

Children and Families Committee

Agenda

Date:	Monday, 8th July, 2024
Time:	2.00 pm
Venue:	Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded and the recordings will be uploaded to the Council's website

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To note any apologies for absence from Members.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registerable interests, and non-registerable interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 3 - 12)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 June 2024.

For requests for further information

Contact: Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01270 686466

E-Mail: josie.lloyd@cheshireeast.gov.uk

4. **Public Speaking/Open Session**

In accordance with paragraph 2.24 of the Council's Committee Procedure Rules and Appendix on Public Speaking, set out in the [Constitution](#), a total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to put questions to the committee on any matter relating to this agenda. Each member of the public will be allowed up to two minutes each to speak, and the Chair will have discretion to vary this where they consider it appropriate.

Members of the public wishing to speak are required to provide notice of this at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

Petitions - To receive any petitions which have met the criteria - [Petitions Scheme Criteria](#), and falls within the remit of the Committee. Petition organisers will be allowed up to three minutes to speak.

5. **ILACS Improvement Plan** (Pages 13 - 20)

To consider the final version of the improvement plan to address the findings from the latest Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS). (**Appendix 1 and 2 to follow**).

6. **Work Programme** (Pages 21 - 24)

To consider the work programme and determine any required amendments.

Membership: Councillors R Bailey, M Beanland, S Bennett-Wake, J Bird, C Bulman (Chair), N Cook, M Edwards, E Gilman (Vice-Chair), G Hayes, B Posnett, B Puddicombe, J Saunders and G Smith

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children and Families Committee**
held on Monday, 3rd June, 2024 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor C Bulman (Chair)
Councillor E Gilman (Vice-Chair)

Councillors R Bailey, M Beanland, S Bennett-Wake, J Bird, B Posnett,
J Saunders, G Smith, J Clowes, G Marshall, J Snowball and M Edwards

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Claire Williamson, Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration
Andrea Stone, Interim Director of Family Help and Social Care
Gill Betton, Head of Children's Development and Partnerships
Alex Cooper, Project Manager - Education
Joe Carter, Project Manager
Simon Hodgkiss, Capital Development Officer
Janet Witkowski, Head of Legal
Nikki Wood-Hill, Lead Finance Partner
Jennie Summers, Legal Team Manager
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Cook, Cllr Hayes and Cllr Puddicombe. Cllr Marshall, Cllr Clowes and Cllr Snowball attended as substitutes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

Cllr Bennett-Wake declared that she worked at Puss Bank Primary School and had a close connection with Hurdsfield Primary School.

Cllr Beanland declared that he had previously worked with the academy auditors.

Cllr Bailey declared an interest as a food producer.

Cllr Bulman declared an interest in relation to item 7 which referenced a payment from Middlewich Town Council to Cheshire East towards a Youth Support Service. Cllr Bulman was a Middlewich ward member and the

Chair of a residents committee in Middlewich which ran the youth club. Cllr Bulman left the meeting for the duration of item 7.

Cllr Smith declared in relation to items 10 and 11 that he was a secretary for NASUWT. Cllr Smith left the meeting for the duration of items 10 and 11.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers present.

5 OFSTED INSPECTION FINDINGS

The committee received the report which set out the findings from the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) conducted in February and March 2024, the plans in place to improve services in relation to the findings, and monitoring arrangements from Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE).

The Executive Director of Children's Services introduced the report and reiterated apologies to the care experienced young people for whom the support and services were found to be inadequate. The Executive Director thanked the staff in Children and Families Services who were working to deliver the required improvements that had been identified and expressed the view that, while the findings were extremely disappointing, they were believed to be a positive catalyst for continued improvement and would be used to reflect, learn and move forward.

The committee raised questions and provided scrutiny in relation to the outcome.

It was queried whether the letter from the DfE had been received and whether the committee could have sight of it. It was confirmed that a draft letter had been received and officers were due to meet with the DfE to discuss. A copy of the letter in its final form could be shared with the committee.

Regarding the Improvement Board, it was noted that the DfE had advised that it was not normal practice for this to be a political meeting with member attendees, other than the committee Chair in her role as statutory lead member. It was requested that this advice be reviewed to consider the inclusion of another member of the committee.

The following members were nominated to sit on the Corporate Parenting Working Group:

- Cllr Rachel Bailey
- Cllr John Bird
- Cllr Jos Saunders
- Cllr Geoff Smith

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Committee:

Unanimously:

1. Note the inspection findings, implications for monitoring from Ofsted and the DfE, and plans to improve services

Unanimously:

2. Agree to hold a task and finish workshop for Children and Families committee on 2 July 2024 to review and scrutinise the draft improvement plan

By majority:

3. Agree to the onward referral of the improvement plan for approval at full Council on 17 July 2024

By majority:

4. Approve the terms of reference for the Improvement Board

By majority:

5. Agree the development of the terms of reference for the Corporate Parent Working Group and agree member membership

Unanimously:

6. Include in the committee's work programme receipt of assurance reports updating the committee on progress and impact measured against the agreed improvement plan, to all future meetings

6 UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE KEY AREAS OF THE DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024/25 TO 2030/31

The committee considered the report which outlined progress against the DSG management plan based on the outturn financial position 2023-24 and the relevant performance data of the January 2024 SEN2 DfE return, compared to the previous two years. The report acted as a baseline as the

committee began to receive regular monthly reporting, as agreed at the 29 April 2024 committee meeting.

There was a request for a short briefing paper to set out a summary and expected outcomes of the management plan, particularly to assist new members of the committee in their understanding.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Scrutinise the key areas of progress outlined in this report regarding the DSG Management plan 2024/25 to 2030/31 to achieve a balanced budget by 2030- 31
2. Note that this briefing report outlines the progress of the DSG management plan based on the outturn financial DSG high needs position and includes the relevant performance data of the January 2024 SEN2 DfE return, compared to the previous two years
3. Agree the monthly reporting schedule for committee to scrutinise progress against the plan
4. Approve the draft terms of reference for the SEND executive oversight panel. (Appendix 1)

7 FINAL OUTTURN 2023/24

The committee received the final outturn for the Children and Families services for the financial year 2023/24.

Officers reported that there was an error in paragraph 4 of the report which stated that the full report would be received by the Corporate Policy Committee on 13 June 2024. This was corrected to refer to the Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 25 June.

A query was raised regarding the reference to the Springfield Satellite Site (Dean Row) on page 96 of the agenda and whether this was government funded or from the Children and Families budget. The committee were advised that this was requesting a virement for an already approved fund and officers undertook to check and confirm whether this was fully DfE funded.

A request was made for an item to be added to the work programme regarding the school catering service, with further detail to be submitted to officers in writing.

A query was raised regarding page 99 of the agenda which referred to the Dedicated Schools Grant and stated that funding had not kept pace with the increasing numbers and cost of children with an education, health and

care plan and what the difference was between the funding provided and the cost per child. Officers undertook to provide the detail in a written response.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Consider the factors leading to an adverse Net Revenue financial outturn of £8.2m against a revised budget of £81.9m (10.0%), for Children and Families Committee services
2. Scrutinise the contents of Annex 1 and note that any financial mitigation decisions requiring approval will be made in line with relevant delegations
3. Approve the Capital Budget Virements above £500,000 up to and including £5,000,000, as detailed in Annex 1, Section 3 Capital Strategy, Table 3
4. Note that Finance Sub Committee will be asked to approve the Supplementary Capital Estimates (SCEs) over £1,000,000 and Capital Budget Virements over £5,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Annex 1, Section 3 Capital Strategy, Table 4

Cllr Bulman left the meeting for the duration of this item, having declared an interest.

8 SERVICE BUDGETS 2024/25 (CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE)

The committee received the report which set out the allocation of the approved budgets for 2024/25 to the Children and Families Committee.

Officers reported that there was an error within the table on page 105 of the agenda and that the headings in that table were not correct. The table on page 121 was correct for the earmarked reserves.

A request was made for the committee to be kept updated on the costs associated with Crewe Youth Zone. It was noted that a report had gone to the Economy and Growth Committee but that members of the Children and Families Committee had not been aware. It was requested that consideration be given to adding this to the work programme.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Note the decision of the Finance Sub-Committee to allocate the approved revenue and capital budgets, related budget policy changes and

earmarked reserves to the Children and Families Committee, as set out in Appendix A

2. Note the financial reporting timetable for 2024/25 set out in Appendix B as approved at Finance Sub-Committee on 22 March 2024

3. Review progress on the delivery of the MTFS policy change items, the RAG ratings and latest forecasts, and to understand the actions to be taken to address any adverse variances from the approved budget

Cllr Bailey and Cllr Saunders left the meeting during this item and did not return.

9 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CAPITAL SCHEMES

The committee received the report which provided an update on progress in delivering the school capital programme for 2024/25.

A request was made for a cashflow forecast to be shared with the committee. Officers undertook to provide detail on how many places were needed in different settings and the full forecast.

During consideration of the item, the committee resolved to move into part 2 to consider the confidential appendices.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Committee:

Unanimously:

1. Agree the allocation of the Children and Families Capital funding as approved in the budget by full council on 27 February 2024 to the schools and projects as set out in Appendices 1 and 1a

2. Approve the new, named and amended schemes as detailed in Appendices 2 and 2a

3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Childrens Services to determine the school sites and works to be instructed from the block allocations set out in appendices 2 and 2a and take all steps to deliver those works

By majority:

4. Approve the school condition programme of schemes as detailed in Appendix

5. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Childrens Services to determine the school sites and works to be instructed from the block funding allocations set out in Appendix 3 and take all steps to deliver these works

6. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Childrens Services to approve uplifts to project costs of individual schemes approved in the Capital Programme to a maximum of 20% of the approved capital budget or £500,000 whichever is the lesser sum

7. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Childrens Services to allocate uncommitted funds to enable the progression of feasibility studies, design development and project delivery, where projects will be for the purpose of supporting additional pupil places and SEN schemes

Unanimously:

8. Delegate to the Executive Director of Childrens Services the authority to approve Virements and where necessary enter into grant agreements with Academies and Diocesan bodies to facilitate the delivery of the projects identified in the Children and Families Capital Programme

9. Note that the Executive Director of Childrens Services will provide a regular update to committee on the implementation of the Children and Families Capital Programme and the exercise of the delegations set out in this report

10. Note the overview of schemes undertaken and those completed over the last year as detailed in Appendix 4

10 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing this information.

11 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CAPITAL SCHEMES

The committee considered the confidential appendices.

12 ACADEMISATION OF CLEDFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL, GEORGE IV AVENUE, MIDDLEWICH

The committee received the report which set out the arrangements in place to support the intended academy conversion of Cledford Primary School to become part of the Alexandra Academy Trust.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Authorise the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to agree and execute the Commercial Transfer Agreement (Appendix 1) to the Alexandra Academy Trust relating to the transfer of all staff under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006, and assets

2. Authorise the Executive Director of Place and Chief Finance Officer to take the steps necessary to agree the required transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements as are necessary in order to facilitate the conversion, including (but not limited to) the grant and completion of a lease (see Appendix 2) to the Alexandra Academy Trust for 125 years substantially in the form of the model lease produced by DfE at a peppercorn rent. The school site is identifiable as shown on the accompanying redline lease plan (see Appendix 3)

Cllr Smith left the meeting for the duration of this item, having declared an interest.

13 ACADEMISATION OF GAINSBOROUGH PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL, BELGRAVE ROAD, CREWE

The committee considered the report which set out the arrangements in place to support the intended academy conversion of Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School to become part of the Alexandra Academy Trust.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Authorise the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to agree and execute the Commercial Transfer Agreement (Appendix 1) to the Alexandra Academy Trust relating to the transfer of all staff under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006, and assets

2. Authorise the Executive Director of Place and Chief Finance Officer to take the steps necessary to agree the required transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements as are necessary in order to facilitate the conversion, including (but not limited to) the grant and completion of a lease (see Appendix 2) to the Alexandra Academy Trust for 125 years substantially in the form of the model lease produced by DfE

at a peppercorn rent. The school site is identifiable as shown on the accompanying redline lease plan (see Appendix 3)

Cllr Smith left the meeting for the duration of this item, having declared an interest.

14 APPOINTMENTS TO SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, PANELS, BOARDS AND JOINT COMMITTEES

The committee received the report which sought to nominate members to the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Head of Legal advised that there had been a slight change to the wording of the recommendations and clarified that the committee were being asked to nominate representatives to the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee and to the Health and Wellbeing Board and agree to submit the names to the Head of Democratic Services and Governance.

The proposed membership of the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee, in line with the political proportionality, was noted as follows: Cllrs M Beanland, S Bennett-Wake, C Bulman, D Clark, N Cook, E Gilman, G Hayes, S Holland, B Posnett, J Saunders, B Puddicombe. A non-grouped representative had not yet been submitted.

The committee nominated Cllr C Bulman as the representative to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Nominate representatives to the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board
2. Agree to submit the nominations to the Head of Democratic Services and Governance

15 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES QUARTER 3 SCORECARD 2023/24

The committee received the Children and Families scorecard for quarter 3 of 2023-24.

A request was made for a report to be brought forward on dentistry. Officers advised that a report was due to come to the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee where health colleagues would be present to discuss the detail.

A query was raised regarding the budget allocation to address figures for care leavers who were not in education, employment or training. Officers undertook to provide further detail.

The following requests for further detail to be added into future scorecards were raised for consideration by officers:

- A breakdown by area of the borough or by north/central/south
- Further information on care leavers up to age 25 to ensure target were being met

RESOLVED:

That the scorecard be noted.

16 WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 14:00 and concluded at 18:53

Councillor C Bulman (Chair)

OPEN

Children and Families Committee

Monday 8 July 2024

Improvement Plan

Report of: Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director Children's Services

Report Reference No: CF/22/24-25

Ward(s) Affected: All wards.

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report asks committee to approve the final version of the Cheshire East children's services improvement plan to address the findings from the Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) conducted in February and March 2024. It also asks committee to note and approve the approach to providing additional financial investment to ensure we can deliver the plan and the necessary improvements to the quality of services.
- 2 This report relates to the objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 to be a council which empowers and cares about people; that works together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be resilient; protects and supports our communities and safeguards children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation; to be the best corporate parents to our children in care; and ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential.

Executive Summary

- 3 Cheshire East Council received an Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) between 19 February – 8 March 2024. As the inspection found our support to care leavers was inadequate, we are required to submit an action plan (to be referred to as an improvement plan thereafter) to Ofsted 70 working days after publication of the report.
- 4 Additional financial support is needed to ensure that we can deliver the necessary improvements at the required pace. The details of this have been

calculated with support from the finance team and the S151 officer. Committee is asked to approve the approach to funding the delivery of the improvement plan, as detailed in the S151/ finance section of this report and in appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Children and Families Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the improvement plan (appendix 1) for referral to full Council on 17 July 2024.
2. Approve the approach to funding the delivery of the improvement plan, as detailed in the S151/ finance section of this report and in appendix 2.

Background

- 5 Cheshire East Council received an Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) between 19 February – 8 March 2024. The inspection findings are set out in a [report](#) which was published on 16 May 2024. Committee was briefed on the findings from the inspection, the plans in place to improve services in relation to the findings, and monitoring arrangements from Ofsted and the DfE in [a paper to committee on 3 June 2024](#).
- 6 In the meeting on 3 June, the Children and Families Committee agreed to:
 - Note the inspection findings, implications for monitoring from Ofsted and the DfE, and plans to improve services.
 - Hold a task and finish workshop for the Children and Families Committee on 2 July to review and scrutinise the draft improvement plan.
 - The onward referral of the improvement plan for approval at full Council on 17 July 2024.
 - Approve the terms of reference for the Improvement Board.
 - The development of the terms of reference for the Corporate Parent Working Group and agreed membership.
- 7 As the inspection found our support to care leavers was inadequate, we are required to submit an improvement plan to Ofsted 70 working days after publication of the report. The plan is due to be submitted to Ofsted by 23 August 2024. We propose to submit subject to committee and council's approval following full council on 17 July 2024.

- 8 The development of the improvement plan has been informed by feedback from Ofsted and other local authorities' improvement plans. A workshop was held on 2 July for members of the Children and Families Committee and Cared for and Care Leavers Committee to contribute to the development of the improvement plan (appendix 1 – to follow on 5 July following 2 July workshop and any agreed amendments).
- 9 The improvement plan is a live and responsive plan, so will adapt to incorporate new actions as need is identified, for example from quality assurance activity or through external monitoring activity.
- 10 Additional financial support is needed to ensure that we can deliver the necessary improvements at the required pace. The details of this have been calculated with support from the finance team and the S151 officer. Committee is asked to approve the approach to funding the delivery of the improvement plan, as detailed in the S151/ finance section of this report and in appendix 2 (to follow on 5 July as we are working at pace to determine how we can deliver this within budget).

Consultation and Engagement

- 11 The views of children, young people and families, senior leaders, frontline practitioners and managers, and schools, were sought by inspectors during the inspection and have informed the inspection findings. We will continue to work together with children, young people, young adults, parents/carers, staff, and partners to develop, deliver and evaluate improvements.
- 12 The development of the improvement plan has been informed by feedback from Ofsted and other local authorities' improvement plans.
- 13 This plan has been developed together with and provided with scrutiny and challenge by:
- service managers and service leads, including partners.
 - the children's social care leadership team
 - the children's services leadership team
 - the council's leadership team
 - the Safeguarding Children's Partnership
 - the Improvement and Impact Board
 - elected members on the Children and Families Committee and Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee.

- 14 A workshop was held on 2 July for members of the Children and Families Committee and Cared for and Care Leavers Committee to contribute to the development of the improvement plan (appendix 1 – to follow on 5 July). The public will have the additional opportunity to scrutinise to the plan through full council on 17 July 2024.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 15 Cheshire East Council's children's services has received an inadequate judgement from the recent Ofsted inspection. The inspection demonstrated that there are areas we need to address at pace to improve outcomes for children. The council needs to ensure the findings from the inspection are addressed in a timely way to ensure we achieve good outcomes for children and young people and members need to be assured that the arrangements in place to address the shortcomings and make the necessary improvements are sufficiently robust and will deliver good or better outcomes for our children within a reasonable timeframe.
- 16 In the meeting on 3 June, the Children and Families Committee agreed to the onward referral of the improvement plan for approval at full Council on 17 July 2024.

Other Options Considered

Option	Impact	Risk
Do not approve the improvement plan	We will not have a robust plan in place to deliver improvements which will delay our submission to Ofsted and will delay implementing improvements	There is a risk that improvements are not achieved at the pace needed
Do not approve the financial support to deliver the plan	We will not have sufficient resources or support to deliver the plan at the pace needed	Improvements are not achieved at the pace needed

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 17 The committee report sets out the plans and proposed Improvement Plan for the local authority, in response to the outcome of the Ofsted inspection and inadequate judgement, published on 16 May 2024.

- 18 Members of the committee need to be assured that all requirements of the recommendations within the report and any improvement notice served upon the Council by the DfE resulting from the Ofsted inspection findings, are complied with and that the plans in place deliver the improvements required within any timescales set by the DfE.
- (a) Any Improvement Notice served upon the Council by the DfE will be published and have a number of requirements and is likely to require the creation of a focused improvement board, with a Secretary of State (DfE) appointed advisor, a clear Improvement Plan, and regular reviews to measure progress. Failure to comply or poor progress can result in the imposition of directions to secure performance, which can include that the DfE can intervene and nominate a person to act on its behalf to secure performance.
- 19 The protection of vulnerable people is a council responsibility. Oversight by members at full Council by way of the proposal to refer the final improvement plan for its consideration and approval, alongside the overall approach to improving service provision, aligns with this obligation.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 20 The revenue costs associated with the improvement plan are expected to be for additional resources required for an 18-month period. The costs are anticipated to start in September 2024, resulting in 7 months of costs in 2024/25 and a further 11 months in 2025/26.
- 21 The revenue costs are estimated to be £1.987m in total, profiled as £628k in 2024/25 and £1.359m in 2025/26.
- 22 The costings are based on Cheshire East Council employed staff being recruited to deliver the plan, and the intention is to recruit on a permanent basis to attract the best candidates. At the end of the 18-month period the staff will then be transferred to any existing vacancies within the directorate to avoid any risk of over-recruitment.
- 23 If the service are not able to recruit to these posts and need to utilise more expensive agency workers, then the service will need to consider how to mitigate any additional costs.
- 24 Funding for these costs is anticipated to be met through existing service budgets, utilising existing growth that had been built into this year's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It is being targeted to this important work. Currently £1m per annum has been identified within existing budgets, meaning that the total costs over the 2 years could be funded from existing budgets as long as all other savings are delivered to plan and there is no additional growth required for placement costs in-year.

- 25 There are potentially some capital costs that could be required and alongside the use of existing budgets the service will continue to investigate if any alternative funding sources could be identified to support the plan, including S106 funding subject to the allocation criteria of the developer funding received. Finance and the service will continue to work closely together to monitor and manage expenditure and ensure that future years' costs are considered as part of medium-term financial planning.

Policy

A council which empowers and cares about people.

Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient.

Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk, and families from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care.

Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 26 Good quality practice with families ensures that all children and young people's needs are considered and supported.

Human Resources

- 27 Additional capacity has been requested to support the delivery of the improvement plan (as detailed in appendix 2).

Risk Management

- 28 There are reputational and financial risks to not providing good quality services, as well as risks to individual children and young people. The council must continue to ensure that these risks are mitigated by ensuring effective plans are in place to improve and that these make an impact on children's outcomes. The risk of failing to deliver the improvement plan will be added to the council's corporate risk register and this risk will be monitored quarterly through the Corporate Policy Committee.

Rural Communities

- 29 Vulnerable children and young people are present in all communities in Cheshire East.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 30 The improvement plan aims to improve the outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

Public Health

- 31 Same as the implication above.

Climate Change

- 32 There are no implications for climate change because of this report.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Lauren Conway, Business Manager Lauren.conway@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Improvement Plan – TO FOLLOW Appendix 2: Finance information – TO FOLLOW
Background Papers:	Report on the Ofsted inspection findings to the Children and Families Committee on 3 June 2024 Cheshire East's Ofsted Inspection Report published 16 May Ofsted ILACS Framework The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations Volume 3: planning transition to adulthood for care leavers DfE (publishing.service.gov.uk)

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Children and Families Committee Work Programme 2024-25

Report Reference	Children & Families Committee	Title	Purpose of Report	Lead Officer	Consultation	Equality Impact Assessment	Corporate Plan Priority	Part of Budget and Policy Framework	Exempt Item
July 2024									
CF/22/24-25	08/07/24	ILACS Improvement Plan	To consider the final version of the improvement plan to address the findings from the latest Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS).	Executive Director Children and Families	N/A	No	Fair	Yes	No
September 2024									
CF/12/24-25	16/09/24	Academisation of Schools Forward Plan	This report is presented to the Children and Families Committee to inform committee members of planned schools across the borough who are seeking to move to academy status and join a multi academy trust. The forward plan highlights schools that will require Committee approval at future meetings.	Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration	No	No	Open	No	TBC
CF/07/24-25	16/09/24	First Financial Review of 2024/25 (Children & Families Committee)	To note and comment on the First Financial Review and Performance position of 2024/25, including progress on policy proposals and material variances from the MTFS and (if necessary) approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements.	Director of Finance and Customer Services	No	No	Open	Yes	No
CF/23/24-25	16/09/24	Childcare expansion grant capital policy and wrap around childcare revenue grant policy	Committee to approve capital and revenue grant policies	Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration	No	Yes	Open; Fair	Yes	No
CF/24/24-25	16/09/24	Youth Justice Plan	To ensure committee has oversight of the annual Youth Justice Plan.	Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration	N/A	No	Fair	Yes	No

Children and Families Committee Work Programme 2024-25

CF/25/24-25	16/09/24	ILACS Improvement Plan Progress	To update committee on progress against the improvement plan to address the findings from the Ofsted inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) in February and March 2024, and to ensure committee can scrutinise impact on outcomes for children and young people.	Executive Director Children and Families	No	No	Fair	No	No
November 2024									
CF/08/24-25	11/11/24	Second Financial Review of 2024/25 (Children & Families Committee)	To note and comment on the Second Financial Review and Performance position of 2024/25, including progress on policy proposals and material variances from the MTFS and (if necessary) approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements.	Director of Finance and Customer Services	No	No	Open	Yes	No
CF/13/24-25	11/11/24	Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2025/26 - 2028/29 (Children & Families Committee)	All Committees were being asked to provide feedback in relation to their financial responsibilities as identified within the Constitution and linked to the budget alignment approved by the Finance Sub-Committee in March 2024. Responses to the consultation would be reported to the Corporate Policy Committee to support that Committee in making recommendations to Council on changes to the current financial strategy.	Director of Finance and Customer Services	No	No	Open	Yes	No
CF/21/24-25	11/11/24	Children's Centre re-modelling into the Family Hub Model	To seek committee approval on the future outreach delivery model for family hubs and repurposing of seven children's centre buildings to meet the MTFS savings, whilst continuing to deliver the services in a more flexible way following consultation.	Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration	Yes	Yes	Open; Fair; Green	Yes	No

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January 2025									
CF/09/24-25	13/01/25	Third Financial Review of 2024/25 (Children & Families Committee)	To note and comment on the Third Financial Review and Performance position of 2024/25, including progress on policy proposals and material variances from the MTFS and (if necessary) approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements.	Director of Finance and Customer Services	No	No	Open	Yes	No
CF/15/24-25	13/01/25	Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2025/26 - 2028/29 Provisional Settlement Update (Children & Families Committee)	All Committees were being asked to provide feedback in relation to their financial responsibilities as identified within the Constitution and linked to the budget alignment approved by the Finance Sub-Committee in March 2024. Responses to the consultation would be reported to the Corporate Policy Committee to support that Committee in making recommendations to Council on changes to the current financial strategy.	Director of Finance and Customer Services	No	No	Open	Yes	No
February 2025									
CF/20/24-25	10/02/25	Schools Funding Formula and Early Years Funding Formula 2025/26	To provide committee with an update on the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) for 2024/25. To request approval for the allocation of each sub block making up the DSG. To request approval of the schools funding formula and early years funding formula following recommendations from the Schools Forum. To request approval to provide delegated authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to use the funds in accordance with the relevant guidance and proposed funding formula methods.	Executive Director Children and Families	Yes	No	Open	No	No

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April 2025									
CF/16/24-25	07/04/25	Service Budgets 2025/26 (Children & Families Committee)	The purpose of this report is to set out the allocation of approved budgets for 2025/26 for services under the Committee's remit, as determined by Finance Sub Committee	Director of Finance and Customer Services	No	No	Open	Yes	No