and the joint work involving North Wales Police and the FLVC information officer (funded through Families First) to offer families', where the Police had previously attended 'an incident', bespoke, community-based support.
- **Information-sharing and co-location**, albeit that the latter is not fully there yet and has been happening on a more incremental basis. All interviewees recognise that more co-location (such as happens during professionals' meetings and often on these meeting days) remains the ambition as it delivers significantly more dynamic informal information-sharing and decision-making which helps with supporting families faster. Three results of the much better information-sharing that interviewees identified are:
 - Significantly better knowledge amongst multiagency, multidisciplinary practitioners about the wide-ranging support available across the statutory and voluntary and community sector within Flintshire.
 - More comprehensive understanding of the needs and experiences of families that helps EH Hub members frame more appropriate offers of support to families, including whether a child/ren is likely unsafe and so a safeguarding or another statutory intervention might be more relevant; and

- Through better understanding of the needs and circumstances of families, this is helping practitioners that work directly with children, young people and families better understand any specific risks or concerns relevant to children and young people for instance. This, in turn, is helping with safety planning for staff (e.g. health visitors that are lone workers attending family homes).
- **Partnership working**, with a consistent view of EH Hub members of significant improvement in the operation of the EH Hub since an earlier review conducted in September 2017. In interviews, many described the positives in relation to '*trust*', '*not afraid to challenge*', '*the Hub discussion*' '*people work well together*', '*it's fantastic the partnership working*' and '*we feel like a team now*'. This was leading to service innovation (e.g. the joint work of North Wales Police and FLVC). better and more consistent understanding of the impact of ACEs and service transformation (e.g. proactive relationship building with families at greater risk to support their accessing relevant support rather than more traditional models of waiting for families to seek support for themselves).

In several interviews, the **increased co-location and engagement of BCUHB** representatives in the EH Hub was also reported as enhancing the quality of information-sharing and decision-making, with health practitioners recognised as playing an especially useful conduit to introducing support to families with greater levels of need. Moreover, the greater involvement of BCUHB is helping unlock access to wider health services, although this remains work very much in progress too. It was also acknowledged that the **increased co-location and engagement of Community and Enterprise** and **Education** is also helping improve the quality of information-sharing and decision-making and scope for more appropriate actions too.

In several interviews, there was a recognition that there is a **growing confidence in contacting families to offer support** and that doing this quickly, yields positive results in building relationships and engaging families in support.

3.4 What has been more challenging? And how have these been overcome?

The most recurring reflections about what has been more challenging are:

- **Challenges of capacity**- all Strategic and Operational Group agency representatives have contributed their own management time, staffing and other resources from within existing (and reducing) resources to the development and implementation of the EH Hub. This could mean sometimes personnel changing and so there would be revisiting of previous discussions and decisions, some partners would take longer to deliver on commitments than originally conceived etc.

However, these challenges were also recognised in interviews as largely overcome (see next point), although it was noted in several interviews that work to have a **dedicated budget for staff to be co-located at the EH Hub on an ongoing basis (which includes some administrative support)** must be a priority moving forward for statutory

partners and will contribute to the EH Hub sustainability into the long term.

- **Senior commitment not always translating into middle management operationalisation** Like the challenges of limited capacity, interviewees recognised that these challenges were mainly overcome. The primary reasons provided for this were:
 - The quality of the multiagency governance arrangements with regular, effectively chaired meetings that helped build trust and honesty, encouraged accountability, reinforced commitments and agreed processes and a focus for the Strategic Group particularly in seeing the role as one of trouble-shooting and unblocking rather than overseeing.
 - The high degree of support and commitment that exists.
 - Persistence and a willingness to keep moving forward where it was possible to, so for example not waiting until all services could co-locate to start the EH Hub, not deprioritising and cancelling EH Hub professionals' discussion meetings because some services had not completed their research task etc.
 - The way in which Families First was able to lever greater partner involvement and ensure that there was capacity for services to be offered and to encourage innovation. From April 2018, this will be enhanced even further.
 - The involvement of a strategic adviser and project support officer to enhance capacity.
- **Different understanding about the contributions of different roles/services within and aligned to the EH Hub.** While there has been significant improvement in mutual understanding by EH Hub members about different services and what they offer, this is a work in progress. For example, there was less engagement with services outside the EH Hub than had been envisaged, there is scope to improve EH Hub members understanding about decision-making processes at the Children's Front Door and the role of different teams within Children's Services and there was less utilisation by agencies of the FLVC information officer (North Wales Police an exception) than had been envisaged.

In discussing how these challenges have been or are being overcome, there is a strong view that this will increasingly be dealt with as significantly more co-location starts from April 2018. This will help informal information-sharing and communication, as will involving more Front Door decision makers within professionals' discussion meetings.

Within this context, there is also more to do in equipping the workforce with knowledge about how the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 transforms social services within Wales. Plans for strengthening 'step-down' processes from statutory Children's Services so that families that will benefit from extra support to sustain positive outcomes and build resilience and wellbeing have access to targeted support (which will include from agencies/services that work as part of the EH Hub), once risk to child safety is better

managed, will help with this. As this takes shape, workforce development initiatives will focus on helping equip the wider workforce with outcomes-focused approaches to working alongside families that have multiple and complex needs.

- **Takes time to gather information for some EH Hub members.** This was an issue for different EH Hub members in different ways, while for some members such as North Wales Police, TAF, Youth Justice, Children's Services and for some elements (but not all) of Community and Enterprise, this is not a challenge.

However, Flying Start and BCUHB EH Hub members have not been able to gain access to the IM other than when present at the EH Hub office. That said, the Flying Start and BCUHB EH Hub members have devised a manual process for doing so which largely works very well. Often the experience shared through the interviews, is that the phone call with the school nurse or health visitor will generally provide insight because often if the family does have greater needs, primary health care professionals will be involved and know the child or the family. This is even more so with Flying Start health visitors.

It was noted that Education has a related challenge associated with research involving schools (and with 80 schools where children and young people may be attending in Flintshire (to say nothing of out of county schools), so with some similarities to BCUHB challenges too). Nonetheless, several interviewees noted this should improve substantially by having an Education representative co-located in the EH Hub as part of the Flintshire Families First Young People's provision for 5 days per week (0.6 FTE days) from April.

- **While all families have had an offer of support, sometimes this has taken longer than expected.** For parents/carers interviewed as part of preparing this report, they were clear that in terms of service design they strongly value a phone call within a couple days of referral to simply indicate that the referral is being considered and that it may be another fortnight before they are contacted to introduce the assistance. The Strategic Group has accepted and is taking forward this recommendation as part of the next stage of developing the EH Hub.
- **Delays with marketing collateral** to help practitioners introduce the EH Hub to families (and other services) was noted in several interviews and survey feedback as challenging; and has limited some practitioners and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) willingness to reach out to families. The Strategic Group has accepted and is taking forward this recommendation as part of the next stage of developing the EH Hub.

3.5. What have been impacts of the Early Help Hub so far?

3.5.1 In relation to core objectives

There was a consistent view that objectives for reduced demand on high cost public services and improved outcomes such as reduced crime and antisocial behaviour, better health, educational attainment, financial literacy and more secure tenancies would not be expected to have occurred within just over nine months from the first operationalisation of the EH Hub. Nonetheless, there is also a strong view that these objectives are met to varying degrees:

- Greater ability to identify potential vulnerability, enabling more preventative action to be taken, dealing with problems before these become entrenched and building family wellbeing and resilience.
- Closer partnership working, clearer accountability and less duplication of effort (fully met in relation to closer partnership working, but too early yet to indicate with respect to clearer accountability and reduced duplication of effort.
- Where better information-sharing within the EH Hub identifies potential safeguarding concerns, these are actioned in line with relevant procedures. (fully met)
- Better quality referrals to Children's Services as measured by reduced CP referrals and fewer NFAs (no further action) by Children's Services and NW Police (partly met with some excellent work being spearheaded by the Community and Enterprise EH Hub member to help her Housing Solutions colleagues consider whether a referral is for the EH Hub or statutory Children's Services and the start of direct EH Hub referrals from police officers and PCSOs as a result of the excellent work of the North Wales Police EH Hub member, see also next paragraph).

There are signs the EH Hub is contributing to reduced NFAs (down to 34% for October-December 2017) and early and tentative signs that the EHH is contributing to reduced re-referrals of cases to the Children's Services Front Door.

It is only tentative but indicated as possible in several interviews with Strategic and Operational Group members because there are short waiting lists and more manageable caseloads within statutory Children's Services which have arisen because of: (a) referral routes to the EH Hub are clear; and (b) social work teams are increasingly developing a more holistic understanding of family needs and making more use of community-based provision as they become more knowledgeable and confident about this provision, because of experience engaging with the EH Hub.

3.5.2 Creating new ways of working

Throughout interviews, multiple examples were shared about how the experience of the EH Hub is stimulating new ways of working, changes to practice.

- The report has drawn attention to the **innovative practices of North Wales Police following up with families to offer support including connecting them with the FLVC information officer;**
- **Community and Enterprise senior officers describe how they intend progressing work for an EH Hub related to homelessness prevention** with partners such as RSLs and Supporting People providers, given the gains they have identified from their engagement with the EH Hub. The senior officers identify that having a Community and Enterprise EH Hub member also enhances knowledge about relevant needs/risks when a family is at risk of homelessness and so ensure a wider pool of resources may be

available (both to help sustain the family's tenancy and address other family needs).

- **Services are changing as they need to focus on engaging and building a relationship with a family more likely to need support, rather than wait for the family to be ready to be supported and then work with them.** This is challenging for services and in one EH Hub member interview, for example, the interviewee described how working as part of the EH Hub is driving that change for her service and it is not entirely comfortable. It does mean that there can be higher rates of non-engagement than the service is used to but at the same time, the engagement and relationship building time (e.g. with phone calls, sending out a leaflet etc.) is hugely valuable, as it means that families are already being supported and feel supported (even if it isn't '*with an intervention*') and so will engage and engage well, once they are ready.

This theme was echoed in two other interviews. As one EH Hub members notes '*there is a growing confidence about ringing people up and offering support*' as staff have become more knowledgeable and understood that engagement and relationship building with families is key.

3.6. Where to next

3.6.1 The near future

Throughout the interviews, there is a strong sense of an even brighter next chapter for the EH Hub; especially from April 2018 as even more integration with Flintshire Families First takes place. This will have several effects:

- A 5-day per week EH Hub will be operational which creates the room for the EH Hub to accept direct referrals from families.
- A far wider pool of voluntary and statutory services can be actioned to offer support (and significantly more quickly) to families (which will also address a worry expressed by several EH Hub members about too much reliance on at least one service which has had the effect of slowing down access to support- see section 3).
- A far wider pool of services will be able to offer key worker support (i.e. the type of coordination which has formally been undertaken by the TAF team) in addition to the provision of bespoke interventions.
- Greater understanding about a wider range of services to meet the needs of children, young people and families in Flintshire for all those agencies/services actively engaged with the EH Hub.
- Greater capacity for Education/schools involvement.
- As noted earlier, this also helps Flintshire Families First focus support on those families with greater levels of need, as expected by the Welsh Government.

This will bring more change, more dynamism, more voluntary sector involvement, and enhance knowledge about available services more.

3.6.2 The future beyond

The Police Transformation Fund initiative within its successful submission to the Home Office, sets out a commitment to evaluate the EH Hub. North Wales Police identify this as an important lever for learning and to help influence similar practice outside Flintshire.

It was also noted in several Strategic Group and Operational Group interviews that examining more how EH Hub could integrate further with other initiatives such the SPOA and multiagency panels related to young people should be considered; especially given the EH Hub provides the one multiagency panel that takes a whole family perspective, involves the most diverse group of multiagency partners and resources are tight and tightening.

Several interviewees also posited that in the medium term it may be useful for the EH Hub to be located as part of the wider community sector- or somewhere different to its current home with line management of the EH Hub coordinator through Children's Services- as part of helping demonstrate the EH Hub is about the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 in action.

From May 2018, the FLVC CEO will take the lead of the EH Hub Strategic Group which starts developing that agenda and make for especially interesting future chapters in the Flintshire EH Hub story and are a natural extension to the innovative partnership working involving the voluntary and community sector in Flintshire.

Appendix One: Methodology

Interviews were conducted with 8 parents/carers and 23 people from across the multiagency partnership.

- Ann Roberts, Senior Manager, Integrated Youth Provision, FCC
- Ann Woods, CEO, FLVC
- Claire Green, Children's Services Assistant, Community & Enterprise, FCC
- Claire Homard, Chief Officer, Education & Youth, FCC
- Craig McLeod, Senior Manager, Children & Workforce, FCC
- Diane Jackson, Manager, Flying Start Health, & EH Hub member, BCUHB
- Gail Bennett, Manager, Early Years & Family Support, FCC
- Helen Williams, Manager, Supporting People, Community & Enterprise, FCC
- Janet Owen, Information Officer, FLVC & EH Hub member (until Feb 2018)
- Kate Howard, SPOA coordinator, FLVC & EH Hub member 1 day/week (from Feb 2018)
- Karen Edwards, Team Manager, Children's First Contact, FCC
- Kerry Smith-Williams, Sergeant & EH Hub Member, North Wales Police
- Lesley Bayley, EH Hub Member, BCUHB
- Natalie Moore, Senior Practitioner, Children's Services & EH Hub Project Support Officer
- Natalie Woodworth, EH Hub/ TAF coordinator
- Ray Dickson, Service Manager, Children's Services, FCC
- Rebecca Cunningham, Senior Practitioner, Youth Justice Service, FCC & EH Hub member
- Ruth Harris, Business Support Officer, EH Hub
- Samantha Greatbanks, Manager, Teulu Cyfan & EH Hub member
- Sharon McCairn, A/g Superintendent, North Wales Police (Operational Group Chair)
- Sian Beck, Superintendent, North Wales Police (Strategic Group Chair)
- Suzanne Mazzone, Manager, Housing Solutions & Support Services, Community & Enterprise, FCC

In addition, review work was conducted of:

- A survey completed by 7 co-located staff members;
- Consideration of performance data from July 2017- January 2018
- Attendance at a Hub professionals' meeting in March 2018

There is also included here the feedback that was provided during the initial six multiagency workforce briefings conducted across September 2017 and a further three workforce briefings conducted in November 2017; and a survey completed by 74 attendees from the workforce briefings held in September and November 2017;

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JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 24 th May 2018
Report Subject	Childcare Offer for Wales, Flintshire
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services; and Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services); and Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of the 30 Hour Childcare Offer for Wales is to mitigate against the effects of poverty on outcomes for children and reduce inequalities. The provision of high-quality early education and childcare is central to the Welsh Government's 'Building a Brighter Future', the 10 Year Plan which sets out the Government's commitment to improve the life chances and outcomes of all children in Wales.

This report provides an update on the funded Childcare Offer for Wales in Flintshire.

It provides an update on the following:

- All Flintshire Childcare Offer
- Latest update figures of the Childcare Offer for Wales, Flintshire
- Development and rollout of the online Childcare Offer for Wales, Flintshire Provider Portal.
- Partnership with other Authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members scrutinise and endorse the progress made to full roll out of the Childcare Offer in Flintshire.
2	Members endorse the proposed cross-county delivery plan.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	BACKGROUND
1.01	The Welsh Government undertakes by the end of the current Welsh Assembly in 2021 to provide working parents with up to 30 hours of government-funded childcare and early education for 3 and 4 year olds for up to 48 weeks of the year. This includes up to 9 weeks of up to 30 hours funded childcare within the school holiday period, with the aim of supporting families with quality, flexible and affordable care. It will also support economic regeneration and reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, reducing a family's risk of poverty. It is also helping to sustain and remodel the childcare sector.
1.02	The development and delivery of the Offer is a joint partnership between Early Years and Family Support (Social Services), Early Entitlement and Nursery Provision (Education and Youth).
1.03	The Offer supports the wellbeing of children through positive and rich childhood experiences.
1.04	Financially the Offer can make a real difference to a family, of up to £5,535 per annum. Many parents have confirmed a return to work or an increase in working hours as a result of being in receipt of this Offer.
1.05	<u>Progress in Developing and Delivering the Childcare Offer for Wales, Flintshire</u> Since September 2017, Flintshire has been working with Welsh Government and six other local authorities across Wales to deliver the childcare offer through a phased approach. The Offer was initially tested within Bagillt, Broughton and Buckley as well as taking in a number of wards that also offered the Flying Start programme. There were two further expansions agreed with Welsh Government in November 2017 and January 2018. In November, the Offer was expanded to the whole of Holywell, Connah's Quay, and Flint and in January the areas of Higher Kinnerton, Hope and Caergwrle were added.
1.06	In March it was agreed with Welsh Government that the Offer could be rolled out to cover the whole of Flintshire from 1 May 2018. Applications were opened from 9 April for a May start. This has resulted in considerable take up across Flintshire. As of the 14 May 2018, the number of applications received is 853. Also, 177 childcare providers have registered to provide childcare through the Childcare Offer, with 31 of

	these providers based across local borders including Cheshire, Wrexham, and Denbighshire.
1.07	To assist providers to administer the Offer, an online Childcare Offer Provider Portal was launched April 2018. The Portal was developed in-house between the Childcare Team and IT Services. The portal provides a secure platform for completing and submitting claim forms and monitoring information to the Childcare Offer Team and it also speeds up payment to the provider. Positive feedback about the online portal from providers has been received. Providers think the system is easy to use and helps them in the management and administration of their setting. Payments are made directly to settings based upon 'booked' hours. Submission of actual used hours is provided at the end of the month to enable a comparison of used hours against booked hours to ensure value for money.
1.08	<p>The Welsh Government would like to expand the programme of early implementation, enabling the testing of the offer in as many authorities as possible before full roll-out.</p> <p>One of the possibilities being explored is that Flintshire will be the 'delivery authority' for the childcare offer on behalf of both Wrexham County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council. The Minister for Children and Social Care has agreed this approach and Flintshire has been asked to begin the formal arrangements to enable this to happen. It is anticipated delivery will begin in parts of Wrexham from September 2018 and in parts of Denbighshire from April 2019. This will need to include formal agreements between the authorities in line with internal processes. A business case has been provided to Welsh Government which is currently under consideration with an anticipated response in early June.</p> <p>Welsh Government has approached Flintshire to undertake this cross-border role because of the success of its delivery of the Childcare Offer and the very good systems that have been developed.</p>
1.09	<p>Under the model proposed above Flintshire would be responsible for: processing applications from parents across all three counties, determining their eligibility, agreeing terms with childcare providers and processing payments to them.</p> <p>It will be necessary to further develop the IT systems to expand the potential for other authorities to use the Flintshire developed system, with appropriate service level agreements. Through partnership with IT Services, three options have been provided to the Welsh Government for consideration.</p> <p>It is expected Wrexham and Denbighshire will be responsible for publicising the offer to parents and childcare providers within their communities, training their Family Information Service to deal with enquiries on the offer and to provide Flintshire with any information required. Separate grants will be provided to facilitate this when formal arrangements are agreed between Flintshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire.</p>

	<p>These grants will continue to be paid on a claims basis to ensure that the childcare element is fully funded by the Welsh Government.</p>
1.10	<p>With regards to the strategic roll-out of the Childcare Offer across the whole of Wales, Welsh Government wishes to make the process as uniform as possible and to achieve maximum value for money. The administration of the process has been driven by the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the process for applying for the offer should be as uniform as possible for parents; • the process for payments to childcare providers should be as straightforward as possible, particularly so if they are delivering childcare for parents from more than one local authority; • reducing the duplication of effort in developing systems and processes; • building on existing best practice and reducing the differences in approach across Wales; and • achieving economies of scale. <p>Welsh Government are in discussions with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) about the longer-term development of an on-line application process for parents to apply for the Childcare Offer and be checked for eligibility. This would also have the potential for childcare providers to receive payment. Using HMRC would minimise the cost to Welsh Government in the full roll out of the Childcare Offer.</p>

3.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
3.01	<p>There are no immediate financial implications for Flintshire County Council resulting from the 'the Offer' as this is a fully grant funded programme by the Welsh Government. The grant is administered by the local authority as the accountable body.</p> <p>Should in the future Welsh Government decide to end the scheme there may be some redundancy costs or reallocation of grants to cover posts.</p>
3.02	<p>The Welsh Government provided a budget for the administration of the offer locally for 2016/17 and has provided a budget for a further 18 months from April 2018. This is a separate grant to the payments to settings. There will also be a separate grant for working on behalf of Denbighshire and Wrexham.</p>
3.03	<p>The delivery of the Childcare Offer for Wales in Flintshire is largely digitally based. As such, traditional printing costs associated the application, processing, promoting and publicising the Childcare Offer are minimal, although a small budget associated with this activity is still required.</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	Locally, the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment continues to be completed annually, the results of which are used to plan to ensure sufficient childcare is available in all parts of Flintshire to meet demand for childcare and Foundation Phase education.
4.02	Regular provider events and 'surgeries' continue to be held by the Childcare Offer Team to ensure existing and new providers are kept up-to-date with the latest developments of the Offer and to ensure providers have an opportunity to feedback their experiences of the Offer to the Childcare Offer Team.
4.03	The Childcare Offer Advisory Group continues to meet regularly to support the development and delivery of the Offer in Flintshire. The Advisory group consists of representatives of CWLWM and Officers of the County.
4.04	The Welsh Government has commissioned NatCen Social Research (in partnership with Arad Research) to gather the views of settings who provide the offer and parents who receive the Offer. In May a letter and / or email containing a survey link and unique access code was sent to parents inviting parents complete a short 15 minute online survey. The information collected will help to improve early education and childcare in Wales.

5.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
5.01	<p>Risks to the project:</p> <p>Not having sufficient registered childcare settings to provide places for all eligible children in Flintshire and to meet the demand for other programmes including Flying Start and Foundation Phase education.</p> <p>There was originally concern that there would be a shortage of childcare provision during school holidays. To date, this concern has not been realised, although it will be continually monitored.</p> <p>Both situations are monitored.</p>

6.00	APPENDICES
6.01	None.

7.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
7.01	<p>None.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Gail Bennett Early Years and Family Support Manager</p> <p>Telephone: 01352 703953</p> <p>E-mail: gail.bennett@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	<p>The Childcare Offer for Wales: 30 hours of funded childcare and education for 3 and 4 year olds, in working families for 48 weeks a year.</p> <p>Working parents: both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family), with each parent earning, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage (NMW) or national living wage (NLW). Some of this is still to be defined as the work develops.</p> <p>Foundation Phase: the statutory curriculum for all 3 to 7 year olds in Wales, in both maintained and non-maintained settings.</p> <p>CIW: Care Inspectorate Wales.</p> <p>Childcare Sufficiency Assessments: A report that brings together a range of different data and information to develop a picture of the current childcare market and to identify whether there are any gaps in supply.</p> <p>Cwlwm: ‘Cwlwm’ is made up of five organisations with Mudiad Meithrin as the lead organisation. ‘Cwlwm’ organisations are Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids’ Clubs, Mudiad Meithrin, National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA Cymru), PACEY Cymru and Wales Pre-School Providers Association (Wales PPA).</p>