



Report Title	Ambition for Every Child - a Strategy and Plan for Westmorland and Furness
Meeting	Children, Young People and Families - Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Meeting Date	18 April 2024
Report Author	Milorad Vasic, Director of Children's Services
Lead Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Sue Sanderson, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
Wards Affected	All
PUBLIC. PART EXEMPT, OR FULLY EXEMPT	Public
Appendices (if any)	Ambition for Every Child – Children and Young People's Plan

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The draft document attached as Appendix 1 provides a framework for the work taking place to deliver and improve services for children, young people and their families over the next five years. It is the first overarching document setting out the strategic intentions and priorities since becoming a new council in April 2023; it will be updated every eighteen months to reflect progress and new work taking place.

2. Recommendations

For the reasons set out in this report, Children, Young People and Families - Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 To consider the draft document and provide comment on the content.

3. Information: Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

- 3.1 Whilst there is no longer a formal requirement to produce a Children and Young People's Plan, many councils have continued to develop a strategy and/or plan setting out their priorities and explaining how they will work with partners to achieve change.
- 3.2 The document sets out the principles and approach to our work across the Council and with our partners.
- 3.3 It also includes our strategic priorities for the next five years under four main themes of:
- Improving the life chances of children and young people
 - Caring for and keeping children and young people safe

- Ensuring access to services and provision
- Working in partnership to manage our collective resources effectively

3.4 The more detailed actions for the next eighteen months are detailed and will ensure progress towards the achievement of these priorities. The progress on these actions will be monitored regularly and impact assessed using statutory and local measures, including those in the Council Plan.

4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (People, Climate, Communities, Economy and Culture, Customers, Workforce)

4.1 This document has been developed in the context of the priorities set out in Council Plan, including to improve the support for children we care for and those who have special educational needs, re-design our services for early help and deliver our statutory responsibilities for attendance, school transport and the provision of sufficient school places.

5. Consultation Outcomes

5.1 The draft document is being shared for consideration and comment with Council Members and officers, statutory and voluntary sector partners, children and young people.

5.2 A roll out plan is in place to ensure every opportunity is taken to share the document prior to implementation and capture the feedback received.

5.3 The views of children and young people have already been shared and are included in the document.

6. Alternative Options Considered

6.1 The alternative is to produce the statutory plans for children's services and separate service plans, without an overarching document which provides the framework to secure a coherent approach in collaboration with the broader council and partners.

7. Reasons for the Recommendations

7.1 This document ensures there is clarity about the strategic intentions and priorities for the work of the children's services directorate in the context of limited resources and capacity.

8. Climate and Biodiversity Implications

8.1 The actions to develop more local provision for cared for children and those with special educational needs, as well as delivering early help services through community Family Hubs, will reduce travel distance and the carbon footprint.

8.2 The continued transformation of home to school transport, aimed at improving efficiency and cost effectiveness, will ensure any proposed changes consider the impact on the climate.

9. Legal and Governance Implications

9.1 There are no legal and governance issues.

10. Human Resources Implications

10.1 There are no direct HR implications to consider for this report.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 This report is recommending the implementation of a five year, Children and Young People's Plan. With a focus on strategic service delivery, the proposals are expected to be delivered within allocated service budgets as set out in the 2024-29 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The plan includes work on the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme with the aim of improving the sustainability of DSG High Needs expenditure over time.

12. Background Documents

12.1 Council Delivery Plan