

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

# Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 22 November 2023

Dear Councillor

## CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL - WEDNESDAY, 22ND NOVEMBER, 2023

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Wednesday, 22nd November, 2023 meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel, the following report that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No	Item
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| 5 | <u>Minutes of the previous meeting ( 4 October 2023 ) (report to follow) (Pages 3 - 16)</u> |
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[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

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## Attendance

### Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Stephanie Haynes (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Lovinyer Daley  
Cllr Carol Hyatt  
Cllr Qaiser Azeem (Chair)  
Cllr Jenny Cockayne  
Cllr Jane Francis  
Cllr Sally Green  
Cllr Jeszemma Howl  
Cllr Lamina Lloyd

### Co-opted Members (5)

Wolverhampton Youth Council

### Employees

Earl Piggott-Smith  
Alison Hinds  
Phil Leivers  
Andrew Wolverson

Scrutiny Officer  
Director of Children's Services  
Head of Education Excellence  
Deputy Director of Commissioning and  
Transformation of Children's Services  
Deputy Director of Education  
Childrens Innovation Lead

Brenda Wile  
Alice Vickers

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## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*    *Title*

- 1        **Welcome and Introductions**  
Cllr Qaiser Azeem, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised it was also being live streamed to the press and public.
- 2        **Meeting procedures to be followed**  
The Chair explained the process to be followed during the meeting and for asking questions.
- 3        **Apologies**  
Apologies were received from the following members of the panel:  
  
Cllr Paul Sweet  
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre

Cllr Christopher Haynes  
Cyril Randles – Church of England – Diocese of Lichfield

4 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

5 **Minutes of the previous meeting ( 27 July 2023 )**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 **SEND Written Statement of Action - DFE/NHS monitoring - verbal update**

The Chair invited Brenda Wile, Deputy Director of Education, to present a verbal update on progress in response to SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA).

The Deputy Director advised the panel that support services for children and young people with SEND were inspected by Ofsted about 18 months ago. The outcome of the inspection visit was that a WSOA should be drafted based on addressing six key areas of concern.

The Council has had regular monitoring meetings with colleagues from DFE and NHS England, who act as the regulators on behalf of Ofsted under CQC. The Deputy Director commented that during this period there is evidence of significant progress in four of the areas in the WSOA, but there were two areas of concern which have not yet been completely addressed.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that at the final formal monitoring meeting in November 2023 the expectation is that the WSOA will be signed off by the regulators as having made sufficient progress.

The Deputy Director commented on the positive work of cross-party scrutiny working group who met regularly during this period to provide challenge and to support officers in responding to issues in the WSOA.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that a request has been made to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) when the formal monitoring work by DFE and NHS England of progress ends in November 2023 that this should be replaced by a 'light touch' monitoring arrangement. The expectation is that November 2023 will be the final monitoring meeting with DfE and NHS England regulators and the WSOA will be signed off. The Deputy Director wanted evidence that progress continues in the other areas not yet completed and maintained in areas where good progress has been made.

The Deputy Director highlighted challenges around the development of the diagnostic pathway for children and young people waiting either for a diagnosis of autism or on the waiting list for the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) assessment. The Deputy Director added that these services are the responsibility of health partners, and the Council will continue to support colleagues in addressing these issues by taking a partnership approach that has a positive impact on families where SEND is an issue.

The Deputy Director commented on the significant progress made on keys issue of completing Education and Health and Care plans (EHC).

At the time the service was inspected only 19 per cent of EHC plans were issued within the legislative timescale of 20 weeks and now 90 per cent of plans are being completed in the timescale. The Deputy Director commented that this achievement is 40 per cent higher than the current national average.

The Deputy Director commented on the progress in the graduated response to schools for children with SEND needs but not at the stage where a EHC is required because of the introduction of a new toolkit.

The feedback from parents reports that their children's SEND needs are being addressed at a much earlier stage in schools. This development was seen as a good indicator of the excellent progress being made.

The Deputy Director commented that progress has been made in the commissioning of short breaks offer for SEND children, but further work is needed to meet the needs of families.

The Deputy Director commented that there have been regular monitoring meetings with DfE and NHS England over that 18-month period to ensure that the necessary progress is being made. The evidence presented during this period has demonstrated that.

The Deputy Director proposed that in view of significant progress been made to address most areas of concern in the WSOA that the monitoring work of the cross-party scrutiny group on behalf of the panel should end and be replaced by regular updates on progress of the action plans.

The panel were invited to comment on the update and the proposal.

The Chair commented that it was a positive report and highlighted the progress made since the WSOA was published.

A panel member commented on the positive progress made by the group and the collaborative way members worked together to support the work to address areas of action. The work of officers presenting updates was highlighted and a recognition of the amount of effort and resources needed to address the issues in the WSOA. The proposal to formally end the work on the working group was supported.

A panel member queried what a future 'light touch' by the inspectors to review progress against WSOA actions would involve.

The Deputy Director commented that the 'light touch' inspection would involve visits every three months rather than current arrangement of visits every six weeks.

The Deputy Director offered a reassurance to the panel that regular updates will be provided. The SEND service is likely to be inspected in September 2024 or a later in 2025 and the expectation is that there will be a much more positive report than the previous inspection report.

The Chair queried the frequency of the panel getting reports following the monitoring visits. The Deputy Director commented that the frequency of the light touch monitoring will be at the discretion of the DfE and the NHS England and that inspectors will keep coming back three times during the academic year to check that continued progress is being made.

A panel member queried the age range covered by SEND support. The Deputy Director commented that support to SEND children is provided from birth to the age of 25.

A panel member queried if there the option to reconvene the working group in response to an issue arising in the future. The Chair confirmed that this would be an option if the panel considered it appropriate.

A panel queried the SEND support offered when a young person becomes 18 and as there was concern about the primary focus on young people under 18.

The Deputy Director offered panel reassurance that a lot of work is being done on the transitions stage for young people with SEND in preparation for adulthood and it is a key strand of activity. The Deputy Director acknowledged the concern that young people who may feel like they get less support and service when they reach 16. The Deputy Director added that the service will continue to provide help. The support could continue up to age 25 if care leavers are engaged in education or training.

The Deputy Director repeated the commitment to bring regular updates and progress to the panel and to members of the High 5 group and the opportunity for young people to ask questions.

The panel thanked the presenter for the report.

Resolved:

1. The panel accepted the proposed to formally end the work of the SEND cross-party scrutiny working group and for progress of the WSOA to be monitored as part of the panel work programme.
2. The panel agreed to receive three monthly updates on progress of the WSOA from the Deputy Director of Education, with the option to re-establish the group in response to concerns.

## 7 **Childcare Sufficiency Assessment - Spring 2023**

The Chair invited Phil Leivers, Head of Education Excellence, to present the report.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023 reports on the quality of early years provision, the take-up of early years entitlements and the supply and demand for childcare provision across the City.

The Head of Education Excellence advised the panel that the presentation would provide the opportunity to review work being done in Wolverhampton to encourage and provide early years childcare provision. The Local Authority is required to publish an annual assessment of childcare provision and to present a report to Councillors about how the Council is meeting its duty.

The term 'sufficient childcare' is defined as families being able to find childcare that meets their child's learning needs and enables parents to make a real choice about work and training options.

The Head of Education Excellence added that the assessment is also aimed at businesses who might want to open new childcare provision and encourage them to locate in areas of the City where there is a need for this service. The report will be published on the Council website.

The Head of Education Excellence commented that during the drafting of the report that Government announced a significant development in terms of the widening the entitlement to free childcare places over the next two years. The two main benefits of increasing free childcare entitlement are that it supports the Government's agenda to encourage more parents to be able to go back to work and secondly to meet the development needs of young children.

The report contains information to help parents understand what they might be entitled to in terms of provision.

The Head of Education Excellence advised the panel of the criteria for entitlement to free childcare locally is based on receiving certain benefits. It is estimated that 70 percent of families are eligible to take the Terrific for Twos - Children aged 2 whose families receive certain benefits (including low-income families in receipt of in-work benefits), or those who meet additional non-economic criteria. The Head of Excellence commented on the different types of early years funding entitlement, for example, some children are entitled to free childcare, funded by the government.

There is a regular marketing campaigns to try and encourage more parents to take up the Terrific for Twos offer.

The Head of Education Excellence commented on the range of work being to ensure current childcare provision is efficient and of high quality. It was reported that 93 per cent of early years providers inspected were graded as 'Good' or 'Better' and 89 per cent of schools with a nursery provision were judged as either 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

The Head of Education Excellence advised the panel that there are five members of the Early Years Team supporting the childcare providers across the city, such as private independent nursery settings or schools with nursery settings and child minders. The Early Years Team support providers to make sure they are registered with Ofsted and meet welfare and quality of education requirements.

The Head of Education Excellence commented on other responsibilities of the Early Years Team.

The Head of Education Excellence gave a summary of headlines from the main report based on the findings from the sufficiency assessment, for example, the number of childcare providers has remained consistent, the ward with the lowest availability of childcare for the youngest children is Tettenhall Regis and the area with the most childcare availability was in the Penn ward.

The Head of Education Excellence gave a summary of the recommendations and actions from the findings the childcare sufficiency assessment.

The Head of Education Excellence gave further details of the extension of entitlement from September 2023, the timescales of the new entitlements for the period Autumn 2023 to September 2025.

The Head of Education Excellence advised the panel that the future reports will be different and will include progress towards the increasing the extension of entitlements and the introduction of childminder grants to providers wanting to register with Ofsted or with a Childminder Agency as a childminder.

The Head of Education Excellence offered to bring progress to a future meeting of the panel.

The panel were invited to comment of the report and presentation.

The Chair congratulated on the presentation and welcomed the plans to increase entitlement for parents to access childcare provision and to encourage new childcare providers. The Chair also congratulated the Head of Education Excellence and the performance of the Early Years Team.

A panel member queried the role of the local authority in assessing the quality of wraparound care provided by academies.

The Head of Education Excellence advised the panel that the Council has a duty to ensure there is sufficient provision of childcare in Wolverhampton. The Council works with academies to make sure families can access this service.

A panel expressed concern about the lack of provision of wraparound childcare and challenge of parents covering the school holiday periods. There was also concern about the impact of high levels of deprivation and the response from providers that there is not enough need for the service.

A panel member commented on the lack of play schemes, currently there are only four schemes listed on the Council website and queried plans to increase the level of provision to meet future needs.

The location of current provision was highlighted as an issue as current providers and presents a challenge to parents who may have to travel across the city to access it.

The Head of Education Excellence agreed to discuss the concerns raised with colleagues planning holiday activities, and added there is lot of provision while acknowledging that the offer also needs to be accessible.

The Head of Education Excellence agreed to investigate what more can be done to increase the provision of wrap around care and play provision. The Head of Education Excellence added that the service has asked schools to speak to all parents to find what about their needs for this type and to be able to understand the level of demand for this type of provision.

A panel member welcomed the response and highlighted the mismatch between the current offer of wraparound care and the working patterns of families working full time who may not have the flexibility. The importance of ensuring future provision considered this issue was highlighted.

A panel member queried the take up of Terrific for Twos offer for Wolverhampton as there was concern the figure was quite low and actions planned to increase the number of childminders, particularly in those wards where provision does not match the level of need. The importance of promoting the support available to people considering childminding as a career and the introduction of new government funded



grants was also highlighted. There was concern that childminders in some wards were not getting the level of support needed.

The Head of Education Excellence advised the panel that the current take up for Terrific for Twos, which provides 15 hours of free childcare to eligible parents and carers, is at 70 percent, this compares to 90 per cent in some other authorities. The current rate is now back to pre-Covid levels.

The Head of Education Excellence commented there is a publicity campaign to promote the take up of the offer and to encourage child minders, while recognising some families choosing to arrange childcare with the support of relatives. The service is happy to work with ward members on a targeted promotional campaign to encourage more people to consider becoming a childminder.

A panel member queried the viability of the Government plans to increase childcare provision considering the challenges highlighted in the presentation, for example, the low numbers of childcare providers and the difficulty in meeting demand from parents and carers, and affordability issues. The plans to increase childcare provision were welcomed.

The Head of Education Excellence commented that childcare providers have said that the current hourly rate per child is not sufficient to meet their business tax, rent needs and staffing costs. The Council has a limited budget to support childcare providers with such costs. The revised rate is expected to support the expansion of the childcare providers as a result on the significant level of Government investment.

The recent decision by Co-operative Childcare in Wolverhampton to open a large childcare provision in the City was highlighted an example of progress.

A panel member queried the plans beyond the use of social media to promote the new offer and make sure families with language barriers are made aware so that access the service.

The Head of Education Excellence commented that translations of the information are available in other languages and the offer has been promoted on postcards, carrier bags and when the Early Years Team is working in the community. The service is being promoted through other services that families might be accessing.

A panel member commented that practice nurse facilitators could also be used to promote the offer as they are linked to GP and work across the city.

The Head of Education Excellence agreed to follow up on the suggestion.

The panel thanked the presenter for the report.

Resolved:

1. The Head of Education Excellence to provide a further progress report to the panel based on the timescales for the new entitlements outlined in the presentation.
2. The Head of Education Excellence to note the comments and suggestions of the panel on the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023.

## 8 **WST Exploitation Thematic Review**

The Chair invited Andrew Wolverson, Deputy Director of Commissioning and Transformation of Children's Services, to present the report.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that every year several independent reviews are commissioned. The areas of child exploitation and knife crime were selected for thematic reviews this year. The presentation would provide a details of review findings and recommendations.

The Deputy Director explained that the Council that an external review of child exploitation in Wolverhampton was commissioned by Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Board (WST). WST is the statutory partnership body with responsibility for safeguarding issues across the city.

The Deputy Director commented on the purpose and aims of the review. The conclusions of the review findings reported clear evidence of a positive learning culture in Wolverhampton. The report commented on the good progress made in the city in addressing issues of child exploitation. The Deputy Director commented on the deep commitment by professionals to understanding the lived experiences of young people where exploitation is a feature of their lives.

The Deputy Director highlighted some of the key recommendations and linked themes listed below from the review:

- Intelligence and information sharing
- Screening tools
- Training and Professional Development
- Risk Assessment and Response

The Deputy Director gave update on progress and response to the recommendations.

The Deputy Director commented that the review recommendations findings are reflective of the original expectations of the partnership about the progress of the approach take to responding to issues of child exploitation.

The panel were invited to comment on the report.

The Chair of the panel commented on the importance of the issue. The Chair queried if there were any references in the report to issue of exploitation using the internet or social media.

The Deputy Director acknowledged the safeguarding issues linked to the availability of different social media apps and that it is an area of work being done with schools and other groups to respond to the issue. The Deputy Director added that there is a comprehensive programme as part Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education in schools about the safe use of social media apps.

The service also works with parents to help them understand what sites their children accessing, and in addition alerts are sent in response to schools if there are concerns about specific apps that are being used for exploitation purposes.

The Deputy Director reassured the panel that the service is aware of the issue and the need to strengthen the response.

A panel member commented on the importance of the willingness of partners to use and share intelligence to help protect children and overriding priority to be given to issues relating to safeguarding.

A panel member asked for an update report on progress on the work with regional strategic partners to develop an exploitation screening tool to be presented to a future meeting.

A panel member referred to the earlier discussion on use of mobile apps in the exploitation of children and young people and queried if the Council is working with UK Safer Internet Centre to support local efforts.

The Deputy Director commented the service would welcome the opportunity to discuss the issue of exploitation with UK Safer Internet Centre. The Deputy Director reassured the panel that information sharing at the operational level was good and this information is shared at the strategic level so that resources are targeted effectively. The Deputy Director added that a report CSE Problem Profile which previously focused on sexual exploitation has been extended to include other forms of exploitation. The work is being done jointly with colleagues in the police and health and where specific areas of the city are identified such as shopping centres where exploitation is an issue then a cease-and-desist letters will be issued. This was highlighted as an example of the level of information sharing at the operational and strategic levels.

A panel member asked for explanation of terms used in the report – violence needs analysis, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and a ‘reasonable grounds decision’ and funding arrangements for the Power 2 service.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is a detailed health and social report which is led by colleagues in Public Health. The report includes evidence relating to children's mental health that is used to provide a much better understanding of the issue and an assessment of the level of need.

The Director of Children Services advised the panel that the Power 2 service team was set up about three years ago to provide a different way of responding to the risk of exploitation to children and wider family members. The team works in a trauma informed way and work as part of a multi-agency team. The Director commented on benefits of the work done by the team and highlighted the impact of improving outcomes for children and young people.

The team was originally a jointly funded service but has been a Council funded service for the last four years.

A panel member responded to the query and explained that reasonable grounds decision is when a referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

The NRM is a Government framework used to identify and refer potential victims of human trafficking or modern slavery to ensure they receive the appropriate support.

A 'reasonable grounds' decision refers to a situation where a service cannot prove a young person has been a victim of trafficking but has reasonable grounds to believe so. The police will use the assessment to help decide if a young person is a victim or an offender in this situation.

A panel member thanked the presenter for the comprehensive report and welcomed the change in how children are seen and a recognition that what was seen as difficult behaviour is a form of 'communication'.

A panel member queried if there was any specific targeted work being done to identify and support young people with SEND as the report itself identifies this group as being three times more vulnerable to exploitation and sexual abuse.

The Deputy Director commented on the skills and experience of the members of the Power2 team in understanding the traumas that a young person has experienced and have quick access to specialist teams such as educational psychologists and mental health workers who can work with children with additional needs. The Deputy Director accepted that further worked required to support the more vulnerable children in helping to steer them away from the risk of exploitation in the first place. The members of the safeguarding partnership are continuing to look at this issue.

The panel thanked the presenter again for the comprehensive report.

Resolved:

1. The panel agreed to receive an update on progress from the Deputy Director of recommendations detailed in the report to a future meeting.
2. The Deputy Director to note the panel comments on the report and action as appropriate.

## 9 **WST Knife Crime Thematic Review**

The Chair invited the Deputy Director to present the report.

Andrew Wolverson, Deputy Director of Commissioning and Transformation of Children's Services, advised the panel the presentation would include an externally commissioned report for information and a separate Learning Lessons Briefing – Knife Crime Thematic Review. The briefing would be the focus of the presentation to the panel.

The Knife Crime Thematic Review was commissioned by the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Board (WST) in response to three knife crime incidents between April and June 2022. The Deputy Director advised the panel that this was the first published child safeguarding practice review in the city. The learning lessons briefing report was published on 2 October 2023.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that since the three incidents in 2022 which resulted in either death or serious injury there has been another recent incident of death of a young person, which is subject to ongoing investigations.

The Deputy Director commented on added value of the report which was co-authored by someone who was a both a victim and perpetrator of knife crime and that this was the first time this approach had been taken. It was agreed that a survey the views of young people about the issue of knife crime should also be done. About 1000 survey responses were received which has helped to build a picture of the situation locally. In addition, a series of practioner events and interviews with senior leaders within the system was undertaken.

The Deputy Director gave a summary of the main findings of the review. The review identified the following five areas of similarity between victims and perpetrators across the three different cases.

**Gender** – all victims and perpetrators were male.

**Ethnicity** – All victims of the cases that formed a central part of the review were non white.

**Cannabis Misuse** – The use of cannabis was another common factor in cases analysed.

**Cumulative Harm** – The victims and most perpetrators had experienced at one or various points in their lives, exposure to violence.

**Feeling Safe** - The carrying of a weapon carrying is often a tactic used by children and young people to keep them safe from harm.

The Deputy Director reassured the panel that while the region has some the lowest levels of youth violence, and the overall trend has been downward there was a need to avoid complacency based on the statistics which show that violence is not an issue in Wolverhampton.

However, recent knife crime incidents show that when a knife incident does happen, in most cases the result is fatal for the victims involved.

The Deputy Director added the lessons learning briefings have been cascaded through the partnership as the purpose of the review is that it leads to changes in practice and progress in addressing the issues identified in the report.

WST have planned an event where 250 practioners at all levels will meet to discuss the findings of both thematic reviews to look what is being done differently compared to the approach before the review. The Deputy Director commented that this work will not prevent another death and if it does happen; it will not be because of lessons and recommendations being applied from the reviews.

The Deputy Director gave an update on the response to the recommendations from the thematic review.

The Deputy Director invited the panel to comment on the report and presentation.

The Chair thanked the presenter for the report.

A panel member commented that they would have liked to see more than one event a year held to discuss findings from knife crime incidents.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that an event is held annually where practitioners are brought together to look at all the reviews that have happened to talk about the issue. In addition, there are specific events with a wider group of practitioners and other events during the year to share learning and improve practice.

The Director of Children Services reassured panel members that in addition to the annual learning event there is an action plan linked to the review that the members of WST have responsibility for and will be discussed to make sure the work is done and recommendations taken forward.

A panel member asked for a detailed breakdown of the youth survey results.

A panel member queried if there was evidence to suggest seasonal trends may be a factor in when incidents happen, which was referenced in the main report.

A panel member suggested the educational packs for children would also be helpful for teachers to build on other training they may be receiving.

The Deputy Director agreed to share a copy of the survey results with the panel.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that there was no evidence suggesting seasonal trends were a factor in the incidents.

The Deputy Director advised the panel that the service monitors the educational packages used in schools and there is a lot of work being done in relation to the issue of knife crime and helping young people to feel safe.

The service is working in partnership with schools and is aware that they also commission external companies to deliver training to teaching staff. The service has developed toolkits for practitioners and professionals to help them to respond to the issue of knife crime.

The importance of working in partnership in schools and the support of local community to address the issue was highlighted. The role of parents having a good understanding of where their child is and what they are doing outside of the home was also highlighted. The service is working with local communities to get messages out that help young people to feel safe when outside and therefore is no need to carry a knife.

A panel member shared personal experiences of the importance of children and young people having access to local play schemes and other forms of community support. The provision of these facilities or local people acting as positive role models in the past getting involved has had a key role in helping young people. There was specific concern about the extent of cannabis use and vaping and its impact on young people. There was also a need to consider the home lives of children and the role of the local authority in supporting them and their parents or carers in dealing with these complex areas.

The Deputy Director acknowledged the importance of taking a whole system approach and recognised the issues and concerns highlighted. The issue of children being excluded from school was identified as an immediate risk as schools provide a protective environment. The Council is working with schools to make sure that when young person has been excluded that they continue to have access to the education and other support needed.

The Deputy Director commented on the range of work being done to support young people who have been excluded from school and to make them aware of the services available locally that could help and support them.

A panel member shared her personal experiences and fear of being a victim and the impact that this has had. The promotion of misogynistic attitudes towards women and girls on social media was highlighted a real issue and there was also a culture in school of not reporting this behaviour because of a fear of the being bullied online as a result.

The lack of follow up from organisations for young people with mental health issues who still need support was highlighted as a concern. The importance of building the emotional resilience of our young people was highlighted. The panel member invited the Deputy Director to attend a meeting of Wolverhampton Youth Council to have a detailed debate on the matter.

The Deputy Director acknowledged the concerns raised.

A panel member shared the concerns about the issue of knife crime and emotional impact on parents worried about their children and suggested consideration is given to getting the 'Knife Angel' statue to come back to Wolverhampton as part of a programme of education and awareness raising. The visual impact of the statue was highlighted. The promotion of knife surrender bins was also suggested as idea to be considered to respond to the issue of knife crime.

The Deputy Director agreed to check with the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership on this request as they originally commissioned the sculpture, and it was scheduled to be displayed in Wolverhampton before the pandemic.

The Deputy Director commented that the weapon surrender bins are located in different areas and can be moved in response in particular hotspots. The location for bins is based on evidence. The Deputy Director commented that surrender bins have a limited impact and in the most recent knife crime incident a bin has been provided. There is acceptance of the need to balance the value of having bins and not creating the impression that knife crime incidents are rife in the area and add to feelings of anxiety for young people. The Deputy Director commented on the added value of people with shared experiences of knife crime giving talks in schools to raise awareness of the issue and reassured the panel that the service continues to challenge itself and its response to incidents of knife crime.

The panel discussed the important work of Trading Standards service in doing test purchases in response to concerns about underage selling of vapes. The work of the service was congratulated for its quick response to complaints from ward councillors and loss of licence for traders following a successful prosecution.

A panel member commented on the need for enforcement action for people caught with knives while understanding the reasons given that it was important to act as there is a risk that it will be used to intimidate other young people.

A panel member commented on the concerns about vaping among young people and the normalisation of this behaviour and stressed that this was an issue for the wider community to address and not just an issue for schools.

The Chair thanked the presenter again for a comprehensive report.

The Deputy Director was asked to provide a response to the issues raised during the panel discussion and to review progress against the action plan at a future meeting.

Resolved:

1. The Deputy Director to note the panel comments on the report and presentation and action them as appropriate.
2. The Deputy Director to present a further report to update members on progress at a future meeting.

10

**Children and Young People - Draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2023 - 2024**

The Chair invited Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, to present the report.

The Scrutiny Officer commented on the future agenda items on the panel work programme.

The panel discussed the panel work programme.

The Chair invited panel members to submit suggestions for the panel work programme.

Resolved:

The panel agreed to note the report.