

# Public Document Pack

**Sefton Council** 

MEETING: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)

DATE: Tuesday, 16th November 2021

TIME: 6.30 p.m.

VENUE: Town Hall, Bootle

## Member

Councillor  
Cllr. June Burns (Chair)  
Cllr. Paula Spencer (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr. Natasha Carlin  
Cllr. Liz Dowd  
Cllr. Leo Evans  
Cllr. Paula Murphy  
Cllr. Mike Prendergast  
Cllr. Yvonne Sayers  
Cllr. Veronica Webster  
Cllr. Andrew Wilson  
Maurice Byrne, Healthwatch  
Karen Christie, Healthwatch  
Mrs Sandra Cain, Independent  
Advisory Member  
Stuart Harrison, Diocese  
Father Des Seddon, Archdiocese  
Machalla McDermott, PGR  
Claire McDonough, PGR

## Substitute

Councillor  
Cllr. Janis Blackburne  
Cllr. Robert Brennan  
Cllr. Christine Howard  
Cllr. John Kelly  
Cllr. John Dodd  
Cllr. John Sayers LLB. Cert PA.  
Cllr. Terry Jones  
Cllr. Steve McGinnity  
Cllr. Greg Myers  
Cllr. Christine Maher

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Debbie Campbell, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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**See overleaf for COVID Guidance and the requirements in relation to Public Attendance.**

**If you have any special needs that may require arrangements to facilitate your attendance at this meeting, please contact the Committee Officer named above, who will endeavour to assist.**

We endeavour to provide a reasonable number of full agendas, including reports at the meeting. If you wish to ensure that you have a copy to refer to at the meeting, please can you print off your own copy of the agenda pack prior to the meeting.

## **COVID GUIDANCE IN RELATION TO PUBLIC ATTENDANCE**

In light of ongoing Covid-19 social distancing restrictions, there is limited capacity for members of the press and public to be present in the **Ballroom** at any one time. We would ask parties remain in the **Ballroom** solely for the duration of consideration of the Committee report(s) to which their interest relates.

We therefore request that if you wish to attend the Committee to please register in advance of the meeting via email to [debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk) by no later than **12 noon on 16 November 2021**.

Please include in your email –

- Your name;
- Your email address;
- Your Contact telephone number; and
- The details of the report in which you are interested.

In light of current social distancing requirements, access to the **Ballroom** is limited.

**We have been advised by Public Health that Members, officers and the public should carry out a lateral flow test before attending the meeting, and only attend if that test is negative. Provided you are not classed as exempt, it is requested that you wear a mask that covers both your nose and mouth.**

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence

## 2. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested at a meeting where a disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest arises, which is not already included in their Register of Members' Interests, to declare any interests that relate to an item on the agenda.

Where a Member discloses a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, he/she must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest, except where he/she is permitted to remain as a result of a grant of a dispensation.

Where a Member discloses a personal interest he/she must seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or staff member representing the Monitoring Officer to determine whether the Member should withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest or whether the Member can remain in the meeting or remain in the meeting and vote on the relevant decision.

## 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

(Pages 5 - 14)

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2021.

## 4. Report on the Council's NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service commissioned through Economic Growth and Housing (Employment & Learning)

(Pages 15 - 28)

Report of the Head of Economic Growth and Housing.

## 5. Sefton Virtual School Report

(Pages 29 - 72)

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education.

## 6. School Places and Impact of Housing Developments on Education

(Pages 73 - 92)

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education.

## 7. School Attendance Update

(Pages 93 - 96)

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education.

- 8. Improvement Board Update** (Pages 97 - 106)  
Report of the Executive Director of Children’s Social Care and Education.
- 9. Cabinet Member Reports** (Pages 107 - 116)  
Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer.
- 10. Parent Governor Representative** (Pages 117 - 120)  
Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer.
- 11. Work Programme Key Decision Forward Plan** (Pages 121 - 136)  
Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer.

**THIS SET OF MINUTES IS NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL IN".**

Overview  
& Scrutiny



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT  
ON TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillor Burns (in the Chair)  
Councillor Spencer (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors Carlin, Evans, John Kelly (Substitute Member for Councillor Dowd), Prendergast, John Sayers (Substitute Member for Councillor Murphy)  
Yvonne Sayers and Webster

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr. M. Byrne, Healthwatch Sefton  
Mrs. S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member  
Ms. M. McDermott, Parent Governor Representative  
Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member - Children's Social Care  
Councillor Roscoe, Cabinet Member - Education

### **10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dowd and Murphy; Councillor Wilson and his Substitute Councillor Christine Maher; Ms. K. Christie, Healthwatch Representative; Ms. C. McDonough, Parent Governor Representative; and Father D. Seddon, Archdiocese Representative.

### **11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

### **12. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **13. SEND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 6 of 6 July 2021, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education updating Committee Members on the progress made against the actions taken and progress made regarding the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Continuous Improvement Plan.

The report indicated that the Health and Wellbeing Board provided system leadership, kept the Council's Cabinet informed of progress and, if

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

necessary, would escalate concerns to this Committee to provide additional scrutiny of the Improvement Plan. The report set out the background to the matter, together with an update against the continued commitment to delivering improvement.

A letter from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, revoking the SEND Improvement Notice in Sefton, was attached to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress made and the fact that the SEND Improvement Notice in Sefton has been lifted by the Department for Education be noted; and
- (2) robust governance around any further developments be continued to be delivered through the SEND Continuous Improvement Board, with oversight being provided by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

### **14. LSCB ANNUAL REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 21 (1) of 26 January 2021, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education detailing the work undertaken by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), known from September 2021 as the Safeguarding Partnership, the purpose of which was to safeguard children and work together with a collective aim to better improve the outcomes for children and young people.

The report indicated that the Government had abolished LSCBs from September 2019, except where the local area still had serious case reviews underway, and there was a grace period to September 2020. LSCBs were legally abolished in January 2021. Sefton LSCB had agreed to continue to call their board an LSCB until new arrangements were introduced in September 2021 when the partnership arrangements were renamed Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Sefton LSCB Annual Report 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021, was attached to the report and detailed the partnership approach to safeguarding children and young people in response to the COVID 19 pandemic that resulted in the Government introducing restrictions through The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020. The regulations allowed for easements to child care practice and afforded staff across the partnership and families to adhere to the national guidance through Public Health England. Practice across the partnership had to be adapted to ensure children were kept safe as far as possible within the restrictive practice. This practice impacted on the pace of change for the partnership on actions identified in the previous year which were outlined in the Annual Report. Acknowledgement and appreciation of the work that all staff had undertaken throughout the pandemic in such demanding

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

circumstances, as well as the added stress on children and families, was also included.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised issues on the following:

- Best practice by other local authorities regarding the child's lived experience.
- Procedures for serious case reviews.
- Requirements for continuous staff development.

RESOLVED:

That the work of the LSCB over 2020-21 and the progress made through the arrangements, including work with partners on training, local practice review, formerly known as serious case reviews, and more recent work under the pandemic conditions with Covid-19 where services were working under challenging conditions to ensure children were continued to be kept safe, be noted.

### **15. INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICERS ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education on the Annual Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Annual Report that provided information about the IRO service within Sefton between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. This was a developing service that continued to work to support good outcomes for children and young people in Sefton.

The report indicated that the IRO service was set within the framework of the updated IRO Handbook, linked to revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance which were introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO had changed from the management of the review process to a wider overview of the child's journey, including regular monitoring and follow-up between reviews. The IRO had a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for children that were Looked After and for robust challenge.

The Safeguarding and Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 was attached to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised issues on the following:

- Development of a culture of appropriate challenge.
- The benchmark to measure appropriate challenge.
- The advocacy and independent visitor service and how this could be developed.

RESOLVED: That

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

- (1) the work undertaken for the year and the actions under the improvement plan for children's service be noted; and
- (2) the fact that the Advocacy and Independent Visitor Service needs to be developed to a wider offer, in line with the IRO handbook and Children Act requirements, be noted.

### **16. PERSISTENT PUPIL ABSENCE WORKING GROUP UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

Further to Minute No. 22 (3) of 26 (3) 26 January 2021, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education providing a summary update detailing progress and activity against the recommendations produced by the Persistent Pupil Absence Working Group that had previously been established by the Committee.

The report set out progress to date against the recommendations and referred to the impact of Covid 19 on children and young people, particularly in terms of school attendance and disruption to education.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised issues on the following:

- Reasons behind the increase in home schooling since the Covid 19 pandemic and measures taken by the local authority to maintain school rolls.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

### **17. SEFTON INTEGRATED CARE PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the Health and Wellbeing Board of 9 June 2021, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health that presented the latest position regarding steps to develop a Sefton Integrated Care Partnership following approval from the Cabinet in April 2021. Since submission to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the report had been slightly updated to reflect a change in terminology following the publication of the Health and Care Bill in July 2021.

The report set out the background and development of an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) in Sefton; milestones; progress made to date; key deliverables; expectations from the Integrated Care System; governance and accountability of the ICP; the emerging Start Well Programme; and concluded that Overview and Scrutiny might offer further oversight to the process.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:



# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

- Mental health provision for children and young people.
- Access to health services during the Covid 19 pandemic and the resulting impact on children and young people. Reports on Access to General Practice and Dentistry had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) and these could be provided to Members of this Committee, for information.
- Delivery of the ICP and reporting of future progress.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the report be received;
- (2) Members' oversight be given to the direction of travel and decisions as they develop;
- (3) the reports on Access to General Practice and Dentistry submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) be provided to Members of this Committee, for information; and
- (4) the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health be requested to submit a further update on the Sefton Integrated Care Partnership Development to the meeting of this Committee scheduled for 25 January 2022.

### **18. ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education that provided an overview of the activity in the Adoption in Merseyside (AIM) service for 2020/2021 and outlined recent changes within the service since April 2021.

The Merseyside Regional Adoption Agency Report for 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 was attached to the report.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted.

### **19. FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 27 of 26 January 2021, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education that provided an overview of the activity in the fostering service for 2020/2021. The report also provided an overview of the more recent changes within the service since April 2021. The report set out information on re-branding; recruitment involving all the Council to help with advertising for foster carers; working with local businesses on help to

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

recruit foster carers; and the recruitment of a new panel advisor and a new panel chair.

The Sefton Fostering Service Annual Report 2020-21 was attached to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised issues on the following:

- Residential settings in Sefton.
- A forum for foster carers.
- Marketing of the service outside of the Borough.
- Engagement with local businesses.
- Praise for staff and foster families for their continued work throughout the Covid 19 pandemic.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

### **20. CORPORATE PARENTING ANNUAL REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 40 of 16 March 2021, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education that provided a profile and overview of Sefton's Children in Care (CIC) and Care leavers during 2020-2021, reporting on annual activity, and highlighting strengths and areas for development in supporting CIC and care leavers in Sefton. The report set out the current number of children in care; the number of children subject to Care Orders; together with areas for development within the service.

The Sefton Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2020-21 was attached to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised issues on the following:

- Out of Borough placements.
- Semi-independent provision and regulation.
- Numbers of children and young people from outside the Borough and impacts on availability of services and support.
- The role and work of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS).

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

### **21. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS**

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer submitting the most recent update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care, and the Cabinet Member – Education, whose portfolios fell within the remit of the Committee.

The Cabinet Member update report – Children's Social Care, attached to the report at Appendix A, outlined information on the following:

- Children's Services Improvement Board;
- Staff Engagement;
- Improvements to Quality;
- Induction of Cabinet Members;
- Remodelling of Children's Services Structure;
- Inspection of Residential Home;
- Developments in Corporate Parenting; and
- Workforce and Organisational Development.

The Cabinet Member update report – Education, attached to the report at Appendix B, outlined information on the following:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND);
- Schools;
- Safeguarding; and
- Virtual School.

Councillors Doyle and Roscoe attended the meeting to present their reports and to respond to any questions or issues raised by Members of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member – Education be noted.

### **22. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer reviewing the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of 2021/22; reporting on progress of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group; reporting on progress of the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group; requesting agreement to the establishment of a new working group; identifying any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan; and receipt of an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Work Programme for 2021/22 was set out at Appendix A to the report, to be considered along with any additional items to be included and agreed.

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

The report set out the progress to date made by the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group and indicated that the Committee had agreed to defer further consideration of the matter until Autumn 2022. Progress to date made by the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group was also outlined, as a Member of the Committee had agreed to serve on the Working Group that had been established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills).

Further to Minute No. 9 (4) of 6 July 2021, the Committee was requested to establish a working group on the impact of Covid 19 on the primary curriculum.

There were no items for pre-scrutiny within the current Key Decision Forward Plan that fell under the Committee's remit, on this occasion.

The report set out an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following:

- The possibility of including the impact of lockdown and home schooling on the proposed working group on the impact of Covid 19 on the primary curriculum.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) the fact that the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group has been deferred until Autumn 2022, be noted;
- (3) the progress of the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group be noted;
- (4) a working group on the impact of Covid 19 on the primary curriculum be established, to include the consideration of the impact of lockdown and home schooling, comprised of the following Members of the Committee:
  - Councillor Spencer
  - Councillor Yvonne Sayers
  - Mrs. S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member
  - Ms. M. McDermott, Parent Governor Representative;
- (5) the fact that there are no items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion, be noted; and

# Agenda Item 3

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) - TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

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# Agenda Item 4

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Report on the Council's NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service commissioned through Economic Growth and Housing (Employment & Learning)		
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Economic Growth and Housing	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Regeneration and Skills		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To update Members on work relating to this Key Decision and advise on the progress of the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan (Dec 2019), the associated Covid-19 Recovery plan and plans to refresh and update the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan from April 2022.

## Recommendation(s):

That Members note:

(1) The report and the progress made by the NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service.

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To provide information to Members on the performance of this key contract delivered by Career Connect on behalf of Sefton Council.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

None

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue Costs

There are no direct revenue costs associated with the recommendations in this report.

Costs for the operation of this service fall within existing budgets within the Economic Growth and Housing (Employment & Learning) department.

# Agenda Item 4

## (B) Capital Costs

There are no direct capital costs associated with the recommendations in this report.

### Implications of the Proposals:

<p><b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> All resources required for the operation of this service including adequate staffing levels of professionally qualified staff are operated by the Council's commissioned provider, Career Connect.</p>								
<p><b>Legal Implications:</b> None arising from this report</p>								
<p><b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications. The equality implications of this Service are positive. The service improves the lives of young people from across Sefton through effective and personalised progression planning which take individual needs and aspirations into account. Specific focus on vulnerable groups enhances the ability of disadvantaged young people to reach their full potential and make a successful transition to adulthood.</p>								
<p><b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b></p> <p>The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1"><tr><td>Have a positive impact</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>Have a neutral impact</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>Have a negative impact</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td><td>Yes</td></tr></table>	Have a positive impact	No	Have a neutral impact	Yes	Have a negative impact	No	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Have a positive impact	No							
Have a neutral impact	Yes							
Have a negative impact	No							
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes							

### Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: This service brings added value to the Council through its sustained focus on their wellbeing and attainment of various vulnerable groups including young people known to the justice system, looked after children and care leavers, young people with SEND, teenage parents and others.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Employment is a key indicator in improving resilience within our communities, as young people will be more able to make a positive and confident contribution if they can plan and achieve their goals.</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: This commission delivers the statutory duties related to the tracking and destinations of all young people aged 16 and 17 in the borough of Sefton and supplies regular reports to the government on rates of NEET required by all Local Authorities. The service also</p>



supplies the key requirements for the Council related to the Raised Participation age.
<b>Place – leadership and influencer:</b> This commission plays a key role in the wider local offer for young people in Sefton and works in synergy with education and the Post-16 training and employment system to provide pathways for their progression
<b>Drivers of change and reform:</b> The Council has chosen to extend and add value to its statutory duties for young people aged 16 and 17 by extending tracking through this service for 18-year olds and introducing innovative early intervention approaches to identify younger people from year 9 upwards most at risk of becoming NEET at age 16.
<b>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:</b> This service operates within the portfolio of employment and skills support programmes offered by the Council through the Employment & Learning team in Economic Growth and Housing, alongside regeneration, planning and business support. These links amplify connectivity with employers offering apprenticeships, traineeships, jobs and vocational training and contribute to the economic prosperity of Sefton.
<b>Greater income for social investment:</b> All routes for employment, work experience and vocational progression are promoted to young people and wherever possible the options to undertake these activities with organisations and employers with a social investment agenda are maximised.
<b>Cleaner Greener</b> The service provider, Career Connect, has provided an environmental sustainability plan as part of the procurement process and refreshes this regularly. This includes promotion of public transport, awareness of the Council's policies on carbon emissions, single use plastics etc.

## **What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

### **(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 6606/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4807/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### **(B) External Consultations**

N/A

### **Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

# Agenda Item 4

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Claire Maguire
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	Tel: 0151 934 2684
<b>Email Address:</b>	claire.maguire@sefton.gov.uk

## **Appendices:**

There are no appendices to this report

## **Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection.

## **1. Introduction/Background**

The Education and Skills Act 2008 legislated to raise the age of compulsory participation in education or training to 18 by 2015 and until the end of the year in which young people turn 17 in 2013 – this is known as Raising the Participation Age (RPA). Local Authorities are responsible for ensuring that young people in their area participate in learning and to ensure there is support for young people to overcome personal barriers to engagement. Local Authority RPA plans are inspected by OFSTED, as part of reviewing arrangements for their support of school improvements.

The Act placed the following two duties on local authorities with regard to 16 -18-year olds, known as the **September Guarantee** and **Tracking duties** which are described as follows:

- To promote the effective participation in education and training of 16-17-year olds in their areas with a view to ensuring that these young people fulfil the duty to participate in education or training
- Make arrangements to identify 16-17-year olds who are not participating in education or training ensuring that robust tracking arrangements are in place to identify young people who are not engaged in education or training or who have left provision enables local authorities to offer support as soon as possible.

The September Guarantee is a guarantee of an offer, made by the end of September, of an appropriate place in post 16 education or training for every young person completing compulsory education. Ensuring that every young person has an offer of a place to progress onto is particularly important as it helps young people make a seamless transition into post 16 learning or employment with training.

The Council, like all local authorities must consider how best to meet its duties for young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) within a dynamic legislative framework whilst also considering ongoing budgetary constraints.

The transition from school into work is a vital stage in the lives of our young people. A successful transition through a high quality, valued pathway can be the start to a

promising career. Becoming trapped in poor quality, low paying alternatives can trigger many downstream costs and contribute to a loss of personal, social and economic capital, (which can be measured through increase in the number of those who are NEET).

We know that young people who do not make successful transitions at 16, 17 or 18 years of age may well require the support of a range of partners and agencies in later life to help them get back on track or to a positive outcome. Furthermore, young people who spend periods NEET at this key time in their lives are less likely to feel empowered to have ambitious goals and aspirations for their future, leading to a loss to themselves in terms of their individual potential unfulfilled but also a loss to their communities and the wider economy benefitting from their talents.

## **2. The NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service**

The NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service (NR&EIS) was commissioned by Economic Growth & Housing in December 2018 under the leadership of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills and aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Reduce the levels of young people NEET year on year over a 3 – 4-year period and cover all the relevant statutory duties for the Council as listed above
- Track the destinations of all young people so as to reduce the number of Not Known young people
- Introduce an Early intervention model for those young people most at risk of becoming NEET and monitor the impact of this model on NEET levels
- Continue the destination tracking of academic age 18 young people no longer covered by the statutory duty to Local authorities from 2018
- Provide a focused support service for a designated range of vulnerable groups who have high levels of NEET with a primary focus on disengaged young people below the age of 19 and relevant adults up to 25 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) and care leavers who are NEET.
- Augment the provision of high-quality careers guidance provided by schools in line with the Gatsby standards for those young people who are NEET
- Work in partnership with Sefton@work and other local agencies such as the FE Colleges and training providers and schools to design interventions to reduce NEET and promote sustainable employment

Following a procurement exercise Career Connect were appointed to deliver the Service and operations commenced in June 2018 for a period of three years, with an option for the Council to extend for a further year on the basis of effective performance.

The key elements of the contract include:

- Supporting the Local Authority Statutory Duty to ensure young people who are NEET aged 16-19 years old (and those up to 25 with an EHP in place and Care Leavers who are NEET) receive relevant information, advice and guidance in order to be supported to a successful transition into post 16 education, employment and/or training. This includes young people who attend out-of-

# Agenda Item 4

borough Alternative Provision settings or young people who have been excluded from mainstream school and are vulnerable to becoming NEET.

- Identify young people in the Spring term of Year 11 and Year 12 who have no intended destination or whose intended destination is doubtful and deploying skilled advisors to support them into an offer of an appropriate place, to meet the Council's responsibilities under the Raising Participation Agenda and DfE reporting.
- A targeted IAG service to promote EET to vulnerable groups through intensive working in partnership with specialist services to support identified vulnerable groups. This includes an engagement service to target those in the NEET cohort and those whose situation is currently Not Known (NK), in order to achieve full participation in education, employment or training (EET) through to age 18 and ensure individuals are supported to remain EET thereafter.
- An early intervention response for young people in years 9,10 and 11 who are deemed most at risk of becoming NEET and disengaging from provision by the age of 16 and 17.

The innovative model of Early Intervention and Prevention within the commission is primarily targeted at young people from vulnerable groups and those from disadvantaged backgrounds who require additional support to access learning and employment opportunities with a particular focus on promoting retention and preventing disengagement in years 9, 10 and 11. Close liaison and communication with schools is key and the underlying relationships of trust with Career Connect have proven essential. This new element was introduced as the Council recognised that there are a variety of potentially complex reasons for why these young people find the transition from school to be challenging. For example, they may have a lack of awareness or understanding of the potential opportunities available to them, the absence of a role model or low self-esteem. However, with early intervention we can work with these young people to provide support and identify ways of addressing any challenges or barriers they have, which will support the Council to continue to reduce the number of young people becoming NEET.

The service carries out an Annual Destinations Survey where the destination of all young people aged 16-18 is confirmed. The purpose of the Destinations Survey is primarily linked to the September Guarantee in terms of ensuring Year 11/12's continue on in education, training, or other positive destinations. Those young people that are identified as not moving into a positive destination are offered appropriate support and alternative opportunities. Those who have not made a successful transition after the survey will form part of the NEET group and therefore are targeted by Career Connect specialist advisers and coaches. The LA must also report monthly on young people's destinations.

Whilst NEET terminology commonly conjures up images of the long-term unemployed known as the "Core NEET groups", it also covers those who drift in and out employment and/or education and/or training (NEET 'churn'), and to those who take 'time out' after completing compulsory education (transition/gap NEET). There are also several significant equality issues to be considered related to disability, gender, orientation and

other characteristics which mean that a personalised approach to meet the needs of all young people is required.

The continued tracking of 18 year olds as an additional local measure has given the Council a much better understanding of where these young people are in relation to positive destinations and identify those who need additional support to enable earlier engagement, working towards an onward pathway of support into the adult world of work through referrals into our in-house job brokerage service, Sefton@Work.

We believe that by strengthening a more preventative approach at an earlier age will reduce the number of young people being disengaged from aged 16 onwards and this commission expects to demonstrate the effects of this shift over time with increased preventative actions feeding through into reductions in the overall NEET population over the course of this commission and beyond.

**The Key Outcomes we expect to achieve through this commission are:**

- An overall reduction in the NEET rate for Sefton, improving throughout the contract period
- A reduction in the Number of Young People whose destination is Not Known
- A reduction in the Number of days Young People spend NEET
- An increase in the Number of Young People who are EET
- A reduction in the levels of NEET within the following vulnerable groups:
  - SEND young people up to the age of 25 who have an EHCP in place
  - Looked after Children and Care Leavers
  - Young people known to YOS Services
  - Young people who are part of Sefton’s Turnaround Families
  - Young Carers

Achieving these targeted outcomes will help Sefton Council to improve its performance in relation to the reduction of NEET in comparison with the LCR, statistical neighbours and at a national level. This commission sets out to improve this ranking year on year, through the lifetime of the project wherever possible.

As part of this service and additional to supporting NEET and Vulnerable Young People the following activities take place on an annual basis. The timeline for the operational year July 2021/2022 is as follows:

Date	Activity
<b>July/August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September Guarantee Contact with schools/providers and colleges continuing to update offer of learning</li> <li>• Support those young people with no offer or at risk of NEET</li> <li>• Work with identified Year 11 RONI and Vulnerable Groups</li> </ul>
<b>End August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Education and Learning Destinations Expire and require follow up for all and review for all 16/17/18 years (SEND up to 25yrs)</li> </ul>
<b>Sept/Oct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm destinations of full cohort approx. 8500 young people</li> <li>• Activity Survey all Year 11’s educated in Sefton report on 31<sup>st</sup> October.</li> <li>• Starters lists received, input starts and update September Guarantee status</li> </ul>

# Agenda Item 4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaising with schools regarding Statutory Duty and performance of post 16</li> <li>• Request UCAS lists for Year 14</li> <li>• End of September – report on September Guarantee Offers Met.</li> <li>• Review of SEND eligibility – plan reviews for the academic year</li> <li>• Review Looked After Cohort and transition to Leaving Care Cohort</li> <li>• All year groups move</li> <li>• October is a known leaving points for early ‘dropouts’ target support for early intervention.</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RONI Focus: Cohort Check and for Year 11 risk of NEET identification</li> <li>• Review of all vulnerable group cohorts</li> </ul>
<b>Mid-January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mid Jan</b> - Start Year 11 and 12 Cohort Checks</li> <li>• <b>End Jan</b> -School re-confirm cohort and registration status of each student, including details of any students now not on roll and where they have moved onto (new school, out of area into another LA).</li> <li>• Update any characteristically and risk of NEET information.</li> <li>• Report on Activity Survey and individual school data produced</li> </ul>
<b>February Half Term</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition support for Year 11/Vulnerable groups on going but targeted resource reviewed to maximise impact.</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Focus: September Guarantee</b> send previous cohort check (Jan) returned to school and request offer information for each Year 11.</li> </ul>
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send supporting reminder requests for final checks from any outstanding schools</li> <li>• End of April - Send previous cohort checks (from Jan) returned to school and request a final ‘sign off’ of the cohort</li> </ul>
<b>Early May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Cohort Check</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Start of September Guarantee Process</li> </ul>

### 3. How are we Doing? A snapshot of Current Performance on NEET

As part of the NR&EIS, a suite of agreements has been put in place to enable us to bring forward the completion of the September Guarantee destinations. This gives us increased assurance that the data we have on destinations for those leaving school is extremely robust. On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, our data confirms that we have now achieved our best ever performance for the September Guarantee for year 11 at **98.7%** and for year 12 at 95%. This is due to the excellent relationships we have with Sefton Schools, FE Colleges, 6<sup>th</sup> Form Providers and Training Providers where they share information regarding learning offers made to young people for September. Through these links, we can work with the relevant institutions to ensure early identification of young people who fail to start their offered place to identify alternative provision as soon as possible.

Through the delivery of our NR&EIS, we have adapted our delivery methods to meet the needs of young people we are working with and have remained focused on key contract performance indicators. Through robust planning we have identified a range of solutions to address barriers and advocate for young people which has been key to this. During

this past year, the Council has benefitted from insight on trends in terms of young people's motivation during college/school closures

The provision of independent Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) is an integral part of the broader education, skills, and employment system. Timely, relevant, and good quality IAG reduces the possibility of mismatches between supply and demand, generates feedback on performance of the system and maximises young people's potential. We aim to ensure that all young people have access to good quality careers guidance, through their school and through our targeted service where this is necessary.

### 3.1 NEET and Not Known (NK) across our wider 16-18 group

- Our latest data confirms that Sefton has achieved its best ever performance for October 2021, at **3.36%** for NEET/NK for all 16-17-year olds. In October 2020 Sefton ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of the 151 Local Authority Areas this year's national comparisons will be published end of November.
- Compared to 2020 Sefton had improved NEET/NK 16-17-year olds by 15 young people and 0.31%
- NEET has decreased for all ages 16-18-year olds, the biggest improvement is with 18year old with a NEET reduction of 52 young people – evidence the service offer is seeing year on year improvements.
- Although participation is slightly down by 0.03% on last year, the cohort is actually an additional 58 young people.
- We have seen an improvement on those young people in (EET) and an increase compared to October 2020 with an additional 73 more young people entering EET destinations
- Career Connect have tracked over 8000 young people in September and October working alongside schools, colleges, and training providers.
- Year on year performance improvement with an annual reduction since 2016/17 from 8% to 4.2% a reduction of 3.8% with NEET/NK and consistently better than North West and England averages
- The current rate and frequency of engagement with clients for tracking Not Known (NK), vulnerable groups and case loaded young people is excellent in Sefton at 0.5% it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest in LCR, lower than both the Regional and National averages and also the lowest in comparison to our Statistical Neighbours.
- Sefton has the lowest % for NEET and Combined across all our Local Authority areas,
- Sefton is performing better that the North West NEET & Not Known combined measure
- Sefton is performing better that the England NEET & Not Known combined measure

# Agenda Item 4

- Sefton is ranked on average month on month second out of its statistical neighbours

## 3.2 NEET & EET Data for our Vulnerable Groups

The following table gives an outline of the current performance for young people within the vulnerable groups targeted by this service.

	Special Education Need or Disability	Care Leavers	Young Carer	Alternative Provision	Young Parents	Pregnancy /Teen Mums	Known to Youth Offending Service	Elective Home Education - statutory school
Oct-21	SEND	CL	YC	AP	YP	P	YOS	EHE
Academic Age	16-24	16-18	16-17	16-17	16-18	16-18	16-17	16-17
<b>Cohort size</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>47</b>
EET	522	23	52	50	9	13	19	37
NEET	64	11	6	17	21	26	7	7
Other not RPA (eg jobs without training)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not Known	62	0	0	3	1	2	0	3
<b>NEET &amp; Not Known %</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>68.3%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>
NEET %	9.8%	32.4%	10.3%	24.3%	67.7%	63.4%	26.9%	14.9%
Not Known %	9.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	3.2%	4.9%	0.0%	6.4%

## 3. NEET Reduction & Early Intervention Service Supporting Council Departments

Career Connect, our service provider, are committed to working in partnership with the Council responding to local needs and developing opportunities for EET that meet the requirements of young people. We recognise that young people do not fall into convenient categories where complex needs and barriers to progress can be met by a single off the shelf offer. We have therefore ensured that the service does not stand alone, it is an integrated collaborative approach working with a range of other Council departments to support their own statutory duties and a range of Careers Advisors and Coaches are allocated to Council teams which has yielded the excellent results we are not seeing in relation to our current NEET figures.

Priority Group	Area of Support
Leaving Care and LAC Cohorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link with Virtual School for pre-16s young people educated or living in Sefton</li> <li>• Support the Personal Education Plans and Career Action Plans</li> <li>• Post transition support for clients on Sefton MBC Employability Pathways and other destinations, focused on threats to retention</li> <li>• Co-ordinate EET progression support for out-of-borough clients including face to face interventions, case conferencing and advocacy</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EET participation data shared with Virtual School to target support</li> <li>• Quarterly Report will be produced and presented at Corporate Parenting Report.</li> <li>• Monthly collaborative production of accurate IYSS report on accommodation (populated by Social Care), education, employment, and training status of Looked After from 16/18 up to 25</li> <li>• working closely with looked after children and those leaving care 16-18 year olds and up to the age of 25 with EHC plan living in Sefton to improve their resilience in finding education, employment, and training. This is underpinned by strong partnership working with local social work teams, housing options, employers, Sefton@work, Sefton’s Adult and Community Learning, DWP and employers to ensure young people have the support needed to progress</li> <li>• Member of the new Next Steps – Panel</li> <li>• Membership of NEET/EET Group and Employability Group to look at specific needs and opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>YOT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre 16 support for at risk of NEET</li> <li>• Clients supported into provision/employment meeting the requirements of their Order. The adviser will contribute to pre-sentence, panel reports and final reviews ensuring that movement into EET is given high profile.</li> <li>• IAG and career planning to manage the transition from custody to post custody licence, including support to clients and their parents/carers whilst on police bail</li> <li>• Effective engagement with young people who have multiple barriers to access services</li> <li>• EET destinations shared with YOT team</li> <li>• YOT Board Member and Operational Group</li> </ul>
<b>SEND 14-25 Years (With EHCP or High Needs agreed with SENSIS Team)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bespoke support provided from yr9 (or 3 years from transition) with specialist advisers linking into schools and SEN LA team. Provision dovetails with existing school CEIAG arrangements and wider partner support for client (e.g. YOS, Social Care Team). It will be informed by information/views of partners, parents, and the client – with aspirations, supported, challenged, and developed to ensure individual potential is realised</li> <li>• Support to clients at their annual SEN review including career planning to inform the EHCP ‘preparation for adult life’</li> <li>• Clients encouraged/supported to access the SEN Local Offer/specialist provision to ensure progress to stated outcome(s)</li> <li>• Support tailored to individual needs e.g. adapted resources for dyslexia</li> <li>• Brokerage and linked advocacy to opportunities and appropriate referrals (e.g. Job Centre Plus)</li> <li>• supporting SEND young people with an EHCP and or High Need Funding:</li> <li>• (From Year 9 to Year 14) – there is a team of SEND advisers working closely with schools/colleges and the L.A. statutory assessment team to support work the council undertake in relation to</li> </ul>

# Agenda Item 4

	<p>young people with an EHCP or HNF and their transitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (From Year 14 to age 25) – there is a specialist advisor, undertaking a complex role that requires strong partnership working with SEN, Adult Social Services and Mental health services.</li> <li>• Service Lead is Deputy Chair of Preparation for Adulthood Group and also a member of the SEN Forum</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact – coach support looking at Year 10 and 11</li> <li>• Pinefield – IAG support focusing on Year 10 and 11 – looking at resilience and support with mental health. Liaise with EHE.</li> </ul>
<b>Elected Home Educated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with year 9, 10 and 11 to ensure a positive transition at year 11.</li> <li>• To be an active member of Monitoring and Placement Group coordinated by Schools Regulatory Service, working in collaboration to ensure that robust systems and procedures are in place across agencies to identify, support, track, and monitor those children not receiving education, ensuring and supporting a speedy re-entry to the education system and taking a lead agency role as appropriate.</li> <li>• Liaise with Pinefield to do home visits to those pupils who receive complimentary education. These pupils are often educated in the home and do not attend the Pinefield centre.</li> <li>• Assessment and IAG with all young people who engage.</li> <li>• Education and Learning referrals to providers and other agencies.</li> <li>• Intensive Transition support</li> </ul>
<b>Teenage Mothers/ Pregnancy 14-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support delivered jointly with Health and Well Being Centres, Parenting2000 and a network of Health professionals, including joint home visits and IAG sessions</li> <li>• Active promotion of Care to Learn, support with health issues, finance, and housing to support integration into learning</li> <li>• Brokerage with providers/family etc to ensure childcare arrangements in place for EET destinations</li> </ul>
<b>Young Carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of pre/post 16 and core offer provided</li> <li>• Link with Young Carers Project to increase EET outcomes, engagement, and sustainment.</li> </ul>
<b>Early Help and Supporting Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop successful transitions for pre and post 16 young people who are at risk of becoming, and remaining NEET. Young people will be identified through referrals to and from the Supporting Families Programme.</li> <li>• Referral form identification for Early Help</li> <li>• Complete evidence of all inventions using agreed documentation for each EET outcome</li> <li>• Track all identified young people and report progressions into education, employment and training contributing to the outcome-based funding claims.</li> <li>• Ensure young people identified through Sefton Supporting Families have agreed Transition/Action Plans in place post 16</li> <li>• Active member of Early Help Board</li> </ul>
<b>Year 11 'Risk of NEET</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with school and other agencies to determine those 'at Risk of NEET' and establish at RONI register for each school leaving cohort.</li> <li>• The Year 11 identification with schools will start earlier in November.</li> </ul>

<b>Indicator' RONI</b>	<p>Those identified will be case loaded to a coach and support will be provided in partnership with schools and other agencies to ensure that those identified progress to EET.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lead on and support the September guarantee for the current leaver group. We will deliver the guarantee processes, focussing on the tracking of and engagement with the cohort to ensure the identification of young people leaving compulsory education who would benefit from engaging with this service.</li> </ul>
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In addition, the data collected through our NR&EIS also supports and informs the Council, using “best in class” tracking system provides reliable and up to date evidence on destinations for our most vulnerable groups to connected teams and structures across the Council including the SEND team, the Virtual School, the YOT Management Board, Corporate Parenting Board, High Needs Panel, Placing and the Children’s and Young People’s Partnership Board.

#### **4. Post 16 Pathways Partnership**

In 2020, the Council established a strategic Post 16 Pathways Partnership which brings together agencies and services to support the reduction of young people who are NEET by developing clear pathways for all pupils post 16. By strengthening our partnership arrangements, the aim is to improve transition, retention, and achievement of our young people. Actions completed to date through the Partnership include a survey of secondary schools’ barriers and strengths in offering employment and industry placements for compliance with the Gatsby Careers guidance standards and setting up a new Caseload Conferencing model to support specific groups of NEET young people who are ready for work or learning but cannot access appropriate opportunities. The work of the Post 16 Pathways Partnership brings together a range of these agencies to support young people to improve EET outcomes and will help the council to deliver even further reductions in NEET number.

We have extensive and up to date local knowledge of learning/training provision and the local labour market as part of the annual activity survey for the September Guarantee there is a commitment from FE colleges, 6th Forms, schools, and providers in Sefton to share information with us regarding the learning offers made to young people for September. The partnership ensures early identification of young people who fail to start their offered place to identify alternative provision as soon as possible. Additionally, young people already identified as at risk of becoming NEET and the vulnerable group cohorts receive enhanced transition support.

#### **5. Managing the impact of COVID**

We believe that a preventative approach in terms of NEET and NK rates has mitigated the impact of Covid 19 and a series of lockdowns during the past 18 months and therefore reduced the negative impact we may otherwise have felt. This is borne out through comparisons with other areas and statistical neighbours throughout this period. We recognise there remain some very real challenges ahead to improving outcomes particularly for our most vulnerable client groups in the borough, and we will continue to utilise our strong working relationships with education institutions and training providers

# Agenda Item 4

in Sefton and the wider City region and beyond to track and record destinations and activities of our young people.

In Sefton Career Connect have adapted their delivery to meet the needs of those young people they are working with and have remained focused on key contract performance indicators.

Through robust planning they have identified a range of solutions to address any barriers and advocating for young people has been key to this. During the first 12 months of Covid-19, they have reported trends in terms of young people's motivation during college/school closures and believe that this has resulted in more young people more likely to disengage from their education, learning or training and that those who were already facing disadvantage have been hit the hardest.

To address this, they have targeted young people categorised in vulnerable groups such as Looked After Children, those young people involved in Youth Justice System, young people with Education Health Care (EHC) plans, Young Carers, Teen Mums, Elected Home Educated and those young people involved with Early Help. Supporting effective early intervention for young people at risk of poorer outcomes, ensuring retention and reducing risk of NEET. For those young people in NEET we are building trusting relationships and working in collaboration to reduce length of time NEET.

As part of the Sefton's response to COVID-19 and the impact it was having on our young people, Career Connect also actively followed up young people early in EET destinations especially those in Apprenticeships to provide earlier interventions including high quality IAG and access to our service at the most appropriate time. In total, 953 young people were tracked between April – June 2020 and Jan – March 21. They assessed support needs and those at risk of unemployment and targeted particular sectors to review and support – for example those likely to be furloughed – hospitality sector, retail, beauty/hairdressing. They advocated on behalf of our young people with employers and training providers to look at ways to deliver a more blended offer. They offered additional support to those young people who dropped out of their apprenticeships during the pandemic (89) offering additional IAG support to move them back into EET.

# Agenda Item 5

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Sefton Virtual School Report		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To provide information on the Sefton Virtual School and to submit the Sefton Virtual School Annual Report 2019-20.

## Recommendation:

That the report and the Sefton Virtual School Annual Report 2019-20 be noted.

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To provide Members with an overview of the Sefton Virtual School.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

None

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

There are no associated costs with the outcome of this report.

### (A) Revenue Costs

See above.

### (B) Capital Costs

See above.

## Implications of the Proposals:

# Agenda Item 5

<p><b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> There are no direct resource implications associated with this report.</p>									
<p><b>Legal Implications:</b> None</p>									
<p><b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.</p>									
<p><b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b></p> <p>The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Have a positive impact</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a neutral impact</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a negative impact</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table> <p>There are no climate emergency implications as a direct result of this report.</p>		Have a positive impact	No	Have a neutral impact	Yes	Have a negative impact	No	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Have a positive impact	No								
Have a neutral impact	Yes								
Have a negative impact	No								
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes								

**Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:**

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: Sefton Virtual School exists as a collaborative endeavour to ensure that the education of children in care is a key priority for all professionals in line with the “One Council” focus on improving the lives of the most vulnerable.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: N/A</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: As above.</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer: As above.</p>
<p>Drivers of change and reform: As above.</p>
<p>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: N/A</p>
<p>Greater income for social investment: N/A</p>
<p>Cleaner Greener N/A</p>

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

## **(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6607/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4808/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

## **(B) External Consultations**

N/A

## **Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mary Palin
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## **Appendices:**

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Report to the Committee on the Sefton Virtual School
- Sefton Virtual School Annual Report 2019-20

## **Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection.

### **1. Introduction/Background**

- 1.1 A separate report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Sefton Virtual Report is attached to this report.

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Sefton Council 

**Sefton Virtual School**

**Report to O&S (CS&S)**

**November 2021**

# Agenda Item 5

## **Introduction**

Sefton Virtual School exists as a collaborative endeavour to ensure that the education of Sefton's Looked After Children (LAC) is a key priority for all professionals in line with the 'One Council' focus on improving the lives of the most vulnerable. The aim of the Virtual School is to meet Sefton's Pledge to Children in Care to ensure that each child is supported to fulfil their potential in school. The benefits of a stable and aspirational school or educational placement for children who are in the care of the local authority are widely documented as critical to improving life outcomes and social mobility. This report will complement the 2019-2020 Annual Report. The 2020-2021 Annual Report has been delayed due to data collection and ICT difficulties but is in progress and is expected to be available soon.

## **Overview of the Virtual School**

Currently, the Virtual School is comprised of 420 pupils of school age, 237 of whom are in primary schools and 183 in secondary schools, which is a significant increase (12%) on the number of school age children in care in the previous year. Most pupils attend schools located within the borough. The remainder of children, who are placed outside of Sefton, are largely being educated within neighbouring local authorities within the North West. Since September 2021, the Virtual Head Teacher has extended responsibility for promoting improved educational outcomes for children with a social worker. This is a strategic position, and it will involve raising aspirations and improving support for our most vulnerable children. It must be emphasised that it is in addition to the statutory responsibilities for Looked After Children and will neither replace nor mimic these duties.

The following tables show an overview of the composition of the Virtual School:

## Pupils by Year Group at Primary School

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Year Group	2020	2021
Reception	21	36
Year 1	31	28
Year 2	26	33
Year 3	20	34
Year 4	38	32
Year 5	24	24
Year 6	37	50
Total	197	237

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## Pupils by Year Group at Secondary School

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Year Group	2020	2021
Year 7	34	33
Year 8	25	36
Year 9	38	39
Year 10	42	30
Year 11	40	45
Total	179	183

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# Agenda Item 5

## Placement of Pupils

The majority of pupils are educated within the borough. The number of pupils attending provision within the borough is 71.4%, 3.1% less than the last academic year. Of those children who are educated out of borough, most children are educated in neighbouring local authorities, within a relatively short distance from Sefton. A breakdown of the school locations is provided in the following table:

## Placement of Pupils by Local Authority

Out of Borough	Total number of Pupils
Blackburn with Darwin	1
Bolton	2
Cumbria	2
Lincolnshire	1
Halton	6
Hampshire	1
Kirklees	4
Knowsley	12
Lancashire	25
Liverpool	33
Shropshire	2
Somerset	2
St Helens	8
Stockport	2
Telford and Wrekin	1
Waltham Forest	1
Wandsworth	2
Wigan	1
Wirral	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>

## Ofsted Grade of School attended by Looked After Children

The Ofsted grades of the schools attended by pupils continues to be monitored on a regular basis and, wherever possible, pupils are guided to good and outstanding provision. There is now a designated member of the Sefton Admissions team to support Looked After Children.

## Ofsted Grade of Schools Attended by Looked After Children at Primary School

Ofsted Category	% of pupils	
	2020	2021
1	6.2	8.8
2	82.8	79.5
3	10.0	10.9
4	1.0	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

88.3% of primary pupils attend good or outstanding schools, which is similar to the previous year.

## Ofsted Grade of School Attended by Looked After Children at Secondary School

Ofsted Category	2020	2021
1	16.8	18.6
2	63.1	44.4
3	12.8	25
4	7.3	12
<b>total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

63% of looked after children attend good or outstanding secondary schools, a decrease of 16.9% since 2020.

# Agenda Item 5

## **Attendance**

Attendance figures have historically been a matter of concern, particularly in Secondary school. Several measures (increased challenge to carers, incentives, increased frequency of monitoring) have been put in place to address this. In a year where school attendance was disrupted for all, with lockdowns were in place until March 2021 and absences due to infection or isolation measures after schools had opened, the emphasis of the Virtual School was to ensure that children were safe, equipped for remote learning and attending school where possible. As a vulnerable cohort, Looked After Children could attend school during periods of lockdown, but the uptake was initially low, due to medical shielding, illness or fear of infection. In collaboration with the Attendance team, the Virtual School team visited the homes of Looked After Children who were not in school, using the 'First Day Response' system. All of these visits were logged and any concerns regarding the welfare of the children were acted upon. 18% of the pupils contacted at home by the 'First Day Response' team returned to school during spring 2021. When schools reopened, attendance was actively encouraged, unless there was a medical reason for absence. In the summer term, the Virtual School created a celebration of effort and/or attendance during lockdown called 'Lockdown Learning Heroes'. This was open to all children with a social worker, and certificates and vouchers were distributed at the end of the summer term. Due to problems with the Capita system, attendance data for the end of of term is not yet available.

From September 2021, there a termly reward for those pupils with over 95% attendance, and for those whose attendance has improved. The Virtual Head Teacher meets weekly with the Corporate parenting Service manager to discuss children who are persistently absent, or who do not attend full time, and action is taken. The Virtual School Attendance Officer now provides termly attendance updates and fortnightly updates on pupils accessing less than full time education.

## **Virtual School Arrangements and Duties**

### **Our duties:**

- Ensuring that all children in care attend schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding
- Ensuring all children in care have a high quality and effective Personal Education Plan
- Allocating and ensuring the appropriate use of Pupil Premium Plus for Looked After Children
- Supporting and challenging schools to have high aspirations and raise engagement and attainment
- Intervening to improve school attendance and reduce exclusion

# Agenda Item 5

- Providing professional development for designated teachers, foster carers, governors and social workers
- Providing educational advice, support and guidance to families and schools in relation to children that have left care for adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders
- Enabling children in care to have a voice so they can influence the activity of professionals who serve them

The team consists of a Virtual Head Teacher (appointed 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021), Deputy Virtual Head Teacher (vacant), PEP Administration Officer, three Looked After Children Education Coordinators (two are qualified teachers) and a Family Welfare and Attendance Officer. A new Education Coordinator post was recently advertised. This will increase capacity to enable the Virtual School to improve its offer to pupils after they have completed their statutory education (16-18 years) to support them in education and reduce NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) figures, as well as working with the Social Care Adolescent and Leaving Care Teams, Career Connect, colleges, training providers, other partners and carers in order to raise aspirations, develop education and training offers and reduce NEET numbers.

The team continues to work closely to ensure that Looked After Children can participate fully in all aspects of school life and that appropriate support is put in place to ensure this group of young people achieve across the curriculum. The focus of Education Coordinators this year is on undertaking casework to prevent exclusions and unnecessary school moves, improve attendance, and ensure access to appropriate 'catch up' interventions and mental health provision, where appropriate. Every Looked After Child has a right to a Personal Education Plan (PEP). This has three parts, comprising: basic information, pupil voice and the school's education plan. Completion rates from schools remain high (over 90%). There continues to be some variation in the quality of plans, but this is improving, as payment of Pupil Premium Plus (£1600 per year, divided into 3 instalments) to support the plan is no longer automatic upon completion of the PEP. Where a PEP does not pass quality assurance, the school is contacted, and payment withheld until the plan has been revisited and improved. LAC Education Co-ordinators work closely with schools to identify targets that are relevant and achievable, and to implement interventions that will achieve those targets. Key priorities are wellbeing and engagement, progress, attendance and challenging our schools and partners to have higher aspirations for our Looked After Children. All PEPs have a focus on reading and a requirement to intervene where a child's reading ability does not match their chronological age.

# Agenda Item 5

The Virtual School and Career Connect (Sefton's commissioned careers advice service) work in partnership to reduce the number of those who are not in education or training (NEET). Collaborative working between the Education Co-ordinators and Career Connect advisors is embedded. Recent interventions with Year 11 and Year 12 cohorts resulted in intervention with young people who were not in (or in danger of leaving) education, employment and training. This work is valuable, but this cohort needs closer tracking and support, hence the development of the new role within the team. From September, a plan is in place to regularly review Years 11, 10 and 9 to identify those most at risk of becoming NEET and work with colleagues to improve outcomes.

Training opportunities have again been provided to stakeholders, including designated teachers, foster carers, career entry (newly qualified) teachers and school governors. The sessions have included information regarding the experiences of the young people, promoting inclusion, promoting reading and the requirement to support the education of children in care as a priority. Training to Sefton Governors is aimed at ensuring governing bodies are aware of their statutory responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children and understand how they should offer support and challenge to their schools. An information leaflet for governors was created for distribution through Governor services. Training on supporting vulnerable children in education has been developed, in partnership with a senior colleague from Corporate parenting and a panel of Head Teachers, for all social workers in Children's Services. This will be delivered later this term. A wider programme of training is needed, and this will be addressed when a Deputy Virtual Head is appointed.

The Virtual School continues to commission substantial support from Sefton Educational Psychology Service. A termly planning meeting is held to manage referrals, and this facilitates timely assessment of identified children. Schools also commission this service, but the Virtual School arrangement means that our cohort is prioritised.

Several projects to improve mental health for vulnerable children have been funded in schools. Where there are several Looked After Children in a school, additional funds have been awarded to provide timely intervention and/ or staff training to address barriers to mental wellbeing, and thus improve resilience and engagement. This will also have a beneficial impact on other vulnerable children in the same school.



## **Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) Spending**

This year, Sefton has continued to distribute much of the funding (£1600 per pupil) to schools. The Virtual School retains the balance to allow for flexibility to meet individual pupil need and support whole school interventions. In line with the guidance, the pupil premium is managed by the Virtual School Head and is used for the benefit of the child's education needs, as described in the PEP. The rest of the PP+ grant is retained to form a budget that is used for targeted interventions such as\*:

- Support (educational/ emotional/ behavioural) for children who do not receive High Needs Funding to stay in school
- Mental health/ wellbeing interventions
- Educational Psychology support
- College equipment/ tuition for post-16 students where this is not available through other means
- 1:1 tuition for reading, maths or English
- A new book each term for every child (0-18)
- Stationery for home learning
- Laptops for home learning
- Increasing the staffing resource in the Virtual School.

\* *This is not an exhaustive list.*

## **Understanding Pupil Progression**

During 2021, Sefton has been unable to access data usually provided by the NCER Nexus Children Looked After Project. Therefore, data collection for those pupils who attend schools both in and out of borough continues to be collected manually. This presents a challenge, as not all schools supply this information and there is no statutory requirement for them to do so. PEP documentation requests that schools report whether children are meeting expected standards for their age to enable the Virtual School to track progress and monitor the effectiveness of strategies identified in the PEP. Reading skills must be improved to allow children to access all areas of the curriculum and develop confidence and independent study skills.

# Agenda Item 5

## **2021 Key Stage 4 data**

This cohort has been affected by interruption to their education and those with poor engagement were particularly badly affected, as the pandemic further affected attendance. This had a high impact, as grades were dependent on teacher assessment, for which evidence of schoolwork and assessment was required. Out of a cohort of 52, 11 (21%) gained 5 or more GCSEs, including English and maths. 6 (11%) refused to attend and did not produce sufficient evidence to be afforded a grade. The remainder were entered for awards relevant to their level of ability (BTec, functional skills, etc.). 10 (19%) had become Looked After during the pandemic (since March 2020), 9 had Education and Health Care Plans and 10 had identified Special Educational Needs. Due to the mobile nature of this cohort, comparison with previous years is not realistic. Given the disruption to the education and lived experience of this cohort, a focus on recovery is imperative. Our aim is to support them in any way possible throughout Year 12 to enable them to make progress and ensure that they access education, employment or training.

After a period of disruption and isolation for all children, our focus for the coming year is to work with schools, carers and all relevant agencies to help our children to happy, healthy, heard and aspiring to a brighter future.



## **Sefton Virtual School**

## **Annual Report 2019-20**

**(revised period: April 2019-September 2020)**

Produced April 2021

# Agenda Item 5

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Scope of Report</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overview of Virtual School</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Figure 1 Pupils by Year Group at Primary School</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Figure 2 Pupils by Year Group at Secondary School</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Placement of Pupils</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Figure 3 Placement of Pupils by Local Authority</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Ofsted Grade of Schools Attended by Primary Pupils</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Figure 4 Ofsted Grade of Schools Attended by LAC at Primary School</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Figure 5 Ofsted Grade of Schools Attended by LAC at Secondary School</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Figure 6 Overview of Attendance at Primary Level September 2019-March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Figure 7 Overview of Exclusion at Primary Level September 2019- March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Figure 8 Overview of Attendance at Secondary Level September 2019 to March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Figure 9 Overview of Exclusion at Secondary Level September 2019- March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Figure 10 Overview of attendance by type of placement</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Attendance: March to September 2020</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Virtual School Arrangements and Duties</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Response to the Covid Pandemic</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Overview of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) Spending</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Figure 11: Breakdown of Provision and Support Offered through the Pupil Premium Plus paid to schools</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>Understanding Pupil Progression</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Figure 12: GCSE results 2020</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Figure 13 GCSE results 2021</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Statutory School Age Data</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Key Stage 3 Attainment Data</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Figure 14 Year 7</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Figure 15 Year 8</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Figure 16 Year 9</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Primary School Data</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Figure 17 Primary School Data</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Addressing Individual Pupil Need</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix 1 &amp; 2 Guidelines to Virtual School team at the start of the first lock down (March 2020)</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix 3 Report on Pupil Experiences of Lockdown</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix 4 Governing Body of Virtual School Terms of Reference</b>	<b>27</b>

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# Agenda Item 5

## Introduction

Sefton Virtual School exists as a collaborative endeavour to ensure that the education of children in care is a key priority for all professionals in line with the 'One Council' focus on improving the lives of the most vulnerable. The aim of the Virtual School is to meet Sefton's Pledge to Children in Care (Appendix I) to ensure that each child is supported to fulfil his or her potential in school. The benefits of a stable school or educational placement for children who are in the care of the local authority are widely documented as critical to improving life outcomes.

## Scope of Report

Normally, this report comprises an overview of available data that informs the Corporate Parenting Board in monitoring the performance of Looked After Children and draws on several sources, including data from published statistics (N.B. DfE Statistical First Release not available for 2020) and internal data collection and tracking by Sefton Virtual School and Sefton Business Intelligence Team using NCER Nexus. This report is provided for the scrutiny of the Governing Body of the Virtual School. Previous reports have run from April to March each year, in line with the dates of the Statistical First Release. This, however, has meant that the report is not synchronised with the school year. As pupils are tracked throughout the academic year, future reporting will take place in September and cover the previous academic year. This report, therefore, will cover the period up to September 2020. The 2020/2021 report will be written in September 2021. The leadership decision was taken in 2020 not to request attainment and progress data, and therefore this is not available in NCER Nexus. In addition to this, the Virtual Head left her position in summer 2020. As it is imperative that the Interim Virtual Head understands the progress of Looked After Children and, more importantly, targeted intervention needed following a year of disruption, the 20/21 report will rely on data collected by the Virtual School through the PEP process. This has been dependent on the cooperation of the schools, as they have no obligation to provide such data. This assistance is much appreciated by the Interim Virtual Head. For this report, data was supplied by most primary schools and that has been included, although it will be treated only as an *indication* of progress, as it has not been standardised or moderated.

## **Overview of the Virtual School**

The team consists of a Virtual Head, Deputy Virtual Head, PEP Admin Officer, three Looked After Children Education Coordinators and a Family Welfare and Attendance Officer.

In August 2021, the Virtual School comprised 376 pupils of school age, 197 of whom were in primary schools and 179 in secondary schools, which is similar to the number of school age children in care in the previous year. For those pupils who are of statutory school age, there are slightly more boys than girls in both the primary and the secondary populations. Most pupils attend schools located within the borough. The remainder of children, who are placed outside of Sefton, are largely being educated within neighbouring local authorities within the Northwest. The following tables show an overview of the composition of the Virtual School:

# Agenda Item 5

**Figure 1- Pupils by Year Group at Primary School**

Year Group	Girls		Boys		Number of Pupils March 2019	of August 2020
	March 2019	August 2020	March 2019	August 2020		
Reception	10	10	11	11	21	21
Year 1	16	16	15	15	31	31
Year 2	15	16	13	10	28	26
Year 3	11	10	8	10	19	20
Year 4	21	22	18	16	39	38
Year 5	7	8	17	16	24	24
Year 6	10	13	22	24	32	37
Total	90	95	104	102	194	197

**Figure 2 - Pupils by Year Group at Secondary School**

Year Group	Girls		Boys		Number of Pupils March 2019	of August 2020
	March 2019	August 2020	March 2019	August 2020		
Year 7	14	13	18	21	32	34
Year 8	9	8	16	17	25	25
Year 9	21	21	15	17	36	38
Year 10	26	25	18	17	44	42
Year 11	22	21	19	19	41	40
Total	92	88	86	91	178	179



## Placement of Pupils

The majority of pupils are educated within the borough and a substantial number of pupils are educated in Liverpool schools. The number of pupils attending provision within the borough is 74.5% and is the same as the last academic year. Of those children who are educated out of borough, the majority of children are educated in neighbouring local authorities, within a relatively short distance from Sefton. A breakdown of the school locations is provided in the following table:

**Figure 3- Placement of Pupils by Local Authority**

Out of Borough	Total number of Pupils
Bolton	3
Cumbria	2
Halton	5
Huddersfield	4
Kirklees	1
Knowsley	8
Lancashire	18
Liverpool	32
Manchester	1
Shropshire	2
St Helens	6
Warrington	1
Warwickshire	1
Wigan	3
Wirral	7
Woking	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>

# Agenda Item 5

## Ofsted Grade of School attended by Primary Pupils

The Ofsted grades of the schools attended by pupils continue to be monitored on a regular basis and, wherever possible, pupils are guided to good and outstanding provision. The Virtual School sign posts pupils to good or outstanding provision in partnership with Sefton Admissions team.

## Figure 4- Ofsted Grade of Schools Attended by Looked After Children at Primary School

Ofsted Category	% of Pupils	
	March 2019	August 2020
1	6.8	6.2
2	81.8	82.8
3	10.3	10.0
4	1.1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	100	100

89% of primary pupils attend good or outstanding schools, a slight increase on the previous year.

## Figure 5- Ofsted Grade of School Attended by Looked After Children at Secondary School

Ofsted Category	% of Pupils	
	March 2019	August 2020
1	20.7	16.8
2	51.1	63.1
3	17.4	12.8
4	10.8	7.3
<b>total</b>	100	100

80% of looked after children attend good or outstanding secondary schools, an increase of 8.2% since 2019.

## Attendance

*N.B. This analysis covers the period until the closure of schools due to the government's lockdown of public buildings, due to the Covid pandemic.*

**Figure 6 Overview of Attendance at Primary Level September 2019-March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

Year	number	of	<90%	90-95%	95-100%
Group	pupils				
R	14	0	3	11	
1	25	4	7	14	
2	20	1	1	18	
3	17	1	3	13	
4	32	3	8	21	
5	20	1	5	14	
6	28	4	5	19	
	156				
<b>Total as a %</b>		<b>9%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>70.5%</b>	

# Agenda Item 5

**Figure 7 Overview of Exclusion at Primary Level September 2019- March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Number of children to receive at least one fixed term Exclusion</u>
R	0
1	0
2	0
4	1
5	1
6	6

**Figure 8 Overview of Attendance at Secondary Level September 2019 to March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Number of Pupils</b>	<b>&lt;90%</b>	<b>90-95%</b>	<b>95-100%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>			
<b>Total %</b>		<b>29.6%</b>	<b>21.2%</b>	<b>49.03%</b>

**Figure 9 Overview of Exclusion at Secondary Level September 2019- March 2020 for children looked after for one year or more at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Number of children to receive at least one fixed term Exclusion</u>
7	4
8	4
9	2
10	7
11	8

Attendance figures are a matter of concern, particularly in Secondary school. A number of measures (increased challenge to carers, incentives, increased frequency of monitoring) have been put in place to address this.

Exclusion figures are low in primary schools, with the exception of Year 6. The trend is an increase as children get older (with the exception of Year 9) and the Virtual School is working closely with professional colleagues to explore ways of meeting challenges without resorting to exclusions.

### **Attendance and Type of Placement**

The following table provides an overview of attendance by type of placement.

# Agenda Item 5

## Figure 10: Overview of Attendance by Type of Placement

An analysis of those children by type of placement was undertaken for those pupils who have less than 90% attendance. The results are as follows.

<b>Placement</b>	<b>Placed with Parents</b>	<b>Placed with Friend Relative</b>	<b>with Foster of Care</b>	<b>Residential Home or School</b>	<b>Other*</b>
<b>No of pupils</b>	53	60	157	40	1
<b>No below 90%</b>	19	9	11	22	1
<b>Total as % proportion Of all LAC</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total as % for individual group</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*ICS file locked and therefore no placement information

30% of all children who are persistently absent are placed with parents, 15% of children who are persistently absent are placed in foster care with a relative or friend, 18% of pupils who are persistently absent are placed in foster care, 35% of pupils who are persistently absent are placed in a residential setting.

35% of children who are placed with parents have below 90% attendance, 15% of all children placed in foster care with a relative or friend have below 90% attendance, 55% of all children in a residential setting have below 90% attendance and 100% of all children in other setting have below 90% attendance.

Overall, children placed with foster carers have higher attendance and children in residential care have the poorest attendance. A target for the Virtual School (for the next academic year) is to work more closely with our colleagues in social care and residential care to improve attendance rates for children living in residential homes.

Good school attendance is critical for children in care. School is a key place where they can socialise, form quality relationships with adults and peers, develop skills and knowledge and feed their own aspirations. It is a place of safety and consistency. During the last year, this has been severely disrupted by the Covid pandemic. Some children will have benefitted from being at home and enjoying the company of their parents or carers, but a pupil experience survey, commissioned by the Virtual School and carried out by the Educational Psychology Service (APPENDIX 4) showed a range of experiences and attitudes. Primary school children were much keener to return to school, whereas secondary school pupils were more cautious. Improving school attendance is a main target for the Virtual School and it is clear that some pupils will need a lot of reassurance, encouragement and support when returning to school.

### **Attendance: March to September 2020**

In March 2020 schools closed but remained open for children of key workers and vulnerable children. Schools reported on which children attended each day but did not complete attendance registers. From 1 June, the government asked schools to reopen for children in nursery, reception and years 1 and 6, alongside children of critical workers and vulnerable children. From 15 June, secondary schools, sixth form and further education colleges were asked to begin providing face-to-face support to students in year 10 and 12 to supplement their learning from home, alongside full-time provision for students from priority groups. After the government's decision to close schools in March 2020, the instruction to Local Authorities was to collect attendance data for vulnerable children, but this was not divided into specific cohorts, such as LAC. The Virtual Head, together with the Lead officer for attendance, decided to focus on the safety of the child, making sure that carers understood the education offer and ensuring that children had access to appropriate IT equipment and could access their school's remote learning facility. All children were seen regularly and the Virtual School liaised with carers, social workers and schools to ensure that attendance was encouraged, where appropriate and safe, and that schools were able to maintain contact with their Looked After pupils.

# Agenda Item 5

## **Virtual School Arrangements and Duties**

Sefton Virtual School currently comprises the Virtual Headteacher, a Personal Education Planning Officer, three Looked After Children Education Co-ordinators and a Family Intervention/Attendance Officer. In January 2020, the establishment of a Deputy Head Teacher was created to enhance the capacity of the Virtual School to provide support to pupils and improve outcomes for children. The Virtual Headteacher role was combined with the Principal Educational Psychology role, and the Deputy Virtual Headteacher had an operational role in ensuring schools provide high quality interventions for pupils on a day to day basis, and in developing the skills of the Education Co-ordinators in quality assurance of PEPs, and in ensuring that schools enhanced their curriculum and pastoral offer to children in care.

The team continue to work closely to ensure that Looked After Children can participate fully in all aspects of school life and that appropriate support is put in place to ensure this group of young people achieve across the curriculum. The focus of Education Co-ordinators this year continues to be undertaking casework to prevent exclusions, ensure access to appropriate education and monitor the quality of education for Sefton's children in care. A key driver to improvement is the Personal Education Planning process. Completion rates are monitored by the governing body and the PEP Coordinator is active in supporting schools and social workers to ensure timely completion. Completion rates from schools remain high. There continues, however, to be considerable variation from schools in terms of the quality of plans and this is an ongoing focus and challenge for the Virtual School. A quality assurance system has been implemented, but this is at an early stage.

The administrative aspects relating to this process are undertaken by the PEP Co-ordinator and systems that have been put in place have had a positive impact. The LAC Education Co-ordinators have a dual role in supporting and challenging both school and social workers in relation to education and the support that young people require. The family intervention worker has a focus on improving attendance and working with those pupils who are most at risk of disaffection and persistent absence from school. Currently roles are clearly defined, and work flow systems are in place to ensure that children are supported according to need. Key priorities are wellbeing and



engagement, progress, attendance, making sure that each child receives a suitable full-time education, with a quality PEP in place that meets their needs.

The Virtual School continues to commission substantial support from Sefton Educational Psychology Service and currently shares two trainee educational psychologist with this service using a student bursary arrangement with the University of Manchester. A monthly planning meeting is held to ensure that referrals are timely and that cases are prioritised. This close partnership means that the Educational Psychologists are on hand to support the Virtual School by communicating the needs of the children and offering advice and guidance on the implementation of their recommendations.

The Virtual School and Career Connect (Sefton's commissioned careers advice service) work in partnership to improve the advice made to our young people and reduce the number of those who are not in education or training (NEET). Collaborative working between the Education Co-ordinators and Career Connect advisors is growing, with a member of the Career Connect team attending the weekly Virtual School team meeting. The Deputy Virtual Head attends meetings of the Post 16 Partnership, which aims to improve networking and collaboration between all agencies involved in decision making and the offer of education, employment and training.

Several training opportunities have been provided to stakeholders including Designated teachers, foster carers, and school governors. The sessions have included information regarding the experiences of the young people, promoting inclusion, promoting reading and the requirement to support the education of children in care as a priority. Training to Sefton Governors is aimed at ensuring governing bodies are aware of their statutory responsibilities in relation to Looked After Children and understand how they should offer support and challenge to their schools.

## **Response to the Covid Pandemic**

In March 2020, a national lockdown resulted in significant changes in the arrangements and working practice of the Virtual School. The team began to work from home, in accordance with Sefton Council directives. Guidelines were issued to Education Coordinators. Priorities were to contact carers/ schools of Looked After Children and ensure that they had appropriate provision for home learning, with the

# Agenda Item 5

safeguarding of children a priority (Appendix 2). Following updated information from the Government and Local Authority, additional guidelines were issued (Appendix 3). In addition to monitoring vulnerable children, and encouraging them to attend school, the usual business of dealing issues around education, wellbeing, newly LAC cases and school enquiries continued.

With many carers ill or shielding, it was imperative that parents and carers were equipped to support children learning at home and in particular to minimise disruption for children facing transition. The following measures were taken:

- Education resources were shared with the Foster care Training Officer for distribution to foster carers.
- Team meetings increased to twice weekly, to improve communication and support the wellbeing of the team.
- Career Connect contacted pupils in Years 11, 12 and 13 about next steps in EET.
- Virtual School collaborated with SENIS to update transition lists for schools, in order to support transition of LAC and SEND pupils.
- A new 'Covid' summer PEP document created, with emphasis on the safety of the child and access to school or, if attendance is not possible, home learning. Schools have the option of deferring Pupil Premium Plus payments until the autumn term to fund 'catch up' activities.
- Weekly meetings set up with Attendance and Social Care managers to monitor attendance and to support Social Care in ensuring that all vulnerable children were seen and had access to IT equipment to enable them to access school work at home.
- Virtual School undertook doorstep visits to ensure that children were seen, safe and heard, and that they had equipment and resources to facilitate learning and wellbeing. They were also informed and reminded that school was open and ready to welcome them.
- Pupil Premium funds used to purchase equipment for education and wellbeing of children at home (e.g. office equipment, exercise equipment and garden play equipment). Reading books distributed to Children placed with foster carers following training on reading with children.

# Agenda Item 5

- 'First Day Response' system set up by Attendance manager for vulnerable young people (LAC, CIN, CP) to ensure that absences are challenged and return to school is accelerated. The VS team took over the visits for Looked After Children.
- Regular meetings with Career Connect colleagues to liaise regarding support for Year 11 and Post 16 pupils to reduce cases of young people leaving education or training by removing barriers e.g. changing to a more suitable course, receiving travel training, mentoring, financial support with equipment, etc.
- Meetings held with Educational Psychologists to refer pupils needing assessment, and to prioritise cases. Support given to children in transition to KS3. EPs working from home but would access children remotely wherever this was feasible.
- Monthly meetings with SENIS managers to manage risk assessments, share information and improve efficiency when responding to the needs of children with SEND.
- Regular communications from Admissions regarding any LAC applying for schools has resulted in early intervention to avoid school change, or to ensure that the most appropriate school was found. With an increase in children coming into care, and changes in care placements, it is vital that our children attend the best school available and do not change schools unless in the best interests of the child.
- Increased Virtual School attendance at multi-agency planning meetings for complex cases, children out of education, children moving schools and/ or placement. This has resulted in fewer moves for our children, and a more bespoke package of care and services (Appendix 4).
- Funding given to foster carers (£50 per child) from PP+ to assist with home schooling during 'Lock down'.
- The 'No Limits' celebration of achievement event was cancelled, due to public meeting restrictions, but went ahead with a 'door step' delivery of top prizes. The rest were posted.
- The Virtual School set up a scheme with 'The Reader' organisation to provide remote reading mentors for vulnerable young people.
- Stationery, art equipment and books delivered to children placed with parents.
- Monthly meeting set up with Designated LAC nurse to discuss any concerns and exchange information regarding attendance, behaviour, etc. that might be linked to health issues.

# Agenda Item 5

## Overview of Pupil Premium Plus (PP+) Spending

This year, Sefton has continued to distribute much of the funding (£1600 per pupil) to schools. The Virtual School retains the balance to allow for flexibility to meet individual pupil need and support whole school interventions. In line with the guidance, the pupil premium is managed by the Virtual School Head within Sefton and is used for the benefit of the child’s education needs, as described in the PEP. The VSH ensures there are arrangements in place to discuss how the child will benefit from the funding with a designated teacher in the child’s educational setting. Schools continue to offer wide ranging support for children in care. In the summer term, a ‘Covid’ PEP was created and the option to defer expenditure of PP+ was given in anticipation of a higher level of need when children returned to full time education. Analysis of the Personal Education Plans from summer 2020 indicates that Pupil Premium funding was spent as follows

**Figure 11: Breakdown of Provision and Support Offered through the Pupil Premium Plus paid to schools**

<b>Provision</b>	<b>% of total provision 2019</b>	<b>% of total provision Summer 2020</b>
<b>Deferred</b>		48.2
<b>Partly Deferred</b>		8.4
<b>1:1 Tuition</b>	3	9.2
<b>Extracurricular</b>	12	2.1
<b>Social/ Emotional interventions</b>	21	2.6
<b>I.T Equipment</b>	9	25.1
<b>Other Equipment (books, etc) *</b>	8	2.1

# Agenda Item 5

<b>Breakfast/ After School Clubs</b>	5	0
<b>Trips</b>	7	0.3
<b>Uniform</b>	1	1.6
<b>Careers Advice</b>	0.8	0
<b>Transport</b>	1	0
<b>Specialist Assessments</b>	0.8	0
<b>Photographs</b>	0.3	0
<b>Milk</b>	0.1	0
<b>Bike/sports equipment/toys</b>	0	2.6
<b>Art resources</b>	0	1.3
<b>Music lessons</b>	0	0.8
<b>FSW/Home liaison</b>	0	1
<b>Transition support/resources</b>	0	1.6
<b>Not paid – No PEP received/awaiting responses</b>	0	7.1

**\*In addition to school expenditure, the Virtual School will send a book each term to each pupil between the ages of 0-18. Stationery packs were distributed to all children placed with family and a payment of £50 per child was made to Foster Carers to assist with the cost of home schooling.**

The support that is provided is varied and of note is the use of 1-1 tuition which, although expensive, is usually an effective and welcome method of support, which can

# Agenda Item 5

take place virtually. Predictably, expenditure differed from the previous year. Although social/ emotional or wellbeing interventions were identified in many PEPs, much of this (if it happened) was provided 'in house', or virtually, as many providers were unable to visit schools. As some of these services are difficult to deliver virtually, much of the identified need was not met. The option to defer payment was given, as some schools anticipated higher spending on interventions when the children returned to school after the summer holiday. Some challenges associated with Pupil Premium Plus and the Personal Education Planning process remain and these are addressed as part of the every day work of the Virtual School. An improved system of quality assurance has resulted in greater challenge and support to schools where the PEP does not represent a robust plan for the child. Training for Designated teachers has been delivered in a series of Microsoft Teams twilight sessions, as well as on a more bespoke basis in schools where there are several Looked After Children. Where a plan is not submitted, or is of poor quality, the payment is withheld, and the school and social worker contacted to discuss the plan for the child. Returns from social workers are still not as high as returns from schools, but the gap is closing. PEP returns are monitored regularly by the Virtual School Governing Body.

## **Understanding Pupil Progression**

During 2020, Sefton has been unable to access data usually provided by the NCER Nexus Children Looked After Project. Therefore, data collection for those pupils who attend schools both in and out of borough continues to be collected manually. The national pause in assessment tracking continues to present challenges. However, PEP documentation requests that schools report whether children are meeting expected standards for the year group so that there continues to be appropriate oversight of individual pupil progress. Although there is no requirement for schools to report during the Covid pandemic, the Virtual Head has requested that schools provide progress data based on teacher assessment, although it is understood that this data is not standardised or moderated. In this way, Designated Teachers, Social Workers and the Virtual School can continue to plan to address the needs of individuals, and of particular cohorts. In order to improve tracking and analysis of data, discussions have been held with colleagues in the SIMS team and the application of SIMS will be

# Agenda Item 5

enhanced in order to enable the Virtual Head to more accurately track progress, produce reports and identify areas for improvement. The following data has been collected internally through the PEPs, or unofficial school reporting, and is therefore only a guideline.

**Figure 12: GCSE Results 2020 Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)**

No of Pupils (CLA 12 months +)	%Pupils with 5 Grades 5-9	% Pupils with 5 Grades 4-9	% Pupils with 5 Grades including Maths and English	% Pupils with 5 Grades including Maths and English
22	13.6	18.1	4.5	13.6

**Figure 13: GCSE Results 2019**

No of Pupils (CLA 12 months +)	%Pupils with GCSEs Grades 5-9	% Pupils with Grades 4-9	% Pupils with Grades 5-9 including Maths and English	% Pupils with Grades 4-9 including Maths and English
36	11.1	19.4	8.3	16

These results are disappointing. However, it is important to put the 2020 results into context: 19 pupils attended specialist provision or alternative education and 7 pupils were not entered for examination at GCSE level, due illness or their level of ability.

# Agenda Item 5

Statistically, young people who attend Alternative Provision (AP) do less well than their peers, and a disproportionate number of our young people are in AP. Therefore, the Virtual School is taking measures to keep our young people in mainstream provision where possible. N.B. One alternative provider did not enter TAGs for a girl who had poor attendance. By the time this had been shared with the Virtual School, the appeals date had passed. Another pupil had only been entered for 4 GCSEs, all of which he passed. This suggests that he would have been capable of achieving 5, had he been supported in making more aspirational choices. Consequently, the Virtual School has liaised with Career Connect to take action to ensure that the current Year 11 cohort is visited, given appropriate guidance and supported in dealing with the challenges of school disruption. A more robust quality assurance system for PEPs has also been implemented to improve monitoring and present challenge to providers, where a young person is under achieving.

**Statutory School Age Data** *(N.B. this data is teacher assessed and was not a requirement for the Local Authority. It was collected through the PEP process, and with the collaboration of schools. Therefore, it is incomplete and not standardised or moderated, as would usually be the case. It will be used only as a rough guide to enable the Virtual School to target interventions and form a recovery plan).*

## **Key Stage 3 Attainment Data**

<b>Figure 14: Year 7</b> (32 pupils)	<b>English</b>		<b>Maths</b>		<b>Science</b>
Below expected standard	11		9		6
Meeting expected standard	16		19		23
Above expected standard	2		1		0
No attainment submitted	3		3		3
	62% at or above expected grade*		69% at or above expected grade*		79% at or above expected grade*



# Agenda Item 5

<b>Figure 15: Year 8</b> (24 pupils)	<b>English</b>		<b>Maths</b>		<b>Science</b>
Below expected standard	7		7		7
Meeting expected standard	10		11		9
Above expected standard	1		1		2
No attainment submitted	6		7		6
	61% at or above expected grade*		66% at or above expected grade*		61% at or above expected grade*

<b>Figure 16: Year 9</b> (32 pupils)	<b>English</b>		<b>Maths</b>		<b>Science</b>
Below expected standard	5		7		6
Meeting expected standard	13		9		10
Above expected standard	0		2		2
No attainment submitted	14		14		14
	72.2% at or above expected grade*		61% at or above expected grade*		66% at or above expected grade*

*\*Percentages are expressed as a proportion of the actual number of returns, and not as a percentage of the cohort*

This data is treated with caution but gives us some indication of the level of intervention needed. As the data suggests, literacy and numeracy skills will be a priority. Reading skills must be improved to allow children to access all areas of the curriculum and develop confidence and independent study skills, and the PEP document has been updated to ensure that literacy is a key element. It is notable that, as the age of the child increases, the reporting of attainment data decreases. There will be a number of reasons for this: attendance, lack of engagement, health problems, and so on. However, the Virtual School will work with schools to offer incentives for attendance and rewards for effort, and to request teacher assessed grades so that we can gauge (albeit with limited accuracy until the reporting policy changes) whether a child or young person is making progress or is in need of extra support to catch up.

# Agenda Item 5

## Key Stage 4 Attainment Data

*Only a small percentage of KS4 schools provided data and therefore data analysis cannot be included in this report.*

## Primary School Data

### Figure 17: Primary School Data

<b>Key Stage 1</b>	<b>At or above expected level</b>	
Reading	52%	
Writing	46%	
Maths	44%	
		39% achieved at or above the expected level in all 3 areas
<b>Key Stage 2</b>	<b>At or above expected level</b>	
Reading	56%	
Writing	44%	
Maths	52%	28% achieved at or above the expected level in all 3 areas

This data is again treated with caution but it gives us an indication of the level of intervention needed. As the data suggests, literacy and numeracy skills will remain a priority since too few children achieve expected levels or above in all three areas. Reading skills must be improved to allow children to access all areas of the curriculum and develop confidence and independent study skills, and the PEP document has been updated to ensure that literacy is a key element.

## Addressing Individual Pupil Need

This year there has been significant use of educational psychology assessment commissioned by the Virtual School. Those pupils who are not making progress are

reviewed and a number of pupils have received specialist assessment so that, where there are concerns regarding progress, individual needs are identified, and schools are advised of appropriate intervention. Children in care are more likely to have special educational need, and to have suffered trauma, so early intervention is key to their wellbeing and in securing the support they need to be happy and successful. To increase this resource, the Virtual School has employed a trainee Educational Psychologist in conjunction with the Educational Psychology Service. This will ensure that, for those children who are not on target to achieve, there is capacity to intervene as required. Quality assurance of the PEP documents is focused on whether the plan for the child shows aspiration and clear, achievable targets that are based on sound pedagogy.

# Agenda Item 5

## **Appendix 1: Guidelines to Virtual School team at the start of the first lock down (March 2020)**



Guidelines for VS  
working from home.docx

## **Appendix 2: Additional guidelines issued to the Virtual School team March 2020**



VS Working from  
Home guidelines 26t

## **Appendix 3: Pupil Experiences of lockdown (July 2020)**

[Pupil Experiences of Lockdown.docx](#)

## Appendix 4:

## **GOVERNING BODY OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Virtual Governing Body provides strategic oversight of Sefton Virtual School, ensuring that Sefton Council's vision and commitment to children in care is championed in all aspects of education. Members will be committed to ensuring all looked after children achieve their potential, through ensuring accountability and providing support and challenge to the Virtual School.

#### **AIMS**

- To challenge schools to provide a first class education and have high expectations for young people.
- To support children in achieving their aspirations and fulfil their potential
- To ensure that the attainment and progress of children is tracked regularly and that appropriate intervention is in place where required.
- To support multi-agency working to develop a co-ordinated approach to planning for the young person, breaking down any potential barriers between care and education.
- To advocate on behalf of young people
- To ensure that all children in care have a robust and effective personal education plan that focuses on learning outcomes and access to 1:1 support
- To champion the educational needs of Children Looked After across the Authority and those placed out of the Authority.
- Drive effective strategies for managing attendance, engaging young people in their education and early intervention to support improvement, having high aspirations and raising the profile of Looked After Children.
- Ensure strategic decisions are made about the allocation of resources.

# Agenda Item 5

- Offer support and challenge to Virtual Head, to review how all children and young people are performing
- The Virtual Head will provide the Board with regular information, advice and guidance of provisions for schools, carers and of other professionals.
- Ensure that pupil premium spending for looked after children is effective and linked to outcomes.

## **MEETINGS**

- Clerk to be appointed
- The quorum for the meetings will be 4.
- Substitutes will be allowed for Foster Carer and Care Leaver when appropriate.
- All members will have equal voting rights. The members will work collaboratively to ensure that all decisions are made on a consensual basis. In the exceptional circumstances that there is a tie the chair will have the casting vote.
- A Vice Chair to be elected at the first meeting of each autumn term.
- The Chair will work with the Head of the Virtual School and others to produce purposeful agenda.
- If members are unable to attend they must inform the clerk. Chair will follow up absences of more than two meetings to discuss with member.
- The Governing Body may establish sub groups to carry out specific tasks.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

- The Virtual School governing body will report to the Corporate Parenting Board

## **REVIEW**

- The terms of reference will be reviewed annually

## **MEMBERSHIP**

# Agenda Item 5

Chair -Director of Children's Services

Head of Education Excellence

Care leaver

Primary Headteachers

Secondary Headteacher

Special School Headteacher

2 Elected members

Foster Carer

Service Manager Corporate Parenting

Member of Virtual School Team

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16th November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	School Places and Impact of Housing Developments on Education		
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Education	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

The Head of Education was requested to submit a report to this Committee on school places and impact of housing developments on education.

## Recommendation(s):

(1) That the committee notes the information in the report

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The Head of Education was requested to submit a report to this Committee on school places and impact of housing developments on education.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

Not applicable.

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue Costs

Schools are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is linked through formula funding directly to the number of pupils on roll at a school.

# Agenda Item 6

## (B) Capital Costs

Not applicable

### Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> Not applicable	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> School reorganisations are covered by statutory processes and the Local Authority has statutory duties in terms of securing efficiency and quality of school places.	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>  The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
This report is for information as requested by members. It does not include any Climate Change implications – positive or negative. Any specific school projects would be the subject of separate assessment at the time.	

### Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Sefton Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places to accommodate the young people who reside in the borough and to ensure these places are of good quality with enough capacity to promote parental choice and diversity.

Protect the most vulnerable: Not applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: See comment above
Commission, broker and provide core services: See comment above
Place – leadership and influencer: Not applicable
Drivers of change and reform: Not applicable
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Not applicable
Greater income for social investment: Not applicable

Cleaner Greener: Not applicable
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## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6526/21.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4727/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable.

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tricia Davies
Telephone Number:	0151 934 3428
Email Address:	Tricia.davies@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Appendix A: School places and the impact of housing developments on education

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Sefton Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places to accommodate the young people who reside in the borough and to ensure these places are of good quality with enough capacity to promote parental choice and diversity. There has been a significant change in legislation around the role of Local Authorities becoming commissioners of school places rather than providers. This was further supported by the Academies Act 2010 and the Education Act 2011.

# Agenda Item 6

While maintained schools continue to be managed by Local Authorities, the responsibilities of academies and free schools are monitored by the Department for Education through the Regional Schools' Commissioner. The duty of the Local Authority is to ensure adequate provision of school places; however, this applies across all types of school.

## **2. Factors affecting the demand for pupil places**

- 2.1 Monitoring school places is a continual and complex process and one which can be affected by many factors from trends in the birth rate, the number of people moving into and out of a Local Authority area and the number of people choosing mainstream or independent schools. International migration of people moving to and from the UK can also be a factor that increases or decreases demand. Sefton also has cross boundary movement of pupils who live outside the borough but gain access to places in Sefton schools and vice versa. However, Sefton tends to import more pupils than it exports to other areas. Housing developments can also contribute to the demand for school places.

## **3. Pupil places and housing**

- 3.1 Details of pupil places and proposed housing developments in Sefton together with the pupil forecasts which have been submitted to the DFE as part of Sefton's recent School Capacity Return for 2021 (SCAP21) are included in Appendix A to this report.

## APPENDIX A

### School Places and impact of housing developments on education

#### Introduction

Sefton Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places to accommodate the young people who reside in the borough and to ensure these places are of good quality with enough capacity to promote parental choice and diversity. There has been a significant change in legislation around the role of Local Authorities becoming commissioners of school places rather than providers. This was further supported by the Academies Act 2010 and the Education Act 2011.

While maintained schools continue to be managed by Local Authorities, the responsibilities of academies and free schools are monitored by the Department for Education through the Regional Schools' Commissioner. The duty of the Local Authority is to ensure adequate provision of school places; however, this applies across all types of school.

#### Factors affecting the demand for pupil places

Monitoring school places is a continual and complex process and one which can be affected by many factors from trends in the birth rate, the number of people moving into and out of a Local Authority area and the number of people choosing mainstream or independent schools. International migration of people moving to and from the UK can also be a factor that increases or decreases demand. Housing developments can also contribute to the demand for school places.

#### Births in Sefton

Table 1: Live Births by area (academic year)

Birth Year	Entry Year	Sefton	Bootle	Litherland	Crosby	Formby	Maghull & Aintree	Southport
2009/10	2014/15	2855	675	340	453	170	278	942
2010/11	2015/16	2833	679	334	454	164	285	917
2011/12	2016/17	2799	678	327	451	147	294	903
2012/13	2017/18	2820	689	326	463	145	305	893
2013/14	2018/19	2811	683	342	471	144	294	878
2014/15	2019/20	2755	701	337	411	153	297	856
2015/16	2020/21	2803	728	342	475	131	310	817
2016/17	2021/22	2732	730	320	423	118	293	848
2017/18	2022/23	2625	666	304	422	150	282	801
2018/19	2023/24	2632	723	301	416	147	323	722

Source: ONS

At the time of writing the birth figures for 2019/20 were not yet available.

# Agenda Item 6

There tends to be a south-north population movement within Sefton and as a result there tend to be more surplus places in Bootle and Litherland with fewer in Crosby and Formby as demand for places in the north tends to be much higher as parents aspire to send their children to schools in these areas.

Pupil turnover in the south of the Borough also tends to be higher. If we compare the births for an area with the corresponding Reception intake we find that there is a drop in Bootle and Litherland whereas more pupils are admitted to Reception than were born in Crosby, Formby and Maghull. In the last couple of years the Reception intake in Southport has also been lower than the birth figure but this changed again in 2020/21 when more pupils were admitted to Reception than were born in the relevant year.

## Housing developments in Sefton

Data on housing developments is provided by Sefton's Planning Department from Sefton's Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). This includes developments in the Local Plan.

Anticipated school places arising from new developments are calculated on the following basis:

17.5 primary school pupils per 100 homes which gives a primary pupil yield factor of 0.175

10.5 secondary school pupils per 100 homes which gives a secondary pupil yield factor of 0.105

Local differences in housing size or type are averaged out and accounted for in this figure.

Based on Sefton's SHLAA 2019, which were the latest figures available, a total of 9,748 houses are to be built in Sefton between 2019/20 and 2033/34. 3,494 of those properties had planning permission. In addition, there were 615 conversions with planning permission.

This would indicate that the estimated pupil yield for Sefton from the newbuild developments would be 1,706 primary pupils and 1,024 secondary pupils over that period.

The SHLAA 2019 indicates that the following housing developments would take place between 1999/20 and 2033/34 in each area. The following table gives an indication of the possible pupil yield **across all year groups** from these houses.

Table 2: Estimated pupil yield from housing developments in Sefton by area

Bootle & Litherland	<b>Housing with PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary	<b>Housing without PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary
1999/20	<b>140</b>	25	15	<b>0</b>	0	0
2020/21	<b>216</b>	38	23	<b>0</b>	0	0
2021/22	<b>34</b>	6	4	<b>0</b>	0	0
2022/23	<b>5</b>	1	1	<b>89</b>	16	13
2023/24	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>72</b>	13	11
2024/25	<b>80</b>	14	8	<b>127</b>	22	19
2025/26	<b>79</b>	14	8	<b>128</b>	22	19
2026/27	<b>79</b>	14	8	<b>127</b>	22	19
2027/28	<b>79</b>	14	8	<b>103</b>	18	15
2028/29	<b>67</b>	12	7	<b>90</b>	16	14
2029/30	<b>30</b>	5	3	<b>22</b>	4	3
2030/31	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>22</b>	4	3
2031/32	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>22</b>	4	3
2032/33	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>22</b>	4	3
2033/34	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>22</b>	4	3

Crosby	<b>Housing with PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary	<b>Housing without PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary
1999/20	<b>149</b>	26	16	<b>0</b>	0	0
2020/21	<b>174</b>	30	18	<b>25</b>	4	3
2021/22	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>35</b>	6	4
2022/23	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>49</b>	9	5
2023/24	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>105</b>	18	11
2024/25	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>165</b>	29	17
2025/26	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>127</b>	22	13
2026/27	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>96</b>	17	10
2027/28	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>94</b>	16	10
2028/29	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>92</b>	16	10
2029/30	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>35</b>	6	4
2030/31	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>35</b>	6	4
2031/32	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>23</b>	4	2
2032/33	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
2033/34	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0

# Agenda Item 6

Formby	<b>Housing with PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary	<b>Housing without PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary
1999/20	<b>76</b>	13	8	<b>0</b>	0	0
2020/21	<b>122</b>	21	13	<b>3</b>	1	0
2021/22	<b>116</b>	20	12	<b>30</b>	5	3
2022/23	<b>95</b>	17	10	<b>72</b>	13	8
2023/24	<b>70</b>	12	7	<b>135</b>	24	14
2024/25	<b>71</b>	12	7	<b>54</b>	9	6
2025/26	<b>26</b>	5	3	<b>55</b>	10	6
2026/27	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>53</b>	9	6
2027/28	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>55</b>	10	6
2028/29	<b>1</b>	0	0	<b>55</b>	10	6
2029/30	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>26</b>	5	3
2030/31	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
2031/32	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
2032/33	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0
2033/34	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>	0	0

Maghull & Aintree	<b>Housing with PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary	<b>Housing without PP</b>	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary
1999/20	<b>149</b>	26	16	<b>0</b>	0	0
2020/21	<b>210</b>	37	22	<b>10</b>	2	1
2021/22	<b>184</b>	32	19	<b>48</b>	8	5
2022/23	<b>103</b>	18	11	<b>203</b>	36	21
2023/24	<b>86</b>	15	9	<b>203</b>	36	21
2024/25	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>232</b>	41	24
2025/26	<b>3</b>	0	0	<b>192</b>	34	20
2026/27	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>192</b>	34	20
2027/28	<b>3</b>	0	0	<b>192</b>	34	20
2028/29	<b>2</b>	0	0	<b>191</b>	33	20
2029/30	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>163</b>	29	17
2030/31	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>163</b>	29	17
2031/32	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>145</b>	25	15
2032/33	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>125</b>	22	13
2033/34	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>125</b>	22	13



Southport	Housing with PP	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary	Housing without PP	Estimated total pupil yield primary	Estimated total pupil yield secondary
1999/20	<b>324</b>	57	34	<b>0</b>	0	0
2020/21	<b>453</b>	79	48	<b>34</b>	6	4
2021/22	<b>171</b>	30	18	<b>90</b>	16	9
2022/23	<b>169</b>	30	18	<b>95</b>	17	10
2023/24	<b>158</b>	28	17	<b>165</b>	29	17
2024/25	<b>97</b>	17	10	<b>252</b>	44	26
2025/26	<b>97</b>	17	10	<b>244</b>	43	26
2026/27	<b>97</b>	17	10	<b>151</b>	26	16
2027/28	<b>68</b>	12	7	<b>127</b>	22	13
2028/29	<b>29</b>	5	3	<b>127</b>	22	13
2029/30	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>120</b>	21	2
2030/31	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>118</b>	21	2
2031/32	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>85</b>	15	2
2032/33	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>85</b>	15	2
2033/34	<b>0</b>	0	0	<b>85</b>	15	2

## Pupil Projections by Planning Area

The following pupil projections were submitted to the Department for Education (DFE) as part of the recent SCAP 2021 return. Schools are grouped into planning areas and there are five primary planning areas and five secondary which are based on geographical and ward boundaries. Projections are produced for five years ahead for primary schools and seven years ahead for secondary schools. Additional pupil yield has been added to allow for the housing developments with planning permission in each area but not all developments can be included as the DFE requires that only those developments in the Council's 5-year housing land supply with planning permission should be included. The housing yield has been based on the figures provided by Sefton's Planning Department from the 2019 SHLAA as detailed above which was the most recent one available.

The Total Published Admission Number (PAN) is calculated using the published admission number for each year group in each school. This may vary from year group to year group depending on changes made in previous years. Future changes to PANs are included where these are known in advance. Total published admission numbers may vary from the net capacity of a school which is based on the teaching accommodation (or the funding agreement for an academy). A published admission number can be set higher than that indicated by the net capacity.

Some of the secondary academy schools in Sefton have started to cap or reduce their intake numbers in Year 8 to 11 as they are unable to admit further pupils after the entry year due to their internal school organisational arrangements. This makes planning future places very difficult as the situation may change on a yearly basis. Sixth Form numbers are not included in the secondary figures as there are no

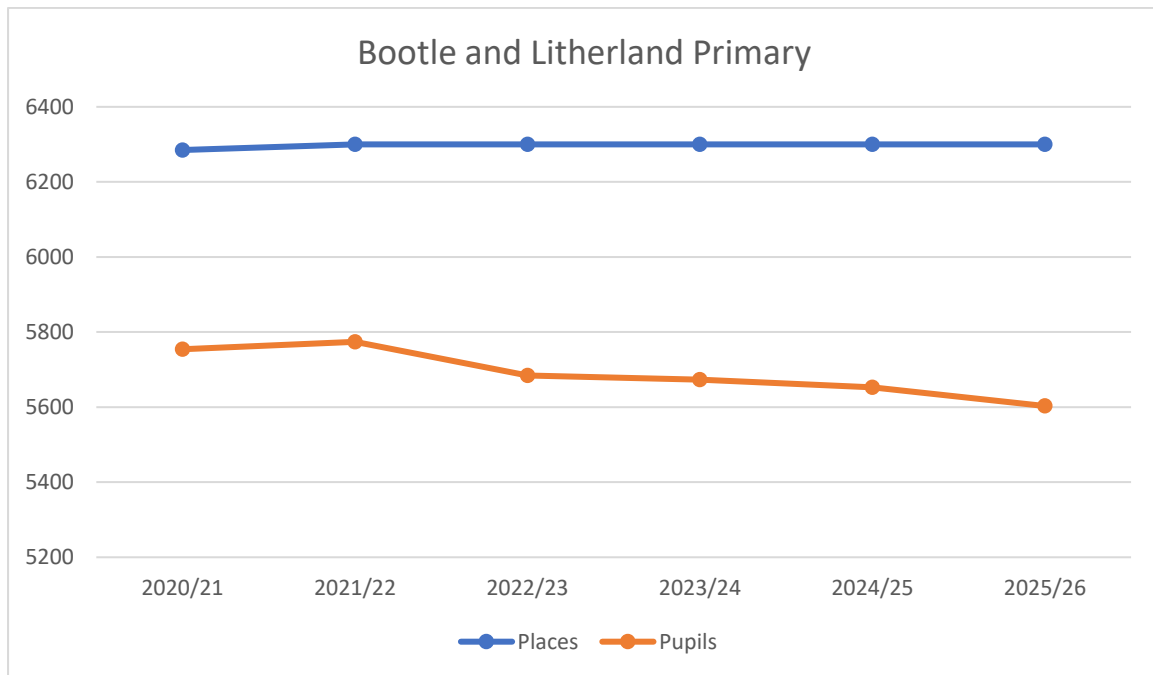
# Agenda Item 6

planned admission numbers for Years 12 and 13. The graphs compare the total number of pupils with the total number of places but do not show where there may be a need for additional places or empty places in a particular year group.

Table 3: Bootle & Litherland Primary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
2020/2021*	6285	847	805	842	824	806	829	801	5754
2021/2022	6300	829	845	797	839	821	800	844	5774
2022/2023	6300	773	826	835	792	834	813	813	5684
2023/2024	6300	816	770	816	830	788	826	827	5673
2024/2025	6300	807	815	763	814	828	783	843	5653
2025/2026	6300	807	804	806	760	810	821	796	5603

\*Actual

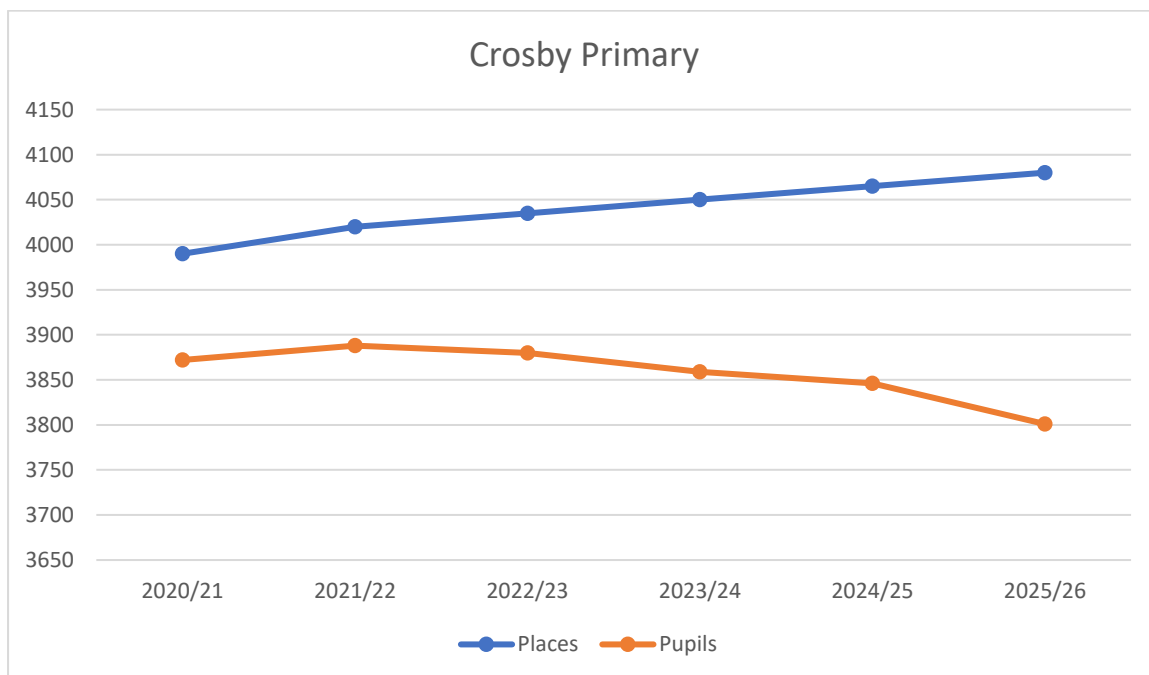


Births in this area have remained relatively stable over the last few years. They reduced in 2017/18 but increased again slightly in 2018/19. Overall intakes into Reception have also remained stable. Most of the schools in this planning area have surplus places. Pupil projections for this area indicate that pupil numbers will gradually decrease over the five-year period.

Table 4: Crosby Primary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
2020/2021*	3990	593	530	576	544	546	543	540	3872
2021/2022	4020	552	596	533	576	543	547	542	3888
2022/2023	4035	529	555	599	533	575	543	545	3880
2023/2024	4050	521	532	558	600	532	575	542	3859
2024/2025	4065	525	524	535	558	598	532	574	3846
2025/2026	4080	525	528	527	535	557	599	531	3801

\*Actual



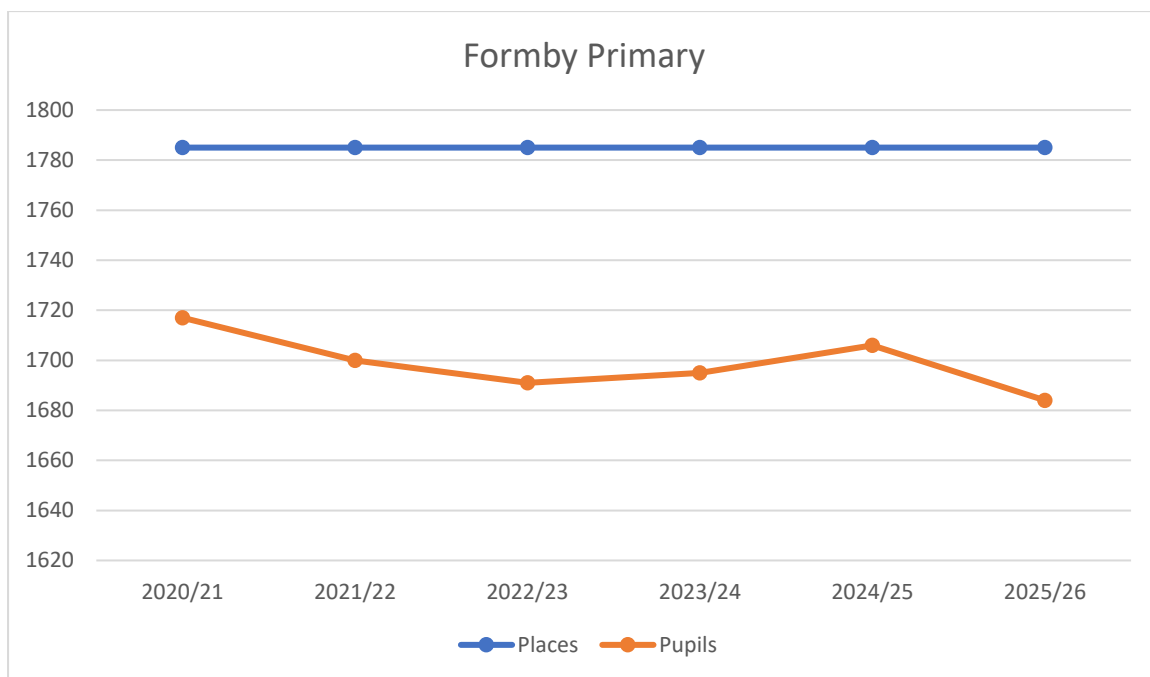
Births in the area continued to rise until 2014/15 when they dropped but rose again the following year. They have dropped again slightly in 2016/17 and following years. Pupil projections indicate that pupil numbers will start to reduce after 2021/22. However, there are more housing developments planned which have not been included in the forecasts at this stage. Pupil places have risen year by year since September 2015 due to the additional places added in the Catholic sector at Great Crosby Catholic Primary.

# Agenda Item 6

Table 5: Formby Primary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
2020/2021*	1785	200	250	248	230	245	270	274	1717
2021/2022	1785	204	209	259	256	239	256	277	1700
2022/2023	1785	236	209	213	264	262	247	259	1691
2023/2024	1785	231	243	214	217	270	270	250	1695
2024/2025	1785	225	238	249	218	223	279	275	1706
2025/2026	1785	224	230	242	253	223	229	282	1684

\*Actual

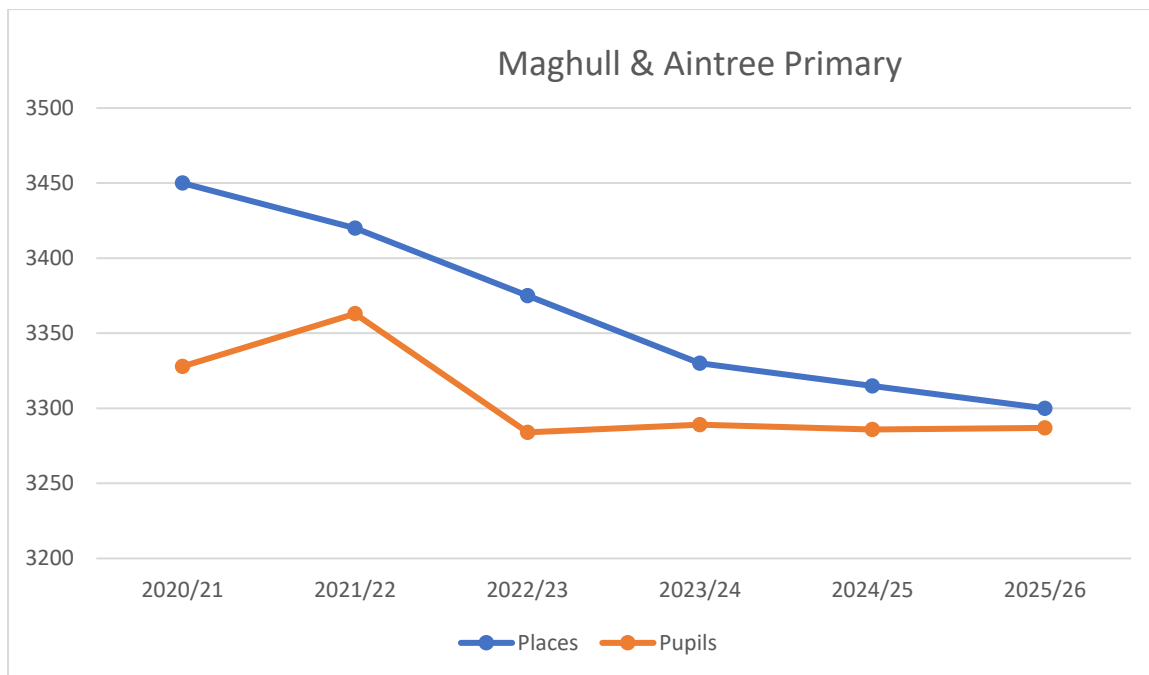


In Formby, there tends to be a shortage of places in specific year groups (Years 4, 5 and 6) rather than overall and this reflects the tendency for parents to move into the area when their children are older and creates problems for the schools in organising their classes. Births in this area have been reducing since 2007/08 and intakes into Reception have reduced overall since 2015. The births in 2017/18 have shown a slight increase and have remained at a similar level in 2018/19 but are still not at the same level they were in 2007/08. These trends are causing the pupil projections to start to reduce over the next five years even though additional pupil yield has been added for proposed housing developments with planning permission in the area.

Table 6: Maghull & Aintree Primary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
2020/2021*	3450	481	452	473	467	499	498	458	3328
2021/2022	3420	457	492	458	483	471	498	505	3363
2022/2023	3375	438	460	489	459	478	462	498	3284
2023/2024	3330	500	442	459	493	457	472	464	3289
2024/2025	3315	469	504	440	462	490	450	472	3286
2025/2026	3300	469	474	504	444	460	484	451	3287

\*Actual



Birth rates have tended to remain stable in the past but have risen in 2018/19. Maghull is also subject to pupil migration from other local authority areas. Intakes to Reception have also increased overall since 2015. Schools in this area are popular and some are oversubscribed. However, the total PAN for the area is reducing year by year as two of the schools have reduced their PAN. Lydiate Primary has reduced by 5 places to 45 from 2014/15 onwards and has requested to reduce to 30 from September 2022 due to reduced demand for places. St Andrew's CE Primary Academy reduced by 1 FE (30 places) from 2017/18 onwards and this change is

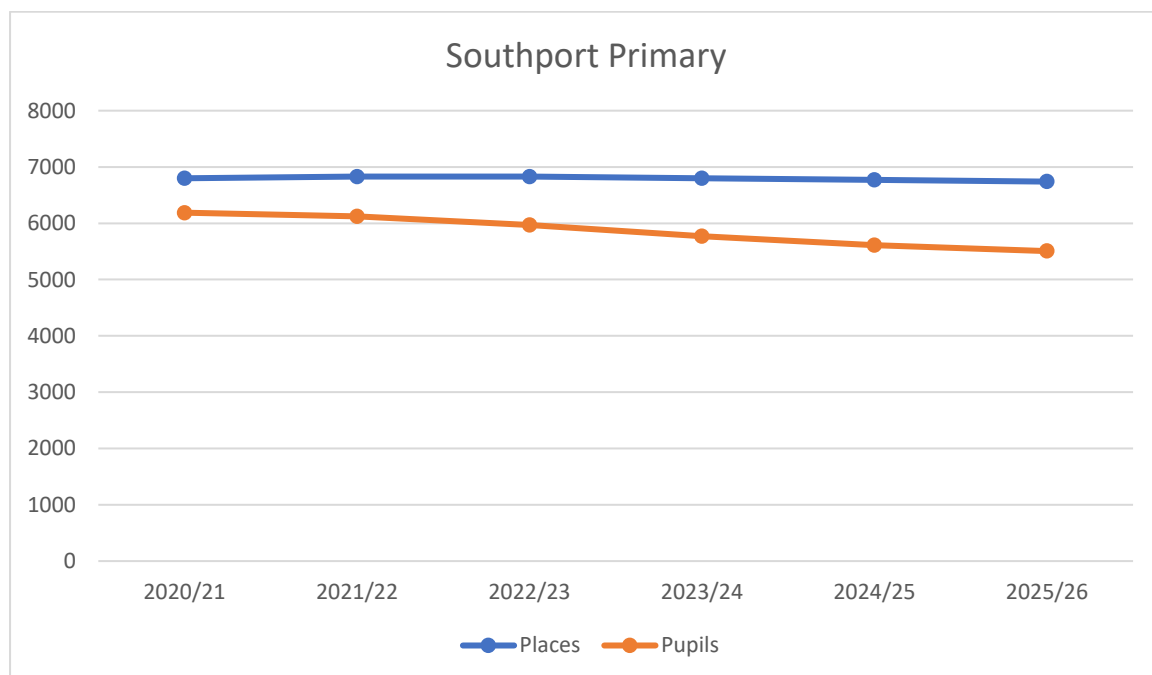
# Agenda Item 6

working through the year groups. Places do not include the proposed expansion of Summerhill Primary by 1FE (30 places per year group) as the final project is subject to further consultation and has not yet been approved. The project will be funded using contributions from the housing developer.

Table 7: Southport Primary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
2020/21*	6800	806	841	864	906	905	936	930	6188
2021/22	6830	840	810	844	868	911	905	942	6120
2022/23	6830	794	840	809	844	869	907	907	5969
2023/24	6800	716	794	838	808	844	864	908	5773
2024/25	6770	760	714	791	837	808	839	864	5613
2025/26	6740	760	760	713	791	838	804	840	5506

\*Actual

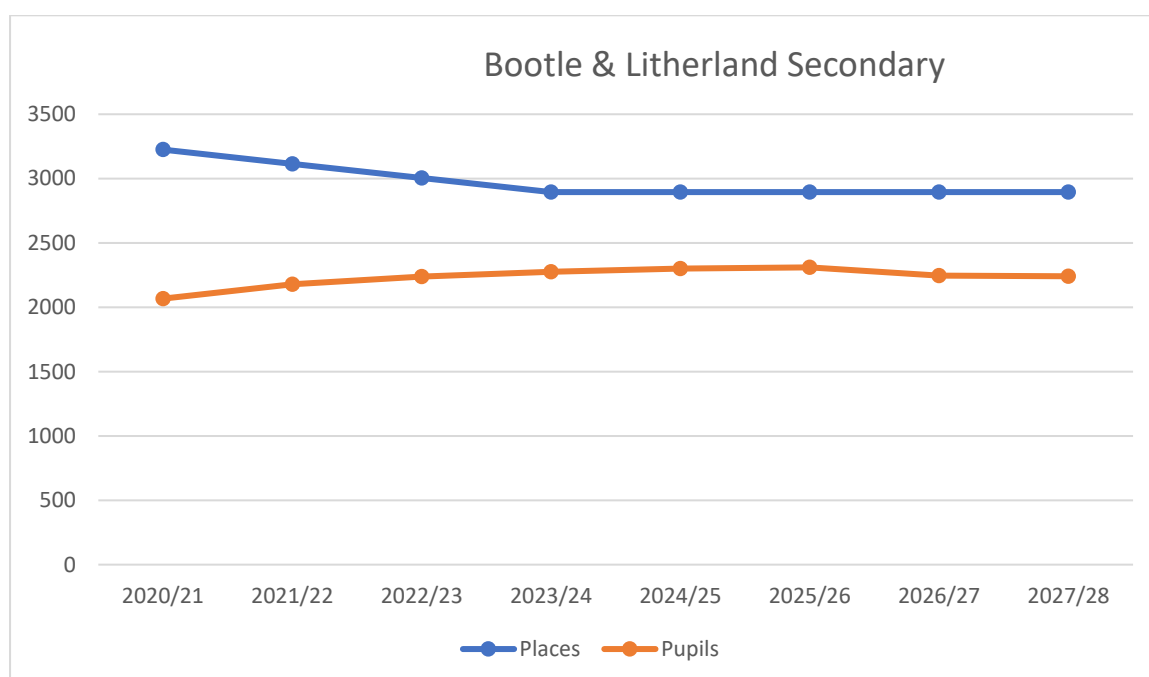


Birth rates for this area have been reducing since 2009/10. They rose again slightly in 2017/18 but have dropped since then. Overall intakes into Reception have also reduced since 2015. This trend has resulted in a reduction in the pupil projections. Additional pupil yield has been added to the projections to allow for housing developments with planning permission in the area. Pupil places continue to rise due to additional places being added in central Southport from 2016/17 onwards. This will stabilise by 2022/23 after which the number of places begin to reduce.

Table 8: Bootle & Litherland Secondary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total
2020/21*	3225	442	436	410	394	385	2067
2021/22	3115	492	451	441	401	393	2178
2022/23	3005	453	501	455	430	398	2238
2023/24	2895	437	462	506	444	428	2277
2024/25	2895	446	447	468	496	443	2300
2025/26	2895	455	454	452	457	493	2310
2026/27	2895	430	463	459	441	454	2247
2027/28	2895	450	437	468	447	438	2241

\*Actual



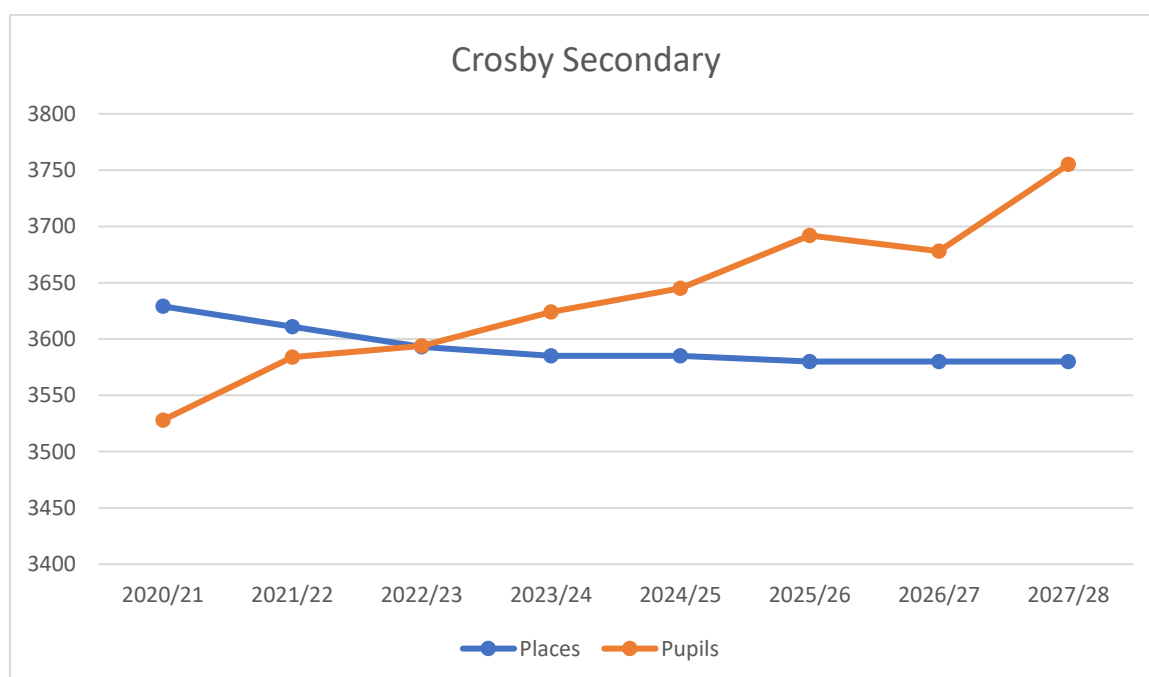
Pupil projections indicate that numbers will start to increase from 2020/21 onwards as larger numbers move through from the primary sector. Additional pupil yield has been added to the projections to allow for housing developments with planning permission in the area. The number of places in the area is likely to reduce as Savio Salesian College is converted to an academy and changes are also being made at Litherland High School as they propose to move Litherland Moss into their school building.

# Agenda Item 6

Table 9: Crosby Secondary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total
2020/21*	3629	754	722	710	699	643	3528
2021/22	3611	753	743	713	683	692	3584
2022/23	3593	756	742	734	686	676	3594
2023/24	3585	760	745	733	706	679	3624
2024/25	3585	756	749	736	705	699	3645
2025/26	3580	801	745	740	708	698	3692
2026/27	3580	741	789	736	712	701	3678
2027/28	3580	833	730	779	708	705	3755

\*Actual



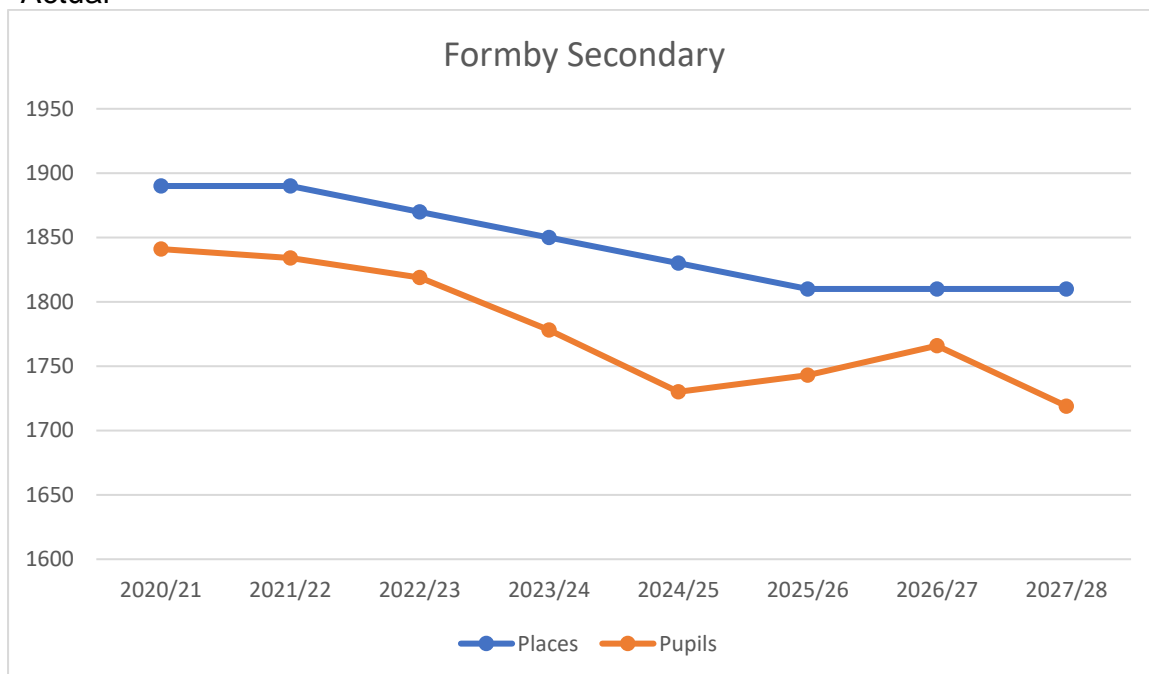
Pupil projections continue to rise based on the pupil numbers in the primary sector in this area and have exceeded the total PAN in some years. This is also partly due to intake numbers being capped by the two academies in the area which makes planning school places very difficult. The total capacity for secondary schools in this area is 4,442 based on teaching accommodation and funding agreements so there is currently sufficient capacity available which may not always match the number of places based on PANs. Additional pupil yield has been added to the projections to allow for housing developments with planning permission in the area.



Table 10: Formby Secondary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total
2020/21*	1890	346	381	379	375	360	1841
2021/22	1890	349	350	380	380	374	1834
2022/23	1870	368	350	346	378	377	1819
2023/24	1850	344	369	346	344	375	1778
2024/25	1830	332	345	366	345	342	1730
2025/26	1810	365	332	341	364	342	1743
2026/27	1810	373	365	329	339	360	1766
2027/28	1810	319	374	362	328	337	1719

\*Actual



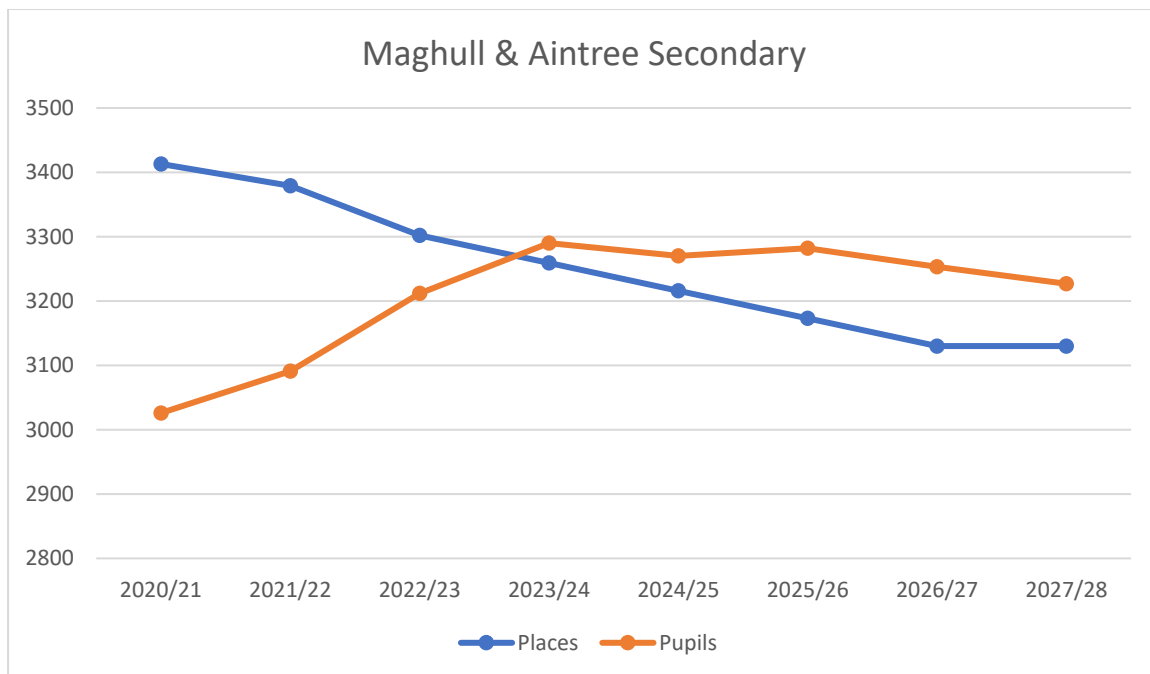
Pupil places are continuing to grow until 2021/22 due to changes in the school admission numbers while pupil projections remain stable but are then declining from 2022/23 onwards based on the current numbers of pupils in the primary sector in Formby. However, as the schools in this area are popular it is likely that places would be filled by pupils from outside the area although this is difficult to quantify. Additional pupil yield has been added to the projections to allow for housing developments with planning permission in the area.

# Agenda Item 6

Table 11: Maghull & Aintree Secondary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total
2020/21*	3413	637	649	602	549	589	3026
2021/22	3379	654	640	649	593	554	3091
2022/23	3302	698	651	635	634	593	3212
2023/24	3259	688	697	648	622	636	3290
2024/25	3216	639	685	692	633	622	3270
2025/26	3173	650	638	682	677	634	3282
2026/27	3130	622	649	635	668	679	3253
2027/28	3130	668	621	646	622	670	3227

\*Actual

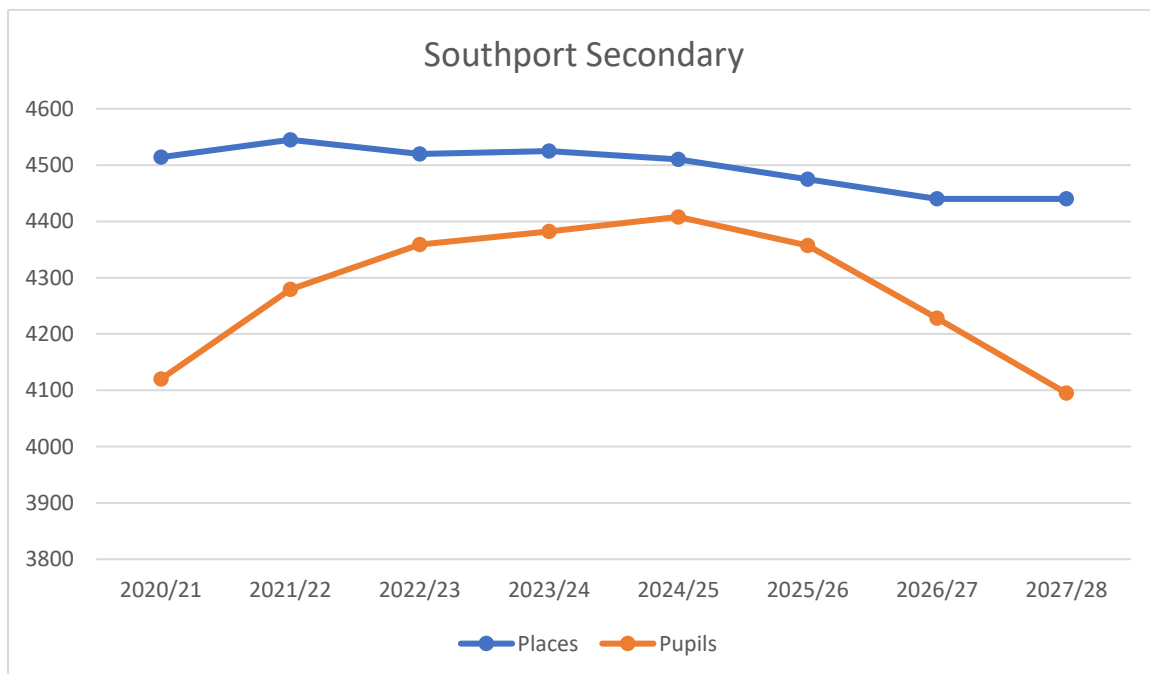


Pupil projections in this area are increasing based on the pupils currently in the primary sector and changes in the pattern of admissions. The number of places is decreasing based on changes which one of the schools has made to their planned admission number. The capacity of secondary schools in this area based on teaching accommodation and funding agreements is 3,485 so the capacity for the increasing numbers is currently in place but there would need to be adjustments made to admission numbers to accommodate additional pupils. Additional pupil yield has been added to the projections to allow for housing developments with planning permission in the area.

Table 12: Southport Secondary (including pupil yield from housing developments with planning permission)

Year	Total PAN	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total
2020/21*	4514	869	826	837	814	774	4120
2021/22	4545	926	870	832	837	813	4279
2022/23	4520	897	927	873	829	833	4359
2023/24	4525	863	894	930	870	824	4382
2024/25	4510	863	860	896	925	864	4408
2025/26	4475	821	861	863	892	920	4357
2026/27	4440	798	819	864	859	888	4228
2027/28	4440	764	795	821	860	854	4095

\*Actual



The increase in pupil numbers has slowed down but numbers are still increasing over the period up to 2024/25. Additional pupil yield has been included in the projections to allow for housing developments with planning permission in the area. Meols Cop High is oversubscribed and has pupils in excess of capacity. The other schools in the area have some level of surplus places although the total number has decreased in 2020/21.

### Conclusion

As we have already noted, monitoring pupil places is a complex process with many factors to consider.

# Agenda Item 6

We have also observed that where families with children moved in to newbuild properties which were completed in recent years many of those children were already attending local schools in Sefton and did not change school following the move. New housing may not always have as much initial impact as people expect and may not always bring new pupils into the area. However, this may vary depending on the location.

The housing figures included above are estimates which may change over time as it is difficult to predict when homes will be completed particularly when they do not have planning permission. It is also difficult to determine how much impact the COVID 19 pandemic has had on the rate of housebuilding in Sefton but it must have affected this to some extent particularly as there has been a shortage of building materials and workers may have been ill or isolating. We are waiting for revised estimates to be provided and will continue to monitor the situation.

# Agenda Item 7

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	School Attendance Update		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary update, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to school attendance since September 2021.

## Recommendation:

That the Committee notes the report

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To update the current situation in relation to school attendance and following up actions from Persistent Absence Working Group.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

N/A

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue Costs

There are no additional costs associated with this report. The school attendance statutory functions and the traded offer with schools used to support school attendance in Sefton are contained with existing budget resources and through school buy-in.

### (B) Capital Costs

N/A

## Implications of the Proposals:

# Agenda Item 7

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> N/A	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> School attendance is mandatory for pupil attendance at school is compulsory and the usual rules on school attendance apply once more. This includes the parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends the school term after their 5th birthday and the last Friday in June in the school year they turn 16.	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>  The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Yes
Have a neutral impact	No
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	No

## Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: Encourages children from our most vulnerable families to attend early years settings and schools. We know children are attending school and accessing education and we want all children to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>Good attendance in the early years' settings help build good habits for the children, it can also help alleviate academic problems later on. If children are regularly absent, they may not be fully prepared for school. Preschool is a time for building the social, emotional, cognitive, and language skills needed for school readiness.</p>
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above
Place – leadership and influencer: N/A
<p>Drivers of change and reform: Actions undertaken contribute to the continuous improvement for attendance at early years settings and schools including those children who are vulnerable.</p>
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Yes
Greater income for social investment: N/A

Cleaner Greener N/A
------------------------

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6605/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4806/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

Information will be shared at the Education Collaborative Group and the primary and secondary head teachers' associations.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tracy McKeating
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 3269
Email Address:	tracy.mckeating@sefton.gov.uk

### Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

### Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Schools are fully open in Sefton and the Department for Education expect schools, education settings and local authorities to utilise interventions and sanctions to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence.

## 2. Progress update school Attendance from September 2021

- 2.1 School attendance is a standing item on the agenda at the Education Collaborative Group. Updates are provided from schools both secondary primary and special and any barriers are discussed and debated with ideas being shared. The impact of COVID 19 forms a part of this discussion for example some of the challenges schools and parents are facing in relation to if people have been previously shielded in the lockdown.
- 2.2 School attendance parental responsibility measures and statutory functions are now fully operational. The school attendance panel will resume on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021. The school attendance panel allows an opportunity for families to meet with school and local authority staff to address any difficulties that a family is experiencing that is negatively impacting on a child attending school. At the panel

# Agenda Item 7

relevant information is shared between families and on some occasions agencies who are working with the family. Recommendations and interventions are agreed to support the family to improve their child's attendance. A monitoring period will also be established and if there is no improvement legal proceeding may be instigated against the parents for failing to secure regular attendance at schools.

- 2.3 During the first half term Sefton have issued 157 warning letters to parents in relation to school attendance who cannot provide a valid reason for their child to be absent from school. This has resulted in 141 penalty notices being issued. 109 for holidays in term time and 31 for general unauthorised absence.
- 2.4 Communication will be going out to parents from the council about the importance of school attendance. Information will go via the schools and the council's variety of social media platforms.
- 2.5 All Sefton schools are fully open despite some staff and children testing positive for COVID 19 Attendance (snapshot) is at the current time is approximately 93.49% The reason the detail behind the data summary is not as accurate as it should be is due to the fact the DfE have produced sub-codes relating to the absence related code for COVID which affects the council's extraction of attendance data. Solutions to address this are currently being explored as a priority by the Business Intelligence and Data Team
- 2.6 Guidance across Early years settings to encourage attendance has now been finalised produced to support practitioners, leaders, managers, owners and governing bodies. It offers information and practical suggestions around promoting, supporting, recording and monitoring the attendance of children.
- 2.7 Schools are continuing to use the first day response school attendance initiative model of practice. Schools report daily any child who is absent with a social worker.
- 2.8 Since mid-October there has been a marked increase overall in schools' referrals to Complimentary Education, 13 pupils since September 2021. Children access this service when a clinician deems the child is not fit to attend school. This is usually a CAMHS practitioner.
- 2.9 Across Sefton there are a number of children who have not returned to school with mental health being cited as the reason. Some of these children are not accessing any mental health services. Sefton are currently undertaking an audit across all schools to understand the scale of this issue and the senior school attendance lead and the Service Manager for school support Services will be meeting with these parents to try to find a solution to address this.
- 2.10 Sefton Council have reviewed the guidance in relation to children who are accessing reduced education provision through a part time timetable. The guidance is very clear that reduced education provision should only be used in certain circumstances outlined by the Department for Education and short be short term.
- 2.11 From 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021, the school attendance statutory functions and the traded offer have transferred to Education Excellence. This will strengthen the relationship between school attendance and school improvement.



# Agenda Item 8

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement Board Update		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Children's Social Care		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

This report provides an overview of the introduction of the Children's Services Improvement Board in July 2021 as a direct response to the Improvement Notice issued from the DfE IN June 2021.

The terms of reference for the Improvement Board is provided in Appendix A

## Recommendation:

That the content of the report to be noted.

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The report and the recommendation are as a direct response to the Improvement Notice issued from the DfE IN June 2021.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

N/A

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue Costs

There has been an investment of £7.3m between 2020/21 budget and 2021/22 in Children's Services. A further approval of £2.0 million was given in September 2021 to invest in the workforce.

A paper was submitted to Cabinet in October 2021 to request an extra £4 million for the workforce which means an additional £7.5 million investment in the workforce this year and a total investment of £13.3m into Children's Services.

# Agenda Item 8

## (B) Capital Costs

N/A

### Implications of the Proposals:

<p><b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> The investment into Children’s Services by Cabinet members will support improvements to benefit staff through improvement to IT systems, IT support for staff to complete their work in the most efficient way and the bringing back of staff into offices as business as usual in a Covid safe way.</p>									
<p><b>Legal Implications:</b> N/A</p>									
<p><b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.</p>									
<p><b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b></p> <p>The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Have a positive impact</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a neutral impact</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a negative impact</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table>		Have a positive impact	No	Have a neutral impact	Yes	Have a negative impact	No	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Have a positive impact	No								
Have a neutral impact	Yes								
Have a negative impact	No								
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes								

### Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

<p><b>Protect the most vulnerable:</b> Children’s Services protect children and young people in Sefton who are the most vulnerable and require protection through targeted and statutory social work services. The purpose of this report is to highlight how the Improvement Board is holding the partnership across Sefton to account for improvements across the whole of Children’s Services.</p>
<p><b>Facilitate confident and resilient communities:</b> The role of supporting confident and resilient communities is not the responsibility of one sole agency and needs to be addressed via a partnership approach to meet the multi-faceted needs of Sefton’s communities. This support will range from universal, community based, targeted and statutory consistent with the identified needs and risks of children and young people.</p>
<p><b>Commission, broker and provide core services:</b> Children’s Social Care is a core offer which is enshrined within statutory legislation and regulations.</p>
<p><b>Place – leadership and influencer:</b></p>

N/A
Drivers of change and reform: N/A
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: N/A
Greater income for social investment: N/A
Cleaner Greener N/A

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6604/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4805/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

None

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Caroline McKenna
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	Caroline.Mckenna@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

The terms of reference for the Improvement Board are provided in Appendix A.

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

# Agenda Item 8

## Introduction/Background

### 1. Purpose of the Improvement Board.

- 1.1. Following the issuing of an Improvement Notice in June 2021 by the Department for Education (DfE), it was deemed necessary to convene an independent, multi-agency, independent Children's Services Improvement Board to oversee Sefton's response to the Improvement Notice.
- 1.2. The first Improvement Board was constituted in July 2021, chaired by an independent chair who is an experienced ex Director of Children's Services in the North West region. The Board has met monthly since that first Board in July 2021, meeting a total of four times so far.
- 1.3. The purpose of the Board is to address the findings of the Ofsted focused visit of Children Services which was conducted in March 2021, ensure the underlying causes of weakness in practice are addressed and to put in place the arrangements needed to support continuous improvements in practice.
- 1.4. The Improvement Board membership includes Sefton's DfE Advisor and a member of the DfE's Children's Services Improvement and Interventions Unit responsible for providing 6 monthly updates to the relevant Minister. It also includes the Chief Executive, Cabinet members with a responsibility for Children Services and Education, staff representatives and key statutory partners. A full list of members can be seen in the Board terms of reference in Appendix A.

### 2. The focus of the Improvement Board since July 2021

- 2.1. The Improvement Board has received several diagnostics from the Interim Executive Director of Children's Services and Education which has provided a details lens for the Board to understand the many areas of improvement required across Children's Services.
- 2.2. The August Improvement Board focused on findings from the senior leadership team's diagnostics of services across the journey of the child, the actions which have been undertaken as a result and what future plans are being put in place. This identified strengths, weaknesses and areas of focus and gave the Improvement Board a full understanding of what needed to be done.
- 2.3. The approach of the Improvement Board chair is to use the Improvement Board to inform future agenda items, and the detailed diagnostic received in August informed the September Improvement Board which focused on the Front Door of Children's services and the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).
- 2.4. The September 2021 Improvement Board received a paper detailing the findings on a deep dive by the new service manager on what was working well, areas of concern and what was working well in the 'Front Door' to statutory social care services. This highlighted the need to strengthen contextual safeguarding and missing services in Sefton, which prompted the chair to request a report on vulnerable children in the October Improvement Board.

- 2.5. The September Improvement Board also signalled a focus of the Board on the workforce in Sefton following an initial report from the Interim Service Manager, Practice Development and this has since been followed up with a report from the Chief Personnel Officer in the October Improvement Board and a request for a subsequent follow up report detailing approaches to be taken in the November Improvement Board.
- 2.6. Therefore, the focus of the Improvement Board over the last 3 months has been the Front Door to Children's Services and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Vulnerable children, especially those at risk of contextual safeguarding and missing and Sefton's Children's Services.
- 2.7. To get a direct line of sight and a detailed understanding of services which are a focus of the Improvement Board. The independent chair visits relevant teams, services and partners a week before the Improvement Board. He is accompanied every other month by the DfE Advisor.
- 2.8. Standing agenda items include an update from the DfE Advisor and a report from frontline staff practitioners from a monthly staff engagement group. The independent chair and DfE Advisor attend this group on a bi-monthly basis to keep a direct line to the views of staff and the impact of improvement work on them.

### **3. Progress to date**

- 3.1 As a result of the review of the Front Door undertaken in early September, a significant change was made to Front Door services in Sefton. On 27<sup>th</sup> September, a single front door was implemented which meant there was only one way to refer into Children's Services which took all queries, triaged them and a decision made about the most appropriate cause of action. By the time of the October Improvement Board the new process had only been in place for a couple of weeks and feedback from partners was largely positive.
- 3.2. Police have increased confidence in the new leadership team in Children's Services. This has enabled a move from a monthly missing meeting to a daily missing meeting which takes up a significant amount of time of Police resources. But police see the value of working in different ways to protect vulnerable children and young people and such changes are the start of the development of contextual safeguarding services based around layered support in Sefton.
- 3.3. Sefton has put in place new strategic safeguarding arrangements to replace the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) as prescribed in 'Working Together to Safeguarding Children' (2018). (This guidance set out a shared responsibility between health, the police and the local authority to safeguard children and receive services in a co-ordinated way to achieve the best outcomes). New arrangements were developed, sent to partners for consultation and in October 2021 the first Leadership Group met. This is to be followed with the Sefton Safeguarding Forum and various sub groups.

# Agenda Item 8

## **4. Future focus of the Improvement Board**

- 4.1. The Improvement Board has focused on areas which will have the biggest impact on managing risk for children and young people through the Front Door and vulnerable children, as well as Sefton's biggest asset – staff. The Improvement Board will continue to re-visit new arrangements made in the last few months to check they remain fit for purpose and seek feedback from partners, staff and service users to ensure their continued effectiveness.
- 4.2. In November 2021, there will be independent reviews undertaken in the Care Leavers Service and the Virtual School, and the Improvement Board will hear the outcomes of these reviews in January 2022. It then will track actions taken as a result in the months following.
- 4.3. In August 2021, the Interim Executive Director moved the Children with Disabilities (CWD) service into Children's Services and brought in an experienced Service Manager who developed an improvement plan focused on addressing immediate issues followed by incremental improvements. An update on the Children with Disabilities service was due to be heard by the Improvement Board in November 2021, but this has been deferred to either January or February 2022.
- 4.4. The November 2021 Improvement Board is focused on hearing progress against issues identified in the August diagnostics and progress against priority areas from the focused visit. This will support the development of the 6 monthly report written by the Department for Education (DfE) to the Minister about progress against the Improvement Notice. Improvement Boards in 2022 will focus on the content of that report and the response by the Minister which will set out further priorities for the next six months.

### **Appendix A: Sefton Metropolitan Council Children Services Improvement Board Terms of reference.**

#### **Aims and Purpose**

Address the findings of the Ofsted focused visit of Children Services, ensure the underlying causes of weakness in practice are addressed and to put in place the arrangements needed to support continuous improvements in practice.

To achieve this, the Board will:

1. Ensure services for children and families are fit for purpose, children and young people are kept safe and healthy and are supported to aspire and achieve.
2. Work on a multi-agency basis in the interests of children, young people and their families.
3. To ensure the necessary actions and appropriate resources are available and directed to areas of concern
4. Own the Improvement Plan by making sure there are clear lines of accountability, scrutiny and governance.
5. Hold the owners of Improvement Plan actions to account by making sure all key performance measures are accurately reported and supported by a clear narrative that explains how performance has been achieved and what corrective action will be taken if the required performance has not been achieved.
6. Hold the owners of Improvement Plan actions to account by making sure the timely delivery of the required actions supported by a clear narrative that explains how actions have been delivered and what corrective action will be taken if timescales have not been achieved.
7. Have a planned approach to scrutinising and challenging the effectiveness of services and front-line practice using Ofsted IILAC grade descriptors. This will include the commissioning of independent audits and reviews as a mechanism to ensure performance is improved and sustained.
8. Ensure progress against the Improvement Plan is properly and regularly reported to elected members, the Department for Education Improvement team and to the Minister for Children and Families.
9. Engage frontline staff, in developing and monitoring improvement activity to ensure that the voices of practitioner's children and young people's voices are heard.

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX A

10. Engage children, young people and families in developing and monitoring improvement activity to ensure that the voices of children, young people and families are heard.

11. Work with the existing strategic governance, accountability and scrutiny framework, including the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Health and Wellbeing Board, Children and Young People's Partnership, Corporate Parenting Board and relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee(s), to strengthen, complement and enhance the work done by these bodies.

12. Enable a culture of continuous quality improvement which is embedded across all organisations and ensure there is an understanding and sharing of good practice.



### **Core Membership**

The membership of the Board will be:

- Independent Chair:

### **Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council:**

- Cabinet Member with responsibility for children's services
- Cabinet Member with responsibility for Education
- Chief Executive
- Executive Director of Children's Services
- Executive Director People
- Head of Children Social Care
- Head of Education Excellence
- Front line practitioners

### **Partner members:**

- Board Member and strategic lead with responsibility for children from the NHS CCG
- Chairs of Head Teacher forums for primary, secondary and special schools.
- Independent scrutineer of the Sefton Safeguarding Partnership
- Senior Officer from Merseyside Police.
- Department for Education Improvement Advisor

### **Stakeholder members\***

Sefton Metropolitan Council

- Director of Public Health
- Head of Service Performance
- Head of Service Commissioning
- Chief Personnel Officer

\* Stakeholder members will not be required to attend all meetings. Attendance will be based on the relevance of agenda items or at the request of the chair.

### Other Matters

#### Role of the Chair:

- Ensure that the Board delivers against the agreed terms of reference
- Ensure there is effective support and challenge required to deliver the required improvements in a timely, effective and sustainable way.
- Ensure all core Board Members are fully engaged with the business of the Board and can report to the Board as and when required.
- Establish effective mechanisms to enable practitioners to have their voice heard and contribute to the work of the Board
- Establish effective mechanisms to enable children, young people and families to have their voices heard and contribute to the work of the Board
- Carry out 6 weekly diagnostic reviews of the impact improvement actions have had on practice and report findings to the Board.
- To work closely with the DCS and the DfE to ensure the required improvements are achieved.

**Quorum:** There should as a minimum be representation from the statutory safeguarding partners and a representative from the council's political executive.

**Substitutes:** Board should notify the chair if they are unable to attend and nominate a named substitute who will attend in their absence. The substitute must have the delegated authority of the board member to make decisions and commit resources.

**Frequency of meetings:** Meetings will be monthly, unless otherwise agreed by the Board

**Changes to Membership:** Changes to membership can be agreed by the Board. The Board may invite anyone who it believes will be useful in achieving its aims and purpose to attend meetings or join the Board as a full member with voting rights or a co-opted member without

# Agenda Item 9

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee  (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Cabinet Member Reports – November 2021		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Children's Social Care Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To submit the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member - Education reports relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member - Education reports relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

## Reasons for the Recommendation:

In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No alternative options have been considered because the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

Any financial implications associated with the Cabinet Member reports which are referred to in this update are contained within the respective reports.

# Agenda Item 9

(A) **Revenue Costs** – see above

(B) **Capital Costs** – see above

**Implications of the Proposals:**

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
<p>There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from the consideration of reports referred to in the Work Programme will be contained in such reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.</p>	

**Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:**

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report. The Cabinet Member updates provides information on activity within Councillor Doyle’s and Councillor Roscoe’s portfolios during the previous three-month period. Any reports relevant to their portfolios considered by the Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committees during this period would contain information as to how such reports contributed to the Council’s Core Purpose.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: As above</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer: As above</p>
<p>Drivers of change and reform: As above</p>
<p>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above</p>
<p>Greater income for social investment: As above</p>
<p>Cleaner Greener: As above</p>

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## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Cabinet Member Update Reports are not subject to FD/LD consultation. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the attached Cabinet Member update reports will be included in those reports as appropriate

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Debbie Campbell
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2254
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk">debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk</a>

## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A - Cabinet Member – Children’s Social Care - update report
- Appendix B - Cabinet Member – Education – update report

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

### 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.2 Attached to this report, for information, are the most recent Cabinet Member reports for the Children’s Social Care and Education portfolios.

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<b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT</b> <b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding)</b> <b>16 November 2021</b>		
Councillor	Portfolio	Date
Mhairi Doyle	Cabinet Member Children’s Social Care	16 November 2021

Children’s Services continues the Improvement Journey. The Improvement Board has convened four times since the last Group meeting and is now held monthly. The Board continues to be Independently chaired and attended by both Lead Members, Councillor Doyle and Councillor Roscoe, Chief Executive and key statutory partners for Health, Police and Schools. The Improvement Board had reports on the following areas:

- Multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements have been finalized forming a Safeguarding Children Forum to replace the former LSCB and a Leadership Board consisting of the 3 statutory agencies CSC, Police and CCGs.
- Deep dive on children who are missing/at risk of sexual exploitation – this has resulted in a new pathway for this group of vulnerable children with a dedicated post of Child Sexual Exploitation officer for multi-agency work
- Data scorecard – covering key areas of children’s performance. This will be developed to include narrative of key areas.
- Workforce development report -see below
- Reports from the DfE advisor and Improvement Board chair which included their observations on practice week.

Improvements across the service have continued at pace and it is recognised that our workforce is key to these improvements. There has therefore been a review of our workforce strategy including recruitment and retention of key posts within the service. A range of proposals and ideas have been submitted and are currently being explored, these include: Branding, advertising and social media comms development- this is currently in development including a dedicated platform for people interested in becoming a social worker.

- Incentives and retention for social workers who join Sefton as permanent members of staff
- Free car parking for all social work staff.
- Our training and development offer is well considered amongst staff. We will ensure this captured within our social work adverts.
- Flexible working policy to be promoted. Continued promotion of agile and flexible working patterns where the business need is consistent.

**Practice week** -took place for 3 days in October with CEO, Lead Members, DfE advisor, Improvement Board chair and other officers in children’s services observing practice.

# Agenda Item 9

## APPENDIX A

There was also a range of workshops run by key staff to highlight key developments in areas such as children missing, children involved in sexual exploitation and organised crime/gang activity. The feedback on this was positive and the areas that were marked for development have been actioned through the service.

**MASH-** the remodelling of the front door has begun providing a single point of entry to the service and the creation of an assessment team. This has seen a significant increase in referrals coming through to MASH which was expected as we closed other points of contacts off. There are plans to remodel other parts of the service so that children's and family's needs can be met more appropriately at an earlier stage. This work will involve creating a court and protection team which will alleviate some of the pressures currently felt in the Localities.

**Fostering-**the service is currently undergoing a review with Sefton audit, reviewing from a regulatory perspective. This will then form an action plan for Fostering. An improvement board will oversee the improvements in the service and will start December 21.

A Foster Carer Association is being developed to ensure carers meet with Senior managers and Members each quarter and are involved in the development of the service going forward.

The service has currently had a new brand and a marketing campaign is set to start in January 2022. Independent fostering assessors have been recruited to start the assessments following this and to ensure these are completed swiftly and are of a good quality. Interviews are taking place in the next couple of weeks for a new Fostering panel chair and the service at the end of November will restructure in to 4 definite teams, with a placement team, combining with the commissioning function, joining in the New Year.

### **Adoption**

The AIMS contract is due to be extended for another year. This year to date 14 children have been adopted, an increase on last year's 7 children and there are now 16 children waiting, a decrease from 34 in July. Adoption tracking meetings continue to monitor the progress of children where adoption has been identified as the plan.

**Corporate Parenting-**the Corporate Parenting Board is adopting a champion model with key activity and task and finish projects to deliver outcomes and priorities for care experienced children. A presentation was presented this week to the board which looked at the 5 new priorities and how us as Corporate parents will meet these. A participation officer post has been created to work with Children in Care and to create a Children in Care council.

The Corporate Parenting service has increased management capacity and has gone from 3 managers to 5 with the formulation of a new adolescent service. This means Corporate Parenting will be working with children 0-13years and adolescence 14-18yrs. The service has introduced the next steps multi agency panel. The focus of the panel is to ensure children moving on from care have appropriate plans and skills in place to enable them to live independently.

The leaving care service is supported by an additional team manager and therefore being split into two. This will enable the service to work with children from 16yrs, a personal advisor will be allocated to each young person to support their transition to adulthood.



<b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE</b>		
<b>Overview and Scrutiny (Children’s Services and Safeguarding)</b>		
<b>16<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b>		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Period of Report</b>
Diane Roscoe	Education	November 2021

### **Education Excellence**

The structure for Education Excellence was approved and recruitment has started. We have appointed permanent services managers for School Improvement, Early Years, Virtual School, School Services ... We are now recruiting staff in the teams so that by Easter we will hopefully have a full compliment of staff. This will ensure that we have support and challenge for education provision from 0 – 19 years.

### **Schools**

We have had eight inspections to date (22<sup>nd</sup> October), we do not have all the reports yet but it has been mixed. Forefield Junior School remained good; Hillside have moved from inadequate to requires improvement. The support provided by the School Improvement Team has been commented on by inspectors as well as the relationships we have with the schools. All our maintained schools due an inspection whether currently RI, good or outstanding have been offered a ‘health check’ to help them consider where they are at.

All six of our new headteachers have been provided with a mentor and a package of tailored support if required. The professional partner programme has started well with five of our schools joining the programme and all our schools causing concern accessing a professional partner.

The schools causing concern programme continues with ten schools on the programme. Two schools have moved off the programme and one added. There are a myriad of reasons as to why schools are on the programme. Schools receive half termly or termly meetings to challenge progress and support is identified and brokered.

The secondary Narrowing the Gap programme has started with all secondary schools involved. This is being delivered by Meols Cop Research School and funded by the LA. Initial anecdotal information indicates schools are welcoming this programme and the opportunity to work in partnership to develop provision.

The DfE piece of work which focuses on South Sefton and North Liverpool schools will be focusing on attendance and speech, language and communication. The secondary schools will be focusing on literacy and linking to the Narrowing the Gap programme.

### **St Teresa’s**

Several meetings have been held with the Governing Body, elected members, the Archdiocese and LA officers to discuss the continued fall in pupil numbers and rising budget deficit. The Governing Body have worked to hard to try to find solutions to keep the school viable however last month they reached the decision to ask the Council to consider consultation with a view to closing the school.

### **Covid**

All schools opened for all pupils at the beginning of September. Pupils in secondary schools were asked to undertake two LFT within the first few days of the new term.

# Agenda Item 9

## APPENDIX B

Government guidelines changed at the start of term and as a result schools moved to a normal operating mode, although they were encouraged to continue with a focus on keeping safe.

We have seen an upsurge in positive results both for staff and pupils. If someone tests positive the close contacts are encouraged to undertake an asymptomatic PCR however, they are allowed to attend school whilst waiting for the results. This has caused concern amongst staff and parents. PH Sefton have worked closely with several schools to support them with any concerns.

	Primary Schools	Secondary School	SEN Schools
No. meeting threshold	29	6	4
No. introducing initial measures* and receiving support from PH	29	6	4
No. receiving school-wide asymptomatic testing**	0	2	1

\*initial measures include asymptomatic PCR testing for class groups, where threshold has been met, reintroduction of face coverings for staff in communal areas, actions to reduce social mixing between classes e.g. cancellation of whole school assemblies.

\*\*in all three school settings, support was provided by mobile testing units (national) or the local swabbing team – this action is decided following an outbreak management meeting with UKHSA, where initial measures have not been sufficient to control spread

### Attendance

School attendance is a standing item on the agenda at the Education Collaborative Group. Updates are provided from schools both secondary primary and special and any barriers are discussed and debated with ideas being shared. The impact of COVID 19 forms a part of this discussion for example some of the challenges schools and parents are facing in relation to if people have been previously shielded in the lockdown.

School attendance parental responsibility measures and statutory functions are now fully operational. The school attendance panel will resume on the 1st November 2021. The school attendance panel allows an opportunity for families to meet with school and local authority staff to address any difficulties that a family is experiencing that is negatively impacting on a child attending school. At the panel relevant information is shared between families and on some occasions agencies who are working with the family. Recommendations and interventions are agreed to support the family to improve their child's attendance. A monitoring period will also be established and if there is no improvement legal proceeding may be instigated against the parents for failing to secure regular attendance at schools.

During the first half term Sefton have issued 104 warning letters to parents in relation to school attendance in relation to parents who cannot provide a valid reason for their child to be absent from school.

Communication will be going out to parents after half term from the council about the importance of school attendance. Information will go via the schools and the council's variety of social media platforms.

All Sefton schools are fully open despite some staff and children testing positive for COVID 19 Attendance (snapshot) is at the current time is approximately 93.49%. Schools are continuing to use the first day response school attendance initiative model of practice. Schools report daily any child who is absent with a social worker.

Guidance across Early years settings to encourage attendance has now been finalised produced to support practitioners, leaders, managers, owners and governing bodies. It offers information and practical suggestions around promoting, supporting, recording and monitoring the attendance of children.

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<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Parent Governor Representative		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Children's Social Care		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

**Summary:**

The term of office for one of the current Parent Governor Representatives on the Committee is due to expire at the end of November 2021. This report is seeking to formally agree extending the term of office of the Parent Governor Representative concerned.

**Recommendation:**

That the term of office for the Parent Governor Representative concerned be extended for a period of no more than two years, up to November 2023.

**Reasons for the Recommendation(s):**

The term of office for the Parent Governor Representative concerned is due to expire at the end of November 2021.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** (including any Risk Implications)

To allow the Parent Governor Representative concerned to end her term of office at the current time would result in having to invite nominations and a potential ballot for a new Parent Governor Representative. This is not considered to be practical, particularly given the current position with Covid-19. It is also considered that the Parent Governor concerned should be offered the same opportunity to continue in the role as the other Parent Governor was offered in November 2020.

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

There are no costs associated with the proposal, rather avoiding a potential ballot will negate the possibility of printing costs, together with associated officer time.

**(A) Revenue Costs**

# Agenda Item 10

See above.

## (B) Capital Costs

See above.

### Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001 apply in this case.	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>  The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Yes
Have a neutral impact	No
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Postponing the possibility of an election for a replacement Parent Governor will negate any necessity in printing ballot forms at the current time.	

### Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Extending the appointment of the Parent Governor Representative concerned will allow the scrutiny expertise gained by the individual to be retained by the Committee for up to a further two years.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above.
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above.
Place – leadership and influencer: As above.
Drivers of change and reform: As above.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Not applicable.

Greater income for social investment: Not applicable.
Cleaner Greener Not applicable.

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

**(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6602/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4803/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

**(B) External Consultations**

The Parent Governor Representative concerned has indicated their willingness to continue in their role.

**Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Debbie Campbell
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 2254
Email Address:	debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk

**Appendices:**

There are no appendices to this report

**Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection.

**1. Introduction/Background**

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) to have two parent governor representatives who have voting rights on the committee on education matters. The Parent Governor Representatives are normally appointed for a two-year term of office.

# Agenda Item 10

- 1.2 The term of office for one of the current Parent Governor Representatives is due to expire at the end of November 2021.
- 1.3 A vacancy would require the Council to seek nominations from existing Parent Governors from local maintained schools. In the event of more than one nomination, a ballot would be required.
- 1.4 A similar situation arose in November 2020 with the other Parent Governor Representative. Given the situation with Covid-19, particularly within the Liverpool City Region area, Council officers were reluctant to hold a ballot, which could not be held electronically. Rather, ballots would need to be returned to a Council office in the post. With a few exceptions due to logistical reasons, most Council staff were, and still are, working remotely, and the receipt of postal ballots present logistical difficulties. It could also potentially put both voting Parent Governors and Council staff handling ballots at risk of the virus.

## **2. Matters for Consideration**

- 2.1 The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001 apply in this case. The Regulations state that the Term of Office shall not be “greater than four years.”
- 2.2 Given that the other Parent Governor Representative was able to continue in her role for a further 2 years, officers consider that it is fair and equitable to offer the same opportunity to the Parent Governor Representative whose term of office is currently due to expire.
- 2.3 The relevant officers have approached the Parent Governor Representative concerned, to ask about the possibility of retaining the services of the individual, and they have indicated a willingness to continue in the role.
- 2.4 Arguably, there is still an element of risk for both Parent Governors and Council staff by potentially holding a postal ballot and officers are keen to mitigate Covid 19 risks, wherever possible.
- 2.5 By continuing in the role, the Committee will retain the expertise and experience of the individual concerned and avoid the risk of a ballot that is arguably non-essential at the current time.



<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	16 November 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Work Programme 2021/22, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Children's Social Care Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To review the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of 2021/22; to report on progress of the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group; to report on progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group; to identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan; and to receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## Recommendations:

That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2021/22, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be agreed, along with any additional items to be included and agreed;
- (2) the progress of the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group be noted;
- (3) progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group be noted;
- (4) items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit of the Committee, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be considered and any agreed items be included in the work programme referred to in (1) above; and
- (5) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

# Agenda Item 11

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2021/22; identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny “adds value” to the Council; and to comply with a decision of the Committee to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues before making formal decisions.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

No alternative options have been considered as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to approve its Work Programme and identify scrutiny review topics.

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from the consideration of a key decision or relating to a recommendation arising from a Working Group review will be reported to Members at the appropriate time.

**(A) Revenue Costs – see above**

**(B) Capital Costs – see above**

## Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from the consideration of reports referred to in the Work Programme will be contained in such reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.	

**Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:**

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report. Reference in the Work Programme to any other reports could impact on the Council's Core Purposes, in which case they will be referred to in the report when submitted.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As Above
Commission, broker and provide core services: As Above
Place – leadership and influencer: As Above
Drivers of change and reform: As Above
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As Above
Greater income for social investment: As Above
Cleaner Greener: As Above

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

**(A) Internal Consultations**

The Work Programme Report is not subject to FD/LD consultation. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the Work Programme report will be included in those reports as appropriate.

**(B) External Consultations**

Not applicable

**Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Debbie Campbell
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2254
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk">debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk</a>

**Appendices:**

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A - Work Programme for 2021/22; and
- Appendix B - Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection.

# Agenda Item 11

## Introduction/Background

### 1. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

- 1.1 The Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2021/22 is set out at **Appendix A** to the report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.
- 1.2 Members are requested to consider whether there are any other items that they wish the Committee to consider, that fall within the terms of reference of the Committee. The Work Programme will be submitted to each meeting of the Committee during 2021/22 and updated, as appropriate.
- 1.3 **The Committee is requested to comment on the Work Programme for 2021/22, as appropriate, and note that additional items may be added to the Programme at future meetings of the Committee during this Municipal Year.**

### 2. HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE WORKING GROUP

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Committee held on 10 November 2020, the former Chair reported that Members of the Committee would be invited to serve on the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group, established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills), and a copy of the draft Scoping Document would be circulated to Members to aid them in their deliberations on this matter.
- 2.2 Councillor Murphy, a Member of this Committee, agreed to serve on the Working Group.
- 2.3 Councillors Janis Blackburne, Dave Robinson and Anne Thompson, from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills), have agreed to be Members of the Working Group.
- 2.4 The table below sets out Working Group activity.

Meeting Date	Activity
4 December 2020	The Working Group appointed Councillor Robinson as its Lead Member; and approved its Scoping Document to review the topic of housing support services provided to vulnerable people by non-governmental organisations and charities and their links to statutory agencies covered by the Communities and Housing portfolio. This is a wide-ranging topic and will include looking at accommodation and support services provided to Asylum Seekers, Syrian Refugees, those fleeing domestic violence and vulnerable homeless households. A meeting will be held shortly to appoint the Lead

	member and approve the scoping document and commence the review
22 January 2021	The Working Group will consider information on the scale and location in Sefton of supported accommodation for the cohorts of vulnerable people within the scope of this review; the comments raised by Members in their deliberation on the Scoping Document for example, details of the Serco contract specification with the home Office; and profiles of service users in relation to age, gender, children; and the support services commissioned by the Council and the accommodation related to those services; and the associated support service specifications.
26 February 2021	The Working Group interviewed witnesses from Venus Charity, a former Asylum Seeker, a Syrian Refugee, the Bosco Society and service users the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority; and considered a report on Serco Postcode Checks.
23 April 2021	The Working Group interviewed witnesses from Serco, the Home Office and Migrant Help.
24 June 2021	The Working Group interviewed a witness from Migrant Help; and consider information requested at previous meetings.
27 July 2021	The Working Group considered information on the 6 Monthly Asylum Procurement Report for the period 1 January to 30 June 2021; and approved recommendations for inclusion in the Final Report. The Final Report was subsequently signed off by Members following email exchanges. It is anticipated that the Final Report will be submitted for approval to the Committee on 21 September 2021 and then on to Cabinet and Council for final approval.

2.5 The Final Report of the Working Group was submitted to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) held on 21 September 2021 and the Committee approved the Final Report. The Cabinet, at its meeting held on 7 October 2021 also approved the Final Report. Approval of the Working Group report will be required by the Council at its meeting to be held on 18 November 2021.

2.6 **The Committee is requested to note the progress of the Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group.**

### 3. **SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC 2021/22 – IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM WORKING GROUP**

3.1 At the meeting of the Committee held on 28 September 2021, the Committee agreed that:

a working group on the impact of Covid 19 on the primary curriculum be established, to include the consideration of the impact of lockdown and home schooling, comprised of the following Members of the Committee:

- Councillor Spencer
- Councillor Yvonne Sayers

# Agenda Item 11

- Mrs. S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member
- Ms. M. McDermott, Parent Governor Representative;

(Minute No. 22 (4) refers).

3.2 At the time of drafting this report the initial meeting of the working group is scheduled for 9 November 2021, when it is anticipated that members will appoint the lead member and scope the review. Any developments will be reported verbally to the Committee.

3.3 **The Committee is requested to note the progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group.**

## 4. PRE-SCRUTINY OF ITEMS IN THE KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

4.1 Members may request to pre-scrutinise items from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit (terms of reference) of this Committee. The Forward Plan, which is updated each month, sets out the list of items to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration during the next four-month period.

4.2 The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.

4.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has requested that only those key decisions that fall under the remit of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be included on the agenda for consideration.

4.4 The latest Forward Plan, published on 29 October 2021, is attached at **Appendix B** for this purpose. For ease of identification, items listed on the Forward Plan for the first time appear as shaded.

4.5 There is just one item within the current Plan that falls under the remit of the Committee on this occasion, namely:

- High Needs Funding Allocations

4.6 Should Members require further information in relation to any item on the Key Decision Forward Plan, would they please contact the relevant Officer named against the item in the Plan, prior to the Meeting.

4.7 **The Committee is invited to consider items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix B to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the Work Programme referred to in (1) above.**

## 5. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 5.1 During the October/November 2019 cycle of meetings, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered a report on the guidance produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government relating to Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities following on from the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny. This Committee considered the matter at its meeting held on 15 October 2019 (Minute No. 32 refers).
- 5.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees all agreed the recommendations contained in the report, one of which being that updates on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (LCRCAO&S) be included in the Work Programme report considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- 5.3 In accordance with the above decision, information on the LCRCAO&S is set out below.

## 5.4 **Role**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was established by the Combined Authority in May 2017 in accordance with the Combined Authorities Order 2017.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Scrutinise the decision and actions taken by the Combined Authority or the Metro Mayor;
- Provide a "critical friend" to policy and strategy development;
- Undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region; and
- Monitor the delivery of the Combined Authority's strategic plan.

## 5.5 **Membership**

The Committee is made up of 3 elected Members from each of the constituent Local Authorities of the LCR Combined Authority, along with one elected Member from both the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

Sefton's appointed Members are Councillors Hansen, Howard and Waterfield. Councillor Howard is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

Councillor Patrick Moloney of Liverpool City Council is the representative of the Liberal Democrat Group on the Committee. Councillor Sir Ron Watson of Sefton MBC is the representative of the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

## 5.6 **Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. Councillor Steve Radford, a Liberal Party and Independent Group Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Chair for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

# Agenda Item 11

## 5.7 Quoracy Issues

A high number of meetings of the LCRCAO&S have been inquorate in the past.

The quorum for meetings of the LCRCAO&S is 14, two-thirds of the total number of members, 20. This high threshold is not set by the Combined Authority but is set out in legislation.

The Combined Authority's Monitoring Officer will be looking to work with the Monitoring Officers from the other Combined Authorities to identify what problems they are experiencing with Scrutiny and how/if they had overcome them. Representations to Government would also be considered once all options locally to resolve the quorum issue had been exhausted. The CA Monitoring Officer would then be able to provide evidence to Government that the quorum level was obstructing the work of scrutiny within the CA.

## 5.8 Meetings

Information on all meetings and membership of the LCRCAO&S can be obtained using the following link:

<https://moderngov.merseytravel.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=365&Year=0>

### **Latest Meeting – 3 November 2021**

The latest meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 3 November 2021 and was quorate.

Matters considered at the meeting related to:

- Verbal Update from Metro Mayor S Rotherham
- Update on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Corporate Planning and Proposed Reporting Practice
- Race Equality Programme Update
- Developing the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Equality Strategy
- Update on the Air Quality Action Plan and its Integration into the Climate Action Plan
- Work Programme 2021/22

The next meeting of the LCRCAO&S will be held on 20 January 2022.

Details of all meetings can be obtained using the link referred to above

## 5.9 ***The Committee is requested to note the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.***



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)

## WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>6 JULY 21 Bootle</b>	<b>28 SEPTEMBER 21 Southport</b>	<b>16 NOVEMBER 21 Bootle</b>	<b>25 JANUARY 22 Southport</b>	<b>15 MARCH 22 Bootle</b>
<b>Regular Reports:</b>					
Cabinet Member Update Reports (Julie Campbell-Stenhouse/Debbie Campbell)	X	X	X	X	X
Work Programme Update (Debbie Campbell)	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Service Operational Reports:</b>					
General Update on Covid-19 In Schools (Verbal Update) (Tricia Davies)	X				
SEND Continuous Improvement Plan Update (Jan McMahan/Gill Norman)	X	X		X	
Children's Social Care Improvement Journey (Laura Knights)	X			X	
Persistent Pupil Absence Working Group – Six Month Review of Recommendations (Tricia Davies/Tracy McKeating)		X			

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>6 JULY 21 Bootle</b>	<b>28 SEPTEMBER 21 Southport</b>	<b>16 NOVEMBER 21 Bootle</b>	<b>25 JANUARY 22 Southport</b>	<b>15 MARCH 22 Bootle</b>
Sefton Integrated Care Partnership Development (Eleanor Moulton)		<b>X</b>			
Sefton Local Safeguarding Children Board - Annual Report (Caroline McKenna)		<b>X</b>			
Fostering Service Annual Report (Laura Knights)		<b>X</b>			
Adoption Annual Report (Laura Knights)		<b>X</b>			
Corporate Parenting Board (Annual Report) (Laura Knights)		<b>X</b>			
Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report (Caroline McKenna)		<b>X</b>			
Update on Children's Improvement Board (Caroline McKenna)			<b>X</b>		
School Attendance (Tricia Davies/Tracy McKeating)			<b>X</b>		

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>6 JULY 21 Bootle</b>	<b>28 SEPTEMBER 21 Southport</b>	<b>16 NOVEMBER 21 Bootle</b>	<b>25 JANUARY 22 Southport</b>	<b>15 MARCH 22 Bootle</b>
NEETs (Claire Maguire)			X		
Virtual School Report (Tricia Davies/Mary Palin)			X		
School Places and Impact of Housing Developments on Education (Tricia Davies/Marie Stevenson)			X		
Parent Governor Representative (Debbie Campbell)			X		
Sefton Integrated Care Partnership Development (Eleanor Moulton)				X	
Children's Services Performance Reporting – a Refreshed Approach (Eleanor Moulton)				X	
<b>NHS Updates</b>					
Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Across Sefton – Update Report (CCGs)				X	

Date of Meeting	6 JULY 21 Bootle	28 SEPTEMBER 21 Southport	16 NOVEMBER 21 Bootle	25 JANUARY 22 Southport	15 MARCH 22 Bootle
Review of Health Services for Children Looked After & Safeguarding in Sefton – Update on Actions Being Undertaken (CCGs)				<b>X</b>	

Performance Reports for Key Children’s Services (To include reps of Alder Hey & Mersey Care) (CCGs)					<b>X</b>
Review of Looked After Children and Safeguarding) (CCGs)					<b>X</b>



## SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

**FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 DECEMBER 2021 - 31 MARCH 2022**

This Forward Plan sets out the details of the key decisions which the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members or Officers expect to take during the next four month period. The Plan is rolled forward every month and is available to the public at least 28 days before the beginning of each month.

A Key Decision is defined in the Council's Constitution as:

1. any Executive decision that is not in the Annual Revenue Budget and Capital Programme approved by the Council and which requires a gross budget expenditure, saving or virement of more than £100,000 or more than 2% of a Departmental budget, whichever is the greater;
2. any Executive decision where the outcome will have a significant impact on a significant number of people living or working in two or more Wards

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the matters listed below may do so by contacting the relevant officer listed against each Key Decision, within the time period indicated.

Under the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, a Key Decision may not be taken, unless:

- it is published in the Forward Plan;
- 5 clear days have lapsed since the publication of the Forward Plan; and
- if the decision is to be taken at a meeting of the Cabinet, 5 clear days notice of the meeting has been given.

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made, even though they have not been included in the Forward Plan in accordance with Rule 26 (General Exception) and Rule 28 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

Copies of the following documents may be inspected at the Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle L20 7AE or accessed from the Council's website: [www.sefton.gov.uk](http://www.sefton.gov.uk)

- Council Constitution
- Forward Plan
- Reports on the Key Decisions to be taken
- Other documents relating to the proposed decision may be submitted to the decision making meeting and these too will be made available by the contact officer named in the Plan
- The minutes for each Key Decision, which will normally be published within 5 working days after having been made

Some reports to be considered by the Cabinet/Council may contain exempt information and will not be made available to the public. The specific reasons (Paragraph No(s)) why such reports are exempt are detailed in the Plan and the Paragraph No(s) and descriptions are set out below:-

# Agenda Item 11

APPENDIX B

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or b) to make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime
8. Information falling within paragraph 3 above is not exempt information by virtue of that paragraph if it is required to be registered under—
  - (a) the Companies Act 1985;
  - (b) the Friendly Societies Act 1974;
  - (c) the Friendly Societies Act 1992;
  - (d) the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978;
  - (e) the Building Societies Act 1986; or
  - (f) the Charities Act 1993.
9. Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992
10. Information which—
  - (a) falls within any of paragraphs 1 to 7 above; and
  - (b) is not prevented from being exempt by virtue of paragraph 8 or 9 above, is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Cabinet and Council which are held at the Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle or the Town Hall, Lord Street, Southport. The dates and times of the meetings are published on [www.sefton.gov.uk](http://www.sefton.gov.uk) or you may contact the Democratic Services Section on telephone number 0151 934 2068.

**NOTE:**

*For ease of identification, items listed within the document for the first time will appear shaded.*

**Dwayne Johnson**  
**Chief Executive**

## FORWARD PLAN INDEX OF ITEMS

Item Heading	Officer Contact
High Needs Funding Allocations	Nick Carbonaro <a href="mailto:nick.carbonaro@sefton.gov.uk">nick.carbonaro@sefton.gov.uk</a>

## SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>High Needs Funding Allocations</b> Review of Sefton's funding allocations to Special Schools and other SEND Resource Units.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	2 Dec 2021 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 04/11/2021 to 02/12/2021. Reason: internal consultations are still being undertaken on the proposal			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Children's Services and Safeguarding			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Officers and Executive Leadership Team and Regional Colleagues			
Method(s) of Consultation	meetings and emails			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	High Needs Funding Allocations			
Contact Officer(s) details	Nick Carbonaro nick.carbonaro@sefton.gov.uk			