

Children and Families Committee

Agenda

Date: Monday, 16th January, 2023
Time: 12.30 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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 top 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 and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 November 2022.

For requests for further information

Contact:

Tel: 01270 686>

E-Mail: with any apologies

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.

5. **Update on Progress Against the Joint Targeted Area Inspection Action Plan** (Pages 11 - 54)

To receive an update on the partnership progress against the action plan from the JTAI inspection.

6. **Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-27 Consultation**

To receive and respond to the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-27. (Paper to follow)

7. **School Organisation - Funding Review for Springfield School: Dean Row Site** (Pages 55 - 68)

To receive a report on the funding review for the new Springfield School satellite site at Dean Row, Handforth.

8. **School Organisation - New DfE Special Educational Needs Free School Applications** (Pages 69 - 84)

To receive a report on the applications for new SEN free schools.

9. **School Organisation: Proposed reduction in SEN resource provisions at Middlewich Primary School, Middlewich and Lindow Community Primary School, Wilmslow** (Pages 85 - 118)

To consider the report on the proposed reduction in SEN resource provision at Middlewich Primary School and Lindow Community Primary School.

10. **School Organisation: The Dingle Primary School, Haslington: Authority to enter into a construction contract inclusive of pre-construction services** (Pages 119 - 126)

To consider a report seeking authority to award a construction contract for the expansion of the Dingle Primary School.

11. **Proposed change in age range at Pebble Brook Primary School and Underwood West Academy** (Pages 127 - 132)

To receive a report on the proposed change in age range at two schools.

12. **Children and Families Q2 Scorecard 2022-23** (Pages 133 - 142)

To receive the Children and Families scorecard for quarter 2 of 2022-23.

13. **School Organisation: Academisation of Schools: Forward Plan** (Pages 143 - 148)

To note the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East schools.

14. **Work Programme** (Pages 149 - 152)

To consider the work programme and determine any required amendments.

15. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The reports relating to the remaining items on the agenda have been withheld from public circulation and deposit pursuant to Section 100(B)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the matters may be determined with the press and public excluded.

The Committee may decide that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

16. **School Organisation - New DfE Special Educational Needs Free School Applications - Appendices** (Pages 153 - 210)

To consider appendices 2-5 of the report.

Membership: Councillors M Addison, L Anderson, M Beanland, J Buckley, C Bulman (Vice-Chair), K Flavell (Chair), A Gregory, S Handley, G Hayes, I Macfarlane, J Saunders, L Smetham and L Smith

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children and Families Committee**
held on Monday, 14th November, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)
Councillor C Bulman (Vice-Chair)

Councillors L Anderson, M Beanland, J Buckley, S Handley, G Hayes,
I Macfarlane, J Saunders, L Smetham, L Smith, D Edwardes and R Bailey

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Jacky Forster, Director of Education and 14-19 Skills
Claire Williamson, Director of Strong Start, Family Help and Integration
Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care
Deborah Nickson, Legal Team Manager (People) and Deputy Monitoring
Officer
Steve Reading, Principal Accountant
Gill Betton, Head of Children's Developments and Partnerships
Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport and Parking
Alistair Jordan, Business Manager: Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's
Partnership
Annie Britton, Lead Participation Worker
Dave Leadbetter, Head of Children's Commissioning
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services

OTHERS PRESENT

Cllr A Critchley
Richard Hall, Edge Public Solutions
Rob Carter, Deputy Chief Executive of OnSide Youth Zones
Joseph Parrot
Oliver Probert-Hill
Anna Morgan
Jasmine Ward
Holly Lonsdale
Lily Cawley

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Addison and Councillor Gregory. Councillor Bailey and Councillor Edwardes attended as substitutes.

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hayes declared an interest under item 9 as he had recently been appointed as a Local Authority Governor at St Gregory's Catholic Primary School which was referenced within the report.

46 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

47 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

48 CHILDREN'S TRAVEL SUPPORT REVIEW

The committee received the report which set out the findings from an independent review of travel support for children and young people.

A query was raised regarding existing available walking routes which may require improvement and maintenance, particularly with regard to rural areas where some existing walking routes could cause difficulties for residents with disabilities. It was requested that input from Highways colleagues be provided in a written response.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Note and agree the report contents and the underlying principles and cultural change set out in the independent review of travel support for children and young people at Appendix 1.
2. Endorse the proposal to procure specialist professional capacity, funded from the children and families transformation fund, to drive the initial transformation plans, achievable savings and establishment of the integrated travel support team.
3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children and Families, in consultation with the Executive Director of Place, to make decisions in relation to:
 - The roll out of a three-year transformation and modernisation programme to deliver the recommendations in the report, including a new strategy and integrated travel team, supported by clear performance and budget management reporting and consultation, communication and engagement with stakeholders.

- Proposal to streamline and revise the school transport policy and process from application to delivery, including a new application, reassessment and appeals process and the immediate, in year (2022/23) development of alternative travel solutions, such as personal budgets and independent travel training.
- Proposals to embark on a comprehensive exercise around the operational delivery and re-procurement of school transport to improve the effectiveness of routes, encourage and support new suppliers to Cheshire East, improve value-for-money and the experiences for families.
- Developing a business case for investment for small capital schemes to improve safe walking routes on potential high-volume routes, including the production of an agreed protocol and strategy for implementing safe walking routes and supporting the council's priority outcomes for active travel and decarbonisation.

4. Agree to receive interim reports around specific actions that require committee approval, along with an initial update report within six months and annually thereafter.

49 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND 3 GRANT DELIVERY

The committee received the report which provided an update on the household support fund 3 (HSF3) grant awarded to Cheshire East and sought agreement to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to incur expenditure in line with the HSF3 grant conditions.

Councillor Critchley attended the meeting to speak as a visiting member and seek assurances around the scheme, including the need for communication and messaging to be improved. The Director of Strong Start, Family Help and Integration gave assurances that this was being taking forward through a number of avenues to engage directly with residents and increase awareness of the scheme.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Note Cheshire East's final HSF3 grant allocation of £2,203,892.10.
2. Endorse the proposed allocation of the grant, eligible cohorts and payment arrangements set out in this paper.
3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to incur expenditure in line with the HSF3 grant conditions.

50 FINANCIAL REVIEW 2022/23

The committee received the Financial Review report for 2022/23.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Notes the report of the Finance Sub-Committee (Agenda for Finance Sub-Committee on Wednesday, 9th November, 2022, 2.00 pm | Cheshire East Council), specifically the recommendations of that committee.

Finance Sub-Committee recommend Service Committees to:

- note the financial update and forecast outturn relevant to their terms of reference.
- note that officers will seek to improve the financial outturn across all committees to mitigate the overall forecast overspend of the Council.
- approve supplementary revenue estimates for specific grants coded directly to services up to and including £1,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 2 Children and Families Committee, Section 3 Corporate Grants Register, Table 2.

2. Notes Appendix 2 and the following sections specific to this Committee:

- Changes to Revenue budget 2022/23
- Action Plan 2022/23
- Corporate Grants Register
- Debt Management
- Capital Strategy
- Reserve Strategy

51 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCORECARD Q1

The committee received the report which provided an overview of performance against the core indicator set within the three directorate areas of Children's Services.

A query was raised regarding an increase in the figures for young people not in education, employment or training. Committee were advised that this had been impacted by the time of year due to pupils leaving school and awaiting the start of training programmes or employment but that further clarification would be provided.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

52 SCHOOL ORGANISATION: ACADEMISATION OF SCHOOLS: FORWARD PLAN

The committee received the report which informed of planned schools across the borough which were seeking to move to academy status and join a multi academy trust.

RESOLVED:

That the committee receives and notes the summary table (Appendix 1) showing the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East schools.

53 COMMITTEE TAKEOVER FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS MONTH

The committee held a children's takeover session as part of Children's Rights Month. This involved young people attending to deliver presentations on issues that matter to them and take questions from committee.

54 CHESHIRE EAST SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The committee received the report which provided an update on progress against the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership priorities and its plans for 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

55 WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered the work programme. A suggestion was made for officers to look into scheduling an additional meeting to consider the Joint Targeted Area Inspection Update and Improvement Plan item, currently scheduled for January committee, due to the expected size of the January agenda. It was agreed that officers would consider this as part of a wider review of the work programme.

56 MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the following sub committee meetings be noted:

Local Authority School Governor Nomination Sub Committee – 8 June 2022
Corporate Parenting Committee – 6 September 2022

57 CREWE YOUTH ZONE PROJECT UPDATE

The committee received the report which provided an update on progress for the development of the Crewe Youth Zone.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

58 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in 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 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing this information.

59 CREWE YOUTH ZONE PROJECT UPDATE - APPENDIX 1

The committee received Appendix 1 for the Crewe Youth Zone Project Update report.

RESOLVED:

That the appendix be noted.

60 CLOSURE OF REACH FOR THE STARS NURSERIES, CREWE

The committee received the report on the closure of Reach for the Stars Nurseries, Crewe.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

The meeting commenced at 13:00 and concluded at 18:45

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)



Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting:	16 January 2023
Report Title:	Update on progress against the Joint Targeted Area Inspection action plan
Report of:	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Report Reference No:	CF/63/22-23
Ward(s) Affected:	All Wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.** This report provides the Children and Families Committee with an update on the partnership progress against the action plan from the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to the criminal exploitation of children in Cheshire East. This relates to the priority in the council's Corporate Plan 2021-2025 to protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk, and families from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1** The partnership fully accepted all the inspectors' recommendations and apologised for the gaps in our collective work to protect these children and young people.
- 2.2** A comprehensive multi-agency action plan has been developed following the inspection to address each of the areas for priority action and areas for improvement. New governance arrangements have been established to ensure there is dedicated oversight and scrutiny of progress against the plan by the chief officers from the three statutory partners (the local authority, Cheshire Constabulary and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside).

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. The Children and Families Committee is recommended to consider the Action Plan appended (appendix 1) to this report and scrutinise the progress to date against the JTAI recommendations.
- 3.2. The committee to agree to receive 6 monthly reports on progress against this action plan

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1. The local authority, as one of three statutory safeguarding partners under Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), has a legal duty to work with partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in the local area. The JTAI demonstrated that there are areas the partnership need to address to improve outcomes for children. Cheshire East needs to ensure the recommendations and findings from the JTAI are addressed to ensure we achieve good outcomes for children and young people, and effectively protect them from harm.

5. Other Options Considered

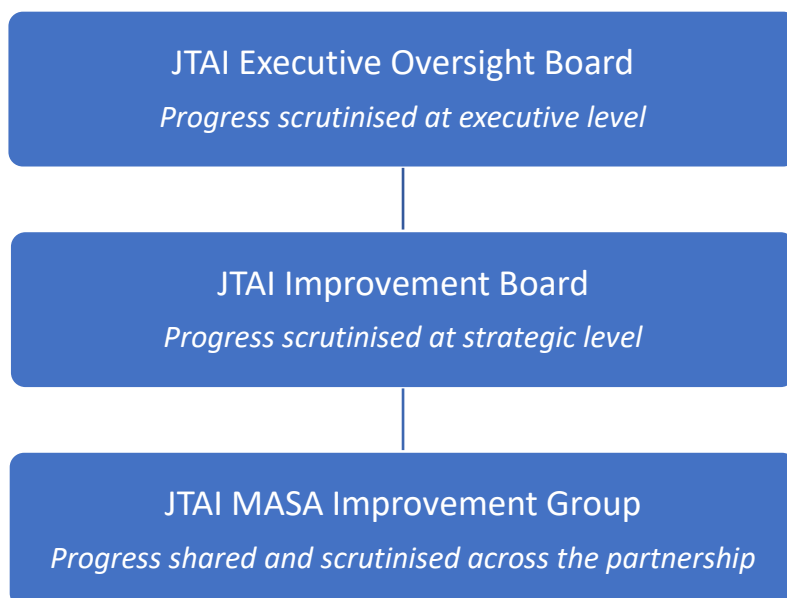
- 5.1. Not applicable as this is an update report.

6. Background

- 6.1. The joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to the criminal exploitation of children in Cheshire East took place from 27 June to 15 July 2022. It was carried out by Inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).
- 6.2. The [findings of the inspection](#) were published on 26 September 2022 and three areas for priority action were identified with further areas that required improvement.
- 6.3. The three areas for priority action were identified as
 - Leaders of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership should address the strategic weaknesses in the leadership, function, purpose and impact of the work of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership and its sub-groups. This should include gaining a full understanding of the risks of exploitation to children across the local area, and ensuring that this understanding leads to analysis, provision and commissioning of services that reduce risk for children effectively.
 - Across the partnership, leaders should ensure that operational practice reduces risk of exploitation of children.
 - East Cheshire NHS Trust should improve wider safeguarding practice in emergency departments so that risks to children with additional complex needs are identified, understood and responded to.

7. Progress against the recommendations from the JTAI

- 7.1. A comprehensive multi-agency action plan has been developed following the inspection to address each of the areas for priority action and the findings from the inspection (please see Appendix A). Cheshire East Council is required to submit this to Ofsted by 5 January 2023.
- 7.2. Governance arrangements have been established to ensure there is dedicated oversight and scrutiny of progress against the plan by the chief officers from the three statutory partners (the local authority, Cheshire Constabulary and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside). This includes a chief officers group (JTAI Executive Oversight Board) consisting of the Chief Constable of Cheshire Constabulary, the Chief Executive of Cheshire East Council, the Chief Nurse and the Place Director. This scrutiny will ensure improvements are made at pace, and there is continual evaluation of the impact of improvements on children and young people’s outcomes.



- 7.3. The Safeguarding Children’s Partnership has appointed an independent scrutineer who is reviewing the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Cheshire East to ensure that they are effective and comply with statutory guidance set out in Working Together 2018. The independent scrutineer will complete a report with recommendations, which will support leaders of the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership to strengthen the strategic leadership, function, purpose, and impact of the work of the partnership and its sub-groups.
- 7.4. The improvement board will be independently chaired by an improvement advisor appointed by the Department for Education. This advisor will support and monitor the improvement work of the partnership and report back to the Department for Education periodically. The advisor is due to start work with the partnership in late December 2022 for 12 months.

- 7.5.** There has been considerable work on the comprehensive action plan which can be seen within appendix 1. The following paragraphs (6.10-6.13) sets out details of some of these actions relating to the priority actions identified.
- 7.6.** As of 13 July 2022 (during inspection) several operational changes were made to ensure that the multi-agency response to children at risk of exploitation is timely. This includes all exploitation screening tools received into the integrated 'front door' being managed without delay and within 24 hours as per statutory guidance. A decision is made on the same day to either progress to a referral to children's social care and allocate to a social worker or into early help and prevention and allocate to an early help practitioner. Statutory intervention is defined in Working Together 2018 and the Children Act 1989 as commencing immediately. This includes a visit to the child and the initiation of a child and family assessment; specific risk mitigation now begins without delay.
- 7.7.** The integrated front door (IFD) meeting now retrospectively reviews the immediate safety planning for all children at risk of exploitation (as identified in the above process) who have been referred into either children's social care or early help in the previous 7 days. This reviews and monitors that the risk to children has been identified by statutory agencies swiftly and that safety planning has been implemented immediately. This also ensures that actions are owned by partner agencies with clear timescales.
- 7.8.** Local authority social work teams now receive police intelligence, vulnerable person assessments and screening tools on the same day they are submitted to the integrated front door which ensures that swift action is taken at the point of identification of new risk.
- 7.9.** The Safeguarding Children's Partnership, within 10 days of the inspection, took immediate action to complete multi-agency reviews of the cohort of children at risk of criminal exploitation to ensure that the risk mitigation plans in place were effective in reducing risk. No child was identified as having experienced further harm or as being at immediate risk during this review.
- 7.10.** Further progress against the actions in the plan is detailed within the action plan at Appendix A.

8. Consultation and Engagement

- 8.1.** The three statutory partners (the local authority, Cheshire Constabulary and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board) developed the multi-agency action plan in response to the JTAI findings and recommendations. The action plan has been shared with the wider membership of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership Executive. The Independent Scrutineer has provided constructive feedback on the plan to ensure it will drive change for children and young people in Cheshire East.

9. Implications

9.1. Legal

9.1.1. JTAI inspections are carried out under section 20 of the Children Act 2004.

9.1.2. The Safeguarding Children's Partnership has a statutory responsibility to safeguard children and young people within the borough and the services operate within the relevant legal framework.

9.2. Finance

9.2.1. The Safeguarding Children's Partnership is funded primarily by the three statutory partners with an additional contribution provided by Probation Services and schools. The funding arrangements are currently under review to ensure that the partnership has sufficient resources to fulfil its responsibilities.

10. Policy

There are no policy implications.

11. Equality

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

12. Human Resources

Recruiting and retaining high quality social workers and managers is crucial in supporting the local authority to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities. This is also applicable to the Safeguarding Children's Partnership Business Support Team to ensure that the partnership can fulfil its obligations.

13. Risk Management

We need to have an effective Safeguarding Children's Partnership in place to deliver effective partnership services that support children, young people and families in a holistic way and help them achieve good outcomes. There are reputational and financial risks to not providing a good Safeguarding Children's Partnership, 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 where areas for development are identified. Progress against the JTAI action plan is on the council's corporate risk register.

14. Rural Communities

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

15. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

The multi-agency action plan intends to improve the experiences and outcomes for children and young people across the borough, those that are

most vulnerable. Cheshire East Council has a corporate parenting responsibility for children in their care.

16. Public Health

Exploitation of children is a public health issue and tackling it and the impact of it cuts across many agencies and partnerships.

17. Climate Change

Children’s services continue to support the council with climate change objectives. There are no implications for climate change as a result of this report.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Nabeel Chaudhry – Head of Safeguarding Nabeel.chaudhry@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	A. JTAI Improvement Plan
Background Papers:	Published inspection report for the joint targeted area inspection of Cheshire East



Action Plan to address the findings from the Joint Targeted Area Inspection on Criminal Exploitation of Children

July 2022 – December 2023

Progress updates from December 2022



Cheshire East Safeguarding
Children's Partnership

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Introduction

This is our partnership action plan to address the findings from the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of criminal exploitation of children in Cheshire East which took place in July 2022. All the findings from the inspection are summarised in a letter which is available on the [Ofsted website](#). The inspection demonstrated that there were areas of our work that needed significant improvement to effectively protect children and young people at risk of exploitation. This plan sets out how we will do this and is our written statement of action. It will be submitted to Ofsted by the 5 January 2023 as set out in the letter dated 26 September 2022.

As a partnership we are committed to improving outcomes for children and young people. This plan responds to the areas inspectors identified in the inspection letter as areas for priority action, areas we need to improve, and the wider inspection findings.

The plan starts with children and young people’s voices and lived experiences, as it is essential that these underpin all areas of our work. It then follows the child’s journey. The plan is split into the following sections:

1. Children and young people’s voices and lived experience
2. Identifying needs and information sharing
3. Swift support for children and young people at risk
4. Protecting children and young people at risk
5. Supporting good practice
6. Strategic Leadership.

Our plan sets out the actions we will take; some of these are multi-agency actions which will be led by the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership, for example multi-agency training or guidance, and some are single agency improvements, for example on how practitioners record within their own systems or improving service capacity. Some action owners are a partnership group, which reflects that the action needs to be collectively owned and delivered; the person ultimately responsible for delivering this action is the chair of the group.

Each action is rated as red, amber, or green to indicate progress:

Colour	Definition
Red	Delayed or at risk of not being achieved within timescale
Amber	In progress and on track to be delivered within timescale
Green	Action completed

We know that it is not enough to complete the actions, we need to evaluate that these are having the right impact.

We have set up dedicated governance arrangements to scrutinise progress against this plan. This includes a chief officers’ group (called the JTAI Executive Oversight Board) consisting of the Chief Constable of Cheshire Constabulary, the Chief Executive of Cheshire East Council, the Chief Nurse of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, and the Place Director for Cheshire East. This is supported by an independently chaired

JTAI Improvement Board at the strategic level, and a JTAI MASA Improvement Group who are focusing on the delivery of the plan. This ensures improvements in relation to the JTAI are prioritised, without taking capacity or focus away from other areas of business within the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership. It ensures there is a partnership approach to improving services and scrutinising progress at all levels. These groups are also supported by scrutiny arrangements within each agency.

Progress against the plan is reviewed monthly by all three partnership JTAI groups to ensure that we stay on track and continually evaluate the impact our actions are having on outcomes for children and young people.

We will use a variety of sources to assess our impact, including:

- Listening to children and young people’s experiences
- Single agency and multi-agency audits
- Performance information
- Listening to practitioners and managers across the partnership
- Observing practice
- Recruitment and retention information
- Training attendance and evaluations
- Independent review from the independent scrutineer.

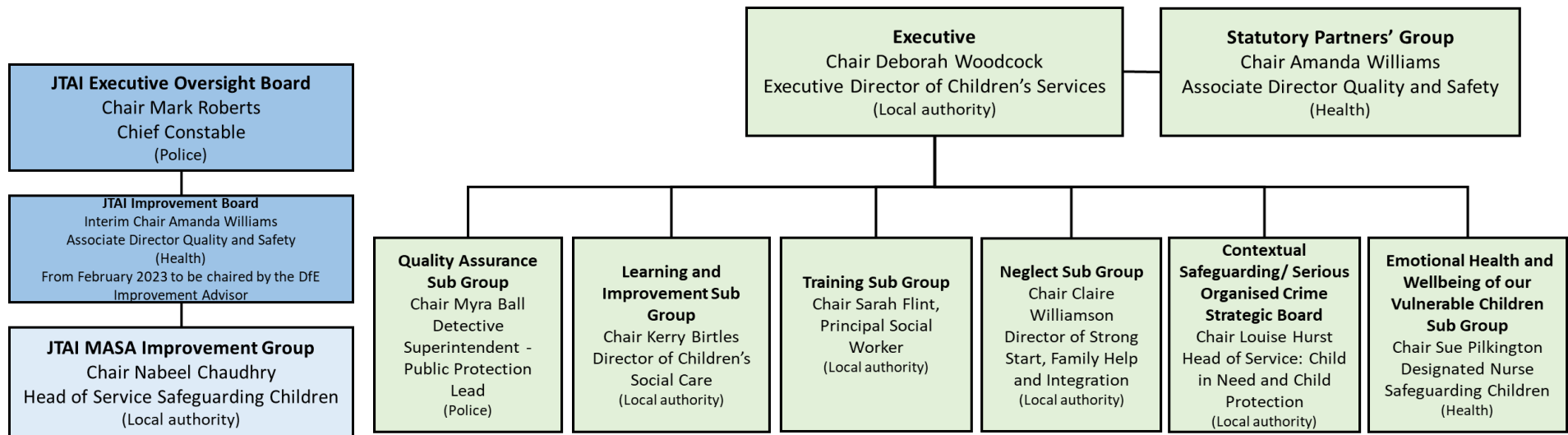
Once we have enough evidence to show that a priority area for action or a finding from the inspection has been addressed, this will be reported to the JTAI Improvement Board. The JTAI Improvement Board will review this and will agree, as a partnership, whether we are satisfied that this has been fully

addressed. When it has been agreed that an area has been fully addressed, the Board will also agree how this will continue to be monitored outside of the JTAI governance arrangements to ensure that progress continues to be sustained.

Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
CP-IS	Child Protection Information System
CS/SOC	Contextual Safeguarding/Serious Organised Crime
CSC	Children's Social Care
CSE	Child sexual exploitation
CWP	Cheshire and Wirral Partnership
ECT	East Cheshire Trust
ED	Emergency Department
IFD	Integrated Front Door
JTAI	Joint targeted area inspection
LSCP	Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
MASA	Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements
MCHFT	Mid Cheshire Hospitals Foundation Trust
MFH	Missing from home
MLE	Managed Learning Environment
PST	Problem Solving Team
RAG	Red Amber Green
SGU	Safeguarding Governance Unit
VH	Vulnerability Hub
VPAs	Vulnerable Person Assessments
WCHCFT	Wirral Community Health and Care Foundation Trust

Governance Arrangements – Safeguarding Children’s Partnership



Key

- Sole focus on scrutiny of JTAI improvements
- Sole focus on delivery of JTAI improvements

OFFICIAL

JTAI Action Plan

Date of progress updates: 14 December 2022

1. Children and young people's voices and lived experiences

1.1 Partnership practice

What needs to improve	The consistent recording and analysis of children's voices across all agencies' records.				
What inspectors found	<p>This training deficit [in relation to multi-agency training on exploited children], in part, leads to a general lack of consistent recording and analysis of children's voices and their reasons for going missing within case records across the partners.</p> <p>Children presenting at the emergency department of Cheshire East NHS Trust are not having their voices heard.*</p> <p><i>*Please note actions relating to improving practice within East Cheshire Trust are included in section 2.3</i></p>				
Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
1.1a	Embed a culture across the partnership of working together with children and young people and seeking and listening to their voices and experiences, starting with a focus on exploitation. Share this message through key communications, senior managers modelling working together with children and young people and ensuring activity at all levels is focused on impact on outcomes for children and young people.	LSCP Executive	13 July 2023	A	<p>Since the inspection, senior leaders have been focused on the importance of impact on outcomes for children and young people - and have continually shared this message in discussions with partners, managers, and frontline staff.</p> <p>Working together with children and young people and listening to their lived experiences will be a key message at the child conference exploitation conference on 31 January. A young person will be attending the conference to speak on their experiences.</p>

1.1b	Develop partnership guidance on how to capture and record the voice of children and young people and analyse what this is telling us about their lived experience.	LSCP task and finish group on voice of the child	28 February 2023	A	Work is underway to develop this guidance.
1.1c	Deliver a campaign within the constabulary to highlight the voice of children and young people.	Detective Chief Inspector Littlewood	1 December 2022	G	Cheshire Constabulary have launched a 12-month campaign to improve the voice of child updates provided by frontline officers. A video from an officer's perspective has been created on what the voice of the child means to them. The campaign will see activity each month including consolidation of learning via questionnaires and audit. A child centred policing strategy has been launched utilising national research from the Vulnerability and Knowledge Practice Programme.
1.1d	Hold masterclasses for social work practitioners on recording the child's voice and reflecting on their experiences to enable practitioners to understand the impact of their children and young people's situations on their lives.	Principal Social Worker	7 November 2022	G	<p>Masterclasses on meaningful recording of the child's voice took place in practice week from 7-11 November 2022. Some feedback from the practitioners who took part in the training included:</p> <p>"Brought into perspective what we are writing e.g., do our case notes really reflect what the child is actually saying?"</p> <p>"I'm going to try and write the pen picture with the child from now on";</p> <p>"Really powerful, made me think when mum and dad are shouting, how must that feel for the child?"</p> <p>"Will have more of a focus on the feelings the child is experiencing, not just describing what is happening".</p>
1.1e	Review Trust and health provider policies and pathways in view of child exploitation and safeguarding to ensure these include how to capture the child/ young person's and family voice and the importance of understanding the impact of	All Health Safeguarding Leads	30 November 2022	G	Safeguarding policies, pathways and training packages have been reviewed within East Cheshire Trust (ECT), Mid Cheshire Hospitals Foundation Trust (MCHFT), Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP), Wirral Community Health and Care Foundation Trust (WCHCFT), Change Grow Live (alcohol services), and sexual health. The services will also complete

	exploitation on children and young people.				<p>their annual Children Act Section 11 safeguarding children's audit which are due for submission on 31 January 2023.</p> <p>The child/ young person's voice is audited through the safeguarding daily assurance checks/audits. All audits evidence improvements.</p> <p>The Designated Doctor and Designated Nurse have dip sampled audits of supervision notes and evidence of the voice of the child, which found that impact for the child/ young person are clearly present.</p>
1.1f	Thematic report, including performance and joint case reviews, on the quality of recording children and young people's voices, to be completed to evaluate the impact of work in this area.	JTAI MASA Improvement Group	30 April 2023	A	First thematic report planned for April 2023.

1.2 Strategic oversight and understanding of children's lived experiences

What needs to improve	LSCP strategic oversight and understanding about exploited children's experiences, including through the quality, accuracy and effectiveness of audits.				
What inspectors found	<p>There is insufficient senior leadership analysis of the underlying complexities or understanding of the day-to-day experiences of these vulnerable children.</p> <p>Senior leaders across the wider partnership have failed to evaluate and understand exploited children's lived experiences.</p> <p>Evaluation is not based on a systematic analysis of the impact of frontline work across services; instead, there is too much focus on process.</p>				
Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
1.2a	The independent scrutineer to review the current quality assurance and learning methodology and support the LSCP to have an	Independent Scrutineer	3 February 2023	A	The first session for this work took place on 16 November 2022. The proposed approach and scope for this work was included in the independent scrutineer's presentation to the LSCP Executive on 12 December 2022.

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	improved understanding of the lived experience of children, young people, and their families.				
1.2b	Implement the recommendations from the independent scrutineer's work on quality assurance.	LSCP Executive	To be determined based on the recommendations	A	To be completed once the independent scrutineer has completed their recommendations.
1.2c	Develop an annual programme for senior leaders to visit and speak to children and young people about their experiences. To focus on children and young people at risk of exploitation initially.	LSCP Business Manager	28 February 2023	A	Work on the developing the programme is underway.
1.2d	LSCP Executive meetings to have a standing item on children and young people's lived experiences to ensure meetings remain focused on impact and outcomes for children and young people.	LSCP Business Manager	8 February 2023	A	A standing item has been agreed to start from the LSCP Executive in February 2023. Plans are being put in place to explore arrangements for involving children and young people. Arrangements were discussed during the LSCP Executive meeting on 12 December.
1.2e	Determine the programme of LSCP audits for the year, including audits on the front door and children and young people at risk of exploitation.	Chair of Quality Assurance subgroup	12 December 2022	G	The audit plan was scrutinised by the Quality Assurance subgroup on the 24 November and was agreed in the LSCP Executive on the 12 December.
1.2f	Carry out a multi-agency audit of children and young people at risk of exploitation as part of the multi-agency audit programme to evaluate the impact of improvements on outcomes for children and young people.	Chair of Quality and Assurance subgroup	30 June 2023	A	This is included within the LSCP audit plan.

2. Identifying needs and information sharing

2.1 Quality and timeliness of police recording and information sharing

Priority Action	The police should improve quality and timeliness of recording on systems and prompt intelligence-sharing with partners about exploited children at risk of significant harm and those missing from home and care.				
What inspectors found	Inspectors identified examples where crucial police intelligence concerning children at risk of exploitation was not being shared promptly enough, due to policing capacity.				
Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
2.1a	Instruct all staff on the consistent use of Public Protection templates within Niche to ensure recording is accurate and timely, paying particular attention to: a) Child sexual exploitation (CSE) screening tools b) Missing from home (MFH) problem profiles c) Strategy meetings	Detective Chief Inspector Littlewood	20 October 2022	G	Formal direction regarding MFH and CSE screening was issued on 18 September 2022. Detailed focus groups have and are taking place on child exploitation flagging, with the last one being held on 31 December 2022. The force has reviewed the application and consistency of Niche reporting mechanisms. This position has allowed scrutiny of recording on police systems to enable one point of reference for matters affecting children who are missing from home, screening tools, and strategy meetings. In a review of strategy meetings that occurred during October 2022, 21 of 25 had the pre-requisite template. Of the 4 remaining: 3 are not yet closed and 1 is a duplicate. This is high assurance that there is consistency in the use of templates. A review of the use of missing from home problem solving profiles has been completed by Inspector Jim Adams which also demonstrated that consistency is being applied.
2.1b	Review the child sexual exploitation flagging process to ensure information is recorded appropriately.	Detective Chief Inspector Littlewood	1 December 2022	G	A multi-agency review of the children identified as at risk of child sexual exploitation using flags across all services was completed. All agencies were satisfied with the flagging process.

2.1c	Examine and review the daily system for sharing intelligence through the VPA and exploitation screening tools and ensure that this is shared in a timely way.	Detective Chief Inspector Littlewood	1 December 2022	G	<p>The force has included an interim measure of notification of missing children to the local authority. This measure will be in place until an IT fix can be secured (likely June 2023). Governance is in place for the Vulnerability Hub (VH) to share every morning the details of children currently missing; the performance of this is managed by a daily police operational focus meeting. When the child is found/returned a notification is completed through the VPA mechanism and using missing from home problem solving team submissions into the commissioned missing from home service 'We are with you'. This allows We are with you to complete their statutory intervention.</p> <p>Timeliness and scrutiny of VPA sharing into the integrated front door has been progressed since June 2022. VPA submissions to police remain stable at 30-50 per day and the yearly number into the front door approximately 2,900. The Constabulary will be moving to a 7 day a week service from April 2023 to manage the spikes in VPAs received on Monday and Tuesday (due to no weekend working). Current audit suggests that for the first 14 days in November, we had 7 days in which we were dealing with VPAs within 24 hours.</p>
2.1d	Examine and scrutinise monthly missing from home data sets for any deficiencies in information sharing or increase in demand. Map this against the daily notifications that police sent to children's social care.	Detective Superintendent Ball	31 January 2023	A	<p>Monthly tactical missing from home and child sexual exploitation data set has been developed. A prototype of the document has been shared with JTAI MASA Improvement Group who agreed that this provides good oversight of our population. This will be shared through the CS/SOC Strategic Board following sign off by police senior analyst and head of crime / intelligence.</p>
2.1e	Introduce a daily multi-agency information sharing meeting in the integrated front door to support effective intelligence sharing between agencies.	Detective Chief Inspector Littlewood	17 October 2022	G	<p>The daily multi-agency information sharing meeting was introduced from 17 October 2022. The multi-agency team review VPAs in the meeting and agree what action is needed. Feedback from service managers is positive - awaiting formal review.</p>

2.2 Identifying children at risk of exploitation within emergency departments

Priority Action Health leaders should ensure that children at risk of exploitation are identified when they attend an emergency department and their needs are consistently analysed using the LSCP-approved screening tool, with findings swiftly communicated to multi-agency partners.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
2.2a	Ensure that health staff who work in emergency departments (ED) are equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to children who are at risk of exploitation through a range of methods, including staff briefings, supervision and training. Promote the use of the pan-Cheshire child exploitation screening tool.	MCHFT and ECT Named Nurses and Designated Doctors for Safeguarding Children	30 November 2022	G	<p>Each Trust has delivered targeted ED training for ED staff including use of the screening tools. East Cheshire Trust (ECT) and Mid Cheshire Hospitals Foundation Trust (MCHFT) have included child exploitation into level 3 safeguarding training.</p> <p>Training PowerPoints have been reviewed and compliance is monitored quarterly. As of 30 November 2022, ECT staff are at 85% compliance and MCHFT are at 83%. Both trust safeguarding teams have a level 3 safeguarding training improvement plan in place and there are extra sessions being facilitated specifically for ED staff.</p> <p>All training PowerPoints include current information regarding recognition and response to child exploitation.</p> <p>Both ECT and MCHFT Named Nurses report an increase in the use of ED staff using the pan-Cheshire exploitation screening tool. MCHFT and ECT have implemented revised ED documentation which includes a specific child exploitation question which prompts to complete the screening tool if indicated.</p> <p>Both trusts have increased their safeguarding supervision sessions within ED and the Designated Doctor for safeguarding children is available for consultation, case management and complex case debrief.</p> <p>Both trusts have developed a safeguarding briefing available for staff, these include examples of good practice, learning from practice learning reviews and local safeguarding updates.</p>

					<p>ECT and MCHFT safeguarding team members attend their EDs on weekdays to go through cases and discuss referrals made with staff.</p> <p>Alert flags have been added to the electronic patient system to prompt medical staff to check that the safeguarding risk assessment has been completed and child exploitation considered as part of the medical consultation.</p>
2.2b	<p>Monitor and evaluate the impact on practice through the partnership JTAI groups, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that ED records, CP-IS and safeguarding referrals evidence timely and consistent information sharing to multi-agency partners for children and young people at risk of exploitation • use of exploitation screening tools in EDs via monthly audits with the designated nurse team scrutiny and oversight. • that safeguarding flags are correctly put on the ED system to highlight any child identified at risk of exploitation. 	MCHFT and ECT Named Nurses and Designated Doctors for Safeguarding Children	31 January 2023	A	<p>ECT undertake daily Clinical Excellence Framework Audits. Learning is fed back to the individual clinician/nurse for positive feedback or areas for development. A quarterly audit report was received at the Safeguarding Assurance meeting on 26 October 2022. All audits evidence improvements. Of the 61 ED cards relating to paediatric attendances to the department that were audited in quarter 2, the existing risk assessment had been completed in 53 (87%) cases. This is a significant improvement from Q1 where 11 out of 36 (30%) had been completed.</p> <p>MCHFT safeguarding ED audits are reported into the monthly Trust Safeguarding meeting, which is attended by all the Trust department leads, representatives from the Integrated Care Board and adult social care. Awaiting the audit data for MCHFT to demonstrate improvement and impact.</p> <p>ECT and MCHFT safeguarding teams complete weekly auditing of the safeguarding risk assessments which are fed back to the ED team to drive improvements in practice and continue to evidence compliance with completion of the ED risk assessment.</p> <p>The Designated Nurse and Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children visited ECT and MCHFT emergency departments on 9 November 2022 and dip sampled ED records. The dip sample evidenced there was a clear analysis of risk for children presenting to both EDs. There was also a good use of chronologies and evidence of timely information sharing. ED staff in both trusts were able to demonstrate the use of the pathways, the new updated ED documentation and the use of the liaison safeguarding team.</p> <p>The use of safeguarding flags has been audited across all health providers and flags have been appropriate and up to date.</p>

2.3 Identifying and responding to children and young people with additional complex needs

Priority Action	East Cheshire NHS Trust should improve wider safeguarding practice in emergency departments so that risks to children with additional complex needs are identified, understood and responded to.
What inspectors found	<p>Children at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation are not consistently having their needs and risks considered on presentation at emergency departments.</p> <p>Furthermore, children presenting at the emergency department of Cheshire East NHS Trust are not having their voices heard.</p> <p>Staff need to be more curious so that broader safeguarding needs are identified, understood and responded to quickly.</p>

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
2.3a	Ensure emergency department (ED) staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to children who are at risk of exploitation through a range of methods, including staff briefings, morning huddles, feedback following safeguarding team reviews, group supervision and training.	Head of Safeguarding East Cheshire Trust	30 September 2022	G	<p>Immediately following verbal feedback from the JTAI, the safeguarding team arranged to attend departmental meetings for Band 5, 6 and 7 staff to discuss child safeguarding and areas of learning from the JTAI. Group safeguarding supervision is now provided to staff through these meetings to support learning and reflection on practice. Attendance of staff at these meetings will be reviewed quarterly and staff who have not attended these meetings and accessed supervision will be followed up by the safeguarding team.</p> <p>The safeguarding team attended the 7.30 and 4.30 safety briefings in the department daily (Monday – Friday) for 3 weeks following the inspection, to raise awareness of the various forms of exploitation, risk indicators, the pan-Cheshire child exploitation screening tool, and referral pathways.</p> <p>The team continues to attend the 7.30 and 4.30 safety briefs once a week to raise awareness of professional curiosity, ongoing learning from the JTAI - including capturing the voice of the child, and the national Safeguarding review following the deaths of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes.</p> <p>The Safeguarding team also attends the daily 9am huddle/handover (Monday – Friday) to support staff with professional curiosity,</p>

					capturing the voice of the child, risk assessment and decision making. This is also used to feed back cases where additional learning is required or examples of good practice. Case examples have been anonymised and used to inform 'bite size' training sessions provided at the early morning and afternoon safety briefs and huddles in the ED, and in supervision sessions.
2.3b	For every child that is discharged from the ED, the safeguarding team to review whether all concerns have been responded to appropriately and take action where necessary to ensure all safeguarding concerns are responded to.	Head of Safeguarding East Cheshire Trust	28 November 2022	G	<p>For every child that is discharged from the ED, the safeguarding team access the records and review whether appropriate risk assessments have been completed and whether all concerns have been responded to appropriately. The actions from the safeguarding team are now included within the medical documentation so there is a clear record of the actions taken as a result of this review.</p> <p>Every child / young person's attendance at the ED is checked for safeguarding flags, frequent attendances and triaged as either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring further safeguarding intervention, and assessed to see whether any additional information and action is required • Liaison with no further action required - routine information sharing to School Nurse /Health Visiting hub. <p>In cases when the child left before clinical assessment, self-discharged or if insufficient information is documented on the GP letter, the ED card is reviewed for triage information to ascertain whether further action is required. The team gather further information and share information with agencies as appropriate. Any action taken is shared with the school nurse, health visiting hub and the safeguarding team. The safeguarding team also update the GP letter with actions taken by the team which is then printed for inclusion in the ED records.</p>
2.3c	Emergency department documentation to be redesigned and rolled out to teams to support good practice.	Lead Nurse ED	1 December 2022	G	<p>The ED card has been revised to include prompts that support the recording of professional curiosity.</p> <p>The safeguarding risk assessment has been reviewed and updated to include guidance and prompts about next steps to be taken by staff following identification of risk factors, use of the child exploitation and domestic abuse screening tools and onward referral pathways.</p>

					The new documentation was implemented on 21 November 2022.
2.3d	Medical staff documentation process / template to be reviewed and updated to ensure that this accurately records safeguarding concerns, professional curiosity, and actions taken. Ensure that a copy of the GP letter which provides a summary of the medical care provided is added to the patient's ED card following discharge from the department to provide a complete record.	Clinical Lead ED	7 November 2022	G	<p>Medical staff documentation process and template has been reviewed and updated. The Clinical Lead for ED, and the Consultant leading on child safeguarding in the department have both discussed expectations in relation to the standard of medical staff documentation at the ED Consultant meeting and the ED Governance meetings in August and September 2022.</p> <p>Admin support has been identified from 7 November 2022 for filing the GP letters to ensure these are consistently included within the patient's ED card.</p>
2.3e	Single agency audits (including the Clinical Excellence Framework audit) to be reinstated, to assess the impact of improvements on outcomes for children and young people.	Head of Safeguarding, East Cheshire Trust, and Lead Nurse ED	31 October 2022	G	<p>In addition to the safeguarding team's daily review of ED documentation for children and young people's attendances to ED, the safeguarding team has established a robust programme of audit to monitor compliance with safeguarding standards and requirements. The team has developed a tool to guide audit in the department which mirrors the tool used on the paediatric ward and includes review of evidence of professional curiosity and the voice of the child.</p> <p>Oversight of medical staff documentation standards is maintained by the Clinical Lead for ED, who audits 5 children's records each day when on duty. Feedback from audits is provided individually via huddles.</p> <p>Clinical Excellence Framework audits are completed daily in the ED by the Senior Sister, with assurances regarding standards and actions to be taken being provided to the Deputy Head and Head of Nursing for the Directorate. This is embedded in practice within the department. The audit is undertaken by the Band 7 nurse in charge to provide assurance regarding the completion of risk assessments. The safeguarding team are also undertaking this daily and findings are fed back to individual staff.</p> <p>These audits are being used to support learning, practice development and compliance with the expected standards.</p>

					<p>Audits in November show improvements in practice. Of 22 cases audited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 (91%) children had a safeguarding risk assessment • 20 (91%) evidenced that the CP-IS system had been checked • 17 (77%) showed clear planning for children • 20 (91%) the safeguarding team felt the discharge plan adequately safeguarded the children. Further action was taken by the safeguarding team for to safeguard the remaining two children. • Of the 16 children where it would have been appropriate for them to be seen alone, 14 were seen alone (88%). <p>A quarterly summary audit report will be reported to the Safeguarding Assurance Committee on 21 December.</p>
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3. Swift support for children and young people at risk

3.1 Front door

Priority Action	All partners in the integrated front door and local authority social work teams should ensure that exploited children requiring statutory intervention receive it swiftly from all agencies.
What needs to improve	Children missing from home and at risk of exploitation are quickly and consistently identified by the multi-agency integrated front door. Prompt and updated action planning by the multi-agency child exploitation and integrated front door weekly meetings that demonstrates reduced risks to children.
What inspectors found	Significant harm thresholds for exploited and missing children are not rigorously evaluated, or action plans put in place following integrated front door meetings that address risk effectively. For instance, some children who met threshold for a child protection strategy meeting were not identified as such and so waited too long to have their needs risk assessed and investigated.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
3.1a	<p>All exploitation screening tools received by the front door will be reviewed within 24 hours and managed as a contact, in line with Working Together 2018. This involves partnership information gathering, analysis by an experienced social worker and management approval of the most appropriate course of action.</p> <p>A decision will be made on the same day either to progress to a referral to children's social care and allocated to a social worker or into early help and prevention and allocated to an early help</p>	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, Cheshire East Council	13 July 2022	A	<p>From 13 July 2022 (during inspection) the process was changed to ensure all exploitation screening tools received into the front door are required to be reviewed within 24 hours and managed as a contact. This involves partnership information gathering, analysis by an experienced social worker and management approval of the most appropriate course of action.</p> <p>Decision should be made on the same day either to progress to a referral to children's social care and allocated to a social worker or into early help and prevention and allocated to an early help practitioner.</p> <p>Although the new process is in place, this action is coded as amber as dip sampling has identified that although all exploitation tools received by the front door are opened as a contact on the same day, due to challenges with staffing capacity not all are reviewed within 24 hours. Performance in this area will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis by fortnightly front door dip samples. As of 28 November, 77%</p>

	practitioner. Statutory intervention commences immediately including a visit to the child and the initiation of a child and family assessment, and specific risk mitigation now begins without delay.				screening tools were reviewed within 24 hours. This action will remain amber until performance is at 95% or higher. Performance is monitored on twice a month by the Director of Children's Social Care and shared monthly with the JTAI partnership groups.
3.1b	Social work teams will receive police intelligence, VPAs and screening tools on the same day they are submitted to the integrated front door rather than being disseminated at the integrated front door meeting to ensure that swift action is taken at the point of identification of new risk.	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, Cheshire East Council	13 July 2022	G	Social work teams now receive police intelligence, VPAs and screening tools on the same day they are submitted to the integrated front door which ensures that swift action is taken at the point of identification of new risk.
3.1c	Introduce a requirement for a strategy meeting to be held for all young people who are missing for more than 48 hours. This will ensure that these young people receive coordinated multi-agency support.	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, Cheshire East Council	31 July 2022	G	This requirement has been introduced and strategy meetings have increased as a result. A fortnightly performance update will be provided to ensure compliance in this area.
3.1d	Develop practice guidance 'Expectations for a good quality contact' to support frontline practitioners in the integrated front door to support decision making.	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, Cheshire East Council	31 October 2022	G	Completed and shared with the team. This is also part of the induction for new team members.
3.1e	The safeguarding service manager will offer challenge and support to the group of partnership practitioners who undertake monthly dip samples on themed areas in the front door. These dip	Head of Service for Children's Safeguarding, Cheshire East Council	30 November 2022	G	The safeguarding service manager joined the audit group on 10 November 2022 and is part of the group that meets every other Thursday to focus on themed areas. The first dip sample on the 10 November was on exploitation.

	samples will include a focus on child exploitation.				
3.1f	The weekly integrated front door meeting will retrospectively review the immediate safety planning for children at risk of exploitation following receipt of a screening tool and a contact.	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, Cheshire East Council	1 October 2022	G	The weekly integrated front door meeting now retrospectively reviews the immediate safety planning for all children at risk of exploitation following a screening tool being received a contact completed. This reviews and monitors that the risk to children has been identified by statutory agencies swiftly and that safety planning has been put into place without delay. This also ensures that actions are owned by partner agencies with clear timescales.

3.2 Strategy meetings

What needs to improve

The quality and effectiveness of multi-agency strategy meetings across teams and services for children at risk of exploitation.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
3.2a	Establish a rota for police attendance at strategy meetings to ensure strategy meetings can take place swiftly.	Safeguarding Detective Inspector	1 September 2022	G	A rota is in place for police attendance at strategy meetings to ensure strategy meetings can take place swiftly. Feedback from the team has been that it's been easier to arrange meetings.
3.2b	Refresh the expectations on strategy meetings with the partnership practitioners.	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, Cheshire East Council	7 November 2022	G	Partnership practitioners asked on 7 November 2022 to ensure that they review the section 47 guidance, so they fully understand the purpose and impact of strategy discussions.
3.2c	Ensure that minutes from strategy discussions are shared with all partners within timescales.	Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection, and Head of Service	31 December 2022	A	Teams have been reminded about the requirement to do this. An audit has been completed to assess the percentage of minutes shared within 10 days:

		for Cared for Children and Care Leavers, Cheshire East Council			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child in Need and Child Protection Team – Macclesfield – 100% (of 21 strategy discussions in October) • Child in Need and Child Protection Team – Crewe – 73% (of 30 strategy discussions in October) • Children with Disabilities Team – 0% (of 2 strategy discussions in October) • Cared for Service – 70% (of 30 strategy discussions in September and October). <p>The audit identified good practice that will be implemented across all teams.</p>
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3.3 Threshold guidance

What inspectors found	Threshold guidance for professionals has not been revised since 2018 and does not include reference to criminal exploitation or contextual safeguarding; this adds to confusion about referral pathways.
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Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
3.3a	Review and update the threshold of need document to make explicit the necessity to respond immediately to the risk associated with child exploitation, including those who go missing.	Director of Strong Start and Prevention	28 February 2023	A	Work is underway. The thresholds document has been revised and aligned with the new supporting families' framework and is currently out for consultation with partners until 16 December 2022. A consultation session is being held on 6 December 2022. We are planning to launch the new document in February 2023 following approval from the LSCP Executive.

3.4 Fast-track health referrals

What needs to improve	Fast-track health referrals for exploited children with autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder to ensure that they can access appropriate support.
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What inspectors found	Exploited children with autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are experiencing delays in having their health needs met due to the lack of an efficient fast-track process for referrals.
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Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RA G	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
3.4a	Assess how many children with Autism and ADHD are experiencing delays, and the extent of these delays. Based on this understanding, evaluate the best way to support exploited children and young people with Autism and ADHD.	NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board Programme Lead for Mental Health, Learning Difficulties and Autism	31 March 2023	A	<p>Work is ongoing in this area. An update was requested from the programme lead on the process for expediting referrals in CWP including information about their process for prioritisation which is an internal 'expedition' checklist they use on request from a referrer to expedite. This issue was raised as an item to be discussed by all providers at the Autism Clinical Network in October 2022. The pathways have been reviewed, and changes are being implemented following the review.</p> <p>Many children and young people waiting for an assessment could be considered vulnerable in terms of their presenting needs, which presents a challenge in developing a fast-track process linked to vulnerability. The potential impact of this for children and young people at risk of exploitation is being considered alongside the needs of other vulnerable groups.</p>

4. Protecting children and young people at risk

4.1 Appropriate education

Priority Action	Multi-agency partners need to secure appropriate education for exploited children as a protective factor.
What inspectors found	<p>The role of education as a protective factor is not high profile enough in multi-agency work. Too often, children at risk of exploitation do not attend school or are engaged in minimal tuition. This increases the risk to their safety and limits their life chances.</p> <p>Partners do not challenge each other or have sufficiently robust plans to address low engagement in education.</p> <p>In addition, the impact of placement moves on children's education is not sufficiently considered by multi-agency partners. Too often, placement moves result in a breakdown in education which exacerbates the risk of children being exploited.</p>

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
4.1a	Hold awareness raising sessions on education as a protective factor to improve joint working around supporting children and young people to engage in education and other activities which disrupt their ability to experience harm.	Head of Service: Education Participation and Pupil Support, Cheshire East Council	8 February 2023	A	<p>Attendance awareness raising sessions have been delivered to the following stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 September – Cheshire East Association of Secondary Headteachers (secondary headteachers) • 29 September – East Cheshire Association of Primary Headteachers Executive (primary school headteacher locality representatives) • 14 October – School Governors' conference • 19 October – Education Recovery Group (contains representatives from primary, secondary and special schools) • 18 November and 6 December – Cheshire East Council's Children's Services Staff Conferences, with two further sessions being held in January 2023. • 29 November - Designated Leads for Cared for Children. <p>Awareness raising session will continue in January and February across partnership forums such as the Safeguarding Adults Board.</p>

4.1b	Develop a new partnership process for children and young people at risk of exploitation who are not in education full time. The multi-agency team around the child/ young person will work together to develop a timetable of planned activity for the child, including education, to act as a protective factor. Timetables will be reviewed through multi-agency meetings on the child's plan.	Head of Service: Education Participation and Pupil Support, Cheshire East Council	New process to be launched on 9 January 2023	A	<p>The new process has been developed - the multi-agency team around the child/ young person work together to develop a timetable of planned activity for the child, including education, to act as a protective factor. Timetables will be reviewed through multi-agency meetings on the child's plan. Our expectation is that children/ young people will have 10 sessions a week in their timetables to disrupt their ability to experience harm.</p> <p>The new process has been shared with teams through the awareness raising sessions and is already underway in some areas. It will be launched in January for the whole partnership for all children and young people at risk of exploitation.</p> <p>Tuition has been increased to 5 hours per week for children and young people who are able to manage this in line with their health needs.</p>
4.1c	Webinars/ light bitesize sessions will be rolled out from January frontline staff across the partnership to support the roll out of the new process around supporting children and young people to engage in education and other activities which disrupt their ability to experience harm. This will also include the importance of considering the impact of placement moves on children's education.	Head of Service: Education Participation and Pupil Support, Cheshire East Council	28 February 2023	A	Planned for roll out in January 2023.
4.1d	Develop a partnership practice guide which explains how education can be a protective factor, and to support the new process for timetables of activities. To include that planning for education needs to happen at the earliest opportunity, and that education needs to be	Head of Service: Education Participation and Pupil Support, Cheshire East Council	28 February 2023	A	This is being developed. Consultation with partners will take place in January for launch in February 2023.

	considered within contingency planning.				
4.1e	Produce a position statement to the LSCP Executive on securing appropriate education for exploited children and young people to assess the impact of work in this area to date, and to understand any barriers.	Head of Service: Education Participation and Pupil Support, Cheshire East Council	24 April 2023	A	Planned to be received by the LSCP Executive meeting in April.

4.2 Quality assessments

What inspectors found The quality of social work assessments about children and their experiences are highly variable. Some children receive a thorough assessment with a resolute emphasis on understanding the impact of exploitation and children's wider lived experiences, supported by effective planning which addresses emerging issues and risks. For other children, however, assessments of their needs and vulnerabilities are subject to narrow analysis, using a screening tool that results in over-optimism, leaving them in situations of harm for longer.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
4.2a	Continue our strategic focus on embedding consistently good quality assessments and plans within children's social care leading to greater consistency of assessment and intervention.	Director of Children's Social Care	30 August 2022	G	Continual focus is being driven through the senior leadership team for children's social care.
4.2b	Refresh the masterclass programme (bitesize training for social work teams) in line with the findings from the inspection to support good quality practice. This will include conducting assessments, plans, and capturing the child's voice.	Principal Social Worker	5 December 2022	G	Masterclasses have been refreshed in line with the findings from the inspection and were relaunched on 28 November 2022. Impact of the masterclasses is reviewed by the Principal Social Worker and Lead Practitioner team and will be reported to the JTAI partnership groups via this plan. A masterclass on writing good quality plans and assessments will take place on 21 December 2022.

4.3 Review of multiple plans					
What needs to improve		Systematic review of the efficacy of multiple safety plans, child protection plans, and care planning for children in care and young people leaving care.			
What inspectors found		Some children have a range of teams working with them and are the subject of several different plans. Not all professionals involved with the child have the most up-to-date and overarching plan or are invited to attend review meetings. This is confusing for the child and their family and makes it difficult for them, and the professionals working with them, to understand what the priorities are and what they need to do to drive forward the actions.			
Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
4.3a	Implement one plan and one process which follows the child through their journey, so there is a consistent process for developing and reviewing children's plans together with them.	Principal Social Worker	31 January 2023	A	The new plan has been designed and built in the child's record system. It is currently being piloted by a small team to ensure that the system functions as expected. The new plan format should streamline recording requirements for social workers, reducing the time spent completing information which is already available on the system. The plan will be rolled out in January 2023.
4.3b	Ensure there is a consistent approach to consulting with and inviting professionals to attend meetings for children and young people, and for sharing the latest plan.	Director of Children's Services	31 December 2022	A	We are currently reviewing where there is consistently good practice within teams so these features can be incorporated into a new process.
4.4 Evidence-based contingency planning					
What needs to improve		Evidence-based contingency planning, including challenge by practitioners and leaders who hold each other to account.			
What inspectors found		Contingency planning is absent for too many children.			

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
4.4a	The exploitation conference, training and practice guidance for practitioners will include the importance of contingency planning for children and young people, considering education as part of this, and challenging that contingency plans are in place.	Chair of the Training subgroup	31 January 2023	A	A new awareness session for partnership practitioners on child exploitation has been developed. A pilot of the session was run on 29 November. The practice guidance will align with the new exploitation strategy, and they will be launched together at the child exploitation conference in January 2023. These will cover the importance of contingency planning.
4.4b	Masterclasses to be held on contingency planning for social care practitioners.	Principal Social Worker	31 December 2022	A	Masterclasses on planning (including contingency planning) are taking place as part of the regular masterclass programme. A masterclass on writing good quality plans and assessments will take place on 21 December 2022.

5. Supporting good practice

5.1 Practice standards and training on exploitation

What needs to improve	Clarity on expected standards of practice for all staff across agencies, supported by specific multi-agency child criminal and sexual exploitation training.
What inspectors found	<p>The absence of a discrete multi-agency training strategy or budget for exploited children means that many staff do not have the requisite skills or knowledge to consistently help and protect exploited and missing children.</p> <p>This training deficit, in part, leads to a general lack of consistent recording and analysis of children's voices and their reasons for going missing within case records across the partners.</p>

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
5.1a	Develop partnership practice guidance for child exploitation alongside the new strategy.	Chair of the Training subgroup	31 January 2023	A	The practice guidance will align with the new exploitation strategy, and they will be launched together at the child exploitation conference in January 2023.
5.1b	Develop a new training offer for child exploitation, which will focus on the voice of the child.	Chair of the Training subgroup	31 January 2023	A	A new awareness session for practitioners on child exploitation has been developed. A pilot of the session was run on 29 November 2022.
5.1c	Hold a conference on child exploitation for a cross section of partnership staff at all levels. This conference will include a national speaker who will share the latest learning from research and will be used to develop understanding of child exploitation.	LSCP Business Manager	31 January 2023	A	The conference will take place on 31 January 2023. Initial planning meeting with the keynote speaker took place on 15 November 2022. A draft proposal for the event was presented to the LSCP Executive on 12 December 2022.
5.1d	Determine the priorities for training and review and refresh the training offer in response to all the needs	Chair of the Training subgroup	31 January 2023	A	The Training subgroup meeting on 24 November 2022 considered training priorities, which are now out with partners for consultation. The refreshed training plan will come to the Training subgroup in January

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	of the partnership. LSCP training plan to be reviewed and refreshed.				and to the LSCP Executive in February for endorsement. Delivery of training to start from March 2023.
5.1e	Develop a way to evaluate the impact of training on frontline practice, including speaking to attendees and their managers following the training to assess impact.	Chair of the Training subgroup	31 March 2023	A	A proposal will come to the meeting in Training subgroup meeting in January. Evaluations and bookings to be supported through a system which will ensure evaluations are completed.
5.1f	Review the options for resourcing the partnership including a review of the existing training budget.	LSCP Executive	8 February 2023	A	An options paper on the budget for the partnership, including training, will be completed for the LSCP Executive in February.

5.2 Learning and action from rapid reviews

What inspectors found

Learning and action from some rapid reviews are not prioritised, leading to significant delay.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
5.2a	Determine the actions required, owners and timescales for delivery, for the rapid reviews conducted to date.	LSCP Business Manager	31 January 2023	A	An initial working group has ensured there are actions in place to meet the recommendations from local child safeguarding practice reviews and rapid reviews. The Learning and Improvement subgroup are tracking the actions and progress to ensure that owners are held to account and deliver within timescales. Work will be undertaken with the independent scrutineer regarding prioritising and tracking the actions.
5.2b	Track the progress against actions from rapid reviews, and regularly report to the LSCP Executive on the progress.	Chair of the Learning and Improvement subgroup	31 March 2023	A	The Executive meeting in October 2022 was provided with a tracker outlining all actions and progress to date against the recommendations from the LCPRS and rapid reviews. The Learning and Improvement subgroup in December also reported to the LSCP Executive on the progress of rapid review actions.

5.2c	Themes and learning from rapid reviews to be shared across the partnership.	Chair of the Learning and Improvement Sub Group	28 February 2023	A	<p>The partnership is holding a learning week from 30 January and the findings from rapid reviews will be shared during this week. Agency leads have also communicated the findings to teams.</p> <p>The Training Sub Group in November agreed the proposal from the LSCP Training Manager on how to integrate the themes from this learning into the partnership training plan.</p>
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5.3 Supervision and management oversight

What needs to improve	The regularity, quality and impact of staff supervision and management oversight across agencies, with clearly recorded analysis by managers about whether children are safer as a result of support and intervention.
What inspectors found	Supervision across the multi-agency partnership concerning exploited and missing children is sometimes infrequent and often cursory, with little evidence of reflection or consideration of whether plans are effective or sustaining change. Safeguarding supervision for some health staff is stronger.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
5.3a	Develop shared partnership principles for supervision – including the purpose and expected outcome of supervision to cover safeguarding and make children and young people safer.	Task and finish group on supervision	30 April 2023	A	Work is underway and will be finalised following the recommendations from the independent scrutineer.
5.3b	Relaunch the expectations for supervision with social work managers.	Principal Social Worker	31 August 2022	G	All managers attended a supervision development session with the Principal Social Worker in August 2022. At the end of November there was 80% compliance with case file supervision.
5.3c	Increase social work team management capacity to support teams and ensure regular supervision is provided for practitioners.	Director of Social Care	30 November 2022	G	Additional capacity is now in place. In addition, the managed social work service will be supporting the cared for service for 6 months from week commencing 5 December 2022, which will add an additional team to the service.

5.3d	Ensure health providers have clear and robust safeguarding supervision arrangements in place including a supervision policy.	All Safeguarding Leads	30 November 2022	G	<p>Within East Cheshire NHS Trust, supervision processes with nursing staff have been implemented and are being used to discuss cases, learning from the JTAI, and national child death reviews. Supervision case discussion is provided at Band 5, 6 and 7 team meetings. The safeguarding team also attend the 7.30 handover once a week. The safeguarding team also attends 9am handovers to support professional curiosity, risk assessment and case management. The safeguarding team are also available for case discussion as required Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm.</p> <p>MCHFT have commenced twice weekly supervision sessions with the safeguarding team for staff. These have created safe spaces for staff and are supported by examples of good practice and improvements from the safeguarding team. These are supported by the Heads of Nursing.</p> <p>Supervision policies have been reviewed by the Designated Nurses for ECT, Wirral Community Health and Care Foundation Trust (WCHCFT), MCHFT, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) and sexual health.</p> <p>New supervision plans have been implemented in quarter 3, the impact of this on outcomes for children will be audited in quarter 4.</p>
5.3e	Thematic report, including performance and joint case reviews, on supervision and the impact on children's outcomes, to be completed to evaluate the impact of work in this area.	JTAI MASA Improvement Group	30 April 2023	A	First thematic report planned for April 2023.

5.4 Staffing Capacity

What needs to improve	Increased staffing capacity across social work teams and in the police child sexual exploitation and missing children coordinators teams in order to respond to improve the quality of service for children.
What inspectors found	Senior leaders across partners do not have an accurate view of the impact of high workloads on their staff. Social work caseloads are too high in many teams.

Inspectors identified examples where crucial police intelligence concerning children at risk of exploitation was not being shared promptly enough, due to policing capacity.

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
5.4a	Executive meetings to include a standing item on workloads and pressures to ensure there is oversight across the partnership.	LSCP Business Manager	31 October 2022	G	This is a standing item on the Executive agenda. Discussion on recruitment and staffing pressures took place in the Executive meeting in October 2022 and December 2022.
5.4b	Consider creating a dedicated contextual safeguarding team which will include co-located social work, police and health services, modelled on best practice in Stockport.	Chair of the CS/SOC Strategic Board	30 August 2023	A	This is progressing well and meetings are set with partners and Stockport (sector lead improvement partner) in January to plan how this is developed.
5.4c	Continue monthly strategic review of caseloads across all social work teams prioritising work and understanding pressure points across the system. Implement mitigations, for example offering support from other teams.	Director of Children's Social Care	13 August 2023	G	This is continuing to take place monthly by the Executive Director of Children's Services and Director of Children's Social Care. Tracking is taking place monthly by social worker to identify trends and marginal increases/decreases in caseloads.
5.4d	Increase starting salaries for social workers to bring us in line with neighbouring authorities.	Director of Children's Social Care	1 October 2022	G	We have increased salaries in line with neighbouring authorities. Starting salaries for social workers new into post took effect from 1 October. Salaries for existing workers at grade 8 in year 2 of their early professional development have been uplifted from January 2023.
5.4e	Increase social work team manager and family support work capacity within teams to provide additional support to teams.	Director of Children's Social Care	30 August 2022	G	Additional capacity is now in place. In addition, the managed social work service will be supporting the cared for service for 6 months from week commencing 5 December 2022, which will add an additional team to the service.

5.4f	Rebrand and relaunch social work in Cheshire East. Attend the regional social work recruitment day to promote opportunities in Cheshire East.	Principal Social Worker	3 October 2022	G	Completed. This has increased our visibility in the region, and we are developing a programme of events to support social work recruitment.
5.4g	Examine and scrutinise problem orientated policing / trigger plans within missing from home teams and exploitation investigations monthly to assess workloads.	Inspector Adams, Detective Chief Inspector Littlewood, and Detective Chief Inspector Whittaker	1 December 2022	G	Performance is monitored monthly and fed into the JTAI improvement group. To date, there are no issues in Vulnerability Hub or MFH Problem Solving Team with capacity or escalations.

6. Strategic Leadership

6.1 Function, purpose and impact of the LSCP

Priority Action	Leaders of the LSCP should address the strategic weaknesses in the leadership, function, purpose and impact of the work of the LSCP and its sub-groups.
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What inspectors found	<p>A lack of critical enquiry, combined with limited resources, has led to ineffective independent analysis and challenge. Consequently, despite intentions to work in partnership and collaborate, senior leaders across the wider partnership have failed to evaluate and understand exploited children's lived experiences.</p> <p>Weaknesses are exacerbated by the absence of an independent scrutineer.</p> <p>Subgroups to drive the work of the LSCP are not effective; despite the evidence of good attendance and intentions, they lack direction, purpose and leadership.</p> <p>Leaders have identified areas for development, but changes have not been implemented quickly enough. The pace of change for exploited children is too slow.</p>
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Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
6.1a	Increase the frequency of the LSCP Executive meetings to bi-monthly from quarterly to support increased focus on children's outcomes and increased pace of change.	LSCP Business Manager	13 July 2022	G	Meetings have been taking place bi-monthly since August 2022.
6.1b	Recruit a high calibre independent scrutineer to provide scrutiny to the partnership.	LSCP Executive	15 August 2022	G	Independent scrutineer has been recruited - Jane Shuttleworth. Weekly updates are being provided to senior leaders in the partnership on the independent review activity.
6.1c	Independent scrutineer to conduct a review of the LSCP Executive and the subgroups with recommendations on	Independent scrutineer	First stage of the report will be available on 23	A	The findings from the first stage of the review were considered by the LSCP Executive on 12 December. The findings of the first stage of the review will be finalised on 23 December 2022 and shared with strategic leads.

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	developments to enable the partnership to improve its effectiveness and impact for children and young people.		December 2022 and the full review will be completed on 3 February 2023		
6.1d	Ensure greater line of sight between the Executive and the LSCP priority groups and subgroups by implementing the recommendations from the independent review.	LSCP Business Manager	28 February 2023	A	Actions to be agreed following completion of the first stage of the independent review which will be received on 23 December 2022.
6.1e	Resources for the partnership to be considered and agreed in line with the review of the independent scrutineer.	LSCP Executive	8 February 2023	A	Resources to be considered based on the changes as a result of the first stage of the independent review which will be received on 23 December 2022.

6.2 Understanding the risks of exploitation to children and young people in Cheshire East

Priority Action	<p>This should include gaining a full understanding of the risks of exploitation to children across the local area, and ensuring that this understanding leads to analysis, provision and commissioning of services that reduce risk for children effectively.</p> <p>Across the partnership, leaders should ensure that operational practice reduces the risk of exploitation to children.</p>
What inspectors found	<p>Urgent action is required to understand and address the underlying complexities and continuing risks to exploited and missing children across all agencies and services, as too many children remain in situations of risk and harm. Until this inspection, strategic multi-agency partners did not understand the extent and impact of the failure to protect children and drive forward plans for those who are at risk of, or are victims of, criminal and sexual exploitation.</p> <p>These are serious and fundamental weaknesses, leaving some children in situations of unassessed risk and harm. Multi-agency action plans are ineffective.</p> <p>Despite intentions to work in partnership and collaborate, senior leaders across the wider partnership have failed to evaluate and understand exploited children's lived experiences.</p> <p>Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements through the LSCP to monitor, promote and evaluate the work of the statutory partners are underdeveloped and weaknesses are exacerbated by the absence of an independent scrutineer.</p>

Ref	Action <i>What we will do</i>	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date <i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
6.2a	Complete a partnership review of all children and young people at risk of exploitation to ensure the right plans are in place to protect them from harm.	LSCP Executive	22 July 2022	G	Review completed immediately following the inspection and actions taken to ensure the right plans are in place for all children and young people. No child was identified as having experienced further harm or as being at immediate risk.
6.2b	Bring together a profile/performance across the partnership of children and young people at risk of exploitation to ensure our population is understood, and to inform an assessment of any gaps in services and need for commissioning.	Chair of the CS/SOC Strategic Board	8 February 2023	A	Cheshire Constabulary have developed a draft profile which is being used as this basis for this work. The profile will be developed by the CS/SOC Strategic Board and reported to the LSCP Executive to ensure that there is strategic oversight and understanding of those at risk of exploitation.
6.2c	Refresh and relaunch the Serious Organised Crime and Exploitation Strategy.	Chair of the CS/SOC Strategic Board	31 January 2023	A	Refresh of the strategy is set to be completed by January 2023 and will be launched on 31 January 2023 at the LSCP Child Exploitation Conference. A draft of the strategy has been considered by the CS/SOC Strategic Board on 23 November 2022 and the LSCP Executive on 12 December. The strategy covers how to reduce the risk of exploitation.
6.2d	Develop a multi-agency exploitation scorecard which will be reported to the LSCP Executive on a regular basis.	Chair of the CS/SOC Strategic Board	8 February 2023	A	Measures for the scorecard were agreed in the CS/SOC Strategic Board on 7 September 2022. A copy of the scorecard will go the LSCP Executive in February.

6.3 Understanding why children and young people go missing and addressing these reasons

What needs to improve

Systematic reporting, recording and analysis by all leaders to increase understanding of why children go missing.

Ref	Action	Action Owner	Due by	RAG	Progress and impact to date
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	<i>What we will do</i>				<i>What we've done so far and evidence of what difference this has made</i>
6.3a	The Contextual Safeguarding Steering Group will produce a regular report to CS/SOC Strategic Board and the LSCP Executive on children and young people who go missing and the drivers for this.	Chair of the Contextual Safeguarding Steering Group	16 February 2023	A	The group will report on drivers and trends for children and young people going missing on a bimonthly basis to the CS/SOC Strategic Board, and the LSCP Executive.

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Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting:	16 January 2023
Report Title:	School Organisation – funding review for Springfield School: Dean Row site.
Report of:	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children’s Services.
Report Reference No:	CF/67/22- 23
Ward(s) Affected:	All Wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide information to committee regarding the need for the council to increase the funding envelope for the new Springfield Special school satellite site at Dean Row in Handforth, Wilmslow, following detailed assessment of the required works from £3m to £6.1m. This programme of works is a critical mitigation within the SEN High Needs management plan in that it will provide additional in-borough SEN places and reduce the need for high-cost independent placements.
- 1.2** It is now the case that this key programme of work cannot be delivered within the revised funding envelope and therefore this paper outlines the necessity to uplift funding in order to complete the programme and attempt to achieve the completion deadline of autumn term 2023.
- 1.3** The ongoing and extensive work to develop a scheme to provide a further SEN special school site in the north of the borough has progressed from an initial feasibility to detailed costings and timescales with the appointed contractor. This progression has now provided a more detailed assessment

of the funding envelope required; this is substantially above the initial scoping exercise.

- 1.4 This report therefore provides a detailed explanation of the reasoning for this increase in costs.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 As the Strategic Commissioner of school places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient places in our schools to meet the needs of residents. Having the right educational placement for all children and young people is key to supporting children and young people achieve their potential and to develop the range of skills and experiences they need to equip them for adulthood. This approach is in line with our strategy to increase local specialist provisions as set out in the high needs management plan.

2.2 Due to the increasing level of complexities of children and young people identified through assessment, the demand for special school places continues to increase. Committee has previously received reports on both the growing pressures on SEN High Needs funding and provided approval to progress with the scheme at Dean Row for a satellite school. Both of these papers emphasised the critical need for more in borough SEN places in specialist settings.

2.3 The background information outlines the timeline and key milestones which explains the significant increase in costs which fundamentally relate to the current economic climate and the costs of materials and services to deliver capital projects within agreed costings. In summary:

- **July 2021** – Committee report approved project and delegation to enter into contract with anticipated costs of £3m.
- **6 October 2022** - Corporate Policy committee approved uplift in costs to £4.1M
- **19 October 2022** – Revised Contractors costs of £5.3 M
- **09 December 2022** -ODR published in relation to virement.

Full timeline of activity shown with appendix 1.

2.4 It is important to note that previous reports on this project have offered alternative options including the potential to further invest on the Springfield school site in Crewe rather than have a satellite site in the north. Committee need to be aware that since this scheme was approved, the council has commissioned and progress another scheme to expand the

Crewe site thus maximising the available space. In summary therefore, Springfield school (Crewe) is now at its maximum capacity both in terms of pupil numbers and available space.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1** For Children and Families Committee to note the requirement to increase the cost of the build for the delivery of additional SEN places at Springfield School, Dean Row, Handforth to £6.1 m.
- 3.2** For Children and Families Committee to note that the Executive Director of Children's Services has completed the necessary documentation for the virement of this additional funding for this scheme and the awarding of the contract to build.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1** The detailed account of the increase in costs is contained within appendix 1 along with the chronology of dates when actions were required to respond to the challenges of increasing costs.
- 4.2** The original permission was to build a school with up to 80 places to increase overall places at Springfield school to assist with the deficit in special school provision for SEN. Inflationary cost have been covered by two further committee virements giving a total budget of £4.1m. Unfortunately, the revised contractual costs at Stage 2 resulted in the requirement for a further uplift which was subsequently quality assured to seek assurance that these costs were appropriate. Therefore, the cost has changed significantly from the original permission granted. Despite the increase in build costs, officers recommended that this scheme still provides the urgent need for additional special school places but will result in a longer period to accumulate the savings.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1** The option to do nothing and not increase special school provision across the borough would result in increasing costs for out to borough places and failure to provide high quality local provision to meet the local need of our families.
- 5.2** There is an option to consider further alternative sites for the increasing demand. The service is working closely with colleagues in the assets team to identify other potential local sites to address the forecast need for specialist school places across the borough. However, the timescales require the Education Directorate to progress at pace and seeking an

alternative site and commencing all necessary stages to deliver to opening would be both lengthy and not provide any savings of costs.

- 5.3** There is the option to not increase in-borough SEND provisions but utilise independent and/or out of borough specialist provisions. This is not a viable option due to the significant increase in costs for such places which will only further increase the financial pressures on the council due to SEND.

6. Background

- 6.1** The SEN Sufficiency Statement for Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs dated August 2020 highlights the need for significantly more specialist school places within the borough.

- 6.2** Children & Families committee at its meeting of 12 July 2021 determined to make use of an existing Cheshire East Council asset (Dean Row Centre) as a satellite school site for the purpose of an expansion of Springfield School, Crewe. This expansion will provide a specialist setting for children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Springfield School is an Ofsted “outstanding” rated school providing education for children with SEND from its existing site in Crewe.

By delivering this scheme, the Council will provide up to an additional 80 placements towards the overall shortfall of places as identified within the updated sufficiency statement.

The proposal will help the Council with its priority to ensure that all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential through supporting the Councils sufficiency shortfall and the differing needs of its children as a result of a growing population

The delivery of the scheme will ultimately support the Council’s ambitions to provide more in borough specialist school placements to support its residents whilst helping the Directorate with its management plan in reducing the overall deficit within its dedicated schools grant budget.

The scheme recently secured positive planning determination, this process has taken 5 months to complete and despite the positive working relationship between the planning department and school organisation team, this has increased the delay to the project and has also resulted in additional costs due to the increase in raw materials etc.

In order to progress with the implementation of the scheme, the Council's projects team received an updated cost plan for the delivery of the scheme at a value of £6,079,770.46. The breakdown of this is a contract value of £5,319,855.45 and the balance being client-side direct costs including consultancy fees, and client-side risk.

The values have been considered by the Council's appointed external consultants in their stage 2 tender evaluation report (attached) and deemed to be value for money taking into account the unprecedented increases in material costs due to Brexit, the impact of the war in Ukraine, the worldwide energy crisis and inflationary pressures across the board and have been compared benchmarking analysis.

Unfortunately, these revised figures are significantly in excess of the current agreed budget figure of £4,120,000. This figure was agreed at Corporate Policy Committee on the 6 October 2022 following the council's review of projects. This was uplifted from the original budget of £3 million which was agreed at Children and Families Committee on 12 July 2021.

Given the urgent need to provide additional placements from this site from September 2023 and because the programme is already expected to run beyond this date for delivery as a result of planning challenges it is recommended that the budget be reflected to meet a build cost of £6,079,770.

Other options to consider in this instance would be to reduce the scope of the scheme which would result in a reduced quality building which may not be fit for purpose given the vulnerability of the children. Also, this may result in the need for amendments to the planning approval which would further delay the scheme and impact on the wider budgetary problems currently faced within the SEND sector. Currently prices are increasing at an extraordinary and unprecedented pace, if we were to reduce the scope and not progress with the appointment of the contract at this point, we could end up with a lesser scheme, but the costs will not be reduced accordingly.

Appendix 1 which accompanies this paper is provided to give the specific breakdown in the increased costs as well as key timelines for the project implementation to date.

7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1. In accordance with the guidance issued by the Department for Education, Making significant Changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools, section 5, formal consultation was undertaken in May 2021 and with the outcomes reported to Committee in July 2021.

8. Implications

8.1. Legal

All decisions have at least three elements to make them effective. a) the resources to actually carry out the decision b) the authority from the committee or constitution to make the decision, c) the ability to fund or vire money is via a budget.

The current committee authority is limited to a school conversion of Dean Row at a build cost of £3m, as supplemented by further decisions contained in committee finance reports covering inflationary increases giving a total of £4.1m.

The revised scheme has resources committed via the Executive Director. The Executive Director also has authority to vire a further £2m under the financial procedure rules to make available a total build cost of £6.1m.

The current committee authority is limited to £4.1m for an additional 80 places and must be revised to give authority to increase agreed expenditure/budget by a further £2m to build a school at a cost of £6.1m for up to 80 places.

9. Finance

9.1 In terms of estimating the mitigation of further SEN spending that this scheme will ultimately achieve; this would be factored into the overall DSG High Needs recovery plan. The information below is based on the latest average cost to the council per pupil per year for placing children in a Cheshire East Council SEND school and the average placement cost per pupil per year for buying placements at independent non maintained schools.

- The average cost per pupil at a CEC School is £13,800 pa.
- The average cost per pupil at an independent non maintained school is £55,500 pa.

This equates to a per pupil mitigation of costs of £41,700 pa.

9.2 The High Needs and School Condition budget allocations have already been approved as part of the capital programme.

The additional funding for the virement of £1,979,770m will be funded from the following unallocated grant within the Children and Families Capital Programme: -

- £750k from School Condition Grant/Emerging priorities (Currently there is £1.3m unallocated, and will leave us with £550K to address any issues that arise such as boiler break downs etc)
- £1,229,770m from High Needs Capital Grant (Currently unallocated High Needs grant stands at £3.819m 2023-24 allocation and £46k from the 2022-23 allocation).

10. Policy

- 10.1** The establishment of an additional SEN special school provision would support the council in meeting its duty to provide sufficient school places. Local authorities are under a duty to ensure sufficiency of school places in their area (section 14 of the Education Act 1996).

The SEND Code of Practice requires us to consult with parental preference schools and parents have a right to appeal where we are unable to name their preference school through the tribunal process.

- 10.2** The proposal will allow more children access to in-borough specialist provision with the intention of supporting children and young people in achieving the best possible outcomes.
- 10.3** The option of new provision will provide more places for children within their local community, allowing them to build friendships with people who live close to them and spend less time travelling.
- 10.4** By providing more local school places within Cheshire East the expansion will allow for some savings on transport when compared to educating children out of borough, thus allowing the council to make best use of its resources.

11. Equality

- 11.1** An updated Equality Impact Assessment will need to be completed once there is an understanding of the age, gender and needs of pupils attending the school at opening.

12. Human Resource

- 12.1** There are no direct human resource implications for the council, but as this new school provision forms part of a current maintained school, the local authority will work with Springfield school in the appointment of additional

specialist staffing to ensure high quality staffing is achieved, both teaching and non-teaching

13. Risk Management

- 13.1** As outlined in the finance section, the DfE have confirmed capital funding grants which allows for the virement of funding. This funding is already available and therefore is not reliant on future funding allocations
- 13.2** Planning Permission – has already been gained on this scheme.
- 13.3** Force Majeure – The global Covid pandemic has identified that there can be some risks that on impact cannot be mitigated against and will inevitably cause some delay, disruption, and any additional costs.

14. Rural Communities

- 14.1** The creation of new SEN provision would potentially bring benefit to rural communities in that it will result in additional special school places which would be available to residents within a more reasonable travel distance.

15. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

- 15.1** In accordance with the programme to provide more specialist school places within Cheshire East, this proposal will provide more spaces for children to learn and develop friendships with other local children.
- 15.2** The savings made from providing better value school places will allow for more efficient budgeting by the service which in turn will reduce pressure on the High Needs budget.

16. Public Health

- 16.1** There are no direct implications for public health however, some children and young people currently travel significant distances to access the specialist provision they may require. This can have an impact on their emotional wellbeing and can significantly lengthen the school day. The proposal to submit applications for new free schools will mean children getting a placement in their local school thus keeping them in their local community.
- 16.2** By reducing the distances which children are having to make to attend school the proposal will also help reduce congestion on the roads and therefore reduce emissions improving the air quality and making a better environment to live in.

- 16.3** Any increase in SEND provision will require strategic joint commissioning of specialist health services to ensure resources for such services as physiotherapy are sufficient to meet increased demand as more localised school places are generated.

17. Climate Change

- 17.1** Providing additional SEN places will enable Cheshire East children the ability to secure at place at their local school thus reducing the need to travel outside of the area which will reduce energy consumption.
- 17.2** Cheshire East Council are very aware of their environmental education and stewardship role and are very interested in promoting sustainability in general.
- 17.3** It is noted that any funding is for a capital project and not for the ongoing running costs. Therefore, as part of the detailed design process, the design team will be exploring how the expansion could be designed to minimize future running costs. Systems that save on energy consumption will be considered, particularly for electricity, with absence detection being the preferred lighting strategy.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Background Papers:	<p><u>Agenda for Children and Families Committee on Monday, 12th July, 2021, 2.00 pm Cheshire East Council</u></p> <p><i>Constitution: Chapter 3 – Part 3 Page 47</i></p> <p><i>18. Virement between budget heads (excluding reserves / contingencies)</i></p> <p><i>Virement Amount</i> <i>In excess of £500,00 up to and including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,000,000 revenue; or • <u>£5,000,000 capital</u> <p><i>Approval Level</i> <i>Relevant Member(s) of CLT and Chief Finance Officer in consultation with Chair of the relevant Committee and the</i></p>

	<p><i>Chair of Finance Sub-Committee</i></p>
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Appendix 1

ODR: Springfield School: Dean Row – Cost increase timeline and explanation.

The following summary provides key information of key milestones and dates as well as a breakdown of how the additional funding has been identified

March 2021 the service produced the initial high level business case for the Capital Board requesting the transfer of the Dean Row asset for the purpose of providing a satellite school for Springfield School. This was in response to the urgent need to provide additional SEN school places.

At this stage the anticipated cost was £3m, this was based on previous and similar schemes and estimates at this early stage. In this paper, we highlighted that if the proposal was approved then a feasibility and necessary surveys would be undertaken to assess the viability of the building and site.

July 2021 – Children and Families Committee

Report submitted and approved with the following resolutions: -

The Children and Families Committee to:

- 1.1. Approve the proposed expansion of Springfield School (by way of a satellite site) from 170 pupil places to 250 places (an increase of up to 80 places) from September 2022.
- 1.2. Approve the procurement of a contract of works and authorise the Director of Children's Services to award a construction contract to facilitate the provision of additional places at Springfield School (satellite site) together with any other agreements associated with or ancillary to the contract.
- 1.3. Recommend that full council approves a fully funded Supplementary Capital Estimate of £3m to be included as a named scheme within the Children and Families Capital Programme, which is being funded by capital grants.

The initial feasibility report was issued late July 2021; at this stage, an anticipated cost of £4 million was quoted, but we anticipated that this could be reduced via the value engineering exercise.

As the design has progressed, more detailed survey work was undertaken and feedback from planners and highways has been received resulting in the scope and costs having increased. Specific elements causing this increase at this stage included:

- the requirement to install a sprinkler system across the site.
- the council's adoption of the low carbon build standard.

These were in addition to the ongoing restrictions due to COVID pandemic, increases in material costs due to Brexit, Climate Change and rising energy costs significantly impacting on our costs.

January 2022, Construction company was appointed to carry out the pre-construction services, this included undertaking detailed design and submission of the planning application (RIBA stages 2 to 7).

May 2022 The scheme budget was increased by £600k, to £3.6m to reflect rising costs at the Outturn Position, this was agreed at the Finance Sub Committee 06 July 2022.

July 2022, as part of the Council's reprofiling exercise, it was requested that the budget figure for the scheme be uplifted to £4.1m, this was approved by Corporate Policy Committee on the **6 October 2022**. This uplift was agreed through the evidence provided by through the project management group as provided by asset services.

At this stage, we advised the uplifted cost was to reflect current status, risks though included planning delays and further cost increases/planning refusal. A planning decision was due early **September 2022**, and this was delayed until the **7 November 2022**.

11 October 2022, Construction company submitted their initial Stage Two tender sum of £5,422,518.79, which was revised on the **19 October 2022** to £5,319,855.45. QS consultants were appointed on behalf of CEC, issued their stage 2 evaluation report and concluded that the tender allowance can be confirmed as value for money based on the current restrictions and market conditions.

Summary of key dates:

12 July 2021 – Children and Families Committee -Original figure approved but this was based on previous schemes initial estimate: £3m

May 2022 The scheme budget was increased by £600k, to £3.6m to reflect rising costs at the Outturn Position, this was agreed at the Finance Sub Committee 06 July 2022.

21 July 2021 – Stage 1 feasibility costs – Estimated at £4.1m

June 2022 – As part of the Council's Capital reprofiling exercise we requested for the budget to be increased to £4.1m, this was approved by committee **6 October 2022**

11 October 2022 – Construction company submitted their Stage 2 tender report at a figure of £5,422,518.79, this was then revised to £5,319,855.45

19 October 2022 – QS company confirmed that the £5,319,855.45 contract figure was acceptable. Overall, the scheme budget is £6,079,770, this includes additional consultant fees and client risk costs.

7 November 2022 – Planning permission granted for Dean Row satellite for up to 80 places.

21 November 2022 – ODR signed by Executive Director for virement of additional funding.

Funding

The additional funding for the virement of £1,979,770m will be funded from the following unallocated grant within the Children and Families Capital Programme: -

- £750k from School Condition Grant/Emerging priorities (Currently there is £1.3m unallocated, resulting in a balance of £550K to address any emerging and critical expenditure which could result in a short-term close closure (e.g., boiler failure). Based upon evidence over recent years, this remaining balance is sufficient to meet the need for emergency interventions to keep schools open
- £1,229,770m from High Needs Capital Grant (Currently unallocated High Needs grant stands at £3.819m 2023-24 allocation and £46k from the 2022-23 allocation).). In March 2022, we were notified by the DfE of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) for financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24. This funding is to support LAs to deliver new places for academic years 2023/24 and 2024/25 and improve existing provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or who require alternative provision (AP). Therefore, this is the utilising available funding for schemes in progression.

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Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting:	16 January 2023
Report Title:	School Organisation - new DfE funded SEN free school applications
Report of:	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services.
Report Reference No:	CF/64/22- 23
Ward(s) Affected:	All Wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise committee of the submitted application (21 October 2022) to expand the number of in-borough special educational needs (SEN) special schools through engagement with the Department for Education (DfE) 'special free school programme for local authorities' to provide additional SEN free schools. The education directorate have recently submitted two applications for two new free schools; if successful in our applications, this would provide capital investment via the DfE to develop these two new schools. This would align with our SEN sufficiency statement to increase local provisions and the requirement to reduce financial pressures on the High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding as identified in our involvement in the DfE 'Developing Better Value'(DBV) initiative.
- 1.2. The actions outlined in this report have clear benefits for the council if we are successful in our applications. Securing external funding which addresses the increasing demand for school places in SEN special schools

is a positive action and is a key mitigation in our SEN high needs funding management plan.

- 1.3.** The application process stated that *‘You do not need to have a site to submit an application, however, we will give preference to those projects where our site assessment shows that we are likely to secure a value for money site in a timely manner with an acceptable level of risk. This will reduce the risk that your project will be delayed or cancelled during the pre-opening phase.’*” Cledford House in Sandbach has been identified as a specific named site (as discussed at Finance Sub Committee on 6 July 2022) along with a site in the ‘Giants Wood’ housing development in Congleton. The Congleton site has been identified for a potential new primary school and there is an opportunity to utilise this option for dual usage by having two education provisions progressed through liaison with planning and developers. The naming of sites supports the application process and therefore this report outlines our ambition to use these two sites as potential options for new SEN provisions within Cheshire East if the application process is successful.
- 1.4** The increasing levels of engagement with the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme continues to highlight the importance of seeking solutions to the continuing SEN deficit. If successful, having two further SEN special schools will provide an additional 120 in-borough places (proposal of 60 per school) which will reduce the dependency on high-cost independent provisions.
- 1.5** The deadline for submitting applications to this latest SEN wave of new free schools was 21 October 2022; this deadline was met with two applications being submitted. It is expected that the local authority will know if it has been successful with these applications during the spring term; we have had feedback that site visits have taken place prior to the Christmas break.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1.** As the strategic commissioner of school places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient places in our schools to meet the needs of residents. Having the right educational placement for all children and young people is key to supporting children and young people achieve their potential and to develop the range of skills and experiences they need to equip them for adulthood. This approach is in line with our

strategy to increase local specialist provisions as set out in the high needs recovery plan as presented to Committee in September 2022.

- 2.2.** Due to the increasing level of complexities of children and young people identified through SEN assessments, the demand for special school places continues to increase. The council has published its updated sufficiency statement for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), in October 2020, this was endorsed by the SEND Partnership Board on 27 November 2020. This document highlights a need to increase specialist provision in the borough as the number of SEN provisions currently available does not match the needs identified.
- 2.3.** The Department for Education (DfE) released information on the 10 June 2022 relating to the process through which local authorities could apply to open new free schools for both specialist SEN provisions and alternative provision (AP). The initial stage of this national process was for the local authority to register an interest by 31 July 2022. Basic details were needed at this stage however, the naming of potential sites for consideration for such new provisions was an advantage at this initial application stage.

Due to the time restraints in this process and the importance of increasing our special school's estate, two submissions were submitted by the October deadline. The completion of these applications was reviewed by the Director of Education in association with the Executive Director.

A detailed paper has not been presented to committee ahead of this report for the following reasons:

- a. There is no guarantee that the two submitted applications will be successful and that further liaison was required with DfE officials at an early stage regarding the proposed sites. This liaison has now taken place including site visits and therefore it was felt appropriate to present this option to committee following the site assessments and not earlier.
 - b. There was a requirement within the application process to ensure that the 'lead member' for property services was informed of applications being submitted. This particularly relates to the potential for certain costs being applied to the local authority for 'abnormal site development costs' (see legal section for detail). Education services undertake close liaison with asset services in the progression of any build scheme and robust processes are in place to consider site issues which may impact on overall costs. Such discussions have initially taken place and would be fully investigated if successful in these applications.
- 2.4.** In terms of potential sites, the education directorate had already expressed an interest in acquiring Cledford House in Middlewich via the Assets Board. Officer advice was sought to allow for the progression of the application to

utilise Cledford House for a new SEN free school. Giants Wood in Congleton was already identified for a new education provision and this free school opportunity allows us to develop this site for dual usage.

- 2.5. In preparation for submitting DfE applications within the short window available, senior officer advice was sort to progress the applications. The Finance Sub-Committee considered this matter at their July 2022 meeting of this committee. The outcome of this meeting was agreement to add this council asset to the disposal list thus allowing for its future change of use/disposal.
- 2.6 Cledford House is currently occupied by local authority service teams within the Children and Family directorate. The formal process to move these specialist teams to alternative venues as their base had already been initiated and a structured consultation process has been undertaken to ensure adequate bases are available for staff to undertake their duties. The Giants Wood site in Congleton is currently part of a sizeable housing development and therefore is a 'ground level development' which requires a full build programme.

3. Recommendations

3.1 For committee to note the submission of two applications for SEN Free Schools. If, successful, these new resources would provide a key mitigation within the SEN High needs management plan.

3.2 For committee to agree to provide indemnity if one or both schemes are successful. Indemnity would need to be provided relating to any 'abnormal site development' costs. Such a task is part of any new school development site, and the initial analysis of the two site is that there are low levels of risk.

3.3 For committee to note that if successful, that these schools would progress through the free school presumption route and appropriate reports would be provided to committee as projects progress to seek relevant delegated approvals.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1. The DfE opened a further round of applications for new SEN free schools with the initial phase of the process being to formally register interest by the 11 July 2022. The local authority then submitted a formal application to the DfE by 22 October 2022. Due to the critical demand for additional SEN

special school places, it was essential that the local authority progressed with applications to secure potential external capital investment.

- 4.2 Committee have been updated on the progression of the free school presumption process for the new primary school at Kingsley Fields, Nantwich and therefore a similar reporting process would be followed if successful with these two SEN applications.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1. The option to do nothing and not increase special school provision across the borough would result in increasing costs for out of borough places and failure to provide high quality local provision to meet the local need of our families.
- 5.2. There is an option to consider alternative sites for the increasing demand. The service is working closely with colleagues in the assets team to identify other potential local sites to address the forecasted demand for specialist school places across the borough. The two sites identified have initially been vetted by DfE officials and seen as appropriate to allow the local authority to then formally apply by the October deadline (see Appendix 1)
- 5.3. There is the option to not increase in-borough SEND provisions but utilise independent and/or out of borough specialist provisions. This is not a viable option due to the significant increase in costs for such places which will only further increase the financial pressures on the council due to SEND.

6. Background

- 6.1 The DfE wants to open new special free schools in areas where good new schools are most needed. They will prioritise applications which:
- *are in areas where a new school fits with the local authority's wider SEN and high needs strategy*
 - *make a strong strategic case for why a new special free school is needed, and will better meet the needs and achieve better outcomes for children and young people in the area*
 - *demonstrate that a new special free school will help local authorities reduce their dedicated schools grant (DSG) deficit*
 - *demonstrate that a new school will be financially sustainable and that local authorities will commit to commissioning, funding and supporting places*
 - *will contribute to the wider aims of the SEND green paper*
 - *include details of a viable site which is likely to secure value for money, in a timely manner, and with an acceptable level of risk*

6.2 The summary below outlines the pertinent points relating to this DfE programme:

This guidance sets out the process for local authorities to apply to set up a new special free school in their area.

New schools approved through this process are part of the central free school's programme and will be delivered and funded as such. Free schools are legally academies, which are state-funded educational institutions operated by academy trusts.

This process does not replace the [free school presumption](#) process and does not replace a local authority's duty to secure sufficient appropriate education for children and young people

Assessment criteria include that local authorities:

- demonstrate that the places in each of the school's first 2 years of operation will be commissioned and confirm the rate at which top-up funding will be paid
- confirm that all places will be commissioned beyond the first 2 years
- make a sound strategic case for new provision that will better meet the needs of children and young people in the area
- explain how they will afford to fund this in the future and demonstrate that the new school will not add financial pressures
- use data to show that there would not be an over-supply of places in the area if a new special free school were created

6.3 Cheshire East has been invited to be part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme that was announced by the Department for Education (DfE) in February 2022. The DBV programme is designed to provide dedicated support and funding to help 55 local authorities with substantial deficit issues in their high needs block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) to reform their high needs systems, with the aim to put more local authorities on a more sustainable footing so that they are better placed to respond to the forthcoming special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms.

6.4 The application submissions were made on the 21 October 2022 and included details of both potential sites being put forward. These are included in appendix 3 in terms of size and location of each option.

6.5 The two SEN special schools applied for would have the focus on the two SEN primary needs which show the highest level of demand. The following information provides a brief outline as to why these primary needs are required.

School 1 – Cledford House, Middlewich: 5-19 60 place school for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

The last 2 years (Jan 2020-2022) of SEN data shows that there has been an overall 16% increase in the number of EHCPs issued. Our overall increase in EHCPs from 2020-2022 (39.6%) is the highest compared to our statistical neighbours; this was confirmed by our DBV officials in recent meetings. The highest percentage increase in setting types (30%) is within the use of non-maintained/independent sector due to the lack of in-borough special school places. In addition to this, in recent years we have seen a significant increase in the requirement for special school places for early years children especially around primary need of Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). Currently, 25% (955) of the 3834 EHCP plans are identified for SEMH, and it is on this basis that this application has been put in. Further, we are anticipating a further 600 EHCP plans being issued in this academic year which adds to the acute and challenging position which the local authority finds itself in. It is positive that 477 of the SEMH learners have successful placements in our mainstream schools but the increasing number of change of placements and 'expectation' of a specialist provision adds to the case for a new special school.

School 2 – Giants wood Site, Congleton: 5-19 60 place school for Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

In recent years we have seen a significant increase in the requirement for special school places for early years children especially around primary need of ASC. Currently, 25% (943) of the 3834 EHCP plans are identified for ASC, and it is on this basis that this application has been submitted. Furthermore, we are anticipating a further 600 EHCP plans being issued in this academic year which adds to the acute and challenging position which the local authority finds itself in. It is positive that 346 of the ASC learners have successful placements in our mainstream schools but the increasing number of change of placements and 'expectation' of a specialist provision adds to the case for a new special school.

7. Consultation and Engagement

7.1. In accordance with the guidance issued by the Department for Education for opening new schools, the council would ensure all consultation and due diligence processes would be followed and reports would be generated for consideration by CLT and committee as these processes are completed.

8. Implications

8.1. Legal

8.1.1. Central government set up a proposed scheme for provision of additional schools [How to apply to set up a special free school \(for local authorities\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/how-to-apply-to-set-up-a-special-free-school-for-local-authorities)

10 June 2022	Mandatory pre-application registration opened.
27 June 2022	Application window opened.
11 July 2022	Mandatory pre-application registration closed.
21 October 2022	Application window closed.
Late 2022	Applications will be assessed against the published criteria. We may ask for additional information during this period

The Application that must be submitted by the 21 October 2022 as part of the requirement to achieve value for money, there is a requirement for applicant authorities to meet 'abnormal site development costs', including:

- geochemical exceedances relative to guidelines for school use
- geophysical conditions
- flooding and alleviation measures
- s278 costs
- new road provision from the adopted highway to the site boundary
- s106 costs
- retaining structures required as a function of topography
- ecological provision - reserves, species protection and relocation
- listed building and heritage community costs
- title consolidation and registration
- utility provision
- environmental conditions that may require specific mitigations such as acoustics or air pollution
- mitigation measures for constrained sites (such as roof top playgrounds)
- other site-specific issues

The application process also provided that, "written confirmation that the relevant Lead Member for Corporate Property has seen the application and understands that the local authority will be required to meet all site abnormal costs and accept the retention of historical ground condition liability"

The giving of an unlimited indemnity for site conditions is a potentially significant and onerous obligation. As Cheshire East Council operates a committee system there is no lead member who is able to give such an undertaking. Full council provided that single member or 'portfolio holder' decision must be taken at committee. The committee is obligation now falls to the committee.

The committee must therefore confirm it has sight of the application process, has received all relevant information in relation to the proposed site history and is content to provide to confirm that Cheshire East is prepared to meet any possible site abnormalities.

Local authorities have a duty to ensure a sufficiency of places in their area under section 14 of the Education Act 1996. The Department of Education has issued Guidance ('the Guidance') 'How to apply to set up a special free school (for local authorities) updated 21 October 2022. The Guidance sets out the process for local authorities to apply to set up a new special free school in their area.

8.1.2. The Guidance states -

New schools approved through this process are part of the central free school programme and will be delivered and funded as such. Free schools are legally academies, which are state-funded educational institutions operated by academy trusts.

This process does not replace the free school presumption process and does not replace a local authority's duty to secure sufficient appropriate education for children and young people. If there is a significant need in an area, the local authority should decide whether a free school presumption competition is needed. If there is a need, they must ask for proposals to establish a free school through the presumption process.

9. Finance

9.1. If successful with these applications, the capital required for building would be provided externally by the DfE. Certain exceptions apply if significant variations are proposed by local authorities. The impact on the council would be that revenue funding would be required for per place funding, but this will be a lower rate than that currently being applied for independent SEN placements. There is detailed information within the national guidance relating to the how the school would be funded for actual places – link provided below. Such funding arrangements would be outlined in subsequent reports to committee if successful in our applications.

9.2 In terms of estimating the mitigation of further SEN spending that this scheme will ultimately achieve; this would be factored into the overall DSG High Needs recovery plan. The information below is based on the cost to the council per pupil per year for placing children in a Cheshire East Council SEND school and the average placement cost per pupil per year for buying placements at independent non maintained schools.

- The average cost per pupil at a CEC School is £13,800 pa.
- The average cost per pupil at an independent non maintained school is £49,500 pa.

This equates to a per pupil mitigation of costs of £35,700 pa.

- 9.3** Cheshire East is now part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme that was announced by the Department for Education (DfE) in February this year. The DBV programme is designed to provide dedicated support and funding to help 55 local authorities with substantial deficit issues in their high needs block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) to reform their high needs systems, with the aim to put more local authorities on a more sustainable footing so that they are better placed to respond to the forthcoming special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms.

10. Policy

- 10.1.** The establishment of SEN free schools would support the council in meeting its duty to provide sufficient school places. Local authorities are under a duty to ensure sufficiency of school places in their area (section 14 of the Education Act 1996).

The SEND Code of Practice requires us to consult with parental preference schools and parents have a right to appeal where we are unable to name their preference school through the tribunal process.

- 10.2.** The proposal will allow more children access to in-borough specialist provision with the intention of supporting children and young people in achieving the best possible outcomes.
- 10.3.** The option of new free schools will provide more places for children within their local community, allowing them to build friendships with people who live close to them and spend less time travelling.
- 10.4.** By providing more local school places within Cheshire East the expansion will allow for some savings on transport when compared to educating children out of borough, thus allowing the council to make best use of its resources.
- 10.5.** By providing additional places the expansion will provide more choice for parents and carers who may otherwise maybe not find a place at a local school.

11. Equality

- 11.1.** An Equality Impact Assessment would need to be completed if successful in our bids to open new free schools.

12. Human Resource

- 12.1.** There are no direct human resource implications for the council, but any new school will require the appointment of specialist staffing and the council would work with the successful provider to ensure high quality staffing is achieved.

13. Risk Management

- 13.1.** There are clear risks for the council not being successful in this round of free school applications. The naming therefore of Cledford House and Giants Wood at this stage is low risk allowing for progression of a formal application in October 2022 based upon support from both the Assets Board and Finance Sub- Committee.
- 13.2.** It is anticipated that the Cledford House premises will be available in early 2023 as existing council staff teams are re-located to other council premises for their base of work following staff consultation.
- 13.3.** Planning Permission – The proposal to establish new free schools would be subject to planning approval and should the proposal impact on land designated as playing field then Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act will also apply. An added risk to planning is the current delays in achieving approvals.

14. Rural Communities

- 14.1.** The creation of new SEN free schools would bring benefit to rural communities in that it will result in additional special school places which would be available to residents within a more reasonable travel distance.

15. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

- 15.1.** In accordance with the programme to provide more specialist school places within Cheshire East, this proposal will provide more spaces for children to learn and develop friendships with other local children.
- 15.2.** The savings made from providing better value school places will allow for more efficient budgeting by the service which in turn will reduce pressure on the ring-fenced High Needs budget.

16. Public Health

- 16.1.** There are no direct implications for public health however, some children and young people currently travel significant distances to access the

specialist provision they may require. This can have an impact on their emotional wellbeing and can significantly lengthen the school day. The proposal to submit applications for new free schools will mean children getting a placement in their local school thus keeping them in their local community.

- 16.2.** By reducing the distances which children are having to make to attend school the proposal will also help reduce congestion on the roads and therefore reduce emissions improving the air quality and making a better environment to live in.
- 16.3.** Any increase in SEND provision will require strategic joint commissioning of specialist health services to ensure resources for such services as physiotherapy are sufficient to meet increased demand as more localised school places are generated.

17. Climate Change

- 17.1.** Providing additional SEN places will enable Cheshire East children the ability to secure at place at their local school thus reducing the need to travel outside of the area which will reduce energy consumption.
- 17.2.** Cheshire East Council are very aware of their environmental education and stewardship role and are very interested in promoting sustainability in general.
- 17.3.** It is noted that any funding is for a capital project and not for the ongoing running costs. Therefore, as part of the detailed design process, the design team will be exploring how the expansion could be designed to minimize future running costs. Systems that save on energy consumption will be considered, particularly for electricity, with absence detection being the preferred lighting strategy.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk 07770 322965
Appendices	Site information – Appendix 1 Other documents attached are the application templates for both options.

<p>Background Papers:</p>	<p>How to apply to set up a special free school (for local authorities) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p><u>SEN Local Offer including SEN Sufficiency statement</u> https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-senand-disabilities/send-developments/assessing-our-local-sendsufficiency.aspx https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/livewell/sen/send-sufficiency-final-forwebsite.pdf https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/livewell/sen/sen-sufficiency-plan-2023-for-website.pdf</p>
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Appendix 1: Site information for the application of 2 new SEN Special Schools

Full address and full postcode	Cledford House, Long Lane South, Middlewich. CW10 0DB
Size of site	Site size is 13,200 m2. The existing building is 1170m2.
Further details on site (for example, current use/your reasons for choosing it/further developments (e.g. housing) planned for area	<p>The site was previously a school, but in recent years has been used for offices, with the intention that the existing users will vacate the building within the next 6 months. The site is centrally located within the borough, and as it was previously a school site, the access and availability of external space makes it an ideal location. The site is in the ownership of the local authority and agreement has been gained to reuse the building and site for the purpose of a new special school. The site would be made available for a free school on a leasehold, academy terms, upon completion of the development.</p> <p>There has been £700,000 investment into the building in 2012 and ongoing maintenance over more recent years.</p> <p>The school site is adjacent to another maintained school with some available land to potentially develop a forest school facility to add to the learner experience.</p>

Full address and full postcode	Giantswood development site, Congleton.
Size of site	Site size is 1.9 hectares. – See map below.
Further details on site (for example, current use/your reasons for choosing it/further developments (e.g., housing) planned for area	<p>The site at Giants Woods, Congleton has not as yet been transferred to the Council but is identified in the Local Plan and has been included in a Section 106 agreement with the council for the inclusion of a school. The site will accommodate a 1 form of entry primary school and a 4 -19 special school. There will be elements of shared use across both schools, but this will be determined as part of the detailed design. The approved outline design includes for access roads into the school.</p>



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Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting:	16 January 2023
Report Title:	School Organisation: Proposed reduction in SEN resource provisions at Middlewich Primary School, Middlewich and Lindow Community Primary School, Wilmslow
Report of:	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Report Reference No:	CF/62/22- 23
Ward(s) Affected:	All wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.** The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed reduction in special educational needs (SEN) resource provision places for learners with a hearing impairment at Middlewich Primary School from 10 to 5 places and at Lindow Community Primary School from 12 to 6 places.
- 1.2.** The rationale for this reduction is due to the changing profile of SEN learners coming forward and the predicted numbers who require very specialist support for hearing impairment (HI) in a specialist setting. These places have not been fully utilised for several years and the reduced places will provide adequate provision.
- 1.3.** The proposed reductions will enable the council to redistribute SEN funding and resources in line with the SEN high needs management plan and will ultimately contribute to the council's priority to ensure that all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential. This aligns with the ongoing monitoring of spend as part of the SEN high needs, dedicated schools grant (DSG) management plan as previously considered by committee.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1** As the strategic commissioner of school places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools in its area which must be sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education. Having the right educational placement for all children and young people is key to supporting children and young people achieve their potential and to develop the range of skills and experiences they need to equip them for adulthood. Based on the reduced need for resource provision places for children with hearing impairments, this proposal will allow the council to redistribute the funding to support other areas of SEN need. Both of the two schools are community primary schools and therefore the decision maker in terms of the reduction in SEN places for the resource provision is the local authority. Neither school is a diocesan school.
- 2.2** The data provided within the background section shows the current and forecasted numbers within our specialist SEN provisions for hearing impairment. Based upon this data, the requested reduction will allow for efficiencies of SEN funding and resources but retains provisions for this primary area of need. There are no closures of SEN provisions and if the projections going forward change, there remains the ability to increase provisions as required.
- 2.3** The reduction in specialist SEN places at a time when the demand for additional SEN capacity is high needs an explanation. We are constantly needing to review levels of demand according to SEN primary need and whilst we have growth for certain needs (e.g., social emotional mental health), other needs are reducing. This report seeks support for a reduction in numbers but not a change of specialist provision as this would require a further consultation and see a loss of the provision in full.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.** That committee gives approval: -
- 3.2.** To reduce the number of specialist SEN places in the hearing impairment resource provision at Middlewich Primary School from 10 to 5 with effect from April 2023 having given due consideration to the responses to the statutory public notice and consultation process as per DfE statutory guidance.
- 3.3.** To reduce the number of places in the hearing impairment resource provision at Lindow Community Primary School from 12 to 6 with effect from April 2023 having given due consideration to the responses to the statutory public notice and consultation process as per DfE statutory guidance.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** This recommendation is made based on the publication of a public notice and the outcomes of the subsequent 5-week representation period, which

ran from 13 October 2022 until 17 November 2022. The committee are required to consider the feedback received in considering the recommendation to reduce the provision.

5. Other Options Considered

5.1.

Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing	Identified schools continue to receive SEN funding for the higher number of places than are attending. This causes inefficiencies in SEN resources and directly impacts on the SEN high needs funding levels as higher levels of expenditure continue.	Medium: The council would not be demonstrating commitment to effectively manage the overspend within the SEN high needs management plan. This reduction in places is an identified mitigation plan linked to the DfE 'Developing Better Value' Programme
Close both HI resource provisions	Existing pupils in the two provisions would likely need to be placed outside of Cheshire East resulting in higher cost placements, additional travel time and travel costs, which does not deliver the best outcomes for the children.	High: Vulnerable learners would not be able to attend a local school to meet their educational needs. Loss of specialist resources which stops the ability to increase size of provisions if forecast data changes over time.
Merger of specialist resource provisions	Whilst this would maintain pupils within the borough, the geographical location of the two schools makes merger an unviable option. Change of school placement and travel would again apply to this option.	Medium – geography does not allow for such an option and further reduces capacity if changes in numbers occur over time.

6. Background

6.1. A SEN resource provision is a specialist education provision within a mainstream setting to meet the specific needs of SEN learners; these provisions have varying specialist staff and resources based upon the SEN primary need. Resource provisions have one or more dedicated classrooms for pupils with SEN, and provide specialist individual learning packages for pupils, considering the full needs of the child. A key advantage of resource provisions is that pupils attend mainstream classes in addition to the specialist time within the provision and therefore can integrate with their mainstream peers. This approach better enables pupils to experience a full

and integrated learning curriculum in their school community, whilst also having their specialist needs met using specialist staff.

- 6.2.** Currently, the local authority has 22 places dedicated for primary pupils with hearing impairment across the borough, located within 2 specialist settings. However, in recent years the number of children requiring places in specialist hearing impairment resource provision has declined – see table below:

	Place Numbers	October 2022	October 2021	October 2020	October 2019
Lindow Primary	12	3	4	5	6
Middlewich Primary	10	3	4	3	4

- 6.3.** A key reason for this change in profile of HI learners is due to advancements in specialist technology and equipment. Increasingly, the needs of the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) for pupils with hearing impairment is being met in mainstream with the introduction of such facilities as whole class hearing loops as well as specialist support from Speech and Language and Sensory and Inclusion Teams. Hearing Impaired resource provision places have been less than half full for the past 5 years and this impacts on funding as the local authority is still required to fund those empty places.
- 6.4.** It is important to note that this proposed change in HI specialist placements does not impact on secondary provision. There remain two specialist HI resource provisions dedicated for secondary age pupils, and we will continue to monitor the numbers going forward coming through to this phase of education.
- 6.5.** It is also important to state that the local authority retains a specialist service team as part of Children and Family services who provide dedicated support for learners with hearing and sight impairments. This specialist team support pupils with HI and therefore allows adaption of teaching spaces in mainstream settings which can allow the learner to stay in their local school and not require a specialist setting.

7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1.** Any change in the size of specialist SEN provisions requires formal consultation and decision making in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department for Education Making significant changes to schools ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools Statutory Guidance for proposers and decision-makers October 2018). In terms of consultation, detailed discussions have previously taken place with school leaders

including governance to discuss the implications and rationale for these proposed changes.

7.2. Committee members are advised that this statutory process provides the opportunity for any person with an interest to submit representations which can be objections as well as expressions of support for the proposal. Committee members must take any views received into account when making their decision.

7.3. As part of the consultation and engagement process, the local authority has undertaken the following: -

- A public notice was published in the Wilmslow and Knutsford Guardian on 13 October 2022 in respect of Lindow Community Primary School and in the Northwich Guardian in respect of Middlewich Primary School. A 5-week representation period ran from 13 October 2022 to 17 November 2022.
- Information was available on the Cheshire East website and key stakeholders including Ward Members, MP, Diocese, Town and Parish Councils, Cheshire East Parent Carer Forum and East Cheshire Deaf Children’s Society were informed of the process.
- Information was emailed to all local schools together with a letter for distribution to their staff, governors, and parents so that school communities could respond.

7.4. For the two schools, the following summary is provided in terms of responses received to consultations. In total, only one response was received.

Yes support	At present I have no objection to reducing the funded places from 12 to 6 pupils in view of the low numbers at present, but only with the reassurance and capability that the funded places can be increased in the future if required.	School governor, teacher, or employee	Lindow Primary School	
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8. Implications

8.1. Legal

8.1.1 The DfE statutory guidance “Making significant changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools’ statutory guidance for proposers and decision -makers October 2018 (‘Prescribed Alterations ‘Guidance) provides statutory guidance which recipients must have regard to when making ‘prescribed alterations ‘to maintained schools. Prescribed alteration changes can include mainstream school; establish/remove/alter special educational needs (SEN) provision

8.1.2 Under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in their areas and to have regard to the need for securing that special educational provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs (section 14(6)(b) of the Education Act 1996). Local authorities can propose changes to provision that it recognises as reserved for pupils with special educational needs in community, voluntary and schools. When doing so, they must follow the statutory process as set out in The School organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013

8.1.4 The statutory process: prescribed alterations are set out in Part 5 of the Guidance as set out below:

8.1.5

Stage 1	Publication	Statutory proposal published – 1 day.
Stage 2	Representation (formal consultation)	Must be at least 4 weeks, as prescribed in the ‘Prescribed Alterations ‘regulations.
Stage 3	Decision	The decision-maker (usually the LA) must decide proposals within 2 months of the end of the representation period or decision defaults to Schools Adjudicator (OSA). Any appeal to the adjudicator must be made within 4 weeks of the decision by the local Church of England diocese or the local Roman Catholic diocese – (not applicable in these two schools)
Stage 4	Implementation	No prescribed timescale but must be as specified in the published statutory notice, subject to any modifications agreed by the decision-maker.

8.1.6 If a local authority fails to decide about a proposal within 2 months of the end of the representation period the local authority must forward the

proposal, and any representations received, excluding those withdrawn in writing, to the Schools Adjudicator for a decision.

8.1.7 Committee members are advised that they must have regard to the guidance when making their decision. The Guidance statesWhen considering any reorganisation of provision that the LA recognises as reserved for pupils with special educational needs, including that which might lead to children being displaced, proposers will need to demonstrate how the proposed alternative arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for these children.

8.1.8 The guidance provides as follows:

- Decision-makers will need to be satisfied that the appropriate fair and open local consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has considered all the responses received.
- Decision-makers should not simply take account of the number of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s).

8.1.9 When issuing a decision, the decision maker can:

- reject the proposal:
- approve the proposal without modification:
- approve the proposal with modifications, having consulted the LA and/or Governing Body (as appropriate): or
- approve the proposal, with or without modification – subject to certain conditions (such as the granting of planning permission) being met.).

8.2. Finance

8.2.1. Resource provisions currently receive place funding to operate the provision. The cost of the place funding is £10,000 per place. This is funded regardless of whether the resource provision is occupied by any pupils. For several years Middlewich Primary and Lindow Primary have had significantly low occupancy.

8.2.2. Place funding is funded from high needs funding which is part of the dedicated schools grant (DSG).

8.2.3. The council has produced a DSG management plan to help set out forecast spending pressures, income levels and DSG reserve deficit.

- 8.2.4.** As a result of a national high needs funding shortfall, where funding has not matched demand, the council's DSG reserve deficit is forecast to be 90% of the annual allocation at the end of 2022/23. This deficit is forecast to significantly increase in value over the medium term and it is not recoverable under current forecasts.
- 8.2.5.** Within the DSG management plan there are a series of mitigations that are within current capacity levels to reduce the impact on the deficit as much as possible.
- 8.2.6.** Included in the mitigations within the plan is to reduce the number of HI resource provision places. This is to allow resources to be used more efficiently by directing spend where it is most needed.
- 8.2.7.** The reduction of a total of 11 HI resource provision places will result in a cost avoidance of £111,000 per year which is factored into the high needs management plan.

8.3. Policy

- 8.3.1.** Under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in their areas and to have regard to the need for securing that special educational provision is made for pupils who have special educational needs (section 14(6)(b) of the Education Act 1996) When exercising functions under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 decision makers must have regard to the DfE statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers "Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools". The purpose of the guidance is to ensure that good quality school places can be provided quickly when they are needed; that local authorities and governing bodies do not take decisions that will have a negative impact on other schools in the area; and those changes can be implemented quickly and effectively where there is a strong case for doing so.

8.4. Equality

- 8.4.1** Equality impact assessments were completed for this proposal. The proposed reduction impacts primary aged pupils with hearing impairment as their primary need. However, it is not considered there will not be a negative impact on the protected classifications as most pupils are now supported in the mainstream classroom with better technology and equipment. Sufficient places will remain for those pupils who would still benefit from resource provision.

8.4.2 See appendix 1 and 2 for the equality impact assessments.

8.5 Human Resources

8.5.1 There are specific human resource implications for the local authority / schools as any reduction in numbers will result in a reduction of their funding and may result in the potential loss of specialist staff. Schools can work with specialist HR services to manage any potential impact on staffing to redeploy staff to meet needs of children in mainstream. Current challenges in recruitment across the education section will provide opportunities.

8.6 Risk Management

The risk management is outlined in the table as shown in 5.1

8.7 Rural Communities

8.7.1 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

8.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children

8.8.1 The proposed reduction in places impacts on primary aged pupils. As previously mentioned, due to the advancements in technology and equipment the number of pupils requiring separate resource provision teaching has reduced and the majority of pupils with hearing impairment are taught in mainstream with the appropriate support and consequently the need for specialist resource provision places has reduced.

8.8.2 Although this is a planned reduction, sufficient places remain for those pupils who would still benefit from a specialist provision.

8.8.3 It is essential that the council makes best use of resources to ensure that children and young people receive the services they need and those services must be provided.

8.8.4 The council has approved its Children's vision which contains a priority around children with additional needs.

8.9 Public Health

8.9.1 There are no direct implications for public health. However, there may be implications for health services in terms of the demand for specialist speech and language services.

8.10 Climate Change

8.10.1 This is no direct implications. The retention of more pupils accessing their local schools means a reduction in travel to move to specialist provisions.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Head of Service: School Infrastructure & Outcomes. Mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – EIA Middlewich Primary School Appendix 2 – EIA Lindow Community Primary School Appendix 3 – Consultation document – Middlewich Appendix 4 – Consultation document - Lindow
Background Papers:	School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



STATUTORY NOTICE

PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PLACES AT THE HEARING IMPAIRED RESOURCE PROVISION AT MIDDLEWICH PRIMARY SCHOOL, PARK ROAD, MIDDLEWICH, CHESHIRE, CW10 9BS.

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Cheshire East Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Middlewich Primary School, Park Lane, Middlewich, CW10 9BS from April 2023.

The proposal is to reduce the number of places within the Hearing-Impaired Resource Provision at the school from 10 to 5 for implementation by April 2023. The current capacity of the Resource Provision is 10 and the current number on roll is 3.

This Notice is an extract from the consultation document. Copies of the consultation document can be obtained from the Council's website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk or by emailing: SOCS@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Within five weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by completing the electronic survey on Council's website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk or by emailing SOCS@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Signed: Deborah Woodcock

Executive Director Children's Services

Publication Date: 13 October 2022

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STATUTORY NOTICE

PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PLACES AT THE HEARING IMPAIRED RESOURCE PROVISION AT LINDOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, UPCAST LANE, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE, SK9 6EH.

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Cheshire East Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Lindow Community Primary School, Upcast Lane, Wilmslow SK9 6EH from April 2023.

The proposal is to reduce the number of places within the Hearing-Impaired Resource Provision at the school from 12 to 6 for implementation by April 2023. The current capacity of the Resource Provision is 12 and the current number on roll is 3.

This Notice is an extract from the consultation document. Copies of the consultation document can be obtained from the Council's website:

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk or can be obtained by emailing:
SOCS@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Within five weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by completing the electronic survey on Council's website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk or by emailing:
SOCS@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Signed: Deborah Woodcock

Executive Director Children's Services

Publication Date: 13 October 2022

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Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies, plans, functions, policies, procedures and services under the Equalities Act 2010. We are also legally required to publish assessments.

Section 1: Description

Department	Children and Families		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Mark Bayley	
Service	School Organisation		Other members of team undertaking assessment		Val Simons	
Date	October 2022		Version		1	
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy √	Plan	Function	Policy √	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/existing/revision of an existing document (mark as appropriate)	New √		Existing		Revision	
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation) Please attach a copy of the strategy/plan/function/policy/procedure/service	<p>Decision on the proposal to reduce the number of places at the Hearing Impaired (HI) Resource Provision (RP) at Middlewich Primary School from 10 to 5 with effect from April 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Authority must comply with statutory requirements as set out in The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. Undertake a consultation and decision making process as set out in the guidance "Making significant changes (prescribed alterations) to maintained schools" which came into force October 2018. <p>The aims, objectives and outcomes of this proposal are in line with;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Young people with Special Education Needs and or Disabilities Joint Strategy Sufficiency Statement for Children and young people with Special Educational Needs 					
Who are the main stakeholders? (eg general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Young People with HI as their primary need. Parents and carers of pupils with HI 					

Section 2: Initial screening

Who is affected? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People with HI. • Parents and carers. • Middlewich Primary School
Who is intended to benefit and how?	<p>Children and Young People with HI as their primary need and their parents and carers in Cheshire East.</p> <p>Due to advancements in technology and equipment the needs of EHCP pupils with HI is being met in mainstream settings/classrooms with support from Speech and Language and Sensory and Inclusion Teams. Hearing Impaired Resource Provision places have been less than half full for the past 5 years and currently the Resource Provision at Middlewich Primary only has 3 pupils on roll with 7 vacancies and this impacts on funding as the local authority is still required to fund those empty places.</p> <p>The funding saved by the reduction in places could be redirected to support other children with high needs.</p>
Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?	<p>At this stage you expect that there will be no impact. However, the feedback from the consultation will be taken into account and any feedback which illustrates a negative impact will be assessed and mitigation put in place to reduce any impacts.</p>
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?	<p>Any decision on the proposal will not be based on any individual characteristics, needs or circumstances.</p>
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	<p>Relations between different groups or communities are not likely to be affected.</p> <p>As the reduction in places is aimed at children and young people with hearing impairment the change will not impact on able bodied children and young people.</p>
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of	<p>Initial conversation have taken place with interested parties including the Headteacher and Governors of the school who are fully supportive of the proposal. In accordance with DfE guidance the proposal is subject to a statutory</p>

unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?	<p>consultation process including issuing a public notice and at least a 4-week representation period. A public notice was published on 13 October 2022. A 5- week representation period will run from 13 October 2022 to 17 November 2022.</p> <p>Key stakeholders including local schools, parents and carers, Diocese, Ward Members , Parents and Carers Forum, parish and Town Councils and East Cheshire Deaf Children’s Society were emailed and invited to feedback their views either in support or to oppose the proposal.</p> <p>During the representation period any responses received will be collated and a presented in a report to the Children and Families Committee at a meeting to be held on 16 January 2023.</p>
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Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)

Age	Y	N	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N	Religion & belief	Y	N	Carers	Y	N
		✓			✓			✓			✓
Disability	Y	N	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N	Sex	Y	N	Socio-economic status	Y	N
	✓				✓			✓			✓
Gender reassignment	Y	N	Race	Y	N	Sexual orientation	Y	N			
		✓			✓			✓			

<p>What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts</p> <p>Some initial conversations have been undertaken on the proposal and the following statements are based upon research and feedback from representative groups. However, the feedback from the consultation will be taken into account and any feedback which illustrates a negative impact will be assessed and mitigation put in place to reduce any impacts.</p>	<p>Consultation/involvement carried out</p> <p>Consultation is taking place between 13.10.2022 and 17.11.2022</p>
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		Yes	No
Age	<p>The proposed reduction in places only impacts on primary aged pupils. As previously mentioned due to the advancements in technology and equipment the number of pupils requiring separate RP teaching has reduced and the majority of pupils with HI are taught in mainstream, consequently the need for RP has reduced.</p> <p>However, although this is a planned reduction sufficient places remain for those pupils who would still benefit from them.</p>		√
Disability	<p>The proposed reduction impacts pupils with HI as their primary need. However, there will not be a negative impact as the majority of pupils are now supported in the mainstream / classroom with better technology and equipment. Sufficient places will remain for those pupils who would still benefit from RP.</p> <p>The funding saved by the reduction in places could be redirected to support other children with high needs.</p>		√
Gender reassignment	<p>Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and this does not allow for discrimination in this respect.</p>		√
Marriage & civil partnership	<p>Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and all applications are considered on an equal basis without reference to the marital status of the parent/carer.</p>		√
Pregnancy & maternity	<p>Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and all applications are considered on an equal basis without reference to the status of the parent/carer.</p>		√
Race	<p>Places are allocated based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and the local authority has no reason to believe that any proposed expansion of the school would result in an overall change to the</p>		√

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Appendix 1



	current demographics.		
Religion & belief	Places are allocated based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and religion and belief do not form part of the allocation and all applications will be considered on an equal basis irrespective of religious belief.		v
Sex	Places are allocated based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and the local authority has no reason to believe that any proposed expansion of the school would result in an overall change to the current demographics.		v
Sexual orientation	Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and this does not allow for discrimination in this respect.		v
Carers	It is considered that the proposal will have a positive impact. Pupils with HI will continue to be supported in mainstream at their preferred local school with enhanced technology and equipment. The funding saved by the reduction in places could be redirected to support other children with high needs, which in turn will benefit the parents and carers of those children.		v
Socio-economic status	Support in the mainstream or an allocation of a place in are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and all applications are considered on a equal basis without reference to the socio- economic status of the parent/carer.		v
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)	Yes	No v	Date 10.10.2022

If yes, please proceed to Section 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

Section 3: Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified High: Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation Medium: Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures Low: Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect	Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)
Age				
Disability				
Gender reassignment				
Marriage & civil partnership				
Pregnancy and maternity				
Race				
Religion & belief				

Sex				
Sexual orientation				
Carers				
Socio-economics				
Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)				

Section 4: Review and conclusion

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed			
Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
When will this assessment be reviewed?			
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?			
Lead officer signoff		Date	

Head of service signoff		Date	
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Please publish this completed EIA form on your website

Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies, plans, functions, policies, procedures and services under the Equalities Act 2010. We are also legally required to publish assessments.

Section 1: Description

Department	Children and Families		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Mark Bayley	
Service	School Organisation		Other members of team undertaking assessment		Val Simons	
Date	October 2022		Version		1	
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy √	Plan	Function	Policy √	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/existing/revision of an existing document (mark as appropriate)	New √		Existing		Revision	
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation) Please attach a copy of the strategy/plan/function/policy/procedure/service	<p>Decision on the proposal to reduce the number of places at the Hearing Impaired (HI) Resource Provision (RP) at Lindow Community Primary School from 12 to 6 with effect from April 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Authority must comply with statutory requirements as set out in The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. Undertake a consultation and decision making process as set out in the guidance “Making significant changes (prescribed alterations) to maintained schools” which came into force October 2018. <p>The aims, objectives and outcomes of this proposal are in line with;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Young people with Special Education Needs and or Disabilities Joint Strategy Sufficiency Statement for Children and young people with Special Educational Needs 					
Who are the main stakeholders? (eg general public, employees, Councillors,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Young People with HI as their primary need. Parents and carers of pupils with HI 					

partners, specific audiences)	
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Section 2: Initial screening

<p>Who is affected? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People with HI. • Parents and carers. • Lindow Community Primary School
<p>Who is intended to benefit and how?</p>	<p>Children and Young People with HI as their primary need and their parents and carers in Cheshire East.</p> <p>Due to advancements in technology and equipment the needs of EHCP pupils with HI is being met in mainstream settings/classrooms with support from Speech and Language and Sensory and Inclusion Teams. Hearing Impaired Resource Provision places have been less than half full for the past 5 years and currently the Resource Provision at Lindow only has 3 pupils on roll with 9 vacancies and this impacts on funding as the local authority is still required to fund those empty places.</p> <p>The funding saved by the reduction in places could be redirected to support other children with high needs.</p>
<p>Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?</p>	<p>At this stage you expect that there will be no impact. However, the feedback from the consultation will be taken into account and any feedback which illustrates a negative impact will be assessed and mitigation put in place to reduce any impacts.</p>
<p>Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?</p>	<p>Any decision on the proposal will not be based on any individual characteristics, needs or circumstances.</p>
<p>Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)</p>	<p>Relations between different groups or communities are not likely to be affected.</p> <p>As the reduction in places is aimed at children and young people with hearing Impairment the change will not impact on able bodied children and young people.</p>

<p>Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?</p>	<p>Initial conversation have taken place with interested parties including the Headteacher and Governors of the school who are fully supportive of the proposal. In accordance with DfE guidance the proposal is subject to a statutory consultation process including issuing a public notice and at least a 4-week representation period. A public notice was published on 13 October 2022. A 5- week representation period will run from 13 October 2022 to 17 November 2022.</p> <p>Key stakeholders including local schools, parents and carers, Diocese, Ward Members , Parents and Carers Forum, parish and Town Councils and East Cheshire Deaf Children’s Society were emailed and invited to feedback their views either in support or to oppose the proposal.</p> <p>During the representation period any responses received will be collated and a presented in a report to the Children and Families Committee at a meeting to be held on 16 January 2023.</p>
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Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)

Age	Y	N	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N	Religion & belief	Y	N	Carers	Y	N
		√			√			√			√
Disability	Y	N	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N	Sex	Y	N	Socio-economic status	Y	N
	√				√		√	√			√
Gender reassignment	Y	N	Race	Y	N	Sexual orientation	Y	N			
		√			√		√	√			

<p>What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts</p> <p>Some initial conversations have been undertaken on the proposal and the following statements are based upon research and feedback from representative groups. However, the feedback from the consultation will be taken into</p>	<p>Consultation/involvement carried out</p> <p>Consultation is taking place between 13.10.2022 and 17.11.2022</p>
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account and any feedback which illustrates a negative impact will be assessed and mitigation put in place to reduce any impacts.			
		Yes	No
Age	<p>The proposed reduction in places only impacts on primary aged pupils. As previously mentioned due to the advancements in technology and equipment the number of pupils requiring separate RP teaching has reduced and the majority of pupils with HI are taught in mainstream, consequently the need for RP has reduced.</p> <p>However, although this is a planned reduction sufficient places remain for those pupils who would still benefit from them.</p>		√
Disability	<p>The proposed reduction impacts pupils with HI as their primary need. However, there will not be a negative impact as the majority of pupils are now supported in the mainstream / classroom with better technology and equipment. Sufficient places will remain for those pupils who would still benefit from RP.</p> <p>The funding saved by the reduction in places could be redirected to support other children with high needs.</p>		√
Gender reassignment	<p>Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and this does not allow for discrimination in this respect.</p>		√
Marriage & civil partnership	<p>Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and all applications are considered on an equal basis without reference to the marital status of the parent/carer.</p>		√
Pregnancy & maternity	<p>Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and all applications are considered on an equal basis without reference to the status of the parent/carer.</p>		√

Race	Places are allocated based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and the local authority has no reason to believe that any proposed expansion of the school would result in an overall change to the current demographics.		√
Religion & belief	Places are allocated based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and religion and belief do not form part of the allocation and all applications will be considered on an equal basis irrespective of religious belief.		√
Sex	Places are allocated based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and the local authority has no reason to believe that any proposed expansion of the school would result in an overall change to the current demographics.		√
Sexual orientation	Places are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and this does not allow for discrimination in this respect.		√
Carers	It is considered that the proposal will have a positive impact. Pupils with HI will continue to be supported in mainstream at their preferred local school with enhanced technology and equipment. The funding saved by the reduction in places could be redirected to support other children with high needs, which in turn will benefit the parents and carers of those children.		√
Socio-economic status	Support in the mainstream or an allocation of a place in are allocated at the school based on the individual assessment of the child's or young person's needs and all applications are considered on a equal basis without reference to the socio- economic status of the parent/carer.		√

Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)			
	Yes	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Date 10.10.2022

If yes, please proceed to Section 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

Section 3: Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified High: Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation Medium: Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures Low: Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect	Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)
Age				
Disability				
Gender reassignment				
Marriage & civil partnership				

Pregnancy and maternity				
Race				
Religion & belief				
Sex				
Sexual orientation				
Carers				
Socio-economics				
Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)				

Section 4: Review and conclusion

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed			
Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
When will this assessment be reviewed?			

<p>Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?</p>			
<p>Lead officer signoff</p>		<p>Date</p>	
<p>Head of service signoff</p>		<p>Date</p>	

Please publish this completed EIA form on your website



Appendix 3



Consultation document for a proposal to decrease the current resource provision for children with Hearing Impairment at Middlewich Primary School from 10 to 5 pupils.

Consultation period: 13 October 2022 - 17 November 2022

This consultation document sets out:

- Information about Middlewich Primary School
- Why we need to decrease resource provision at Middlewich Primary School
- What the impact will be on resource provision places in the local area
- The proposal
- How you can give your views
- What happens after the consultation?
- The consultation timetable

Middlewich Primary School

Middlewich Primary School is located at Park Road, Middlewich, CW10 9BS. The school is two-form entry with classes from reception age up to year 6. Up to 60 children are admitted into the reception class in the September of each year. Currently, the school educates a number of children with a variety of special educational needs, including 3 children within the resourced provision.

Why we need to decrease resource provision at Middlewich Primary School

Historically, Middlewich Primary School has had a resource provision since it amalgamated in 2005. Previously, both Middlewich Infant School and Middlewich Junior School had units that supported pupils with Hearing Impairment (HI).

Within the past 10 years, there has been a steady decline in the numbers of children in the provision. This is due to decreasing numbers of parent/carers requesting the support the resource provision provides. It is clear that 10 places are no longer required within this locality of Cheshire East.

What the impact will be on resource provision places in the local area

There has been a natural reduction in numbers over the past 10 years and school leaders and governors believe it is the right time strategically for the school to reduce to 5 pupils, where we will continue to be committed to meet the complex and specialist needs of the children in our care.

The proposal

If the proposal goes ahead, 5 places will be offered to children with a primary need of HI across Reception, KS1 and KS2 who have an Education Health Care Plan and the resource provision at Middlewich Primary School is named as their preferred provision. The allocation of a place in the resource provision will be given by the local authority SEND panel.

How you can give your views

You can:

- Complete the electronic survey online at https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/school_organisation/school_organisation.aspx
- Complete the feedback form and email to SOCs@cheshireeast.gov.uk

What happens after the consultation

At the end of the consultation period all the feedback received will be collated, and a report prepared and presented to the Council's Children and Families Committee for a final decision on the proposal.

Process

1. 5-week consultation period with stakeholders including parents/carers
2. Responses collated
3. Outcome's report produced
4. Proposal considered by the Children and Families Committee
5. The school implements proposed change, if approved.

Timeline

1.	Statutory Public Notice Published	13 October 2022
2.	Start of consultation	13 October 2022
3.	Deadline for feedback and comments	17 November 2022
4.	Children and Families Committee	16 January 2023
5.	Implementation of proposal (if approved)	April 2023



Appendix 4

Consultation document for a proposal to decrease the current Resource Provision for children with Hearing Impairments (HI) at Lindow Community Primary School from 12 to 6 pupils

Consultation period: 13 October 2022 – 17 November 2022

This consultation document sets out:

- Information about Lindow Community Primary School
- Why we need to change resource provision at Lindow Community Primary School
- What the impact will be on resource provision places in the local area
- The proposal
- How you can give your views
- What happens after the consultation?
- The consultation timetable

Lindow Community Primary School

Lindow Community Primary School is a single-form entry Cheshire East maintained primary school and is located on Upcast Lane in Wilmslow. The school admits pupils aged 4 - 11 with up to 30 children in each class. Currently, the school educates a number of children with a variety of special educational needs, including 4 children within the Hearing-Impaired Resourced Provision.

Why we need to decrease HI Resource Provision at Lindow Community Primary School

In recent years, there has been a decline in the number of deaf children applying for places. The most recent applications were 4 in 2015, 2 in 2017 and 1 for September 2022.

In response to the current demographics and previous yearly trends the Headteacher, Lead Teacher for the Resource Provision and Governors are in agreement that a reduction in numbers to HI Provision is needed to meet current demands.

What the impact will be on Resource Provision places in the local area

If the number of spaces in the provision are reduced from 12 to 6, and if there are no further applications received, there will be 3 occupied places. This means there will be 3 unoccupied places available to children in the local area and across Cheshire East who have a primary need that can be met by the specialism of the provision.

The proposal

If the proposal goes ahead, 3 places will be occupied by current children who are on the school's roll, are deaf and have Lindow Community Primary School as the current named provision in their Education Health Care Plan(EHCP). 3 further places will be available to children with Hearing Impairment as their primary need across Reception and Key stages 1 and 2 who have an EHCP and the Resource Provision at Lindow Community Primary School is named as their preferred provision. The allocation of a place in the resource provision will be given by the local authority SEND panel, following consultation with the school.

How you can give your views

You can:

- Complete the electronic survey online at https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/school_organisation/school_organisation.aspx
- Complete the feedback form and email to SOCs@cheshireeast.gov.uk

What happens after the consultation?

At the end of the consultation period all the feedback received will be collated, and a report prepared and presented to the Council's Children and Families Committee for a final decision on the proposal.

Process

1. 5-week consultation period with stakeholders including parents/carers
2. Responses collated
3. Outcome's report produced
4. Proposal considered by the Children and Families Committee
5. The school implements proposed change, if approved.

Timeline

1.	Statutory Public Notice Published	13 October 2022
2.	Start of consultation	13 October 2022
3.	Deadline for feedback and comments	17 November 2022
4.	Children and Families Committee	16 January 2023
5.	Implementation of proposal (if approved)	April 2023



Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting 16 January 2023

Report Title: School Organisation :The Dingle Primary School, Haslington: Authority to enter into a construction contract inclusive of pre-construction services

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

Report Reference No: CF/56/22- 23

Ward(s) Affected: Haslington, Sandbach Elworth, Sandbach Ettiley Heath and Wheelock, Sandbach Heath and East, Sandbach Town

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The initial feasibility and design works for the expansion of The Dingle Primary School (maintained) to provide the accommodation required to increase the capacity of the school up to 2 forms of entry (2 FE) have been commissioned. This project will provide an additional 70 places to increase the capacity from 350 to 420.
- 1.2. Following completion of this phase of design work, which is due to be completed by the end of December 2022, approval is sought to tender for and appoint a design and build contractor to further progress the proposal with a view to overall completion of the construction phase during 2023. The next steps would involve pre-construction services, prior to award of a formal construction contract.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report outlines the steps taken to date in relation to the proposed expansion of The Dingle primary school, both in terms of consultation undertaken and scheme design development and seeks formal authority to

progress the proposal into final stages of design and construction phase with a view to full implementation of the expansion project.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Children and Families Committee delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children’s Services to procure and award a construction contract for the expansion of The Dingle primary school to 2FE, inclusive of pre-construction services and any other agreements associated with or ancillary to the contract.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1. The proposed increase in primary school places in Haslington will enable Cheshire East Council to meet its statutory obligations. As the strategic commissioner of school places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places for children resident in its area and a commitment to allow local children to attend their local school wherever possible.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1. If expansion at The Dingle Primary School site had proved not to be viable, then an alternative option would have been investigated for expansion at Haslington Primary School.
- 5.2. The Dingle Primary School is the catchment school for new housing developments that are generating the additional pupils.
- 5.3. Please see below an option appraisal for the above proposals:

Option	Impact	Risk
Expansion of The Dingle Primary school	The Dingle primary school is the catchment school for the new housing developments that are generating the additional pupils.	Issues with safe walking distance if children were offered an alternation school. The Dingle primary school has admitted over Pupil admission number (PAN) for the last 2 years, if this is not

		progressed there will be shortfall of accommodation.
Expansion of Haslington Primary School	The Dingle primary school is the more popular school with consistent admissions over PAN.	Less parents receiving their school of choice. Housing developments are in The Dingle primary school catchment area.

6. Background

- 6.1.** Following meetings with the Sandbach and Haslington headteachers, the local schools have previously supported the expansion of The Dingle Primary school to address the shortfall of places in this area which is as a direct consequence of housing developments within The Dingle primary school catchment area. Due to increasing demand, the school has been admitting over their Published Admission Number (PAN) of 50 over the previous years to meet the need in the Haslington planning area. The Dingle Primary school is currently rated as 'Good' by OFSTED.
- 6.2.** This admission over PAN has been agreed with the local authority and in some cases, it was to ensure that all 'In Area' applicants were offered a place. The forecast figures are showing additional places will be needed at The Dingle Primary school and therefore it is recommended to progress with increasing the PAN to 60 from 50, formalise the capacity of the school at 420 and undertake the necessary works to accommodate this increase.
- 6.3** Estates Property Projects Team were initially commissioned by Children and Families on 19 November 2021 to appoint consultants to develop the proposal through early concept design and feasibility stages. Further design development on the preferred option including undertaking a number of surveys and submission of a planning application was subsequently commissioned on 27 May 2022. Following discussions with the school and governing body representatives, the preferred proposal to expand the school incorporates the following works;

Conversion of an existing unsuitable internal classroom to a studio complete with folding partition wall to main hall;

- Conversion of year 3/4 classroom to create a chair and table store and two group rooms;

- Single storey extension with two classrooms and small store;
- Extension of parking area to provide 8 additional parking spaces;
- Improvements to pedestrian access including new cycle shelter;
- New Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) with all-weather surfacing to corner of existing playing field to offset loss of hard surfaced play for extension and parking.

Also included in the scope of works is the replacement of high-level hall windows which was a planned scheme through the School Condition Allocation Programme.

7. Consultation and Engagement

7.1. This proposal was incorporated into a local member briefing paper on 'Proposals for Additional Primary Places in Haslington and Sandbach Planning Areas', as undertaken on 5 November 2021. A briefing was then held with local headteachers on 3 December to ensure effective consultation and agreements took place.

7.2. The proposed expansion does not fall within the category of a significant enlargement as it is less than 25% of existing capacity and is therefore not subject to formal school organisation procedures, which include statutory consultation. However, in order to ensure that the local community were made aware of the planned changes, the council requested that the governing body communicated its intentions and allowed time for any feedback. The proposal was therefore communicated via the school web-site and the Cheshire East Council School Organisation Consultation web-pages for the period from 24 June until 22 July 2022, however, no feedback was received.

8. Implications

8.1 Legal

8.1.1. In line with government and construction best practice, it is proposed to procure and award the required construction contract using existing regional frameworks. The council currently has access to the Northwest Construction Hub (NWCH), which is a regional framework agreement administered by Manchester City Council and can be used by local authorities and other public bodies in the northwest of England. The NWCH offers a range of value bands, including a low value framework for project of £500k and above, a medium value for projects between £2m and £10m through to high value framework for projects

over £10m, which can be utilised to offer the flexibility required for phasing and programme options. Based on pre-tender budget estimates for the proposed project at The Dingle primary school, this indicates the NWCH Low Value Framework would need to be used.

- 8.1.2. The contract procurement and award will comply with the council's contract procedure rules.
- 8.1.3. As the proposal provides a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to mitigate the loss of playground space to accommodate the additional classrooms, notification was made the Department for Education Land Transactions Team for a class consent under Section 77 of The School Standards and Framework Act. This was acknowledged on 12 April 2022 and no further action is required.

8.2. Finance

- 8.2.1. The project is included in the Education and 14-19 Skills Capital Programme and the MTFS 2022-26 and is a named scheme 'Haslington Planning Area - Primary.'
- 8.2.2. The latest cost estimate as at July 2022, inclusive of construction costs and all professional and statutory fees is £1.217m. This will be principally funded via Section 106 contributions and Basic Need Grant (with the hall windows funded through the School Condition Allocation with a 10% school contribution.) Section 106 education funding contributions are those agreed with new housing developers specifically to fund the additional pupil places needed due to new housing development this is received in stages over many years. This funding estimate will need to be reviewed further as the more detailed cost programme is generated. However, the ongoing challenges to capital budgets must take into consideration what are the critical aspects of this build programme so that these are prioritised within the budget envelope.
- 8.2.3 There is currently a budget of £1.0m in the approved MTFS 2022/26 and an additional virement request funded from the Basic Need and School Condition Grant Allocations was made at the first financial review for 2022/23.

8.3 Policy Implications

- 8.3.1. The local authority will determine the Published Admission Number (PAN) from pupils for year groups Reception to Year 6, in line with the

statutory timescales set out in the School Admissions Code (2021) The total capacity of the school will be 420 primary aged pupils. Standard PAN will be 60 per year group.

8.4. Equality Implications

- 8.4.1. An Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed for this proposal.

8.5 Human Resources Implications

- 8.5.1. Additional staffing resources may be required by the school to fully operate as a 2 FE school.

8.6 Risk Management Implications

- 8.6.1 If additional places are not provided in Haslington, parents of Cheshire East children, who are resident in the area, may be unable to secure places at their local school and may be required to travel over 2 miles to alternative Cheshire East schools requiring transport assistance.
- 8.6.2 A formal process including consultation of statutory consultees will be required as part of the planning application process.
- 8.6.3 All the building works will be planned carefully and contractors will work with the project team to ensure that works are scheduled to keep disruption to a minimum for staff, pupils and local residents.
- 8.6.4 If projected costs come in higher/increase, there would be a need to undertake a value engineering exercise and assess increased costs against wider budgetary needs.

8.7 Rural Communities Implications

- 8.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities. Additional places at The Dingle primary school will assist with reducing traffic around rural areas as the children from this development can attend their local school rather than travelling by car.
- 8.7.2. The additional places will provide the required places for the pupils from the locality , limiting the impact on smaller rural schools and enabling such schools to retain their rural character and not have to expand

8.8 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

8.8.1. Providing additional places at this school will help ensure that local children, including cared for children, can be offered a place at their local school. An increase in capacity in the Haslington area would provide more places for families moving into the area particularly outside the usual admissions rounds and reduce pressure on families in managing their child’s journey to school and help them settle into their local community.

8.9 Public Health Implications

8.9.3 The additional places provide local school places which will assist in encouraging walking to school and for families to actively engage with the school on a range of community initiatives.

8.10 Climate Change Implications

8.10.1. The proposed scheme would need to comply with the Governments targets of nearly zero carbon as outlined within the Building Regulations and the Councils own currently approved policies to achieve carbon neutral targets.

8.10.2. Providing additional places at this local school will enable Cheshire East children, resident in the Haslington area, the ability to secure at place at their local school thus reducing the need to travel outside of the area which will reduce energy consumption and enabling pupils to walk to school promoting a healthy lifestyle.

8.10.3. Cheshire East Council are very aware of their environmental education and stewardship role and are very interested in promoting sustainability in general.

8.10.4. As part of the detailed design process, the design team are exploring how the building could be designed to minimize future running costs.

Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley: Head of Service Mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Building Bulletin 103 Area guidelines and net capacity - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) DFE Guidance on Land Transactions

	<p>Submit a school land transaction proposal - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Briefing Paper - Proposals for Additional Primary Places in Haslington and Sandbach Planning Areas - November, 2021</p>
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Services consulted on this report	Name of person consulted	Role of person consulted	<u>Date consulted</u>
Legal	Chris Hume	Lawyer(Solicitor) Contracts and Procurement Team	10/08/22
Finance	Sam Oakden	Principal Accountant – Finance and Projects Team	10/08/22



Working for a brighter future together

Committee

Date of Meeting:	16 January 2023
Report Title:	Proposed change in age range at Pebble Brook Primary School and Underwood West Academy
Report of:	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Report Reference No:	CF/65/22- 23
Ward(s) Affected:	Crewe St Barnabas, Crewe South.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To consider the consultation responses received to the change of age range at Pebble Brook Primary School.
- 1.2. To approve the proposed changes of age range at Pebble Brook Primary School, Crewe, from 4 -11 to 2-11 to accommodate a nursery provision for implementation in February or March 2023 as a temporary change for a period of up to two years.
- 1.3. To note the proposal to extend the age range of Underwood West Academy, Crewe for implementation in February or March 2023.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Reach for the Stars Nursery Limited provided full day-care at The Brooks Childrens Centre, Crewe and Oak Tree Childrens Centre, Crewe. This was a commissioned service since 2017.
- 2.2 A paper was presented to Children and Families Committee on 14 November 2022, "Closure of Reach for the Stars Nurseries", to inform committee that both nurseries commissioned by Cheshire East Council were closed on 4 November 2022. Approval was given to start a formal consultation with Pebble Brook Primary School to lower the age range of the children in school.

2.3 Both The Brooks and Oak Tree nurseries were co- located on school sites, The Brooks Nursery was on the site of Pebble Brook Primary School and Oak Tree Nursery on the site of Underwood West Academy. Both schools where the nurseries are on site expressed an interest in creating nursery classes on the sites of the previous nurseries so that they can offer nursery age classes within the school. This new model will no longer require a commissioned provider service as it will be delivered within the school which will secure places in the future, ensure continuity for the children, early engagement with the school and a nursery provision delivered in the heart of the family’s community.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.** To consider the consultation responses received to the change of age range at Pebble Brook Primary School; and
- 3.2.** To approve the proposed change of age range at Pebble Brook Primary School, Crewe, from 4 -11 to 2-11 to accommodate a nursery provision for implementation in February or March 2023 as a temporary change for a period of up to two years,
- 3.3.** To note that the Regional Director for Education will move to extend the age range of Underwood West Academy, Crewe.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** To ensure the authority’s duty to secure sufficient childcare under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 are met.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1.** Do nothing and children disperse to other early years and childcare provision in the area – insufficient provision available.
- 5.2.** Recommission the service – unsustainable model in current financial climate.
- 5.3.** Options appraisal:

Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing	Not all children would secure a place with other providers in the area.	Children would not be able to access their early education entitlement and parents are not supported to access work / training.

		The authority's duty to secure sufficient childcare under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 would not be met.
Recommission the service	The current model is not financially sustainable in the current climate.	The recommission provider would also fail.
Create nursery classes in the schools as recommended	Children would not be displaced and would continue to have access to provision in two of the most disadvantaged areas of the borough. Provision within the school would promote and enhance transition to statutory education.	Provision for babies would be reliant on sufficient vacancies with other providers in the area.

6. Background

- 6.1.** Reach for the Stars Nursery Limited were commissioned in 2017 to provide full day-care at The Brooks Nursery Crewe and Oak Tree Nursery Crewe. Prior to this and a previous commissioned service, both schools had maintained nursery classes.
- 6.2.** Due to the sudden closure of both nurseries immediate action was required to ensure sufficient nursery provision in the area.
- 6.3.** Due to the need to quickly move the proposed changes to lower the age range at Pebble Brook Primary School, Crewe, from 4 -11 to 2-11 to accommodate a nursery is purposed as a temporary change. This will be for a period of up to two years with a view that a full consultation of the change of age range will be completed by the school within the first year to consult for a permanent change in age range with a final decision made by committee.

7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1.** With regard to any changes to lower the age range of Underwood West Academy as an academy the academy trust must have regard to the DfE guidance "Making significant changes to an open academy' Departmental guidance for all types of academy trust – January 2022 ". As an academy the trustees will be the decision makers although they will be required to seek final approval from the Regional Director (DfE).

- 7.2.** In accordance with the DfE guidance “Making significant changes (“prescribed alterations”) to maintained schools Statutory Guidance for proposers and decision -makers October 2018 (‘the Guidance ‘), as Pebble Brook Primary is a foundation school the Governing Body or the local authority can propose a change to the age range of 2 years or less, without having to follow the statutory process of a formal consultation.
- 7.3.** For Pebble Brook Primary School the local authority is the decision maker for a temporary change to the age range of 2 years or less. The guidance provides that proposing such a change that the non- statutory process should be followed as set out in part 4 of the Guidance which states that local authorities can make limited changes to their schools without following a statutory process, including some temporary changes but they are nevertheless required to adhere to the usual principles of public law.
- 7.4.** Although the local authority is the decision maker and although no statutory process is required under these exceptional circumstance’s officers are of the opinion that it was beneficial to conduct a formal consultation. Therefore, the local authority has consultation with key stakeholders including ward members, MP, the Diocese, Parish Councils, and all local schools were emailed with information to distribute to their parents, carers, and staff.
- 7.5.** The consultation has been over for 4 weeks from the 16 November 2022 – 15 December 2022. During the representation period 13 responses were received for Pebblebrook, with 11 in agreement and 2 against the proposal. 6 responses for Underwood West were received all in agreement with the proposal.
- 7.6.** The Guidance provides that the local authority and governing bodies will work together and will;
- liaise with the trustees of the school, and in the case of schools designated as having a religious character the diocese or relevant diocesan board, or any other relevant faith body, to ensure that a proposal is aligned with wider place planning/organisational arrangements, and that any necessary consents have been gained.
 - not undermine the quality of education provided or the financial viability of other ‘good’ and ‘outstanding’ schools in the local area.
 - not create additional places in a local planning area where there is already surplus capacity in schools, taking the quality and diversity of the provision into account as well as cross boundary impacts; and
 - ensure open and fair consultation with parents, any affected educational institutions in the area (e.g., primary, secondary, special schools, sixth form and FE colleges as required) and other interested parties.

8. Implications

8.1. Legal

- 8.1.1. The council is under a statutory duty to ensure the authority's duty to secure sufficient childcare under Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 is met.
- 8.1.2. For change of age range that are expected to be in place for more than 2 years (as these are considered permanent increases) the local authority can propose a change of age range of up to 2 years for a foundation school by following the non-statutory process.
- 8.1.3. The local authority is required to adhere to the usual principles of public law - act rationally; consider all relevant and no irrelevant considerations; and follow a fair procedure.

8.2. Finance

- 8.2.1. There are no financial implications at this stage of the process.
- 8.2.2. Funding levels for the new provisions will continue to be determined by the council's early years funding formula that is considered by Children and Families Committee in February of each year.

8.3. Policy

No policy implications identified

8.4. Equality

- 8.5. Equality Impact Assessment will be completed prior to commencement of the informal consultation.

8.6. Human Resources

- 8.6.1. There are no HR issues at this stage.

8.7. Risk Management

- 8.7.1. There is a risk that through the length of the process there will be a childcare sufficiency in the Crewe area and a number of vulnerable children will not be able to access 2,3-year-old funding.

8.8. Rural Communities

- 8.8.1. Not applicable

8.9. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

- 8.9.1. There was one cared for child identified in the cohort of children displaced from the closure of the nurseries and a new nursery setting has been identified for this child.

8.10. Public Health

8.10.1. There is a risk that through the length of the process there will be children who are not able to access nursery provision that will in turn effect their health and wellbeing in the short term.

8.10.2.

8.11. Climate Change

8.11.1. Not applicable.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Claire Williamson Director of Strong start, Family Help and Integration.
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None



Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting:	16 January 2023
Report Title:	Children and Families Q2 score card 2022/23
Report of:	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
Report Reference No:	CF/35/22- 23
Ward(s) Affected:	All Wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To provide Children and Families Committee with an overview of performance against the core indicator set within the 3 directorate areas of children's services. This report covers a range of the corporate objectives under the overarching corporate priority of a fair authority.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1** This report provides an overview of quarter 2 performance for children and families services for the relevant indicators for the reporting year of 2022-23.
- 2.2** The committee will note that the format has changed in line with their request and now includes information around the acronyms used and the alignment with the Corporate Plan Aim of a Fair Council. The report now also reflects a rolling four quarters activity.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1** The Children and Families Committee is asked to:
- 3.1.1** Note the performance of children's services for quarter 2.

3.1.2 Provide scrutiny in relation to performance of children and families services.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 One of the key areas of focus for the Children and Families Committee is to review performance and scrutinise the effectiveness of services for children and young people.

5. Other Options Considered

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Background

6.1 This quarterly report provides the committee with an overview of performance across Children's Services. This report relates to quarter 2 of 2022-23 (1 July 2022 – 30 September 2022).

6.2 The outcomes framework scorecard contains 51 indicators across the 3 directorate areas within children's services and provides a strategic overview of the core activity with the service areas that demonstrate how we support the children and young people in Cheshire East.

6.3 The following indicators have been highlighted for consideration:

Social Care

- **1.14** – assessments completed within 45 days. This continues to be a focus for improvement as any delays can be an indicator of families not receiving timely intervention and support. Timeliness however needs to be balanced to ensure assessments receive sufficient management oversight and are of high quality. 70% of the completed assessments in quarter 2 have been completed within 50 days.
- **1.17** – the increase in the number of S47 enquiries which are a multiagency approach taken where decisions are required around the actions required to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or young person who is suspected of or likely to be suffering significant harm.
- **1.24** – the % of children with a second or subsequent child protection plan in a rolling twelve-month period. It is important to understand the reasons for repeat plans to reflect on whether there are different presenting reasons or whether previous plans had not resulted in sustainable changes being evidenced in a family. Regular auditing activity enables reflective learning which can influence practice. Although a small increase as an authority we still compare favourably with the England average and our statistical neighbours.

- **1.26** – the number of cared for children and young people has increased, this is, in the main, influenced by Cheshire East's support for the National Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) scheme.

Education

- **2.1 – 2.13** - It is pleasing to report that the percentages of schools which are judged good or outstanding has improved since Q1 (primary now at 94% and secondary at 90%). This positive change reflects the detailed work undertaken with schools to ensure that the quality of education judgement is robust and schools have the strong evidence that the curriculum is well embedded and shows effective progression.
- **2.14 – 2.16** – attendance is not reported in the second quarter as the data sets are based on termly activity and the new school year has only just commenced.
- **2.18** – Whilst it is positive that there has been a reduction in the number of individuals educated at home this will be in part due to the number that have now left statutory education (eg year 11 and 13). The elective home education team work closely with all families to ensure that they receive the support they need and where possible enable young people to return to a classroom setting.
- **2.19** – it is important to note that the number of children missing from education at the end of September is always higher. Reasons for this include schools and the local authority are not always advised when individuals move away from the local authority during the summer break or families choose the private schooling rather than state education when entering primary or secondary school. There are a range of national data sharing agreements that enable the local authority team to investigate where individuals who were expected to start at a school have presented and the number will be much reduced by October half term and triangulated with the Autumn School Census data.
- **2.23** – The reported number of individuals with and Education and Health care Plan (EHCP) who are also open to a social care team has been amended to also include care leavers where known.
- **2.25** – The positive improvements in Educational Psychologists (EP) advice being completed within 6 weeks is now beginning to have an impact on the average number of weeks it is taking to complete a plan. The service has also been proactive in increasing capacity both within the local authority and developing a pool of locum EPs to call upon when demand is greater.
- **2.26 – 2.27** although timeliness of EHCP completion continues to be a challenge due to increased demand on services, the average number of weeks a plan is taking is showing a positive trend by reducing from 24.3 to 23.5 weeks. A key element in many plans is observing the individual in a classroom setting to enable the most effective interventions to be put in place, enabling this can be delayed during holiday periods. The numbers of plans that are significantly overdue (i.e ongoing for 24 weeks or more) is also steadily reducing month on month with only 13 outstanding at the

end of September. Once these have all been addressed we will start to see a bigger impact on reducing the average time frame. The average number of plans being issued per month has increased from 60 in quarter 1 to 80 in quarter 2.

Early Help and Prevention

- **3.1** – we continue to be supporting increasing numbers of individuals at the early help level.
- **3.16** – Supporting Families was previously known as Troubled families/ Family Focus. As at Q2 we can demonstrate outcomes have been achieved for 240 families against an expectation that we will aim to successfully support 297 families within the year.
- **3.17** – The numbers of individuals accessing the range of services and sessions provided by the youth support service continues to increase quarter on quarter.
- **3.19** – Cheshire East overall numbers and rates of yr. 12-13 young people NEET continues to be significantly lower than the national picture evidencing that positive outcomes continue to be achieved for the vast majority of young people in the borough. Although the % is extremely positive at the end of quarter 2 this will fluctuate throughout quarter 3 as young people change decisions with regards to 6th form and college courses and quarter 3 outturn will likely be slightly higher.

7.0 Consultation and Engagement

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 Implications

8.1 Legal

8.1.1 There are no direct legal implications.

8.2 Finance

8.2.1 There are no direct financial implications or changes to the MTFs as a result of this briefing paper.

8.3 Policy

There are no direct policy implications.

8.4 Equality

8.4.1 Members may want to use the information from the performance indicators to ensure that services are targeted at more vulnerable children and young people.

8.5 Human Resources

8.5.1 There are no direct human resources implications.

8.6 Risk Management

8.6.1 There are risks associated with some performance measures, e.g. increases in demand and timeliness of services.

8.7 Rural Communities

8.7.1 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

8.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children

8.8.1 Performance reports enable members to identify areas of good performance and areas for improvement in relation to children and young people, including cared for children.

8.9 Public Health

8.9.1 There are no direct implications for public health.

8.10 Climate Change

8.10.1 This report does not impact on climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager Bev.Harding@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Children and Families Outcomes Framework Score Card September 2022
Background Papers:	None

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September 2022 - Children and Families Outcomes Framework Scorecard - This contains a rolling 4 quarters for comparison

Notes: The boxes that are grayed out are where national data is not applicable or data isn't available, for example the schools data is available termly which doesn't always coincide with quarterly reporting

Notes: The column highlighted in blue reflects the most recent quarter being reported on

Notes: Rates are calculated using the 2020 ONS mid year population estimate 0-17 of 78,068 (Office of National Statistics) and are calculated as a rate per 10,000 children aged 0-17. This enables the local authority to be compared on a like for like basis with different local authorities or groups of authorities. The exception is the EHCP rate which we have shown as the rate of 0-25 yr olds in line with the number

Directorate	Indicator	Indicator name	21/22 outturn	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	22/23 outturn	Benchmark National (most recent available)	Benchmark Stat N'bour (most recent available)	Corporate Plan Aim	Acronym
Childrens Social Care	1.1	Number of referrals	1951	494	413	524	616				Fair	
	1.12	Number of referrals (cumulative)	1951	1538	1951	524	1140				Fair	
	1.13	Rate of referrals (cumulative)	249.9	197.0	249.9	67.1	146.0		538	440	Fair	
	1.14	Percentage of repeat referrals	15%	13%	11%	11%	12%		22%	21%	Fair	
	1.15	Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days	78%	83%	74%	70%	56%		84%	90%	Fair	
	1.16	Number of children in need (CIN definition to aid comparison so includes CP/Cared for and some Care leavers)	2122	2062	2122	2063	2166				Fair	CIN - Child in need collection CP - Child Protection
	1.17	Rate of children in need	272	264.1	272	264.3	277.5		334	278	Fair	
	1.18	Number of S47 enquiries (cumulative)	1158	850	1123	284	684				Fair	
	1.19	Rate of Children subject to section 47 enquiries (cumulative)	148	108.9	143.8	36.4	87.6		180	146	Fair	
	1.2	Number of Children subject to an ICPC (cumulative)	336	253	336	83	181				Fair	ICPC - Initial Child Protection Conference
	1.21	Rate of Children subject to an ICPC (cummulative)	43	31.4	43	10.6	23.2		60	53	Fair	ICPC - Initial Child Protection Conference
	1.22	Number of children with a child protection plan	245	256	245	251	262				Fair	
	1.23	Rate of children with a child protection plan	31.4	32.8	31.4	32.1	33.6		42	37	Fair	
	1.24	% of ICPC within 15 days of S47 enquiry	76%	80%	78%	83%	74%		79%	78%	Fair	ICPC - Initial Child Protection Conference
	1.25	Percentage of children with a second or subsequent child protection (CP) plan (rolling yr)	15%	15%	15%	16%	20%		23%	23%	Fair	
	1.26	% of children on CP plans reviewed within timescales	88%	94%	92%	94%	82%		89%	87%	Fair	CP - Child Protection
	1.27	Number of cared for children	522	528	522	522	540				Fair	
	1.28	Rate of cared for children	66.9	67.6	66.9	66.9	69.2		67	60	Fair	

Directorate	Indicator	Indicator name	21/22 outturn	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	22/23 outturn	Benchmark National (most recent available)	Benchmark Stat N'bour (most recent available)	Corporate Plan Aim	Acronym
	1.29	Children looked after who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the last 12 months (%)	51%	45%	42%	37%	44%		40%	43%	Fair	
	1.30	Children looked after who had their annual health assessment (%)	80%	76%	74%	80%	75%		91%	89%	Fair	
	1.31	% of cared for children placed out of borough and over 20 miles from home address	18%	17%	18%	17%	16%		16%	19%	Fair	
	1.32	% of cared for children placed over 20 miles from home address (Cheshire East and out of borough)	24%	24%	24%	23%	23%				Fair	
	1.33	% Children who ceased to be looked after in the period who were adopted (YTD)	9%	9%	9%	11%	8%		10%	12%	Fair	YTD - Year to Date
	1.34	% Children who ceased to be looked after in the period due to a Special Guardianship Order (YTD)	11%	11%	11%	8%	6%		14%	13%	Fair	YTD - Year to Date
	1.35	% of care leavers who are not in education, employment or training (aged 19-21) (NEET)	41%	46%	48%	46%	46%		48%	47%	Fair	NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training
	1.36	% of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation (aged 19-21)	99%	97%	89%	96%	95%		88%	89%	Fair	
Education and 14-19 Skills	2.1	Percentage good or outstanding primary schools	89%	91%	89%	90%	94%		92%	92%	Fair	
	2.12	Percentage good or outstanding secondary schools	80%	79%	80%	80%	90%		83%	81%	Fair	
	2.13	Percentage good or outstanding special schools	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%		94%	95%	Fair	
	2.14	Percentage attendance for primary pupils year to date		94%	94%	94%	Not available in Sept		96%	96%	Fair	
	2.15	Percentage attendance for secondary pupils year to date		91%	90%	90%	Not available in Sept		95%	95%	Fair	
	2.16	Percentage attendance for special school pupils year to date		88%	88%	89%	Not available in Sept		91%	92%	Fair	
	2.17	Number of permanent exclusions from Cheshire East Schools (latest term available)		23	22	11	Not available in Sept				Fair	
	2.18	Current Number of pupils educated at home	496	457	496	492	446				Fair	
	2.19	Current number of children missing from education.	64	46	64	39	199				Fair	
	2.2	Total number with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) aged 0-25	3521	3402	3521	3698	3879				Fair	EHCP - Education & Health Care Plan
	2.21	Rate of children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) NB as rate of 0-25 yr old (105,819)	3.3%	32.0%	33.0%	3.5%	3.7%				Fair	EHCP - Education & Health Care Plan

Directorate	Indicator	Indicator name	21/22 outturn	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	22/23 outturn	Benchmark National (most recent available)	Benchmark Stat N'bour (most recent available)	Corporate Plan Aim	Acronym
Ed	2.22	Total % Pupils in CEC Maintained/State-funded with SEN Support. DfE / census measure from Jan census	9.4%	8.7%	9.4%	9.4%	9.1%		12.6%	12.1%	Fair	SEN - Special Educational Needs DFE - Department for Education
	2.23	Number of children and young people with an EHCP open to social care (NB includes care leavers)	331	321	331	328	338				Fair	EHCP - Education & Health Care Plan
	2.24	Number of children with an EHCP with an EHA	277	294	277	288	299				Fair	EHA - Early Help Assessment
	2.25	% of requests for Educational Psychologists (EP) advice completed within 6 weeks	74%	86%	26%	52%	72%				Fair	
	2.26	Special Educational Needs – Education, Health and Care Plans completion within 20 weeks including exceptions (cumulative yr)	65.3%	67%	53%	42%	39%		58%	66%	Fair	
	2.27	Average number of weeks for EHC Plans to be issued (snap shot at quarter end to which it relates)	20.7	20.9	20.7	24.3	23.5				Fair	EHCP - Education & Health Care Plan
Strong Start, Family Help and Integration	3.1	Current number of open Early Help Assessments/ plans (excluding short breaks)	1158	1099	1158	1190	1279				Fair	
	3.12	% of all open Early Help Assessments led by Cheshire East Prevention service staff	66%	62%	66%	74%	53%	66%			Fair	
	3.13	% 0-2 yrs engaged at children centres (most vulnerable i.e. CIN/CP/Cared for that have attended 3 or more times in the last 12 months)		28%	32%	27%	36%				Fair	CIN - Child In Need, CP - Child Protection
	3.14	% eligible children taking up 2 year old offer (termly figure only)		73%	84%	77%	77%		62%		Fair	
	3.15	% children taking up 3 and 4 year old offer (termly figure only)		95%	97%	96%	96%		88%		Fair	
	3.16	Number of Families meeting the Supporting Families (previously family focus) criteria where outcomes have been successfully concluded (quarterly fig)	332	103	13	123	117				Fair	
	3.17	Number of young people accessing the youth support service		1345	1402	2419	2932				Fair	
	3.18	Number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	149	137	149	194	117				Fair	NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training
	3.19	% of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	1.99%	1.80%	1.99%	2.59%	1.50%		2.80%		Fair	NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training

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Working for a brighter future together

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting: 16 January 2023

Report Title: School Organisation: Academisation of Schools:
Forward Plan

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

Report Reference No: CF/38/22- 23

Ward(s) Affected: All

Purpose of the report

This report is presented to committee to allow committee members to be informed of planned schools across the borough who are seeking to move to academy status and join a multi academy trust. The forward plan shows such schools and those that will require committee approval or will be progressed through delegated authority.

There are no changes to this paper from the version which was considered at the November committee meeting. Commencement of work to convert St Gregory's Catholic Primary School has been initiated but this will require detailed discussions with both the Diocese of Shrewsbury and Regional Directors office.

Note: The 'registration of interest' application the local authority to initiate a multi-academy trust as per the paper presented at the July meeting has been submitted. An outcome as to whether we have been successful in this initial pilot phase is still not available – ongoing discussions with Regional Director office.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Children and Families Committee meeting on 12 July 2021 committee approved the delegation, with certain exemptions, for current and future conversions including academy leases and commercial transfer agreements jointly to the Executive Director of Children Services and the Executive Director of Place. Where exemptions apply delegation is not applicable and a full report would be presented to committee.

- 1.2 It was proposed that committee will receive a forward plan at each meeting highlighting conversions due to take place and confirmation of the conversions that have taken place so that committee is fully informed and can note and scrutinise the academisation process. The forward plan has not been to the last two committees due to the size of the agenda and number of key decisions being taken at these meetings, however, this will be included on the forward plan for all meetings going forward.
- 1.3 A summary report (Appendix 1) provides an update for committee on those schools which have/are planning to convert to an academy so that committee members are kept informed. Note that in the vast majority of cases, schools converting to an academy will be required to join an existing multi-academy trust.

Recommendations

- 2.1 That the committee receives and notes the summary table (Appendix 1) showing the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East schools.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The committee has asked to receive a forward plan at each meeting highlighting conversions due to take place and confirmation of the conversions that have taken place.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The option to not inform committee of academy approvals is not considered appropriate as each academy conversion will have varying levels of risk and the inclusion of a forward plan of pending conversions allows committee members to be kept aware of future changes.
- 4.2 School governing boards apply to the secretary of state to progress with an academy order, the alternative is to remain a maintained school. There is no requirement for a school to convert to an academy unless directed to do so through an inadequate Ofsted inspection.
- 4.3 Failure to cooperate could result in the Secretary of State making transfer schemes which would be binding on the council.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 At the C&F committee meeting in July 2021, committee agreed the delegation for academy conversions as below:
 - a. The Executive Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, has authority to take all steps necessary to agree and execute the commercial transfer agreement, novation of third-party contracts, shared use agreements/facilities access agreements, staffing and information transfer.

- b. The Executive Director of Place in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to agree and execute any transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements.
- c. No delegation may be exercised to execute any agreement as set out above where:
 - The school has a deficit of £100k or there is any significant impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - There are substantive third-party land interests.
 - i. Any public funds are to be reclaimed under section (land contributions)
 - ii. Any current or proposed legal claim has been identified where an indemnity is sought against Cheshire East Council on any matter.

5.2 This report presents the status of a range of recent and future conversions so that committee are kept aware of ongoing work in this area. However, it should be noted that proposed conversion dates can be delayed for a variety of reasons.

6. Consultation and Engagement

6.1 Appropriate consultation and engagement takes place as part of the academy process with both staff and the local community.

7. Implications of the Recommendations

7.1 Legal

7.1.1 All legal requirements are undertaken and approved ahead of any academy conversion.

7.2 Finance

7.2.1 All financial requirements are undertaken and approved ahead of any academy conversion

7.3 Policy

7.3.1 The implementation of academy conversion is undertaken in accordance with national legislation as per the various Education Acts

7.4 Equality

7.4.1 Not applicable for this report summary

7.5 Human Resources

7.5.1 All HR requirements (mainly relating to TUPE arrangements) are undertaken and approved ahead of any academy conversion.

7.6 Risk Management

7.6.1 All associated risks are considered by legal, finance and HR as part of managing the academy conversion process.

7.6.2 The implications of the roll out of UNIT 4 /ERP administrative/transactional system have increased levels of risk due to the requirement to establish a new payroll process as part of the transition to academy status. This has generated some delays in conversion dates due to associated services having the capacity to build payroll structures ready for conversion.

7.7 Rural Communities

7.7.1 Not applicable for this report summary

7.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children

7.8.1 There is scrutiny of multi academy trusts by the Regional Schools Commissioner to ensure they have capacity to adopt the school. Therefore, assuring that the school joins a strong trust that can ensure outcomes for children and young people continue to improve

7.9 Public Health

7.9.1 There are no direct implications for public health.

7.10 Climate Change

7.10.1 There are no direct implications for climate change.

Access & Authorisation of Information	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Head of Service – Infrastructure and Outcomes mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Background Papers:	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/convert-to-an-academy-documents-for-schools Committee paper from 12 July 2021
	Academisation of Schools Report.pdf (cheshireeast.gov.uk)

APPENDIX 1:

C&F Committee: School Academisation – Forward Plan

Date of Meeting: 16 January 2023

The following table will be updated ahead C&F Committee meetings as required to provide the latest position on current/forthcoming school academy conversions. Conversions included within the table are from the date of the commencement of the Council Committee system commenced in July 2021.

Green – completed. Amber – in progress Yellow – initial discussions taking place NOR: Numbers of Pupils on Roll (2021 census)

School	Phase	Status	Core School information	Proposed (P) & Actual (A) Conversion Dates	Commentary
Bosley CofE	Primary	Diocese of Chester:	NoR : 35 – Macc. rural school. Ofsted: 2016: Good	A: 1 st September 2021	Converted on time following approval at July C&F Committee.
Audlem St James'	Primary	Diocese of Chester:	NoR : 187 – rural school. Ofsted: 2018: Good	P: 1 st November 2021 A: 1 st December 2021	Converted following approval at C&F Committee meeting in October
Middlewich High	Secondary	Community Maintained	NoR : 705 Ofsted: 2019: Good Leisure Centre on site.	P: 1 st November 2021 A: 1st December 2021	Converted following approval at C&F Committee meeting in October
Christ the King	Primary	Joint Diocesan: Chester & Shrewsbury Diocese.	NoR : 87 Macclesfield Ofsted: 2018: Inadequate	P: 1 st November 2021 A: 1 st April 2022	No requirement to be considered by Committee. Significant work required to agree suitable trust with both Diocesan.
Elworth Hall School	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 201 Sandbach Ofsted: 2022: Requires Improvement	A: 1 st April 2022	No requirement to be considered by Committee.
Oakfield Lodge	Secondary	Pupil Referral Unit (those at risk or have been permanently excluded)	NoR : 60 Crewe Ofsted: July 21: Requires Improvement	P: 1 st February 2022 A: 1 st September 2022	Expected conversion now planned for 1 September. Recs approved at Committee March 23 2022. School now converted.
Wilmslow Group of schools: <i>Proposing to all convert into a multi-academy trust at same time. schools outlined below:</i>	1x Secondary 4 x Primary			Date as yet to be confirmed	Ongoing discussions taking place with schools – will be brought to future Committee for consideration.
Wilmslow High School	Secondary	Community Maintained	NoR: 2130 Ofsted:2019: Good		

			Significant build programme currently in programme		
Styal	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 119 Ofsted: 2018: Good Land ownership: National Trust		
Alderley Edge	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 203 Ofsted: 2014: Outstanding		
Ashdene	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 419 Ofsted: 2019: Outstanding		
Lindow	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 210 Ofsted: 2018: Good		
St Gregory's Catholic Primary School	Primary	Diocesan of Shrewsbury	NoR : 71 Ofsted: Special measures	Date as yet to be confirmed	This will be a sponsored academy conversion due to an inadequate Ofsted inspection. Ongoing discussions with Diocese and Regional Director office.
Implications of recent White Paper: Trust expectations	All			N/A	Registration of interest submitted to Regional Director to establish a local authority multi academy trust – outcome expected in September 2022.

Work Programme – Children and Families Committee – 2022/23

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CF/66/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Crewe Youth Zone	This report will set out the set of legal documents (Grant Funding Agreement, Operational Agreement, Agreement for Lease and Lease) required for the Crewe Youth and ask for delegated authority to finalise. The report will also set out the process to be undertaken to release Oak Street Car Park.	Director of Strong Start, Family Help and Integration	No	No	Yes	Fair	
CF/34/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Ofsted action plan and progress update	To receive an update on progress against the recommendations from the Ofsted ILACS inspections.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	No	Yes		N/A
CF/59/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Recommendation for a sponsor to run primary school	The briefing report is to provide a recommendation for a sponsor to run the new primary school in Nantwich. The recommendation will also go to the DfE for approval.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	No				
CF/39/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Schools Funding Formula and Early Years Funding Formula	To approve the schools funding formula and early years funding formula.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/40/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Update on Academisation	To receive an update on the forward plan for academisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A

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CF/29/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Update report on progress against the Mental Health Spotlight Review	To receive an update on progress against the Mental Health Spotlight Review.	Director of Early Help and Prevention	N/A	No	Yes		N/A
CF/44/22-23	20 Mar 2023	12 Month Report on Councillor Frontline Visits to Safeguarding Teams	To receive an update on the findings from member frontline visits carried out over the last 12 months.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/24/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Children's Residential Provision	To ensure sufficient homes for cared for children and young people within Cheshire East.	Director of Children's Social Care	No	Yes	Yes		N/A
CF/57/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Development of Family Hubs Update Report	To provide Children and Families Committee with an update on the development of family hubs in Cheshire East, review progress of the transformation so far, and next steps.	Director of Early Help and Prevention	No	No	Yes		No
CF/61/22-23	20 Mar 2023	High Needs Funding Post-Pilot Update	To provide an update on the results of the recently undertaken pilot in relation to a potential change in allocation model, and gain recommendations on next steps for this work.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	No		No
CF/45/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Progress on the All Age Carers Strategy	To receive an update on the progress against the All Age Carers Strategy.	Director of Commissioning	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/30/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Report on the Educational Psychology Service	To receive an update on the Educational Psychology Service.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	No	No		N/A
CF/41/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Review of the learning disability and mental health strategy	To review the learning disability and mental health strategy.	Director of Commissioning	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/31/22-23	20 Mar 2023	School Catering Review Outcomes	To consider the recommended outcomes from the review of school catering.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills		Yes	Yes		N/A

CF/42/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Second financial review of 2022/23	To receive the second financial review for Children and Families and to note or approve virements and supplementary estimates as required.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	N/A	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	N/A
CF/43/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Self-evaluation of Children's Services	To receive the self-evaluation of services which shows the quality and impact of services.	Executive Director Children's Services.	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/46/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Update on Academisation	To receive an update on the forward plan for academisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/18/22-23	May 2023	Independent Care Review Outcomes	To update Committee on the outcome of the Independent Care Review and implications for services.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	No	Yes		N/A
CF/18/21-22	May 2023	Annual Progress Report on the SEND Strategy	To receive the annual progress report on the SEND Strategy.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	No	Yes		N/A

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