

# Cabinet

## 22 March 2017

**Time** 5.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Executive

**Venue** Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

### Membership

**Chair** Cllr Roger Lawrence (Lab)

**Vice-chair** Cllr Peter Bilson (Lab)

### Labour

Cllr Claire Darke  
Cllr Steve Evans  
Cllr Val Gibson  
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal  
Cllr Andrew Johnson  
Cllr John Reynolds  
Cllr Sandra Samuels  
Cllr Paul Sweet

Quorum for this meeting is five Councillors.

### Information for the Public

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

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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

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# Agenda

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

*Item No.*    *Title*

### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1            **Apologies for absence**
- 2            **Declaration of interests**
- 3            **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 12)  
[For approval]
- 4            **Matters arising**  
[To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting]

### DECISION ITEMS (AMBER - DELEGATED TO THE CABINET)

- 5            **Budget Adjustment to reflect Adult Social Care Funding** (Pages 13 - 16)  
[To approve the amendment to the 2017/18 Budget in light of the Spring Budget announced on 8 March 2017.]
- 6            **Review of Discretionary Housing Payment Policy** (Pages 17 - 34)  
[Revision and update of policy to incorporate Department for Work and Pensions guidance and welfare reform changes.]
- 7            **Improving Outcomes within the Early Years** (Pages 35 - 84)  
[To approve the Early Years Strategy and to inform Cabinet of the outcomes of the recent consultation in relation to the development of the Early Years Strategy, which includes The City's Definition of School Readiness.]
- 8            **Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20** (Pages 85 - 118)  
[To endorse the city's three year community safety and harm prevention strategy and proposals for implementation]
- 9            **The Vision for Education 2030 - Shaping a city of learning** (Pages 119 - 136)  
[To approve the City of Wolverhampton Council's Vision for Education 2030.]
- 10          **Exclusion of press and public**  
[To pass the following resolution:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below.]

**PART 2 - EXEMPT ITEMS, CLOSED TO PRESS AND PUBLIC**

11      **Senior Management Structure 2017**

[To provide an update on the Senior Management Structure.]

Report to follow.

Information relating to any individual. Para (1)

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### Attendance

#### Members of the Cabinet

Cllr Roger Lawrence (Chair)  
Cllr Peter Bilson (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Steve Evans  
Cllr Val Gibson  
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal  
Cllr Andrew Johnson  
Cllr John Reynolds  
Cllr Sandra Samuels  
Cllr Paul Sweet

#### Employees

Keith Ireland	Managing Director
Mark Taylor	Director of Finance
Tim Johnson	Strategic Director for Place
Linda Sanders	Strategic Director for People
Kevin O'Keefe	Director of Governance
Claire Nye	Chief Accountant
Jaswinder Kaur	Democratic Services Manager
Philippa Salmon	Democratic Services Officer

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

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i>   |
|-----------------|--|
| 1               | <b>Apologies for absence</b><br>Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Claire Darke.   |
| 2               | <b>Declaration of interests</b><br>Councillor Sandra Samuels declared an interest in connection with Item 10 ' Libraries Transformation – Decision to Consult on a Ten Year Library Strategy'.   |
| 3               | <b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b><br>That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 January 2017 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.   |
| 4               | <b>Matters arising</b><br>There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.  |
| 5               | <b>Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 quarter three review and 2017/18 to 2021/22 budget strategy</b><br>Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the Capital Programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 quarter three review and 2017/18 to 2020/21 budget strategy for approval and recommendation to Full Council. The report highlighted the actual projected outturn |

at 78% for the general fund and 100% for housing revenue. Funds had been identified for new projects, including £6 million for the City Learning Quarter, £2.5 million for the relocation of the retail market to Southside and £1.1 million for the Art Gallery Improvement Scheme and the development of Bantock House Complex.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to:

1. Approve the revised medium term General Fund capital programme of £314.5 million, an increase of £14.5 million from the previously approved programme (paragraph 2.4), reflecting the latest projected expenditure for the medium term.
2. Approve the additional General Fund resources of £14.5 million identified for;
  - i. twelve new projects totalling £11.1 million (paragraph 4.1);
  - ii. eight existing projects totalling £3.4 million (paragraphs 3.14).
  
1. That the General Fund virements totalling £2.4 million detailed at Appendix C be approved for;
  - i. existing projects totalling £1.5 million (paragraph 3.15);
  - ii. new projects totalling £948,000 (paragraph 4.2).
2. That the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) virements totalling £400,000 for existing projects (paragraph 3.15) be approved;
3. That the updated schedules of works for the capital projects be approved under the following directorate (paragraph 3.16);
  - i. Corporate: ICTS, WV Active – Leisure Centres and in relation to Education; Schools Capital Maintenance, Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Primary School Expansion Programme (appendix D1).
  - ii. People: Sports Investment Strategy, Co-location Programme, Children in Need - Aiming High for Disabled Children, Community Hubs and Early Education – Two Year Education Pilot (appendix D2).
  - iii. Place: Corporate Asset Management Programme, Urban Parks Refurbishment Programme, Disposals Programme, Accessing Growth Fund, Managing Short Trips, Highway Structures (bridges, subways, retaining walls), Southside Programme, Maintenance of classified roads, Maintenance of unclassified roads, Non - Highway Structures, Energy Efficiency Measures, Street Lighting, Highway Improvement Programme, Safety Programme and Cycling - Cycle Route Improvements (appendix D3).
  
4. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance to approve the allocation of the provision of the 'Transformation Development Efficiency Strategy' to individual transformation projects in order to benefit from the capital receipts flexibility announced in the Autumn Statement 2015 and in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (paragraph 3.22).
5. That it be noted that the General Fund expenditure position at quarter three of 2016/17 for existing projects stands at 40.6% of the approved capital budget.
6. That it be noted that the General Fund forecast outturn for existing projects for 2016/17 stands at 78.3% of the approved capital budget.
7. That it be noted that the HRA expenditure position at quarter three of 2016/17 for existing projects stands at 57.8% of the approved capital budget.
8. That it be noted that the HRA forecast outturn position for existing projects for 2016/17 stands at 100.0% of the approved capital budget.
9. That it be noted that this report incorporates four revenue budget reduction and income generation proposals which require capital resources and are subject to

approval by this meeting and Council on 1 March 2017 as part of the Budget 2017/18 setting process, see report “2017/18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 – 2019/20” on the agenda. The inclusion of the four projects in this report is on the assumption that approval will be given and therefore, their progression is dependent on that decision. The names of the budget reduction and income generation proposals/projects are:

- Waste & Recycling strategy - service transformation
- Highways Management
- Commercial Facilities - Northcote Farm
- District Parking

If the budget reduction and income generation proposals are not approved, the capital programme will be reduced accordingly.

10. That it be noted that there are two new projects requiring internal resources included in this report but which are subject to separate detailed project reports to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 28 February 2017. The inclusion of these projects is for budget approval purposes and is on the assumption that the approval to progress with each project is given on 28 February 2017. As their progression is dependent on that decision, if the projects are not approved, the capital programme will be reduced accordingly. The names of the projects are:
  - Art Gallery Improvement Scheme
  - Development of Bantock House Complex
11. That it be noted that a separate report on this agenda seeks approval to the conversion of £1.0 million of loan capital to WV Living into investment in share capital (paragraph 3.20).

## 6 **Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18**

Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18, for recommendation to Full Council. The report outlined the borrowing limits and rules by which the Council’s finances were managed.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to:

1. Approve the authorised borrowing limit for 2017/18 as required under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 be set at £1,024.1 million (PI 5, appendix C).
2. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18 as set out in appendix A to this report.
3. Approve the Annual Investment Strategy 2017/18 as set out in appendix B to this report.
4. Approve the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators as set out in appendix C to this report.
5. Approve the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement setting out the method used to calculate MRP for 2017/18 onwards as set out in appendix D to this report.
6. Approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices as set out in appendix F to this report.
7. Approve that authority continues to be delegated to the Director of Finance to amend the Treasury Management Policy and Practices and any corresponding changes required to the Treasury Management Strategy, the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators, the Investment Strategy and the Annual MRP Statement to ensure they remain aligned. Any amendments will be reported to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Cabinet (Resources) Panel as appropriate.

8. Note that, as a result of the changes to the MRP policy approved and implemented during 2014/15, the MRP charge for financial year 2017/18 will be zero increasing to £8.2 million in 2018/19 (paragraph 2.10).
9. Note that Cabinet (Resources) Panel and Council will receive regular Treasury Management reports during 2017/18 on performance against the key targets and Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators in the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy as set out in paragraph 2.8 and appendices B and C to this report.
1. That it be noted, the financial information included in this report is based on the 'Capital programme 2016/17 to 2020/21 quarter three review and 2017/18 to 2021/22 budget strategy' report also on the agenda for this meeting. The capital report is subject to a number of reports being separately approved by Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 28 February 2017. Therefore, if these approvals are not obtained, a revised version of this report will be presented to Council on 1 March 2017.

7 **2017/18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 - 2019/20**  
Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the 2017/18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 – 2019/20, which would be subject to debate at the next meeting of Full Council. It was noted that, following discussions with the Department for Communities and Local Government, additional funding would not be received from the final local government finance settlement.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to:

1. Approve the net budget requirement for 2017/18 of £216.2 million for General Fund services (paragraph 13.4).
2. Approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20 as detailed in Table 6 and the budget preparation parameters underpinning the MTFS as detailed in Appendix A.
3. Approve the budget allocation for Adult Social Care outlined in the report in accordance with the Minimum Funding Level for Adult Social Care (section 11.0).
4. Approve a Council Tax for Council services in 2017/18 of £1,481.12 for a Band D property, being an increase of 3.99% on 2016/17 levels, which incorporates the 2% increase in relation to Adult Social Care (paragraph 7.3).
5. Approve that work starts on developing budget reductions for 2018/19 and progress be reported to Cabinet in July 2017 (paragraph 13.5).
1. That the changes to the 2017/18 draft budget for General Fund services, since the draft budget was last reported to Cabinet on 18 October 2016, as detailed in sections 3 to 12 and summarised in Appendix A be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance to amend the budget, to reflect any changes arising out of the final settlement, for presentation to Council (paragraph 3.3).
3. That the responses made after consideration of the outcome of the budget consultation (section 10.0) be approved.
4. That the budget for 2017/18 is in balance without the use of general reserves (paragraph 13.3) be noted.
5. That it be noted that, in the opinion of the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), the 2017/18 budget estimates are robust (paragraph 13.4).



6. That it be noted that, the Council's arrangements with the West Midlands Pension Fund has been subject to a recent triennial review which will cover pension payments covering the period from 2017/18 to 2019/20. Discussions have been held with the Fund and its actuary over the course of the last year and final agreement has been reached on employer pension payments to the Fund for the next three years. The agreed payments have been built into this budget and the authority's medium term financial plans (paragraph 5.2).
7. That it be noted that, in accordance with delegated authority as approved by Cabinet on 19 October 2016, the Cabinet Member for Resources in consultation with the Director of Finance will continue to consider further opportunities to accelerate contribution payments to the West Midlands Pension Fund to secure additional savings (paragraph 5.4).
8. That it be noted that, in the opinion of the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), the proposed levels of reserves, provisions and balances is adequate in respect of the forthcoming financial year (paragraph 14.4).
9. That it be noted that a further £20.5 million needs to be identified over the period 2018/19 to 2019/20 in order to address the projected budget deficit (paragraph 13.6).
10. That it be noted that, due to external factors, budget assumptions remain subject to significant change, which could, therefore, result in alterations to the financial position facing the Council (paragraph 4.2).
11. That it be noted that, having identified significant budget reductions over the last six financial years, the extent of the financial challenge over the medium term continues to represent the most significant challenge that the council has ever faced (paragraph 13.7).
12. That it be noted that the overall level of risk associated with the 2017/18 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 – 2019/20 is assessed as Amber (paragraph 16.1).
13. That it be noted that Councillors must have due regard to the public sector equality duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) when making budget decisions (paragraph 19.3).

## 8 **Wolverhampton Homes Annual Delivery Plan 2017-18**

Councillor Peter Bilson presented the Wolverhampton Homes Annual Delivery Plan for 2017/18 for endorsement by Cabinet and referral to Full Council for approval. The Delivery Plan Monitoring Group had considered and agreed the Plan and recommendations. The Plan outlined how Wolverhampton Homes intended to improve services and continue to support the Council's strategic objectives. The report reflected the achievements of the previous year and the proposals to continue to improve the offer.

Resolved:

1. That the Wolverhampton Homes Annual Delivery Plan 2017-18 be accepted and recommended to Full Council for approval.

## 9 **Review of Waste and Recycling Service**

Councillor Steve Evans sought approval in principle for proposed revisions to the existing waste and recycling service, with the intention of submitting a further report at a future date setting out in more detail, the final proposed Waste and Recycling Strategy and revised Service Specifications and Standards.

Due to reductions in the level of funding received from Central Government, savings had to be made across the Council and, due to the end of grant funding, changes had to be made to the Waste and Recycling Service. Amongst others, proposals were to introduce fortnightly residual waste collections to replace the current weekly service, with an 'opt-in' for any household requiring a larger residual bin. Support for the transition would be provided in specific communities to ensure a sustainable improvement in both recycling rates and quality.

A further proposal would rationalise the City's Household Waste Recycling Centres, involving the development of a new, central 'supersite' and subsequent closure of the two existing sites.

76% of local authorities across the country had moved to fortnightly collections for residual waste and studies had been carried out to determine the best way forward for Wolverhampton and its residents.

Resolved:

1. That the progression to implementation of the proposed service changes as summarised in section 3.4 of the report be approved.
2. That it be agreed to receive a further report setting out the proposed Waste and Recycling Strategy and proposed revised Service Specification at an appropriate time.
3. That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for City Environment, in consultation with the Strategic Director for Place, to approve the issuing of a Notice of Variation under the Waste Disposal Contract requiring the changes to the service detailed in this report.

10

**Libraries Transformation - Decision to Consult on a Ten Year Library Strategy**

Councillor John Reynolds presented the draft libraries strategy for Cabinet to agree that it would be subject to a 12-week public consultation, running until 21 May 2017. The public engagement phase had generated 500 responses through various methods, which had then been incorporated into the draft strategy. Amongst others, the proposals would maintain the number of branches and improve the facilities, improve the self-service system, improve the offer for volunteers, expand the digital service and increase income generating channels, such as room hire. The final response and strategy would be presented to Cabinet for approval.

Resolved:

1. That it be approved to consult for 12 weeks on the draft libraries strategy and key appendices, including a draft equalities analysis.

11

**Public Space Protection Order (Review of Designated Public Place Order)**

Councillor Paul Sweet outlined the findings from a review of the existing city-wide Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) and sought approval for a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to replace the DPPO following a change in tools and powers introduced in the Anti-social Behaviour, Police and Crime Act 2014. Two trials had been carried out and had produced positive results as there had been a reduction in the associated Anti-Social Behaviour linked to these areas.

Resolved:

1. That the review findings on use of the existing city-wide Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) be noted.
2. That the recommendations for a city-wide Public Space Protection Order, subject to the mandatory six week legal challenge period allowed, which includes proposals to extend prohibitions on public drinking within Park and St Peter's wards, (to include the City Centre), be approved.

12 **Determined Schemes for Co-ordinated School Admissions and Determined Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools - 2018/2019**

In the absence of Councillor Claire Darke, Councillor Andrew Johnson presented the report outlining the Determined Schemes for Co-ordinated School Admissions and Determined Admission Arrangements for both Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the year 2018/2019. There was no proposal to change the scheme from the previous year.

Resolved:

1. That the Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for secondary and primary school admissions at the normal year of entry for 2018/19 (Appendix A) be approved and that the Secretary of State be notified by 28 February 2017 also be approved.
2. That the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2018/19 (Appendix A) be approved.

13 **Exclusion of press and public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to any individual, information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual and/or information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

14 **WV Living Progress and Business Plan Update**

Resolved:

That the recommendations be agreed as detailed in the exempt minutes.

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# Cabinet Meeting

## 22 March 2017

<b>Report title</b>	Budget Adjustment to reflect Adult Social Care Funding	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	No	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Mark Taylor, Finance	
<b>Originating service</b>	Strategic Finance	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Claire Nye Tel Email	Chief Accountant 01902 550478 Claire.Nye@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	None	

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### Recommendation for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve that the gross expenditure and income budgets are adjusted to reflect the additional Adult Social Care funding in 2017/18 of £6.402 million.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek approval to increase the budget for 2017/18 to reflect additional adult social care funding announced as part of the 2017 Spring Budget.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 On 1 March 2017 Council approved the revenue budget for 2017/18. Subsequently, on 8 March in the Spring Budget, the Chancellor announced additional funding for Adult Social Care. The allocation for 2017/18 for the City of Wolverhampton Council is £6.402 million.
- 2.2 It is necessary to increase the council's gross expenditure and income budgets by £6.402 million in 2017/18 to reflect the new grant.
- 2.3 As reported to Cabinet on 22 February, the budget for Adult Social Care has been set in accordance with the Government requirements for passporting of the new Adult Social Care grants and social care precepts. In respect to 2017/18 the budget for Adult Social Care is £1.410 million above this funding level and therefore was being funded by additional General Fund resources. Adult Social Care budgets will therefore be increased by £4.992 million as a result of the new grant, in order to take the net budget up to the revised funding level of £68.382 million.
- 2.4 A further report will be brought to Cabinet to outline the planned use of the additional funding. As reported to Cabinet on 22 February 2017, additional resources have been included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy to reflect growth in demand for Adult Social Care. It is proposed therefore, that the new short term funding is used in a managed way to create a longer term sustainable Adult Social Care budget.
- 2.5 Further guidance may be forthcoming regarding any additional requirements, restrictions and audit arrangements and may inform the use of the monies. Examples of potential use of the grant could include but are not limited to:
- Commissioning additional domiciliary reablement support
  - Bringing forward the implementation programme regarding demand and capacity management in relation to hospital discharge
  - Reviewing effectiveness of and improving current community pathways that support hospital discharge and prevent admission
  - Piloting approaches to prevent people from being admitted from A & E into the main hospital
  - To offer contracts for lower level preventative support that may reduce peoples needs escalating to require more formal support

## **3.0 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The financial implications are outlined in the body of the report.  
[CN/13032017/U]

#### **4.0 Legal implications**

- 4.1 The Legal implications are dealt with in the report which went to Cabinet on 22 February 2017. There are no further direct legal implications.  
[TS/13032017/Q]

#### **5.0 Equalities implications**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

#### **6.0 Environmental implications**

- 6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

#### **7.0 Human resources implications**

- 7.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

#### **8.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 8.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

#### **9.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 9.1 2017/18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 – 2019/20, report to Cabinet, 22 February 2017 and Full Council, 1 March 2017.

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# Cabinet Meeting

## 22 March 2017

<b>Report title</b>	Review of Discretionary Housing Payment Policy	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Mark Taylor, Director of Finance	
<b>Originating service</b>	Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Sue Martin Tel Email	Head of Revenues and Benefits 01902 554772 sue.martin@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Strategic Executive Board	28 February 2017

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the Discretionary Housing Payment policy

## 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. To seek approval from Cabinet to a revised local policy for the award of Discretionary Housing Payments. The policy seeks to improve outcomes for vulnerable people by providing financial assistance with housing costs and preventing homelessness whenever practicable. The policy is attached as appendix 1.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1. Discretionary Housing Payments were first introduced by Government in July 2001 in order to give extra assistance to recipients of Housing Benefit experiencing financial hardship. A Discretionary Housing Payment can cover rent liability and/or other 'housing costs' such as rent deposits, rent in advance and removal costs.
- 2.2. Each year the Department for Work and Pensions allocates grant to Wolverhampton from a national pot. Awards up to the allocation are fully reimbursed. The Council may, from its own funds, make awards up to 2.5 times the value of the Government allocation.
- 2.3. The Department for Work and Pensions periodically publishes guidance on making awards, the most recent in December 2016, though there are few rules. An absolute requirement however, is that in order to receive a Discretionary Housing Payment there must be an entitlement to Housing Benefit or the housing costs element of Universal Credit.
- 2.4. The following table shows grant funding and actual spend on Discretionary Housing Payments over the last four years and the recently announced grant for 2017/18.

	Government Allocation £000	Maximum top-up from General Fund £000	Value of awards £000
2013/14	634	951	588
2014/15	802	1,203	804
2015/16	685	1,028	685
2016/17	807	1,211	750 (at 03/03 2017)
2017/18	1,063	1,594	

## 3.0 Policy review

- 3.1. Over recent years, welfare reform changes and consequential reductions in benefit payments have created an increased demand for financial assistance. The changes creating the biggest impact have been the restriction of Local Housing Allowance rates, removal of the 'spare room subsidy' (commonly known as the bedroom tax) and the benefit cap.

- 3.2. The Government has recognised this through increasing the funding available under the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme. National funding in 2016/17 was £150 million (an increase of £130 million from 2010). The funding is made of of four main components:
- core funding (13%)
  - Local Housing Allowance reforms (20%)
  - removal of the spare room subsidy (40%)
  - benefit cap (27%)
- 3.3. A review of the local policy was carried out to ensure that Discretionary Housing Payment awards support corporate objectives and incorporate latest guidance, good practice and case law. The draft policy also seeks to ensure the council's spending on Discretionary Housing Payments will not exceed the funding available, whilst preserving the core aims of an award which is to safeguard vulnerable people and prevent homelessness whenever practicable.
- 3.4. Partners and colleagues were consulted as part of the review including Wolverhampton Homes, Welfare Rights, Housing Options, Citizens Advice, Christians Against Poverty, Better off in Wolverhampton and housing providers. Feedback from the consultation was used to refine both the proposed policy and operational arrangements.
- 3.5. Whilst legislation permits significant discretion in the administration of Discretionary Housing Payments, the policy outlines the key considerations when dealing with an application, including:
- the shortfall between Housing Benefit and the rental liability
  - any steps taken by the customer to reduce their rental liability
  - the financial and medical circumstances (including ill health and disabilities) of the customer, his or her partner, any dependants and any other occupants of the customer's home
  - the level of indebtedness of the customer and their family
  - the exceptional nature of the customer and their family's circumstances
  - the amount available in the Discretionary Housing Payment budget at the time of the application
  - the possible impact on the Council of not making such an award, e.g. the pressure on priority homeless accommodation.
- 3.6. The policy is intended to contribute to the following outcomes:
- to alleviate hardship
  - to support vulnerable young people in the transition to adult life
  - to assist people in obtaining or sustaining employment
  - to help sustain tenancies and prevent homelessness
  - to keep families together
  - to support vulnerable residents in the local community
  - to help people through family crises or difficult life events.

3.7. The main changes to the policy are:

- putting a greater emphasis on successful applicants making some financial contribution to the shortfall between Housing Benefit and rent;
- use of 'step down' awards where the amount reduces in phases over the award period
- inclusion of awards to cover rent deposits, rent in advance and removal costs.

#### **4.0 Financial implications**

4.1. The approach to date has generally been to maintain Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure within the level of the Government contribution, whilst seeking to minimise the amount of unspent grant paid in advance that has to be returned each year. There is no cost to the Council unless the value of awards exceeds the amount of the government contribution. It is recommended that this approach continues given the significant financial pressures facing the Council.

[GE/15022017/H]

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1. The legislation governing the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme can be found in the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (SI 2001 / 1167) and subsequent amendment regulations. These regulations allow Councils a wide discretion to determine the basis of their own schemes. The policy has been drawn up in accordance with these regulations.

[RP/21022017/U]

#### **6.0 Equalities implications**

6.1. A full equality analysis has been carried out in support of the development of this policy.

6.2. Legislation dictates who can be considered for a Discretionary Housing Payment and the analysis does not address these issues as these fall to Government, however the council policy described here aims to ensure that where there is eligibility, support is offered equally and does not favour one group over another. An action to monitor regularly the equality breakdown of those supported or otherwise by the by the new policy is included in the equality analysis.

#### **7.0 Environmental implications**

7.1. None.

#### **8.0 Human resources implications**

8.1. None.

## **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

9.1. None.

## **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

10.1 Department for Work and Pensions - Discretionary Housing Payments Guidance Manual (2016)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/576787/discretionary-housing-payments-guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576787/discretionary-housing-payments-guide.pdf)

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## Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

**What's in the policy?**

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## Introduction

Discretionary Housing Payments may be awarded when the Council considers that a customer requires further financial assistance towards housing costs and they are in receipt of either Housing Benefit or the housing cost element of Universal Credit.

Discretionary Housing Payments can play an important role in sustaining tenancies, preventing homelessness and, where needed, enabling tenants to move to more affordable accommodation.

In addition to regular rent payments, housing costs can include rent in advance, rent deposits and other lump sum costs such as removal expenses.

Since its inception, the Council has used Discretionary Housing Payment funding primarily to make short term awards to ease transitions and to give claimants time to seek longer term resolution of their difficulties.

## Aims and objectives

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that Discretionary Housing Payment funds are allocated and committed throughout the year to provide further financial assistance for customers in hardship situations where Housing Benefit or the housing costs element of Universal Credit does not cover all the rent. Funds will be allocated in line with legislative requirements and to support local anti-poverty and homeless prevention work.

The Discretionary Housing Payment Policy additionally has the following specific aims that support objectives in the Council's corporate plan:

- To alleviate hardship and safeguard security of tenure.
- To help people through family crises or difficult life events, for example domestic violence, bereavement, births, children at a critical stage of their education or training.
- To support young people in the transition to adult life in particular, care leavers.
- To help keep families together.
- To assist customers affected by the changes to Local Housing Allowance Reforms.
- To assist customers affected by the Benefit Cap.
- To assist customers affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy in the Social Rented Sector.
- To assist people in obtaining or sustaining employment.
- To help people to secure and move to alternative accommodation (e.g. rent deposit, rent in advance and removal costs).
- To help with short-term eligible rental costs until the customer can secure and move to alternative accommodation.
- To help with short-term eligible rental costs while the customer seeks employment.
- To help with on-going eligible rental costs for a disabled person in adapted accommodation.
- To help with eligible rental costs for approved or prospective foster carers and adoptive parents.

## Legislative Framework

The regulations covering Discretionary Housing Payments are the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 and amendments to the regulations are covered by the Council Tax Benefit Abolition (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 April 2013; and The Universal Credit (Consequential, Supplementary, Incidental and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/630), which came into force on 29 April 2013

The total value of Discretionary Housing Payments awarded in any financial year must not exceed the statutory cash limit set by Government. The cash limit is two and a half times the government contribution, which is set each year.

## Awards

Discretionary Housing Payments are discretionary; however, the Council has a duty to act fairly, reasonably and consistently. Each case is to be decided on its own merits, and decision making should be consistent throughout the year

The various scenarios where a Discretionary Housing Payment may be used to assist include (but are not limited to):

- reductions in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit where the benefit cap has been applied;
- reductions in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit due to the maximum rent (social sector) size criteria;
- reductions in Housing Benefit or Universal Credit because of local housing allowance restrictions;
- rent officer restrictions such as local reference rent or shared accommodation rate;
- non-dependant deductions in Housing Benefit, or housing cost contributions in Universal Credit;
- rent shortfalls to prevent a household becoming homeless whilst the housing authority explores alternative options;
- excess income taper reduction
- reductions due to any further welfare reforms
- exceptional hardship

If the purpose of the Discretionary Housing Payment is to meet an on-going rental liability, it is up to the Council how much Discretionary Housing Payment is paid. However, in the case of a Housing Benefit claimant, Discretionary Housing Payment calculated on a weekly basis cannot exceed the eligible rent. For a Universal Credit claimant, Discretionary Housing Payment calculated on a monthly basis cannot exceed the amount calculated in accordance with Schedule 4 to 11 the Universal Credit Regulations i.e. the Universal Credit housing costs component of the Universal Credit award notice.

**Rent deposits and rent in advance**

A Discretionary Housing Payment may be awarded to assist with a rent deposit or rent in advance for a property that the customer is yet to move into if they are already entitled to Housing Benefit or Housing Costs Element of Universal Credit at their present home. When awarding Discretionary Housing Payments for a rent deposit or rent in advance, the Council may consider that:

- the property is affordable for the tenant; and
- the tenant has a valid reason to move; and
- the deposit or rent in advance is reasonable

**Discretionary Housing Payments and two homes**

In some circumstances a Discretionary Housing Payment can be awarded on two homes when someone is treated as temporarily absent from their main home, for example because of domestic violence. In this case, if the customer is treated as liable for rent on both properties, and in both cases there is a shortfall, they could have Discretionary Housing Payments in respect of both properties subject to the weekly limit on each property.

**Exclusions**

Certain elements of a customer's rent cannot be included in housing costs for the purposes of a Discretionary Housing Payment because the regulations exclude them.

Excluded elements are:

- Ineligible service charges
- Increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears
- Sanctions and reductions in benefit, Discretionary Housing Payments cannot meet these because to do so would undermine the effectiveness of the sanctions or reduction in benefit
- Overpayments of Housing Benefit
- Council Tax

**Applying for a Discretionary Housing Payment**

The Council will accept applications in writing or verbally; we will support sick and disabled people to make an application that is accessible to them and sufficiently formal for our needs.

The customer or their partner must make the request however requests will also be accepted from someone acting in behalf of the customer where this is reasonable. Applications will be accepted from Wolverhampton Housing Options and Housing Outreach Team and City of Wolverhampton Welfare Rights Service.

The customer will usually be expected to complete a Discretionary Housing Payment application form and where a more detailed assessment is required may be asked to provide information in support of their application including information about their household, eligible rent, income and expenditure, and any other relevant information regarding their circumstances.

**Examples of personal finances could include:**

Food, gas, electricity, telephone, childcare, debt repayments, health expenses, essential travelling, disability related expenses

**Examples of personal circumstances could include:**

Adaptations to the property, age and health of the customer and household members, any recent bereavement in the family, proximity to friends and relatives who provide support, information from Doctor, Social Worker, health visitor

**Examples of rent could include:**

Tenancy agreement, rent book, proof of Housing Costs Element of Universal Credit  
The customer will be asked how much additional financial assistance is required and for how long.

**Making a decision**

Each case will be considered uniquely; on its own merits and in accordance with guidance contained in the Department for Work and Pensions Discretionary Hardship Guidance Manual.

All Discretionary Housing Payment decisions will be recorded. The reason for the award will be recorded for monitoring purposes and as required by the Department for Work and Pensions. Monitoring of decisions will also help ensure equality in managing the fund and to promoting equal access to the fund.

There may be instances where the Council will use its own data to carry out one off campaigns to target resources to provide transitional protection to those customers affected by reductions in housing costs as a direct result of Welfare Reform and/or to protect vulnerable customers who are showing a shortfall in their rent.

This could include customers who are affected by the Benefit Cap, removal of the spare room subsidy or customers receiving Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance

The Council has developed a tool to assist decision makers. This tool has been developed to ensure that Discretionary Housing Payments meet the aims and target priorities of the Discretionary Housing Payment policy.

The decision maker will consider whether the customer requires further financial assistance and will use the Discretionary Housing Payment decision making tool which assesses the customer's level of need considering the following factors:

- A customer or household member with a disability
- A customer or household member who is vulnerable
- Frail or elderly and unable to move home
- Families with children
- Families subject to Social Services intervention
- A disabled customer or household member living in a significantly adapted property
- Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment

- Attendance Allowance or Constant Attendance Allowance
- Fleeing Domestic Violence
- Relocating due to racial harassment
- Prevention of homelessness
- Providing care
- High levels of priority debt
- Close to support network, services or work
- Residing in Supported or Exempt Accommodation
- Under occupying their home
- Local Housing Allowance applied
- Benefit Cap
- Income Taper
- Non-Dependent Deduction

This list is not exhaustive

The decision-making tool will assist the decision maker in establishing the amount and duration of the Discretionary Housing Payment award and will assist the decision maker to identify those customers who require a further detailed assessment.

Further consideration should include but is not limited to:

- Is there a genuine risk of eviction if help with housing costs is not provided?
- What other outgoings does the customer have which make it harder for them to meet their housing costs?
- What capital assets does the customer have which might be used to help with their housing costs?
- Does the customer have access to other funds, including state benefits, as yet unclaimed?
- Does the customer pay for care costs that exceed the amount of their disability benefits?
- Does the customer have income disregarded for Benefit purposes that might be used?
- Is it possible for the customer to negotiate a rent reduction with the landlord?
- Is it reasonable for the customer to relocate to alternative accommodation that would incur lower housing costs?
- Does the customer or a family member suffer from health problems that make it important for them to remain in their current accommodation, and would it be adversely affect their condition if they were to move to other accommodation?
- Are there additional costs associated with any illness or disability?
- Is the hardship having effect on individuals within the family, for instance young children?
- Are non-dependants living in the household contributing financially?
- Has the customer or partner had a recent change in circumstances that means that their income has reduced significantly?
- Is there a risk of the customer being declared statutorily homeless if a payment is not made?
- The Council reserves the right, when awarding a Discretionary Housing Payment, to advise customers to seek alternative accommodation if it feels that the current

accommodation is inappropriate for their needs or to reduce unnecessary expenditure for non-essential items.

- The Council can identify areas where additional or support can be offered to assist the customer further by referring to other bodies such as the Wolverhampton Homes Money Smart Team; Citizens Advice, Wolverhampton Housing Outreach Team, Wolverhampton Housing Options, Age UK, Welfare Rights or any other relevant organisations.
- Consideration will be given to contacting third persons who the customer gives us permission to contact for information to support their request.

Where the customer is identified as having unusual or exceptional expenditure the customer may be asked to provide further evidence. The customer will be asked to provide original documents to support their outgoings.

When examining the shortfall in rent levels set by the Rent Service the decision maker will consider:

- Requesting a re-determination from the Rent Service
- Whether the Rent Service has determined the rent as 'Significantly High'
- Whether the customer has or may be able to negotiate with the landlord

### **Treatment of income**

All components of Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Constant Attendance Allowance and Attendance Allowance are ignored as income when deciding either using the decision-making tool or carrying out a financial assessment

### **Payment of Discretionary Housing Payment**

Payments to meet a weekly or monthly rental liability may be made at the same frequency as the Housing Benefit or Universal Credit payment; however, the Council will decide the frequency of payments.

A Discretionary Housing Payment is will be paid from the Monday following receipt of the Application. However, requests for backdating an award will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Payments of Discretionary Housing Payment can be made to the claimant, appointee or landlord. If the customer is a tenant of a social landlord the payments will generally be made directly to their rent account.

Full year awards and repeat awards should be considered carefully, however, these can be paid in exceptional circumstances

Payments for rent deposits, rent in advance or removal costs are paid as one-off payments

**Notification of award**

All decisions will be notified in writing or in a manner to suit the needs of the customer. The decision will include: -

- The period of payment and an explanation of reasons for the award and what action we would expect the customer to take, to improve their situation.
- The date of expiry of the award.
- If the award is conditional, the letter will contain an explanation as to what evidence the customer will need to provide to enable a reassessment of their situation, should they wish to reapply on expiry of their award.
- a paragraph explaining that the customer has an obligation to report any change of circumstances and list the type of change of circumstances they need to report.
- Details of their right to request a review of the Discretionary Housing Payment decision.
- Details of the financial assessment if appropriate
- If the Landlord or appointee is the payee, then they should be notified of the decision limited to the amount of the award and the duration.

**Requests for review**

The Council will review a Discretionary Housing Payment decision in the event of a dispute or where the claimant asks for a re-consideration.

Decisions on Discretionary Housing Payments do not carry a right of appeal to a Social Security Tribunal, instead a locally administered dispute process is operated. The route of judicial review is available, and the Local Government Ombudsman if there is an allegation of maladministration.

Reviews will be considered by an officer independent of the original decision maker. The review will look at a decision again in the light of representations made by the claimant. Cases will be considered fairly, reasonably and consistently. Each case is to be decided on its own merits, and decision making will be consistent throughout the year

The Council will notify the customer of a review outcome in writing with reasons as soon as is reasonably practical

**Changes of circumstances**

A customer has a duty to notify the Council of a change in their circumstances that could either affect the level of the Discretionary Housing Payment award and duration. The Discretionary Housing Payment award may be reduced or increased.

Awards can be ended if the customer no longer demonstrates the need for further financial assistance.

**Overpayments**

The Council will recover Discretionary Housing Payments if payment has been made because of misrepresentation or failure to disclose a material fact, either fraudulently or otherwise. The Council may also recover Discretionary Housing Payments if they decide the award has been paid because of an error made when the application was determined.

The Council may not recover Discretionary Housing Payments from on-going Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. This is unlike Housing Benefit overpayments where there is a regulatory provision to allow recovery from on-going Housing Benefit.

The Council will consider offsetting overpaid Discretionary Housing Payment against any future awards.

The Council will endeavour to recover all Discretionary Housing Payment overpayments to ensure that maximum funds are available to those considered to be in most need of further financial assistance

**Further assistance**

When making a decision, the Council will consider other any further assistance the customer may need and advise as follows:

- Encourage liaison with Citizen Advice with regards to consolidating debts and debt relief orders.
- Maximise the claimant's income by advising of other benefits they can claim including referring to Welfare Rights Service
- Consider referring vulnerable customers to Wolverhampton Housing Options Tenancy Sustainment Team for 'assisted' bidding in respect of Council Tenants or to enable re-banding.
- Consider customers who show severe financial hardship and have Council Tax Arrears under the provisions of the Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy
- Help to negotiate a more affordable rent with their landlord.
- Identify vulnerable customers who show difficulty in accessing our service. We will work with partner organisations such as Welfare Rights, Citizens Advice and other appropriate organisations to make our service accessible to vulnerable customers
- If customer is in a council tenancy, consider referring to the Money Smart Team for Debt and Budgeting Advice when applicable.
- For those customers in receipt of Universal Credit, consider referring them for Personal Budgeting Support using the current referral process
- Consider referring customer to the "home swap and move" website to discuss the possibility of a mutual exchange.
- If Discretionary Housing Payment or Rent Deposit application is unsuccessful, then a referral can be made the Manager of Wolverhampton Housing Options who will consider if the customer can be assisted from the Homeless Prevention Fund.
- Consider referring the customer Public Health for assistance if customer requires help quitting smoking. Improve access to 'quit smoking' aids.



**Reporting, monitoring and review**

From April 2013, the Department for Work and Pensions has looked at how Discretionary Housing Payments are being used to support claimants affected by the welfare reforms.

In addition to the annual Discretionary Housing Payment claim form and separate from the accounting returns, the Council is asked to continue to provide supplementary data twice yearly, in October and in April. Following a successful application for Discretionary Housing Payments, the Council will record if the claimant has been affected by one of the following:

- benefit cap
- removal of spare room subsidy in social rented sector
- local housing allowance restrictions
- combination of reforms
- none of the above

The Council will report the amount paid out to a claimant. If it is a one-off payment, the Council will record the amount paid. Where there is a change of circumstances, and an award ceases we will record the amount of the award paid out to the claimant.

Additionally, the Council will record the intended outcome by value of payments made.

The outcomes are broadly grouped into the areas that cover the policy intention of Discretionary Housing Payments:

- To help secure and move to alternative accommodation (e.g. rent deposit)
- To help with short-term rental costs until the claimant can secure and move to alternative accommodation
- To help with short-term rental costs while the claimant seeks employment
- To help with on-going rental costs for a disabled person/s in adapted accommodation
- To help with on-going rental costs for a foster carer / adoptive parent
- To help with short-term rental costs for any other reason

The Discretionary Housing Payments (Grants) Order 2001 requires the Council to submit claim forms providing details of Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure.

The claim form must be signed by the Responsible Finance Officer within the LA (pursuant to S.151 of the Local Government Act 1972)

Due to the increase in Discretionary Housing Payment funding and following discussions with the National Audit Office, the Department for Work and Pensions has strengthened its assurance arrangements by including additional requirements in the LA certificate.

In addition to providing details of Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure, the Responsible Finance Officer must certify that all entries on the claim forms are accurate and expenditure has been incurred in accordance with this guidance and the regulations governing Discretionary Housing Payments.

The Council will monitor the actual and committed spend from Discretionary Housing Payment fund periodically throughout the year to ensure that the fund is managed effectively

In accordance with the Council's responsibilities under S149 of the Equality Act 2010 the Council will monitor the equality profile of those affected by the policy to ensure its compliance with the Act.

The Discretionary Housing Payment Policy will be reviewed in the event of a material change in legislation or the level of funding. Any recommendations for amendment will have due regard for any

- Changes in legislation
- Changes to Discretionary Housing Payment funding
- Alignment with Council strategies and priorities

# Cabinet Meeting

## 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017

<b>Report title</b>	Improving Outcomes within the Early Years	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Val Gibson Children and Young People	
<b>Key decision</b>	No	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Linda Sanders, People	
<b>Originating service</b>	Children and Young People	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Andrew Wolverson Tel Email	Head of Service – Early Intervention  01902 551272 <a href="mailto:Andrew.wolverson@wolverhampton.gov.uk">Andrew.wolverson@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a>
	Alex Jones Tel Email	Assistant Director Schools Standards 01902 555275 <a href="mailto:Alex.jones2@wolverhampton.gov.uk">Alex.jones2@wolverhampton.gov.uk</a>
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	People leadership Team	27 February 2017
	Strategic Executive Board	7 March 2017

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### Recommendation for action or decision:

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the Early Years Strategy

## **Recommendations for Noting**

Note the outcomes of the recent stakeholder consultation

### **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the outcomes of the recent consultation in relation to the development of the Early Years Strategy which includes The City's Definition of School Readiness.

### **2.0 Background and Rationale**

2.1 In November 2016 Cabinet received a report informing it of the progress made toward developing an Early Years Strategy aimed at improving outcomes for children and families from conception to age five.

2.2 Cabinet approved the stakeholder consultation process that took place on the draft strategy, and agreed to receive a further report outlining how consultation had shaped and influenced the strategy and The City's Definition of School Readiness.

### **3.0 Consultation Process and Results**

3.1 Consultation opened on the 14 December 2016 with the publication of the online document through Survey Monkey and closed on 17 February 2017. Stakeholders were encouraged to share their views through social media, City People, and awareness raising publicity.

3.2 As well as Survey Monkey a variety of consultation methods were used including Focus Groups for Early Years Professionals, Early Years Universal Practitioners speaking to parents and dedicated agenda items at partner's meetings.

3.3 Four community stakeholder events were held across the City to gather Early Years Professionals views. Partner meetings attended included The Association of Special Provision in the City, Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel, Health and Wellbeing Board, and the Leadership briefing for Head Teachers.

3.4 The consultation was made as accessible as possible to gain the widest selection of views. When consulting with parents, workers used iPads to enable parents to complete the survey, supporting them if they needed help and partners were contacted individually to gather their views.

3.5 The responses from completing Survey Monkey were more limited by the nature of its structure, however the flexibility of the other methods of consultation allowed for greater scope. This meant that views on wider issues such as the implementation of the thirty-month integrated assessment check, transition to school, the professional relationships between pre-school settings and schools, and the difficulties of recruiting appropriately skilled staff, were captured. These comments will be fed back to the relevant theme leads to inform future action plans.

3.6 However, the key areas the consultation sought views and agreement on were:

3.6.1 The City's Definition of School Readiness:

"Children will be able to express their needs, feelings and wants. A school will ensure that children feel heard and understood by their practitioners. Children will be excited, enthused and demonstrate a willingness to learn both inside and outside the classroom".

It asked if stakeholders' thought the statement clearly set out the expectations for children to be ready for school.

3.6.2 The principles underpinning the Strategy:

- Work with families to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes, safely preventing family breakdown.
- Deliver a whole system approach, enabling close working with partners with clarity on roles and responsibilities.
- Build employee confidence and skills, and empower and support to work creatively and innovatively with families.
- Provide affordability and enable the financial sustainability of children's services in the future.

It asked stakeholders to rate on a scale one to five (*One being low and five being high*), how important they thought the statements are as principles for the strategy.

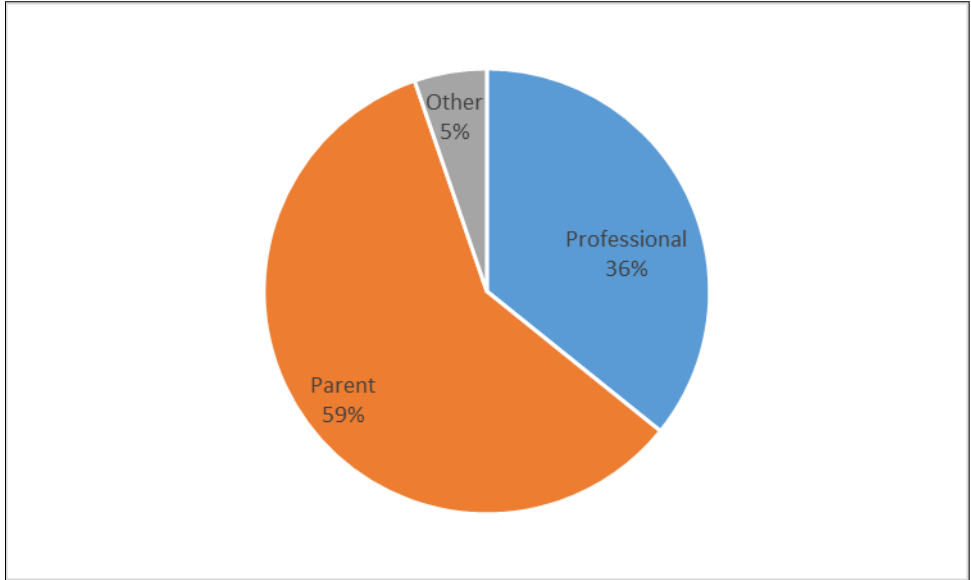
3.6.3 The four themes of

- Good Maternal Health
- Parental Engagement
- High Quality Education
- Workforce Development

It asked if stakeholders agreed with the themes and if there were any other objectives that stakeholders would expect to find or would want to see.

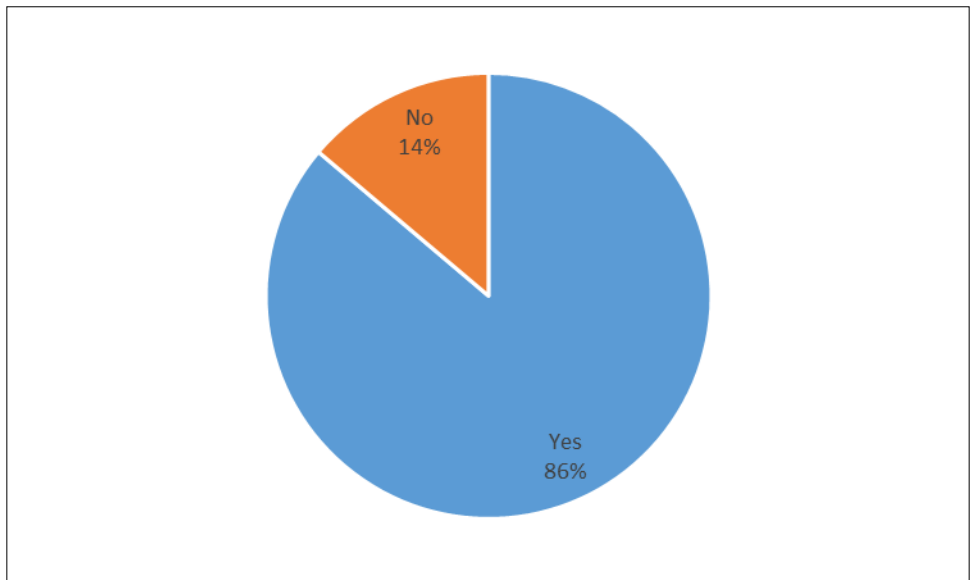
#### 4.0 Consultation Results

4.1 There were 95 Survey Monkey responses; 34 from professionals, 56 from parents and five from people who responded as both as a professional and as a parent.



#### 4.2 Definition of School Readiness

4.2.1 81 people agreed or strongly agreed with the definition of school readiness but 13 did not.



4.2.2 From the respondents who thought that the definition did not clearly set out the correct expectations, comments were grouped around the following themes.

4.2.3 The definition should incorporate expectations both on children and parents around independence skills such as toilet training, dressing, eating and drinking, sitting ready to listen, listening per se, feeling confident and ready for the challenge of school.

4.2.4 Children should be provided with the right environment with good high quality teaching and interaction to enthuse and excite them.

4.2.5 Carers and parents should be engaged and supported to help their children in the next big leap of their development.

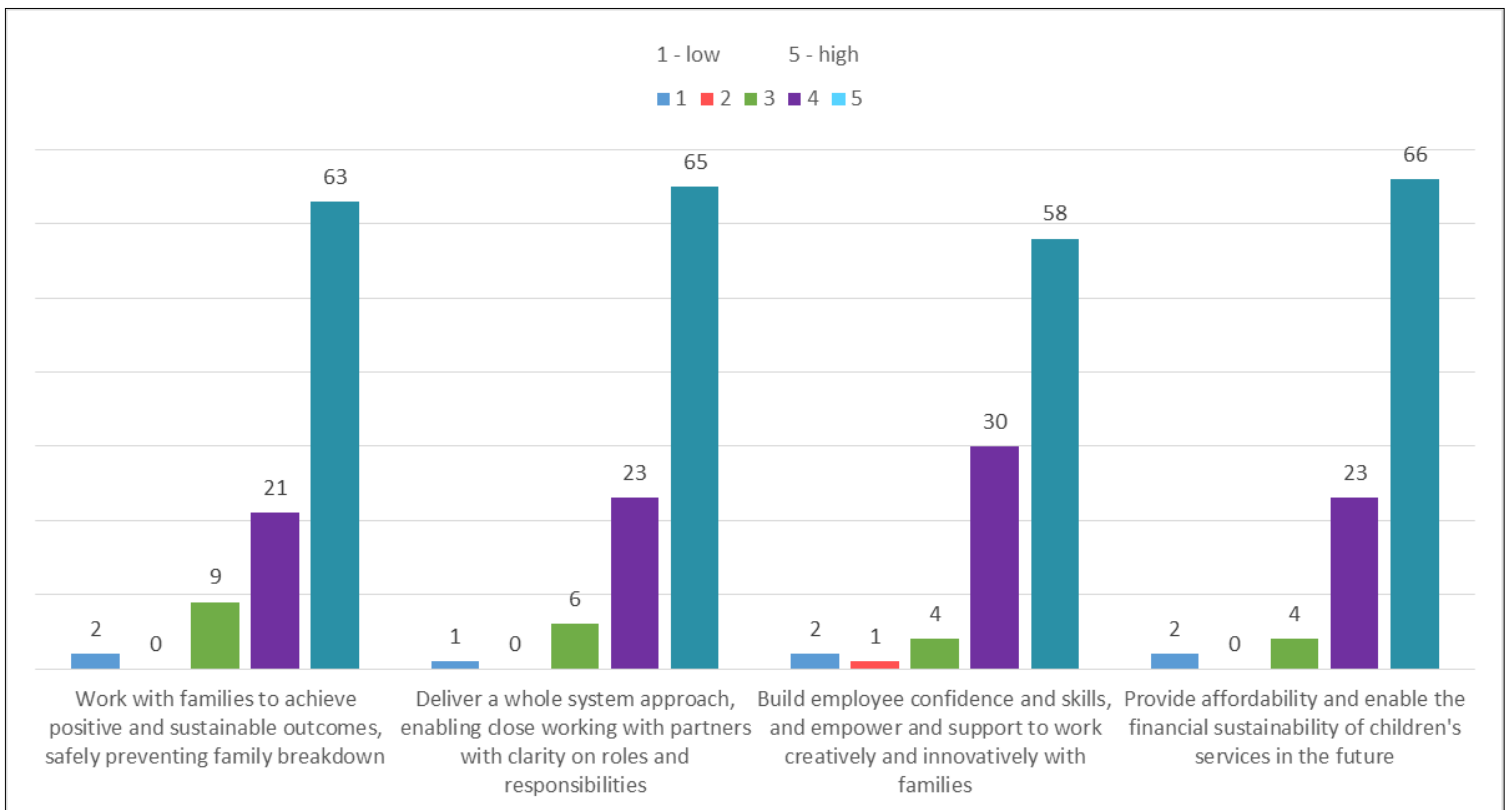
4.2.6 In response to these comments the Definition of School Readiness has been amended to be:

Children are school ready when, supported by their parents/carers, they have self care skills, interact well, and can participate in a range of opportunities to the best of their ability.

This will be achieved through listening to, and following age appropriate instructions, participating in a variety of opportunities and successfully building new friendships whilst taking responsibility for understanding their actions and consequences.

### 4.3 Principles underpinning the Strategy

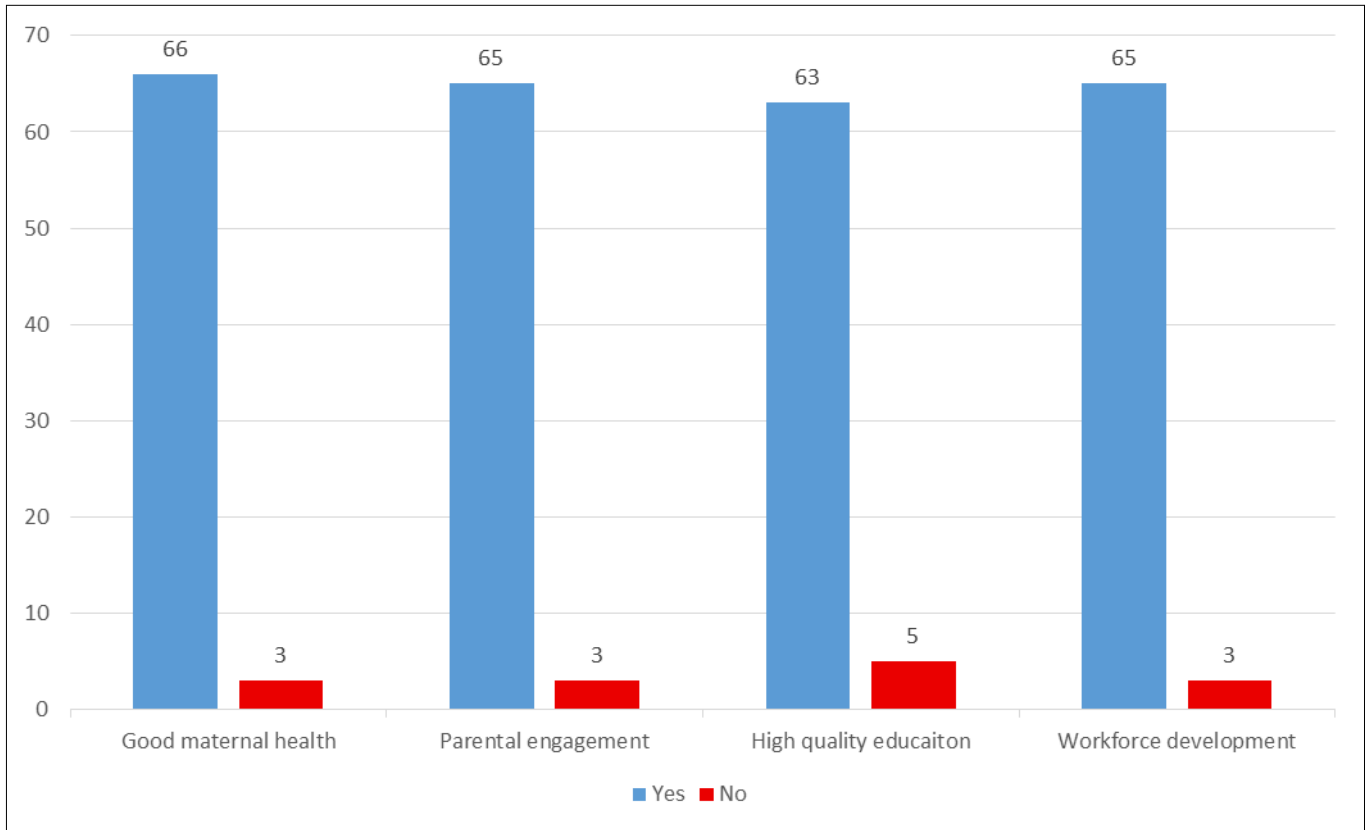
4.3.1 Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the principles. See graph below.



4.3.2 Based on this positive feedback the principles will now be promoted within the strategy and to our partners.

#### 4.4 The four themes

4.4.1 The four themes were seen by respondents' as positive and there was overwhelming support for all the objectives within the themes.



4.4.2 However, respondents were also asked to identify any other objectives they would expect to find or want to see. They asked that there be:

- Reconsideration and development of the education and workforce development objectives to make a stronger strategy.
- The acknowledgement of parenting skills as important including the development of relationships between professionals and parents to ensure there is consistency in approach.
- The acknowledgement of the key role that parents play in supporting their children to keep themselves safe.
- The identification of a healthy eating objective as parents should be thinking about what their children are eating before starting school.
- The identification of an objective that supports or develops settings deemed as less than good or outstanding.



- The identification of an objective that provides parents with information about services and settings and their Ofsted judgements.

4.4.3 Because of these comments the strategy will include the following:

- The Good Maternal Health theme will now incorporate an objective focused around healthy eating and how to support parents in ensuring their children follow a healthy lifestyle.
- The Parental Engagement theme will now identify an objective that will focus on the development of positive relationships between professionals and parents.
- The Parental Engagement theme will now identify an objective in relation to supporting parents in their role of keeping their children safe.
- The High Quality Education theme will reconsider its objectives to ensure that it identifies ambitious actions that will deliver a strong strategy.
- The Workforce Development theme will now incorporate an objective that identifies how the City will support settings who have a less than good judgment.

## **5.0 Next Steps**

- 5.1 The draft strategy will be updated as outlined in Appendix A to reflect the feedback from consultation and then launched at a stakeholder event in May. At this event, Wolverhampton will not only confirm its definition of School Readiness, but will also outline its expectations of partners and the role they need to play in supporting this ambitious strategy.
- 5.2 The strategy will be challenged and monitored through the Education Board for internal purposes and the Strengthening Families board, feeding into Children's Trust, for partner engagement.

## **6.0 Financial implications**

- 6.1 In addition, on-going support has been identified for parent resources. Based on previous investment through the 2-year-old offer in similar resources the on-going estimated cost of this would be in the region of £18,000 per annum. Funding has been identified from the Children's Transformation Service Redesign to fund this provision. This would provide the ability for a mix of hard copy and digitally accessible resources.
- 6.2 Any costs associated with the development of the Early Years Strategy will be contained within existing budget allocations within the Early Years Service.  
[NM/21022017/L]

## **7.0 Legal implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. [JB/09032017/T]

## **8.0 Equalities implications**

8.1 Ensuring that every child gets the best start in life has been a key aspiration outlined within early years policy for the past ten years. The proposals set out within this report seek to ensure that no child, regardless of background, is disadvantaged in the educational outcomes they can secure.

## **9.0 Environmental implications**

9.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 Human resources implications**

10.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 Corporate landlord implications**

11.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

## **12.0 Schedule of background papers**

12.1 11 November 2015 Cabinet Meeting - Children Services Re-design  
24 February 2016 Cabinet Meeting - Children Services Re-design.  
30 November 2016 Cabinet Meeting - Improving Outcomes within the Early Years

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

Early Years Strategy

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=11544&p=0>

### **Appendix B**

Table of Amendments to Early Years Strategy

# Early Years Strategy 2017-2021



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# VISION

“ Working effectively together to make sure that every child in their early years has the opportunity to be the best they can be”





## 1

## Introduction



From the point of conception through to the first day at school, parents, babies and young children have regular contact with a range of different services including midwifery, health visiting, GPs, children centres, childcare and early education provision.

Getting this contact and these services right in these critical years is crucial to ensure that parents are supported sufficiently and that all babies and children are given the best possible start in life.



An effective Early Years Strategy needs to be based on the assumption that parents are the first educator and ensure that there is a robust system in place to support them in this vital role.

Research shows social class, income, living conditions and parent's own education levels are directly related to child development outcomes. However, the quality of the early home learning environment (from birth) acts as a significant modifying factor. All parents can enhance their child's progress if they engage regularly in activities that encourage positive social development and thinking.

Children with strong early home learning environments are ahead in both social and cognitive development at the age of three. They show advanced language ability, higher levels of confidence, co-operation and sociability, and this advantage continues as they progress through school.

Services need to be focused on delivering an approach that is underpinned by the need for parents to develop good parenting skills. This will provide the basis for them to have an understanding of how a child learns and ensure that they are an active participant in their child's brain development, enabling the child to become an active learner with a strong attachment and healthy relationships.



Whilst parents must be recognised as the child's first educator, this strategy recognises the impact that access to high quality education can have in improving outcomes for children. Research shows us that access to high quality educational experiences can have a significant impact on the outcomes a child achieves. This strategy has a strong focus on accelerating children's learning within early year's settings and building upon the good and outstanding provision that exists within Wolverhampton.

For the purpose of this strategy school readiness is defined as:

“Children will be able to express their needs, feelings and wants. A school will ensure that children feel heard and understood by their practitioners. Children will be excited, enthused and demonstrate a willingness to learn both inside and outside of the classroom”.



## 2

## Guiding principles

In Wolverhampton we know how important it is for children to be happy and confident, secure and safe, and able to achieve their full potential.

We want to ensure that all children living in Wolverhampton have an equal chance to have a really good start in life including supporting them to have a good level of development when they start school.



**Wolverhampton is committed to:**

- Putting the best interests of the child at the heart of decision making.
- Taking a holistic approach to the wellbeing of a child.
- Working with children, young people and their families on ways to improve wellbeing.
- Advocating preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families.
- Believing professionals must work together in the best interests of the child.



**We will:**

- Work with families to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes, safely preventing family breakdown.
- Deliver a whole system approach, enabling close working with partners with clarity on roles and responsibilities.
- Build employee confidence and skills, and empower and support to work creatively and innovatively with families.
- Provide affordability and enable the financial sustainability of children's services in the future.

## 3

## National context



It is now recognised that the earliest years of a child's life can have an important impact on his or her long-term development. These are formative years, physiologically, cognitively, socially and emotionally.

For a child to flourish and fulfil their potential, they need their environment to provide them with specific types of support from conception to the age of five. The parent or primary caregiver is the most important part of a child's environment, and attachment has long been recognised as a key factor in positive child development.

*“Disadvantage is an unfavourable circumstance or condition that reduces the chances of success or effectiveness”*

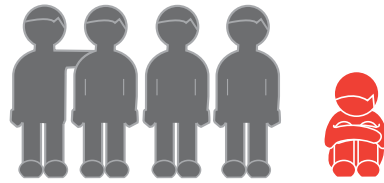
Oxford English Dictionary







Children not reaching expected level in language and communication skills


**1:4**



Children failing to reach expected level in personal, social and emotional development

**1:5**



 Across the UK, figures indicate that children from the poorest 30% of neighbourhoods are:
 

**11 percentage points** less likely than their peers to reach the expected level in communication and language...
 

**-11**






**-9**

...they are also **9 percentage points** less likely to reach the expected level in personal, social and emotional development.




Primary school pupils achieving a “good level of development”



Pupils eligible for free school meals

Other pupils

The EYFS data also show 45 per cent of primary school pupils eligible for free school meals achieved a “good level of development” compared with 64 per cent of other pupils –

**a 19 percentage point gap.**



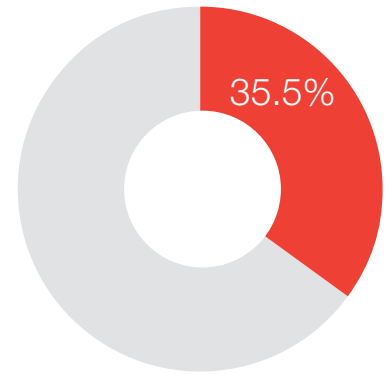
Research found that better childhood behaviour was associated with a number of improved outcomes in later life, including income and aspects of mental health and well-being.

Language development - one of the earliest areas of cognitive development and an important stepping-stone to future success - is also influenced by parents or caregivers. If adults talk with children effectively - taking the lead from the child, elaborating on what they say, asking questions, sharing rhymes or songs or books - then children are given the best start in developing the cognitive tools they need to succeed at school.

# 4

## Local context

● Percentage of population who are from BME communities



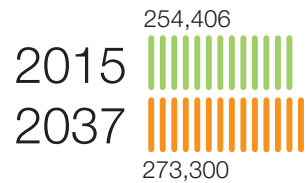
Wolverhampton has a population of 254,406 (mid-year 2015 estimate) and is proud of the diversity that this encompasses, with 35.5% of its residents from BME communities.

The population is predicted to grow by 8.9% by 2037, to 273,300, with the aged 19 or below cohort expected to increase by 7%.

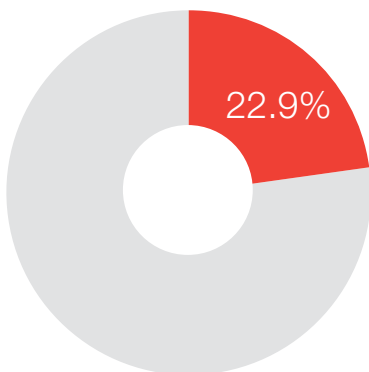
Indices of Deprivation 2010

RANKED NO. **20**

Predicted Population



● Percentage of population who are children (aged 0-17) living in Wolverhampton



A total of 58,167 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Wolverhampton. This is approximately 22.9% of the total population in the area.

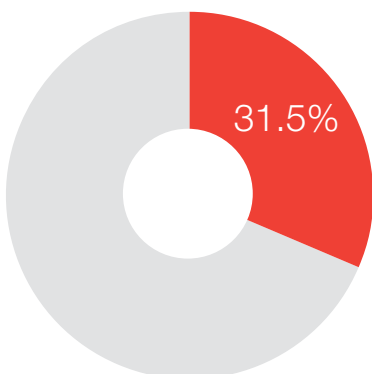
Life expectancy is lower than the England average and Wolverhampton ranks 20 out of 326 Local Authority areas in the Indices of Deprivation 2010.







● Children (aged 0-17) who are living in poverty within Wolverhampton



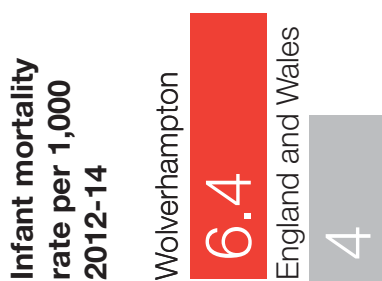
Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 41.6% of all children living in the area compared with 21.5% in England. Approximately 42.7% of children aged 5-17 are from a minority ethnic group compared with 24% in England. The largest minority ethnic group of children and young people in the area are Asian Indian (born in the UK).



## Health

The foundations for virtually every aspect for human development - physical, intellectual and emotional - are established in early childhood. The Healthy Child Programme has highlighted the importance of giving every child the best start in life and reducing health inequalities throughout life.

The health and wellbeing of our children is paramount to securing good outcomes; unfortunately the health and wellbeing of children in Wolverhampton is worse than the England average.



Wolverhampton currently has an Infant Mortality rate of 6.4 per 1,000 (2012-14) compared to 4.0 per 1,000 for England and Wales.

Over the past 20 years there has been a 30% reduction in the average infant mortality rate for England and Wales, whereas in Wolverhampton the local infant mortality rate has largely remained static over this period. Despite a slight fall in the rate in 2012-14 Wolverhampton remains one of the Local Authorities with highest rates of infant mortality in England and Wales.



Analysis by Wolverhampton Public Health found that smoking during pregnancy was a key risk factor for infant deaths within the city with the risk of infant death increasing by 54% for those mothers who smoked.



In 2015/2016 the rate of obesity for children aged 4-5 years is **12.2%** (the national average in 2014/15 was 12.3%)



By Year 6, **40%** of young people in Wolverhampton are overweight or obese

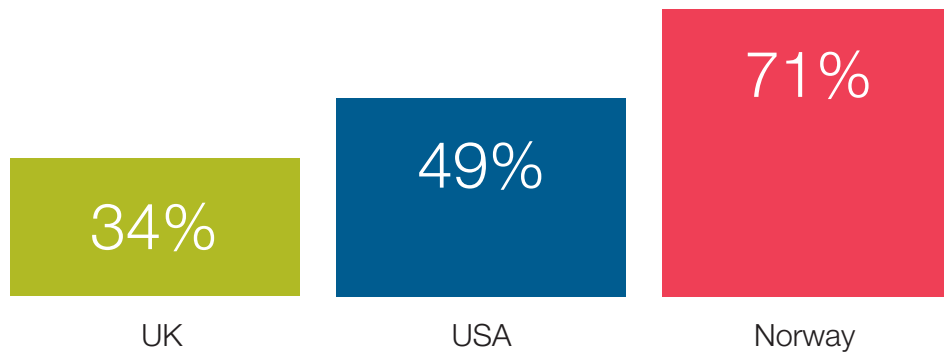


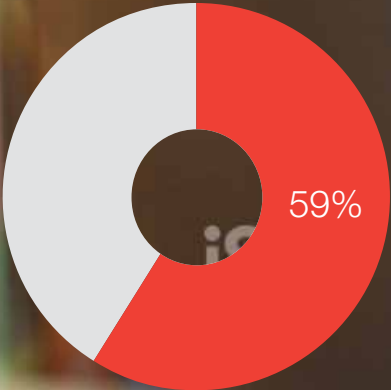
The current rate of under 18 conceptions age 15 to 17 years (2014) in Wolverhampton is **29.6 per 1,000** which is a 6% reduction in the previously reported rate of 31.5 per 1,000 (2013). Although the rate of under 18 conceptions has remained significantly higher than the England average (currently 22.8 per 1,000)



## Infant feeding

Babies receiving breastmilk by six months of age





● Percentage of Primary and Secondary in Wolverhampton in the most deprived quintile nationally

### Education

58 (59%) of the Primary and Secondary schools in Wolverhampton are in the most deprived quintile nationally as defined by Ofsted. There are no Wolverhampton schools classed as being in the least deprived category. 22% of all pupils are eligible for free school meals; for Primary schools (including reception) the figure is 20.5% (the national average is 14.5%) and in Secondary schools (including Academies) it is 19.7% (the national average is 13.2%).

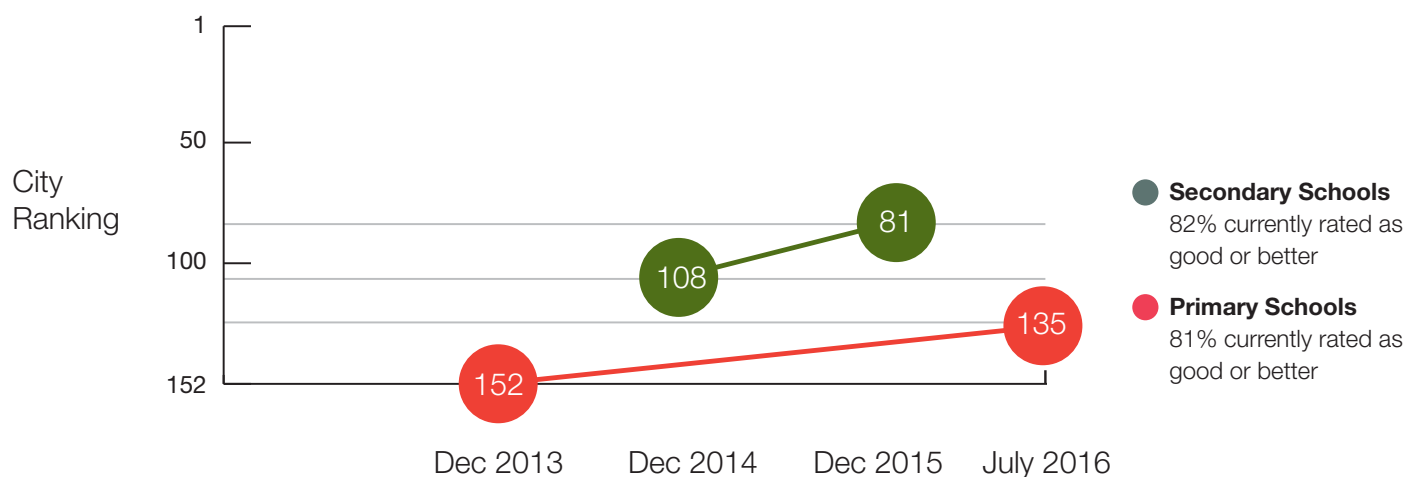


24% of pupils have English as an additional language



18% of pupils have Special Educational Needs against a national average of 15%

### Ofsted outcomes: Wolverhampton



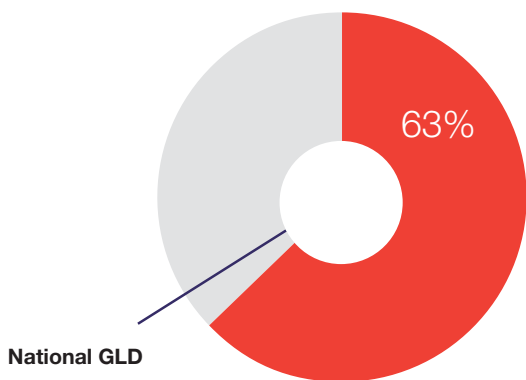
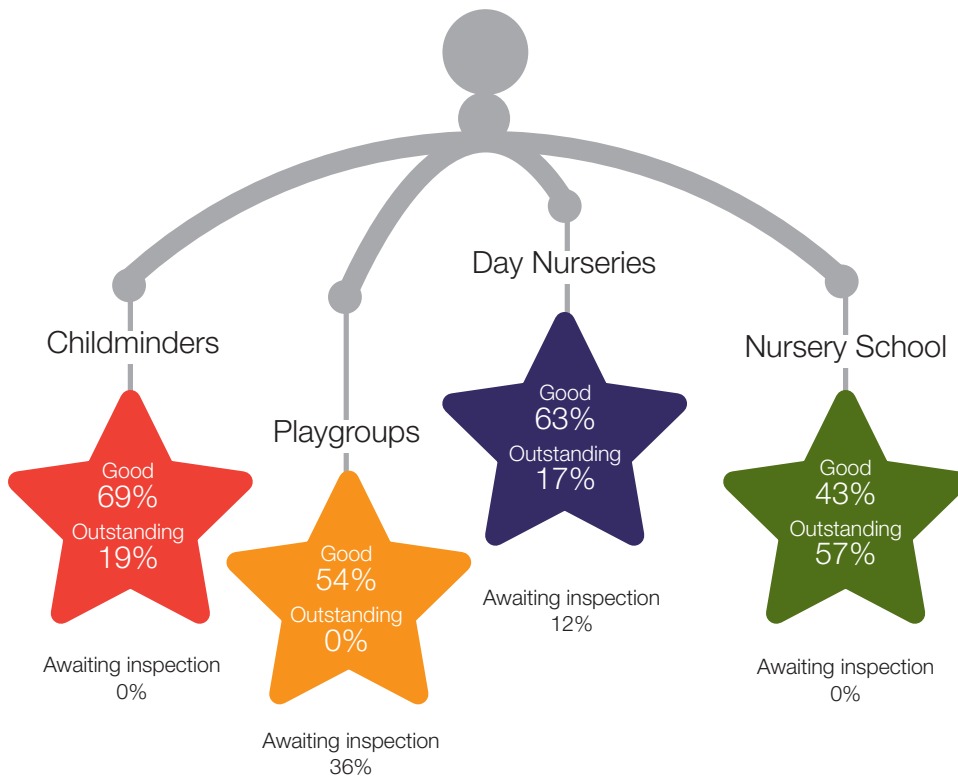
The city's schools have been on a rapid improvement journey over the last two years. Primary School Ofsted outcomes in December 2013 were the worst in the country when the Local Authority was rated 152nd out of 152 – the current rating is 135th and we are rapidly rising up the table – with 81% of Primary schools currently rated as good or better (July 2016). Secondary Schools have been on a similar journey with the Local Authority being rated as 108th in the country in December 2014 and in 2015 rated joint 81st, receiving the accolade of being in the top 20% of most improved authorities in the country, with only Solihull above Wolverhampton in the West Midlands.

The city has 83% of all schools currently rated as good or better (July 2016) with 82% of Secondary schools currently rated as good or better (July 2016).

The ambition is that by September 2018, 95% of schools in the city will be rated good or better when inspected.

The city continues through the work of the early help service, school improvement and standards team strive to ensure that schools, settings, childminders and all early year's providers are delivering high quality early years experiences. The Ofsted ratings for the city continue to rise annually; the figures for all providers within the city demonstrate this.

### Ofsted Ratings - Wolverhampton Early Years Providers



However, the statutory assessment outcomes at the end of the key stage (early year's foundation stage profile EYFSP) do not reflect these judgements as although Wolverhampton's % of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) continues to rise annually; we do not meet the national % GLD. Provisional data for 2016 shows Wolverhampton achieved a GLD of 63%, a shortfall of 6% against the National figure of 69%.

● Percentage of children achieving a good level of development

## September Offer

The September Offer is a commitment to offer, by the end of September, a suitable place in post-16 education or training to all young people in the year they reach compulsory education age.

### Achievement 2015:



99.9% of the Year 11 received an offer. This was higher than the Black Country, the West Midlands and the England average

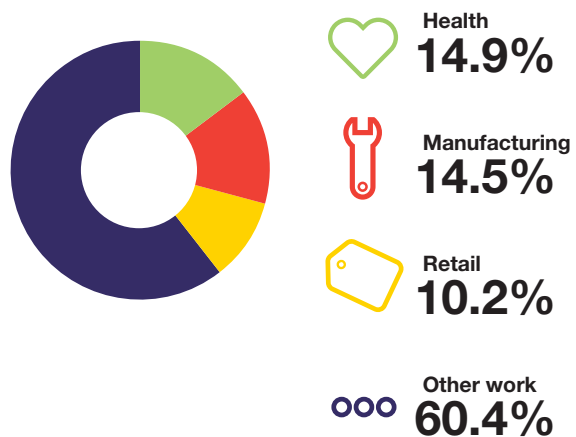


98.5% of Year 12 received an offer. This was higher than the Black Country, the West Midlands and the England average.

## Employment

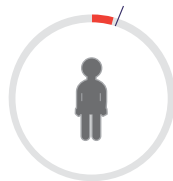
Wolverhampton is a city where economic growth and prosperity is a top priority for the council and its partners. In order to compete in the labour market and progress in the world of work, local people need the education, skills and determination to succeed. The statistics show that many local people struggle. Ensuring our children have the foundations to access future opportunities available to them is critical.

### Where our residents work



## Occupations

Wolverhampton has:



**4.1%** of young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 4.7% nationally.



**19.4%** of the adult resident population have no qualifications compared to 8.5% nationally (Annual Population Survey estimate).



**15.2%** of the resident population aged 16-24 have no qualifications compared to 7.8% nationally (Annual Population Survey estimate).



**33.4%** of the resident population aged 16-24 have GCSE grades A to C or equivalent compared to 21.1% nationally (Annual Population Survey estimate).



Full time equivalent gross median pay is **£434.20** the 17th worst out of 327 English local authorities. However part-time median pay fares better at £156.20, the 91st worst in the country. (Annual Survey of Household earnings HMRC estimate).

## Benefits

Wolverhampton has:



The second highest claimant rate out of 327 district local authorities in England with 4.6% (1,380) of the resident population aged 16 to 24 claiming unemployment benefits

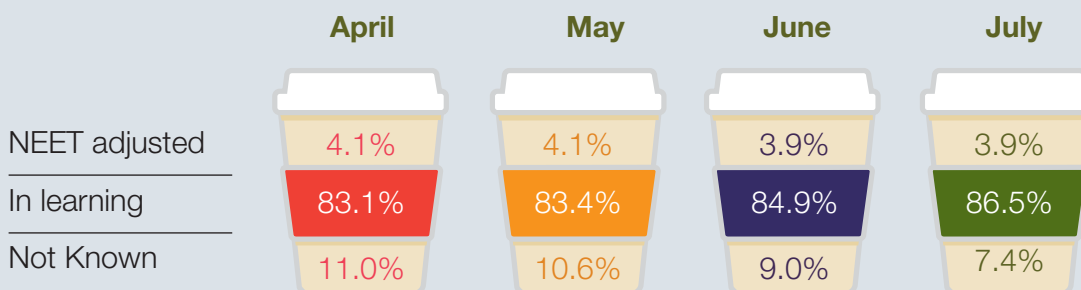


An unemployment claimant count rate of 4.2% that is double the national rate of 1.7% and the West Midlands rate of 2.3%.



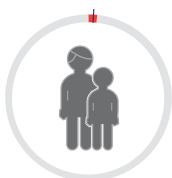
Over 1,360 people receiving Carers Allowance (0.53%) compared to 0.39% of people in the West Midlands.

## Post 16 Participation rates for Wolverhampton April – July 2016





## Lone Parents



Over 2,790 people in Wolverhampton are lone parents; 1.7% of the resident population aged 16 to 64 compared to 1.3% in the West Midlands and 1% nationally.



Over 28% of these lone parents on benefits are aged under 24 and over 97% of lone parents on benefits are female. (NB The removal of entitlement to the housing element of Universal Credit from young people aged 18-21, with some exceptions, from April 2017 has the potential to impact severely on Wolverhampton's young parents and their children).



Over half of lone parents have received benefits for more than two years.

## 5

## Early intervention and prevention

For many years research has helped us understand that intervening early in the lives of young children can have a positive influence on their lives as they live and grow. Intervening early for those children and families who need it most makes a positive difference and the importance of the contribution that the Early Years service can make to this process cannot be underestimated. Yet intervention from services has historically often started at a higher level of need.

Wolverhampton aims to offer support at a much earlier stage, preventing the escalation of needs, wherever possible, and reducing the likelihood of problems emerging in the first place.

Early intervention services target the most vulnerable children and families who require additional and intensive support, focusing on improving outcomes. Services aim to improve the resilience and well-being for children and families and ensure they are able to access the right services at the right time in the right place. They also aim to make a significant difference in reducing demand for statutory services and to provide support to families who are stepping down from statutory services.

The Think Family approach helps to provide responses to the most vulnerable families and reduce inter-generational cycles of poor outcomes. The approach has far reaching implications which extends to both universal and targeted services who work with adults, young people, children and families and who work across all sectors.

Systems and services have recently been redesigned to ensure vulnerable children, young people and adults secure better outcomes, by co-ordinating the support they receive and the impact that services have.

Wolverhampton's approach is designed to be flexible enough to support all children and families whatever their need, whenever they need it. It aims to respond in a meaningful, supportive way, working with parents wherever possible. It takes into account that everyone involved with the family has an important part to play and puts the wellbeing of children and families at the heart of any support.

# 6

## What will Early Years services look like for children, families and partners?

There is good practice happening across the city and families are supported well. However, more needs to be done not only in embedding this good practice but in constantly improving the outcomes for children and families.

In order to capture a child and family's journey and ensure the services we offer to them impacts on their outcomes, the Early Years Strategy has identified a number of key strategic priorities which have been grouped into the following four themes.



## Good maternal health

This theme focuses on ensuring there is a consistent approach to the delivery of health services for families with a clear pathway from conception to age five, in line with the Healthy Child Programme outlining what families can expect from professional services. This will be achieved through good partnership working that ensures specialist services such as drug and alcohol and mental health services receive referrals at the earliest possible point, to help parents develop and sustain a strong bond with their child. The achievement of successful outcomes as a result of early intervention will support parents across the city.

Strengthening Families Hubs offer both universal and targeted support to families across the city. These are facilitated by a range of multi - agency professionals. Delivering universal services to every child and family provides an invaluable opportunity to identify children at risk of poor outcomes and provide early help to families. Research around early attachments tells us that promoting secure attachments and good maternal health are important for the emotional well-being and development of both mother and baby to secure the best start in life.

By offering a consistent and well planned approach to service delivery, families will be supported in developing secure attachments and identification of early needs. A clear pathway will ensure the ease of access to services such as early parenting classes, specialist health services (such as community based health services/professionals) and Strengthening Families Hubs.

# Parents



✔ Will be engaged in health/ universal services at the earliest point and are clear about what is on offer across the city.

✔ Will participate in services so that their children have the opportunity to receive high quality health care

✔ Will understand their child's development milestones and how they can support them through their parenting

# Professionals



✔ Will launch a pathway that all professionals who support children and families in the early years will sign up to that offers a consistent message and ensures the best start in life

✔ Will provide services at the appropriate milestones to ensure children get the best start in life

✔ Will provide antenatal classes that offer an attractive Early Parenting Programme to expectant parents and beyond including sessions focused on early attachment/bonding - Talk to your bump programme

✔ Will identify and make available a suite of multi - agency services to support expectant/new mothers at the earliest point. Especially those who may present with early signs of low mood or historical mental health issues

✔ Will support parents access to services already on offer e.g. SWITCH Programme, Therapeutic Support, Befriending services – Home Start

CASE STUDY

## family in need



A family struggling with drug and alcohol addiction were made the subject of a Child Protection plan due to concerns about the impact this would have on the health and wellbeing of their unborn child – particularly as abnormalities were detected with the baby's heart.

The Early Intervention team provided a package of support to the parents, including emotional support regarding their drug and alcohol use, support to access antenatal hospital appointments and universal groups, housing support and parenting skills work.

Weekly visits to the family were carried out by professionals from health, social care and the Families in Focus programme. The parents interacted well, developing a positive relationship

with social care professionals, and were open and honest about any drug and alcohol use.

Due to ongoing concerns about this, the baby was removed from his parents at birth and placed in to foster care. They had contact with the child 5 days a week with the intention of being rehabilitated back under a Child in Need Plan. Meanwhile, the parents engaged with addiction services, testing negative for anything other than their prescribed medication, and also moved into a more stable property through Wolverhampton Homes.

The child returned to the family home a few months after birth. Early Intervention services continued to support the family, who are now living together successfully.



## Parental engagement

This theme focuses on developing the provision of universal services for families in order to support parental engagement. Parents will be supported to develop good parenting skills to enable them to help their child(ren) achieve their full potential. This meets the key strategic priorities, by developing a clear pathway for parents and professionals that promotes an understanding of child development and improves readiness for school.

Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) research shows that parental engagement with their child's learning has a significant impact



on their outcomes. The role of Universal Services Practitioners is to support parents in becoming their child's first educator, as well as supporting families with school readiness. Practitioners and other professionals; including Health workers; are promoting Early Education Funding for eligible 2 year olds and all elements of 3 and 4 year old entitlement. Access to high quality educational experiences can have a significant impact on narrowing the attainment gap.

Through home learning and promotion of services parents will be assisted to build resilience and become the child's first educator also supporting school readiness. This will be measured by monitoring referrals for home learning and attendance at both play and stay and library groups. By developing the existing parent champions' programme and working in partnership with other professionals, promotion of Early Education Funding will support engagement with families within community groups, schools and childcare providers.

# Parents



# Professionals



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will increase their understanding of their child's developmental milestones and how they can support them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will promote services available to families in their community in order to deliver prevention and early Intervention support</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will develop skills and resilience to become their child's primary educator providing good home learning environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will provide child development resources regarding ages and stages to inform parents of expected progress</li> <li>✓ Will promote awareness and access of the Wolverhampton Information Network website to support parenting</li> <li>✓ Will support with school readiness by developing a holistic understanding which supports families</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will feel supported to participate in services</li> <li>✓ Will access Bookstart, Play and Stay groups and other universal services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will increase the number of parent champions across the city</li> <li>✓ Will develop the skills and knowledge of parent champions so that they can:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote universal services</li> <li>• Encourage other parents to access Early Education Funding</li> <li>• Enable them to signpost and support families to other services available in their community</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will support their children to access high quality Early Education Funding (EEF) for 2,3 and 4 year olds and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Will raise awareness of Early Education Funding and improve the take up of places</li> <li>✓ Will identify eligible children so that resources can be targeted to the right children and families at the right time</li> </ul>



CASE STUDY

## Emma's Story



Emma first began receiving support from Whitmore Reans Children Centre in 2013 shortly after becoming a mum for the first time.

She had been experiencing real challenges at home, but thanks to the help and support of staff at the children's centre she was able to get back on the right track, accessing education and training opportunities at Whitmore Reans.

Shortly after, she moved to Wednesfield with her young child, and signed up to and completed the Freedom Programme for victims of domestic abuse run at Wednesfield Children's Village.

As life began to settle down, Emma gained in self-confidence and decided to volunteer on the Freedom Programme, helping support other women who, like her, had lived through domestic abuse.

Emma enjoyed the role so much that when she was asked to consider volunteering as a Parent Champion – and act as an advocate and peer advisor to other parents in her community - she jumped at the chance. In doing so, it gave her the confidence to use her new found skills, knowledge and experiences to try and secure a job working with children and families.

With a new-found fire inside her, Emma worked closely with the Parent Champion Co-ordinator to apply for a job as a Strengthening Families Worker – and in July was successfully appointed to the role. As Emma says, "the harder the struggle the more glorious the triumph!".

*"The harder the struggle the more glorious the triumph!"*

CASE STUDY

# Caroline's Story



A mum-of-six, Caroline was keen to help other parents get the information they need about childcare and other services – and didn't let being heavily pregnant stop her from volunteering at Bingley Children's Centre.

She soon found the confidence to volunteer as a Parent Champion, enjoying training that gave her the skills she needed to work with parents, particularly around setting boundaries.

As well as chatting to parents when they meet up for activities, such as stay and play and the Freedom Programme, telling them about the support available to them and initiatives such as the two-year-old free childcare offer, Caroline

also worked with parents who are facing very difficult personal problems or circumstances – and quickly realised her role was not to try to immediately help others deal with everything, but to refer them to support services where necessary.

Caroline had a thirst to learn, develop and be a good role model to her children, and so during her time as Parent Champion she successfully applied for a part time Strengthening Families Worker post. She is looking forward to taking on the role after the birth of her baby, and also wants to continue being a volunteer Parent Champion.

*"I know the skills and experience I have picked up as a Parent Champion will be really useful in my new job supporting local communities to thrive, and I'm looking forward to helping families turn their life around, just like I have."*

## High quality education

This theme focuses on ensuring all children in the city have access to high quality pre-school experience and education which will enhance and improve their Primary and Secondary Education.

Research (EPPSE3-16+) which tracked children from 1997 through to their educational and developmental outcomes at 16 years old in 2013 continues to drive and shape current government policy. The report demonstrates how pre-school experience continues to influence the outcomes of young children most significantly:

- The quality of pre-school experience predicted both total GCSE scores and English and Maths grades. High education was also linked to better pro-social behavior and lower levels of hyperactivity. The quality of pre-school experience was especially important for children whose parents have low qualifications.
- Attending a high quality pre-school, experiencing a longer duration, or attending settings of higher quality all predicted a greater likelihood of following an academic pathway post 16 as well key findings as a reduced likelihood of taking a lower academic route.

Key findings from Ofsted's good practice survey, "Teaching and play in the early years-a balancing act?" (July 2015) included:

- Accurate assessment of children's starting points was based on constant reflection about what was deemed typical for each child given their chronological age in months. Where we observed this to be most effective, staff entered into frequent discussion, within and between providers, to check and agree their judgments. This included the frequent sharing of information between parents, other pre-school settings and health visitors.
- Collaboration between early year's providers was key to securing a higher quality of teaching and play. We found that where schools and settings shared a site, were directly managed by one overarching leader or had entered into a professional network with others in the locality, expertise was shared effectively to allow all early years professionals to learn from the best. Many had become early year's hubs for their area, championing the importance of early education and raising the quality of learning and development.

## Children



## Professionals



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will have increased Good Level of Development at the Early Years Foundation Stage and will attain in line with National expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will develop a clear pathway for parents and professionals that promotes a common understanding of child development and how this can be supported</li> <li>✔ Will establish a robust transition protocol to support children's' move onto statutory education including the sharing of data</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will not achieve to a lesser degree if they receive Early Years Pupil Premium compared to those not receiving Early Years Pupil Premium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will develop a school readiness definition to improve readiness for school for all children with particular regard to disadvantaged and vulnerable children at age 5</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will receive high quality pre school education in settings that are judged to be good or outstanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will provide high quality learning environments</li> <li>✔ Will achieve and maintain a "Good" or above Ofsted judgement</li> <li>✔ Will provide a support and challenge function within and to settings in order to develop and continually improve practice</li> <li>✔ Will develop training materials, opportunities and practice to support providers in implementing changes in practice that will impact on children's outcomes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will achieve successful outcomes as a result of early intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ Will track cohorts of children to monitor progress ensuring children at a disadvantage are fully supported</li> <li>✔ Will use their best endeavours through the graduated approach to make sure that children with SEN get the support they need.</li> </ul>

CASE STUDY

# Mason's Story



Mason moved schools mid-term in 2015 after his previous school raised concerns with his family. His family took him out of his old school to escape the reality of the issues facing them.

He arrived at his new school with minimal language skills – his only verbal utterances were of a vulgar nature, including the use of the expletives in response to peers and staff. His low level communication skills and lack of boundaries within the home learning environment manifested itself through disruptive behaviour, demonstrations of temper and lashing out at staff and children.

The school supported Mason with intensive learning support, rewarding positive behaviour moments with praise, recognition, stickers and reward charts based upon his interests. His initial attendance was sporadic but a relationship was built and a consistent approach to managing his behaviour was applied.

Mason settled at school and his attendance, vocabulary and communication skills improved alongside his understanding of right and wrong. A positive impact was seen and documented within three months, and progress within the prime areas of personal, social and emotional development and communication and language means he is now working within age related expectations.

Indeed, he has become a role model for his peers, staff have a great relationship with both Mason and his mother, and will use this model of support with children who have similar needs in the future.

## Workforce development

This theme focuses on challenging and supporting schools and childcare providers to deliver the best education for children and young people through developing a highly skilled Early Years workforce with strong and effective leadership and management. This meets the key strategic priorities, by establishing Early Years forums with a clear programme for improving outcomes. Also to establish a robust transition protocol and to ensure the workforce support effective transitions between settings.

There are some high quality Early Years practitioners across the city who are supporting other members of the childcare workforce to develop their skills within provisions. The model environments focus on strengthening leadership and management to raise the quality of learning environments, progress of implementation is monitored during quality support visits. The Local Offer came into effect from September 2014; this provides parents with information regarding how early years provision can support children with additional needs. Research demonstrates that inspirational practitioners providing stimulating and challenging environments support children in accelerating their learning.

Through the promotion of focused early years forums the workforce will be supported to share and disseminate good practice, building effective working relationships with other partners such as Wolverhampton university, City of Wolverhampton college and Adult Education services, to provide a consistent approach in developing high quality early years practice. Regular monitoring of the quality of early years practitioners entering the workforce and maintaining a continuous cycle of staff development within provision, will assist in ensuring the stability and quality of practitioners.

# Children



✔ Will learn in high quality learning environments

✔ Will achieve to their full potential with those more disadvantaged than their peers progressing well.

# Professionals



✔ Will share and disseminate good practice

✔ Will maintain a continuous cycle of staff development within the provision to ensure the stability and quality of the workforce

✔ Will develop and maintain Early Years forums to enable leaders and managers to enhance their knowledge of the sector and to build locality networks

✔ Will develop high levels of skills in graduate leaders

✔ Will access training support including model environments and peer support opportunities

✔ Will demonstrate an in depth knowledge of child development and how to support families

✔ Will embed effective key worker practice within provision

✔ Will implement observation planning and assessment to meet individuals needs and interests

CASE STUDY

## Fun 4 Kidz Day Nursery and Teeny Weenies Playgroup



Wolverhampton's Early Intervention service recognises that working practitioners are one of the best sources of expertise and knowledge in the field, and has developed a peer-to-peer support network to improve outcomes for children by sharing knowledge and skills.

Teeny Weenies Playgroup wanted support to further enhance their quality and improve the outcomes for their children and was successfully paired with Fun 4 Kids, an outstanding day nursery with exceptional leadership and management strategies, an area of improvement needed by the playgroup.

Representatives from both provisions attended a meeting with a Quality and Access Officer to discuss the peer-to-peer support and identify key areas which would form an action plan.

The mentoring began in December 2015 with a number of visits taking place over the following months during which a range of issues were discussed, from policies and procedures, strategies and disciplinary processes to planning and staff training and support.

The support has been found to be very productive, with improvements being evident, especially around leadership and management and a number of new systems in place which are bringing about positive results.

The programme will continue when the playgroup returns in the autumn term, and the Quality and Access Officer will review the programme with both settings.





## 7

## Performance management and governance

The project group and the strategy will be supported, challenged and monitored through the Education Board for internal purposes.

For partner engagement the project group and the strategy will be supported, challenged and monitored through the Strengthening Families Board on a quarterly basis.

The strategy will be reviewed annually by the Children's Trust Board.

Detailed action plans will be developed across the life of the strategy to drive the required improvement under each of the key themes.

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Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

## Appendix B

Table of Amendments to Early Years Strategy		
Original Statement	Page Reference	Amendments
<p>The City's Definition of School Readiness:</p> <p>"Children will be able to express their needs, feelings and wants. A school will ensure that children feel heard and understood by their practitioners. Children will be excited, enthused and demonstrate a willingness to learn both inside and outside the classroom".</p>	P.9	<p>In response to these comments the Definition of School Readiness has been amended to be:</p> <p>Children are school ready when, supported by their parents/carers, they have self-care skills, interact well, and can participate in a range of opportunities to the best of their ability.</p> <p>This will be achieved through listening to, and following age appropriate instructions, participating in a variety of opportunities and successfully building new friendships whilst taking responsibility for understanding their actions and consequences.</p>
<p>Wolverhampton is committed to: Advocating preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families</p>	P.10	<p>The commitment has been amended to read: Advocating preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families ensuring they are appropriately safeguarded</p>
<p>Good Maternal Health Objectives</p>	P. 27	<p>The addition of the following healthy eating objective:</p> <p>Professionals will support parents to provide healthy eating options for their children before starting school.</p>
<p>This theme focuses on developing the provision of universal services for families in order to support parental engagement. Parents will be supported to develop good parenting skills to</p>	P.29	<p>The theme focus has been extended to ensure that parents are supported in their safeguarding role:</p> <p>This theme focuses on developing the provision of universal services for families in order to support parental engagement. Parents will be supported to develop good parenting skills to enable them to help their child(ren)</p>

<p>enable them to help their child(ren) achieve their full potential.</p>		<p>achieve their full potential. This will include working with parents to understand their role in safeguarding children and how they can support children safeguarding themselves</p>
<p>Parental Engagement Objectives</p>	<p>P.30</p>	<p>The addition of the following parental engagement objectives:</p> <p>Professionals will ensure there is a consistency in their approach which will support the development of good relationships between themselves and parents</p> <p>Parents will understand the key role that they play in supporting their children to keep themselves safe.</p>
<p>High Quality Education Objectives</p>	<p>P.34</p>	<p>The addition of the following high quality objectives:</p> <p>Professionals will support and develop settings deemed as less than good or outstanding.</p> <p>Professionals will provide parents with information about services and settings and their Ofsted judgements</p>
<p>Workforce Development</p>	<p>P.37</p>	<p>The task and finish group will scope out explicit milestones to strengthen the objectives and ensure that performance is robust</p>

# Cabinet Meeting

## 22 March 2017

<b>Report title</b>	Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Paul Sweet Health and Well Being	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Linda Sanders, People Directorate	
<b>Originating service</b>	Community Safety, Public Health and Well Being	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Karen Samuels	Head of Community Safety
	Tel	01902 551341
	Email	Karen.samuels@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	11 July 2016

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- i. Endorse the Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20 and support its implementation.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of the refreshed Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20.

## **2.0 Background and Context**

- 2.1 There is a statutory requirement for SWP to have in place a strategic plan to reduce crime and improve community safety for the city. The current SWP Crime Reduction and Community Safety Strategy expires on 31 March 2017. Performance against the current SWP Crime Reduction and Community Safety Strategy 2014-17 has been reviewed with notable improvements against the strategic priorities of Reducing Reoffending, Substance Misuse, Violence Against Women and Girls and Gangs and Youth Crime.
- 2.2 These improvements include favourable performance of proven reoffending by youths and adults in comparison to national rates, reductions in first time entrants to the youth justice system, successful completions and re-presentations to treatment by criminal justice clients, small increases in reporting of 'hidden crime' (forced marriage, honour based abuse and female genital mutilation). Overall, recorded crime levels across Wolverhampton show the city is performing better than the national average. A number of challenges remain, however these will be used to inform future delivery.
- 2.3 SWP Board engaged in an independently facilitated workshop in June 2016 to refresh its strategic priorities for the city, based on crime trend analysis and applying weighted criteria. Consensus was reached on the following refreshed strategic priorities for inclusion within a revised strategy:
- Reducing Re-offending
  - Violence Prevention
  - Reducing Victimisation
- 2.4 The Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy 2017-20 is the overarching strategy for the city to drive SWP business over the period. It pulls together a number of more detailed, thematic strategic plans currently in place around gang and youth violence prevention and violence against women and girls.

## **3.0 Strategic Priorities and Delivery Priorities for 2017-18**

- 3.1 The draft strategy document (attached as **Appendix A**) has been prepared in conjunction with key partners in the city involved in leading these respective areas of work. Delivery outcomes against each have been agreed upon, to be delivered over the lifetime of the strategy. Progress against these will be monitored quarterly as part of the SWP performance reporting framework and considered at future SWP Board meetings.
- 3.2 As the new strategic priorities set by SWP Board are fairly broad, a more detailed delivery plan will be produced each year to provide clarity on the particular areas of delivery to be progressed under each priority. The delivery plan will be informed by the SWP annual strategic assessment, emerging crime trends and be flexible enough to

cater for changes in national or regional policy. Using this approach, key outcomes against each priority area and the delivery priorities for 2017-18 are outlined below.

### **3.3 Reducing Reoffending**

It is estimated that nationally 50% of crime is committed by 10% of offenders. Reducing the rate of reoffending of those offenders who are most problematic in our local communities is of benefit to everyone, making Wolverhampton a safer place, with fewer victims of crime and less fear of crime. There is also recognition that drug and alcohol misuse is linked to some crimes, so addressing these issues will impact on rates of offending and reoffending.

By targeting repeat offenders and providing a bespoke support package, which will aide their exit from criminal activity, the City will become a safer place and the number of victims harmed by criminality will be reduced.

Recognising that better reoffending outcomes can be achieved by improving access to mental health services, Wolverhampton is fortunate to be one of two pilot areas in the West Midlands focussing on strengthening mental health pathways for offenders as part of the Courts' sentencing options. This will inform wider roll-out and support the West Midlands Combined Authority's 'Thrive action Plan' to deliver better mental health outcomes.

#### **3.3.1 Outcomes:**

- Reduced adult and youth reoffending
- Improved use of tools and powers to effectively manage offenders
- Development of a risk-based, stepped model for high volume offenders
- Improved use of pathways to change offender attitudes and behaviours
- Earlier identification of young people in need of support

#### **3.3.2 Reducing Reoffending Delivery Priorities 2017-18**

The well-established model of Integrated Offender Management (IOM) is considered as 'business as usual'. In order to support the move towards prevention and earlier intervention within youth offending, and to support the case management structures in both youth and adults settings, the following delivery is proposed:

- Development and implementation of a reducing reoffending strategy.
- Continuation of the Youth Inclusion Support Panel delivered through Youth Offending Team (YOT).
- Improvements to the youth and adult IOM case management structures.
- Delivery of the Health and Justice Pathways Pilot for Wolverhampton.

### **3.4 Violence Prevention**

Preventing violence and personal harm is imperative and a priority concern for Wolverhampton. We aim to build on preventative and rehabilitative interventions to reduce the threat of violence. This will include delivery of prevention campaigns, challenging cultural acceptance of violence where this exists and holding perpetrators of violence to account for their behaviour. Provision will adopt a 'whole family' approach and

will integrate and complement new mainstream services such as Strengthening Families Hubs and the city's adults and children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

#### **3.4.1 Outcomes:**

- Improved understanding of risk to prevent offending and harm
- Improved use of tools and powers
- Increased confidence in reporting
- Reduced prevalence of violent crime
- More effective management of threat and risk

#### **3.4.2 Violence Prevention Delivery Priorities 2017-18**

SWP has made a commitment to tackling youth and interpersonal violence with the recent development of strategies to address gangs/youth violence prevention and violence against women and girls. To support delivery of both these areas, the following delivery is proposed:

- Continue implementation of youth violence and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategies.
- Specialist commissioning of VAWG services; maximising opportunities to draw in external funds in support.
- Support local implementation of the West Midlands Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme, funded by the PCC.
- Delivery of targeted community based interventions to engage and build resilience of young people as part of the gangs/youth violence agenda.
- Specialist commissioning of critical incident call outs using deployment of trained community mediators aimed at diffusing tensions and preventing escalation of violence following a critical incident.

#### **3.5 Reducing Victimisation**

Within this priority, there is a key focus on reducing the number of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour and the associated harm caused by offending. We aim to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation, ensuring those who are most vulnerable are more effectively safeguarded and supported; adopting a more systematic approach to organised criminals who take advantage of vulnerable individuals.

We aim to reduce the amount of repeat victimisation by continuing to build on the city's strong community cohesion, empowering community members to play an enhanced role in community safety delivery. We will strengthen our partnership response with improved information sharing, extending joint working opportunities using our shared intelligence to identify vulnerable victims and organised criminals.

#### **3.5.1 Outcomes:**

- Increased reporting of under-reported crime
- Reduced victimisation by adopting a whole family approach
- Improved prevention interventions
- Earlier identification of individuals at risk



- Strengthened community response

### **3.5.2 Reducing Victimisation Delivery Priorities 2017-18**

Recognising the need to continue to increase the confidence of victims to report crimes, the commitment made to raise awareness of vulnerabilities within communities, and reduce repeat victimisation, the following areas of delivery are proposed:

- Develop a sustainable model for businesses to report crimes and reduce their vulnerability through continuation of the Business Crime Coordinator role and implementation of the Wolverhampton Business Crime Reduction action plan.
- Implementation of the Hate Crime action plan and further develop third party reporting centres across the city as a means of reporting.
- Raise awareness of modern slavery with frontline practitioners, businesses and communities.
- Work with community organisations to develop community champions to challenge the acceptance of violence, extremism and exploitation and help deliver key communications.
- Strengthen community engagement methods through implementation of the Neighbourhood Engagement Review recommendations.

## **4.0 Consultation Feedback**

4.1 As part of the consultation process, proposals for the development of the draft strategy were considered at Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel in July 2016, where comments were invited. Following development of the draft strategy, consultation on the document was widely advertised via partner agencies, community networks, Councillors and social media with opportunities for comments fed in via survey monkey, post or email over a 12 week period.

4.2 A total of 103 comments were received from individuals and group discussions. A summary of feedback is detailed below:

- Need to strengthen reassurance for victims within communities and improve cohesion / engagement in communities
- Suggestion for trained community safety champions within the community
- Increase involvement of communities
- Make better use of technology as a tool to engage with and send out messages - particularly for young people
- Safeguarding awareness needed to help protect vulnerable people
- Calls for harsher sentencing for offenders
- Stronger emphasis needed on Restorative Justice
- Engagement with schools is required for early interventions
- Strengthen links into Early Help (develop the Adverse Childhood Experiences - ACES model)
- Frustrations raised at the high levels of support for offenders
- Plain English should be used throughout the document
- More detailed information is required of delivery plan & key activities should be highlighted

4.3 Consultation feedback has informed revisions to the document which are reflected in the final draft strategy attached as **Appendix A**. Endorsement for the strategy will be sought from Cabinet on 22 March 2017.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

5.1 The strategy will be delivered through mainstream partner resources and allocated grant from the PCC for 2017-18 of £369,000. Future allocations of grant will be determined through the West Midlands CSP proposed by the PCC; further detail on this is expected.

5.2 Applications are being submitted at a local authority and West Midlands Metropolitan area for external funding, which if secured, will aid delivery of strategy priorities.

5.3 The annual review of the SWP delivery plan will ensure full consideration can be given to the availability of resources before delivery commitments are finalised. [GS/09032017/P]

## **6.0 Legal implications**

6.1 Sections five and six of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 require the Council and other responsible authorities to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder in the area in the planning and delivery of their services. Subsequent revisions to the Act (by the Police and Justice Act 2006) places a duty on CSPs to prepare strategic assessments with the purpose of informing the partnership plan revisions.

6.2 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) requires the Council along with the other Responsible Authorities to exercise their functions, with due regard to do all that they reasonably can by way of preventing crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending in the locality. All aspects of this requirement are featured within the draft strategy. [TS/08022017/K]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

7.1 A full equality analysis has been completed. Whilst the strategy will impact positively on Wolverhampton residents as a whole, by driving down crime, those groups which are disproportionately impacted by certain crimes will directly benefit. The varying needs of clients will be provided for and victimisation associated with protected characteristics such as gender, religion, disability and race. The performance framework aligned to the strategy will be used to identify trends and the annual strategic assessment will assess impact and inform future planning.

## **8.0 Environmental implications**

8.1 The development and implementation of the Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy will impact positively across all areas of the city, particularly those priority neighbourhoods adversely affected by crime and anti-social behaviour.

## **9.0 Human resources implications**

9.1 There are no human resources implications associated with this strategy.

**10.0 Corporate landlord implications**

10.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this strategy.

**11.0 Schedule of background papers**

11.1 Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel (Presentation) – 11 July 2016

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Safer Wolverhampton  
Partnership

# Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy **2017-2020**





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## Section 1

# Foreword

This refreshed Community Safety and Harm Reduction Strategy emphasises the absolute commitment to continued partnership working and a full recognition that reducing vulnerability and harm must be central to our joint effort to improve outcomes for Wolverhampton's communities.

Wolverhampton has already taken significant steps to improve services against a backdrop of unprecedented financial constraint, and in doing so, has introduced new service models which integrate safeguarding across partner agencies through developments such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Strengthening Families Hubs, delivering a whole family approach to those requiring early help and support. This shift is also reflected at a West Midlands level, with unprecedented organisational change across West Midlands Police, Probation services and the establishment of the West Midlands Combined Authority. The priorities set out within this strategy support this commitment through an enhanced focus on early intervention and prevention.

By adopting broader strategic themes within this new strategy, the approach enables us to build in a greater degree of flexibility over the next three years than has been previously possible, so that changing crime trends and population needs can be reviewed annually and the particular focus for delivery under each strategic priority reviewed to ensure our delivery remains reflects changing needs and maximises opportunities for joint working across the region and sub-region.

Reduced resources continue to provide a significant challenge against a backdrop of high expectation to continue to drive down crime, and provide quality services, however, they also provide a strong business case to work more closely with our partners, identify efficiencies and support communities to take an enhanced role in helping to address the things that matter to them, within their neighbourhoods, and in recognising and celebrating those contributions.



We are in the fortunate position of building on the very positive progress from our previous strategy, with the achievements of the city's Youth Offending Service highlighted following its Full Joint Inspection, successful integration of Prevent principles and development of our response to 'violence against women and girls' crimes into mainstream services across sectors. These areas of responsibility are shared across the various strategic Boards in place across the city, underpinned by a joint operating protocol to provide clarity at a strategic level on lead responsibilities.

Successful joint operations to tackle entrenched issues within communities with Police and Public Health has enabled shared areas of business to be tackled collaboratively and as we move more into the realms of using our collective data more effectively to target need, using early indicators to inform our approach, these joint efforts start to become seen as everyday practice. This strategy will help facilitate this collaborative working moving forward and the opportunities for improving the outcomes for Wolverhampton and its citizens.



**Linda Sanders,**  
Chair, Safer  
Wolverhampton  
Partnership



**Chief Superintendent  
Jayne Meir,**  
Vice Chair, Safer  
Wolverhampton  
Partnership



**Councillor  
Paul Sweet,**  
City of  
Wolverhampton  
Council

## Section 2

# Executive Summary

### Background and Context

Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) is the statutory Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in Wolverhampton. A number of statutory and non-statutory partner agencies work together to assess local crime priorities and formulate a range of strategies and plans to address such issues.

In developing this strategy, SWP has consulted with a range of stakeholders and local communities to inform the content of the document and priorities which will be worked towards over the three year strategy.

### Demographics

The city's population has increased by 5.2% between in the ten years since 2004, resulting in rise in the number of households across the city.

Wolverhampton continues to suffer deprivation and under the Indices of Deprivation 2015; remains one of the 10% most deprived local authorities in England. Wolverhampton is ethnically diverse, with of 36% of the city's residents identifying as Black Asian Minority Ethnic.

### Performance against our previous strategy

Reflecting on the previous strategy (2014-2017) a range of outcomes have been delivered against the key objectives that were set out, Wolverhampton has performed better than the national average. Despite changes in the structure of the management of offenders which bought large scale changes and challenges; positive delivery has been accomplished across all three of the priority areas which were included in the strategy.

### Setting our priorities

Moving into the new strategy, SWP used a range of information, including crime data, strategic assessments, thematic trends and information from key partners and the community to build a well-informed picture of the issues which the city continues to face. Additionally there is recognition that a shift toward early intervention is needed to reduce vulnerability and harm.

SWP Board was able to use the information to identify and agree three overarching strategic priorities for 2017-2020:



These priorities require a multi-agency response and will impact positively on the reduction of crime and will promote self-resilience and strengthen communities across the city.

## Reducing Re-offending

**Effectively manage offenders, both adults and youths that enter the criminal justice system to reduce the risk of reoffending, whilst addressing any drug or alcohol misuse linked to their offending behaviours.**

### **The outcomes expected are:**

- Reduce adult and youth reoffending
- Improved use of tools and powers to effectively manage offenders
- Development of a risk-based, stepped model for high volume offenders
- Improved use of pathways to change offender attitudes and behaviours
- Earlier identification of young people in need of support

## Violence Prevention

**Identifying those in need of support at an early stage to prevent the escalation of violence and reduce crime. To Continue to deliver robust preventative work using a multi-agency approach to ensure that those in need of specialist services receive them at a much earlier point to reduce risk to themselves and the wider community.**

### **The outcomes expected are:**

- Improved understanding of risk to prevent offending and harm
- Improved use of tools and powers
- Increased confidence in reporting
- Reduced prevalence of violent crime
- More effective management of threat and risk

## Reducing Victimization

**Reduce harm to those who are most vulnerable caused by victimisation and repeat victimisation. Build resilience, provide safeguarding and pathways for individuals and within communities so that people are empowered to manage their own risk and are supported through their local community.**

### **The outcomes expected are:**

- Increased reporting of under-reported crime
- Reduced victimisation by adopting a whole family approach
- Improved prevention interventions
- Earlier identification of individuals at risk
- Strengthened community response

## Delivery

The annual local Police and Crime Plan will detail the areas of focus to meet overarching strategic priorities. Each year SWP will work with a range of partner agencies to effectively deliver the strategic priorities using a robust performance management system to ensure outcomes are regularly monitored and delivered.

## Section 3

# Introduction

## The Partnership

Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) is the statutory Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in the city and the Local Police & Crime Board (LPCB) for Wolverhampton.

## Functions and Statutory Duties

The Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP) provides strategic oversight for the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour across Wolverhampton. SWP is a statutory multi-agency forum where relevant partners work together to assess local crime priorities and agree how to deal with these issues. SWP develops strategic plans for the area, ensuring delivery of local community safety priorities and works collectively with partners on city priorities through commissioning, the re-direction of mainstream resources and improved practice.

Developed under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, there is a duty placed on certain partners (termed Responsible Authorities) to be part of SWP membership and SWP has a legal duty to perform a number of statutory functions. Wolverhampton has a strong CSP, delivering key successes over recent years, whilst managing unprecedented organisational change and resource constraints within the respective partners.

The partnership is made up of:

### Statutory partners;

- City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC)
- West Midlands Police (WMP)
- West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority
- National Probation Service (NPS)
- Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)
- Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Her Majesty's Prisons

### Non-statutory partners from;

- Resident representatives covering each constituency area
- Business sector
- Third Sector Partnership – covering Communities of Interest, special interest groups and Third Sector organisations
- Lead Councillor representation

Every effort is made to ensure that third sector partner organisations are involved in the work of SWP. A strong and robust relationship has been forged with local partners, many of whom sit on city wide steering groups and delivery groups to help shape and direct the services we commission across Wolverhampton. Their local knowledge and specialist services are vital in delivering interventions and activities to those members of the public who need support.

All plans are well informed by data sources including the annual strategic assessment, partner data and community input. Whilst delivering against identified strategies and plans SWP implements systems to monitor performance and report back to stakeholders through oversight of key performance indicators and annual reports.

Under the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 SWP has a duty to cooperate with the elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the West Midlands Police Force Area. With the introduction of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) in June 2016, SWP will work proactively to strengthen its contribution to regional priorities.

SWP also works collaboratively with other CSPs across the West Midlands to improve working practices and identify efficiencies. This approach will also extend to strategic forums across Wolverhampton to increase opportunities for joint commissioning.

As part of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, from 2011 SWP has the responsibility to undertake Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR). Where a domestic violence-related death occurs and lessons can be learnt, SWP oversees the review process and the implementation of recommendations in line with Home Office guidance.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 came into force in July 2015 and introduced a statutory requirement for designated agencies to have 'due regard for the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism'. The act also introduced a statutory duty for Local Authorities to establish and maintain Channel Panels in their area to provide case management support for identified individuals.

Although not a statutory requirement for SWP, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a responsibility on key agencies to identify and support victims.

## The City

The city of Wolverhampton measures 26.8 square miles in area, and is one of the four local authorities in the Black Country sub-region, situated to the west of Birmingham and bordered by Dudley, Walsall, Sandwell and parts of Staffordshire.

In 2014<sup>1</sup>, 252,987 people were living in the Wolverhampton. The population of the city has followed a rising trend, with an increase of 5.2% residents since 2004.<sup>2</sup>

Wolverhampton is ethnically diverse, becoming more diverse over the last decade. There has been a 10% decrease in White British residents since 2001 and a corresponding increase in Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) residents. In 2011, BAME residents accounted for 36% of Wolverhampton’s population. In terms of country of birth, 16% of Wolverhampton residents were born outside of the UK. There is strong community cohesion across the city and diversity is embraced.

Over recent years the city has seen an increase in arrivals from Roma communities from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania. At the 2011 census, 87 languages were spoken in Wolverhampton and it is recognised that there are a large amount of practicing religions across the city.

The latest release of the Integrated Household Survey (2012) estimated that 1.5% of adults identified themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). Applying this estimate to Wolverhampton’s population equates to 3,765 LGB residents.



Ethnicity in Wolverhampton 2011



Wolverhampton has a growing visitor economy, supported by economic investment in the city. There is also a large student population studying further or higher education. Recognising that perceptions of crime are a key factor in attracting inward investment; SWP will be aligning its workstreams with the Business Improvement Districts in support of these regeneration efforts and will take an agile approach to crime reduction to maintain public confidence.

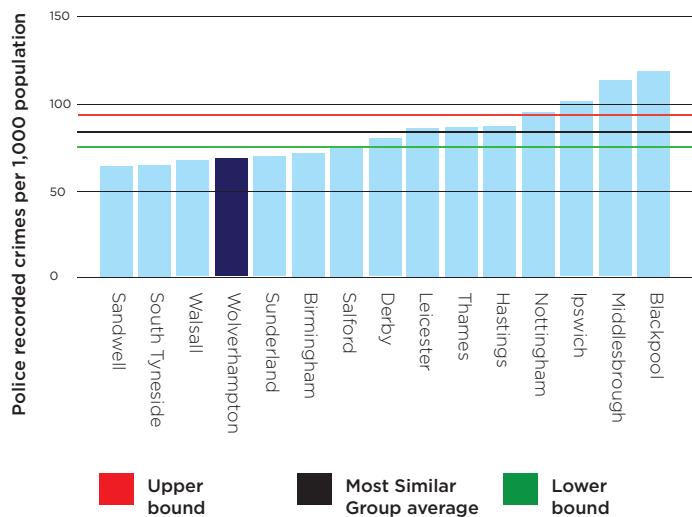
<sup>1</sup> 2014 Mid-Year Population Estimates. Further detailed demographic and census information can be found at [www.wolverhamptoninprofile.org.uk](http://www.wolverhamptoninprofile.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wolverhamptoninprofile.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=212>

## Section 4

# Reflections on 2014-2017





Performance against the current SWP Crime Reduction and Community Safety Strategy 2014-17 has been reviewed; whilst improvements against the strategic priorities of Reducing Reoffending, Substance Misuse, Violence Against Women and Girls and Gangs and Youth Crime are notable, as outlined below, remaining challenges will be used to inform future delivery. Recorded crime levels across Wolverhampton as at 31 March 2016 show the city is performing better than the national average. The chart below<sup>3</sup> shows Wolverhampton's position in relation to its most similar groups.



## Reducing Reoffending

Responsibility for the management of adult offenders is split, with the private sector Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) managing low to medium risk offenders and National Probation Service (NPS) managing higher risk and priority offenders. A change to legislation also increased offenders falling within the remit of CRC. The Youth Offending Service received highly positive feedback from its inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in 2015, which highlighted the service as being amongst the best in the country<sup>4</sup>.

Key achievements are summarised below:

-  The city performed favourably in comparison to national rates of proven reoffending of youths and adults.
-  High levels of compliance with completion of adult community based sentences including requirements to complete unpaid work.
-  Reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system was met, with reductions seen each quarter.
-  Performance of adult prison releases with successful supervision completions remained static.

<sup>3</sup> Information taken from ONS March 2016 <sup>4</sup> Acquisitive crime - crimes where property / commodities are targeted i.e. theft, burglary, vehicle crime.

<sup>4</sup> A full report is available at <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/02/Wolverhampton-FJI-report.pdf>



## Substance Misuse

There are increased risks of involvement in crime for people who misuse alcohol and drugs, either as perpetrators or victims. Public Health data has shown positive outcomes in tackling these issues:

- ✓ Wolverhampton performed favourably in comparison to the rest of the West Midlands in terms of successful completions and re-presentations to treatment by criminal justice clients.

Although successes were achieved, work to engage this client group to reduce offending linked to drugs or alcohol use is ongoing:

- ! Increases were seen in the number of positive drug tests in custody, yet referrals of criminal justice clients into treatment reduced.
- ! Levels of public place violence with injury recorded by police remained raised.
- ! Increases in successful completion of drug rehabilitation and alcohol treatment requirements by adults (as measured by CRC) were not achieved.

## Gangs and Youth Crime

Joint working across statutory, third sector and private sector providers to coordinate delivery has provided effective exit pathways and interventions across agencies to target the small number of individuals where gang culture remains problematic. Whilst performance has been positive, an increase of public place violence with injury across all West Midlands authorities remains a local challenge. Prevention and earlier targeted intervention is the future priority.

- ✓ Levels of violent crime involving a knife, sharply bladed instrument or firearm showed a high level of control with low levels recorded.
- ✓ Personal Robbery levels in Wolverhampton, including those committed against or by young people, remained low and controlled.

## Violence against Women and Girls

‘Violence against women and girls’ (VAWG) is a collective term that encompasses domestic violence (DV), sexual violence (SV), forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and so-called honour crime. The majority of victims of these crimes are female at the hands of male perpetrators; however Wolverhampton’s VAWG strategy acknowledges that all genders can be victims and perpetrators of such crimes. Performance measured for this priority was encouraging:

- ✓ The increase of recorded crimes and non-crimes for investigation related to domestic abuse and serious sexual offences reflects increased confidence in reporting.
- ✓ Reporting of ‘hidden crime’ (forced marriage, honour based abuse and female genital mutilation) whilst still low, showed a small increase in 2016/17.
- ✓ Improvements in identifying high risk cases referred for support and providing interventions to reduce levels of risk and repeat referrals across partners.
- ✓ The number of referrals (inc. self-referrals) to sexual assault services saw a continuing increasing trend, indicating improved confidence in reporting.

## CHALLENGES

Reflecting on the priorities from the previous strategy, it is apparent that although crime, such as acquisitive crime<sup>5</sup> is reducing, challenges remain.

Reduce levels of violent incidents, particularly against young people	Reduce weapon enabled crime	Address the threat and harm caused by substance misuse, including NSP (so-called ‘legal highs’) use	Increase reporting of ‘hidden’ crimes	Increase accountability of DV perpetrator’s behaviour
Address and reduce vulnerability	Increase reporting of hate crime	Increase reporting of VAWG crimes and confidence of victims, particularly amongst new communities	Increase levels of collaborative working	Diversion from gangs

<sup>5</sup> Information taken from ONS March 2016<sup>4</sup> Acquisitive crime - crimes where property / commodities are targeted i.e. theft, burglary, vehicle crime.

## Section 5

# Determining Priorities for 2017-2020

In setting strategic priorities for this refreshed 2017-20 strategy, a range of information was used to build a well-informed picture of the issues facing the city. Information was collated using recorded crime data and thematic trend information combined with data from partner agencies. Findings included:

- Increases in violent crime, particularly in public places, due to the vulnerability of both victims and offenders especially where alcohol or drugs are a factor.
- Further effort is required to raise awareness and build confidence of victims to report abuse, to sustain the increasing trend in recorded DV and SV offences and Hate Crime.
- Young people are disproportionately affected by violent crime and there is a need to target intervention earlier to break the cycle of gang recruitment.
- A need to further develop the local response to Modern Slavery and associated organised criminality.
- The under reporting of Business Crime remains a concern despite high volume recording and repeat victimisation.
- There have been promising reductions in reoffending rates for both adults and youths, although issues such as employment post-release, and reducing the harm caused by substance misuse need to be addressed.

There has been recognition that a shift towards early intervention will reduce vulnerability, harm and the demand for crisis intervention. This approach is underpinned by research into Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) which identifies early-life causal factors as key contributors to poor life outcomes.

These findings were used by SWP Board to set revised strategic priorities for the city, ensuring they appropriately reflected need and required joint delivery across partners, as well as aligning with current city and regional priorities.

The resulting strategic priorities agreed by SWP Board are detailed below:



The 2017-20 priorities are broader than those that have been agreed in previous years, with a number of work areas sitting within each priority. Use of the SWP annual strategic assessment to analyse crime trends will ensure that the delivery focus remains relevant, allowing an enhanced flexibility and agility to respond to new and emerging risks and priorities. The Local Police and Crime Plan will provide an annual focus for delivery which is informed by local need.

## Priority 1: Reducing Reoffending

The ability to effectively manage the behaviour of offenders that enter the criminal justice system to reduce their risk of reoffending remains a strategic priority. This spans both youth and adult offenders and includes the full spectrum of risk and offending type. The causal factors linked to offending such as drug and alcohol misuse and the transition between youth and adult systems will be strengthened. A new Reducing Reoffending Strategy will provide an in depth focus highlighting areas for improvement and an evidence-based approach to regularly assess repeat offending types, adopting innovation and best practice.

### There are 7 reducing reoffending delivery pathways:

1. Accommodation provision for successful rehabilitation
2. Education, Training and Employment – support to access stable employment and training
3. Health – improved access to primary care provisions
4. Drugs and Alcohol – tackle and reduce substance misuse
5. Finance, benefit and debt – support to access advise and secure finances
6. Children and families – improve relationships where required
7. Attitudes, thinking and behaviour – Provision of interventions to meet need

### Outcomes



Reduce adult and youth reoffending



Improved use of tools and powers to effectively manage offenders



Development of a risk-based, stepped model for high volume offenders



Improved use of pathways to change offender attitudes and behaviours



Earlier identification of young people in need of support

## Priority 2: Violence Prevention

Recognising the personal harm caused by violent crimes will be a particular area of focus. SWP is building on a much improved multi-agency approach to tackling VAWG, covering the high volume crimes of domestic and sexual violence, whilst challenging the cultural acceptance of VAWG and embedding improved practice across frontline services so it becomes an integral part of their offer. Similarly, Wolverhampton has developed a strong multi-agency approach to preventing gang involvement and reducing the harm caused by gangs and youth violence. Innovative approaches are in development to address remaining challenges of youth violence and ensure both our mainstream and specialist services identify those in need of support at a much earlier point to reduce the risk of escalating violence.

The West Midlands Violence Alliance was launched early in 2016 to deliver a targeted partnership response in collaboration with health agencies, Councils and others to drive forward violence prevention across the region. Wolverhampton's approach will align with recommendations stemming from this work.

### Outcomes



Improved understanding  
of risk to prevent  
offending and harm



Improved use of tools  
and powers



Increased confidence  
in reporting



Reduced prevalence  
of violent crime



More effective  
management of threat  
and risk

## Priority 3: Reducing Victimization

Reducing the volume and harm caused by victimisation, as well as the likelihood of repeat victimisation will ensure those who are most vulnerable are more effectively safeguarded and are supported to reduce their own risk.

Wolverhampton benefits from strong, cohesive communities across the city; safeguarding and building on this position will enhance positive perceptions of safety within communities and increase an awareness of the active role citizens can play in improving community safety. This may include raised awareness, improving mutual respect and tolerance, or improving methods of communication and engagement such as via social media or community safeguarding alerts. It is recognised that this is not a static picture; SWP will actively monitor and respond to changing crime trends, direct resources to reduce vulnerability and extend the use of restorative justice.

### Outcomes



Increased reporting of under-reported crime



Reduced victimisation by adopting a whole family approach



Improved prevention interventions



Earlier identification of individuals at risk



Strengthened community response

## Section 6

# Delivery

Strong relationships have been built with our cross-sector partners over many years, building purposeful and consistent partnerships to deliver services and interventions.

A robust performance management system is in place to ensure outcomes within the strategy are delivered. Quarterly performance returns are made to the PCC to provide updates against PCC funded delivery PCC, whilst SWP Board provides rigorous oversight, scrutiny and challenge against delivery. Actions plans are in place and monitored regularly to ensure progress is maintained.

Recognising areas of commonality between SWP, Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards, Health and Well Being Board and Children's Trust Board, a joint working protocol has been adopted to provide clarity over areas of lead responsibility and aid collaborative working.

To inform the delivery of interventions and commissioned services annually over the life of the strategy SWP will use information and data from strategic assessments to analyse current crime trends to ensure priorities delivered remain relevant; assessing the need on an annual basis will provide SWP with greater flexibility to respond to new and emerging risks and priorities across Wolverhampton.

The Local Police and Crime Plan will be published annually for the life of the strategy. Priorities which will be reflected in the 2017/18 plan can be found in Appendix A.

## Section 7

# Local Policing Plan

The Local Police and Crime Plan for Wolverhampton will aid the delivery of this strategy. The plan is shaped by consultation with partners, stakeholders and local communities and takes into consideration existing strategies which may impact on policing across the city. It is refreshed annually to ensure that the services provided by Wolverhampton Police and its partners continue to meet the needs of local communities and reflect changing priorities within neighbourhoods across the city.

West Midlands Police are currently working towards a new operating model which will improve how policing is delivered by 2020. The ambition of the next generation of Local Policing is to prevent harm at the earliest possible opportunity by:

- Delivering with partners to reduce harm through early intervention
- Preventing reoffending through consistent and effective Offender Management
- Building community resilience and capacity to resolve problems
- Increasing public confidence by understanding needs and building trust
- Reducing repeat demand through preventative problem solving

To achieve this ambition West Midlands Police have introduced a new model of local policing creating Neighbourhood Policing Units (NPU's) made of several teams focused on prevention and intervention activities at the local level. Policing will be tailored to meet the differing needs of individual neighbourhoods which will maximise impact in areas with the greatest levels of harm and need.



## Section 8

# *Equalities and Resources*

### Equalities

Current service data and crime analysis highlight that this strategy will impact differently on certain groups. Women and girls are statistically more likely to be victims of domestic abuse and violence, as well as sexual abuse and exploitation. It is therefore likely that services which benefit and support women and girls will be accessed predominantly by that group.

Offenders are statistically more likely to be males, and therefore services aimed at reducing reoffending and changing behaviour programmes will be accessed mainly by that group. The strategy will impact positively on communities with protected characteristics by catering for the different needs of clients across the age spectrum and addressing victimisation associated with gender, disability, race or religion. No adverse impacts have been identified as a result of the strategy development, proposed implementation, or consultation feedback.

Planned approaches to cater for differing needs of client groups are detailed within the full analysis which is available on request.

### Resources

On-going funding reductions over recent years across SWP and many partners has seen opportunities increase for joint commissioning. Collaborative cross-boundary working throughout the West Midlands area will also provide opportunities for improved efficiencies and practice, as will developments emanating from the West Midlands Combined Authority.

SWP will align its commissioning activity against the strategic priorities set out within this strategy using its available resources and will be looking to develop joint commissioning opportunities across the city, the sub-region and the West Midlands Metropolitan area across the lifetime of this strategy to realise efficiencies and increase value for money in the delivery of services.

Section 9

# Recognising the Active Role of our Communities

SWP understands and values the importance of community engagement to build resilience and confidence within neighbourhoods; enabling residents to report issues of concern and empowering them to play an active role in tackling low level issues within their locality. This may include activities such as Speed Watch, litter picks or Neighbourhood Watch groups.

A review of neighbourhood engagement in 2016 showed that of 496 respondents, over 70% wanted to be kept informed about crime and community safety in their locality. The review highlighted a number of recommendations for implementation.

These included;

- Improved advertisement and communication to actively promote the range of engagement.
- To ensure that PACT priorities are monitored and evaluated as standard to ensure that outcomes, successes and value for money can be evidenced.
- Increase the use of social media as a means of communication to extend engagement opportunities.
- Improve effectiveness and accessibility of PACT meetings.

Roll out of the Active Citizens Programme is underway, which is a police led initiative to support communities in delivering interventions in response to low level neighbourhood concerns. The aim of the programme is to engage with and empower residents to make small changes to their street or neighbourhood with the aid of small-scale funding. The scheme has been rolled out across all neighbourhoods in the city with bidding opportunities available annually.

## Methods to engage communities:



SOCIAL MEDIA  
incl. Facebook, email and website

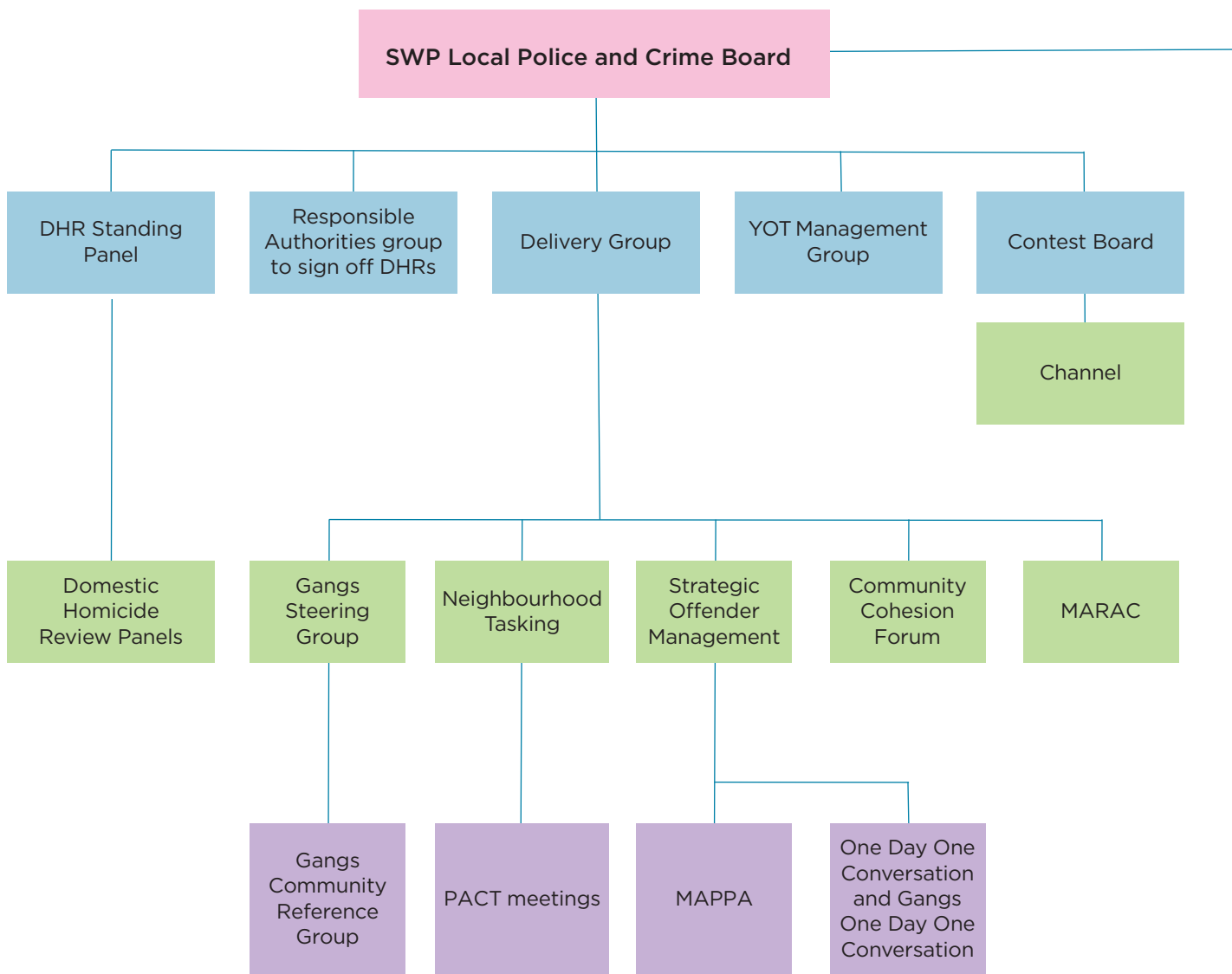


CITY DIRECT



Section 10

# Delivery Structure Chart



Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum, Adults and Children's Safeguarding, Public Health Delivery Board, Business Partnership, Prevent Regional Board, City Wide Information Sharing Group, Early Help, Families in Focus Programme Board, Alcohol Strategy Leads, Wolverhampton Business Crime Partnership, BID, Street Sex Workers Group, MASH, Specialist Domestic Violence Court Steering Group

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACES	Adverse Childhood Experiences	MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment meetings
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	NPS	National Probation Service
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group	NPS	New Psychoactive Substances
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company	NPU	Neighbourhood Policing Unit
CSP	Community Safety Partnership	NRM	National Referral Mechanism
DHR	Domestic Homicide Reviews	ONS	Office of National Statistics
DV	Domestic Violence	OPCC	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	PACT	Partners & Communities Together
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation	PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
JSA	Job Seeker's Allowance	SWP	Safer Wolverhampton Partnership
KPI	Key Performance Indicator	SV	Sexual Violence
LGB	Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual	VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
LPCB	Local Police and Crime Board	WMCA	West Midlands Combined Authority
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements	WMP	West Midlands Police
		YOT	Youth Offending Team

**Contact**

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[safer@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:safer@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

Visit us at: [www.saferwton.org.uk](http://www.saferwton.org.uk)



Page 117 Operating as Wolverhampton's Local Police & Crime Board

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# Cabinet Meeting

## 22 March 2017

<b>Report title</b>	The Vision for Education 2030 – Shaping a city of learning	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Claire Darke Education	
<b>Key decision</b>	YES	
<b>In forward plan</b>	YES	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All	
<b>Accountable director</b>	Julien Kramer (Education)	
<b>Originating service</b>	School Standards	
<b>Accountable employee(s)</b>	Alex Jones Tel Email	Assistant Director of Education (School Standards) 01902 555275 alex.jones2@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Strategic Executive Board CYP Scrutiny Panel	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2017 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2016

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### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the City of Wolverhampton Council – Vision for Education 2030.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the content of the “Vision for Education 2030 – Shaping a city of learning” and to seek approval for the Vision for Education 2030 to be published

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council – Vision for Education 2030 brings together the ambitions of all strands of education, across all directorates of the council, to ensure that education continues to play a key role in making the City a place people come to from far and wide to invest, work, shop, study and play. It encompasses the council’s commitment to ensuring that our citizens have outstanding opportunities at every stage of their education – from nursery through to university and beyond.

## **3.0 Discussion:**

- 3.1 Following extensive consultation with cross-directorate stakeholders across Education, People and Place, the vision was then taken to full consultation.

The following stakeholders were consulted:

- Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
- Youth Council
- Executive Team
- City Board
- Education Board
- Business Champions
- Headteachers across all sectors and school designations
- Chairs of Governors
- LA School Improvement Stakeholders Board

The feedback from the consultation was overwhelmingly positive with only very minor changes to be considered – all of which have now been incorporated, where appropriate, into the final document (see attached).

### **Some examples of the positive comments received:**

“comprehensive and positive”

“very impressive statistics on the transformation journey so far”

“very strong vision of where the city is moving and good to see a fully integrated approach”

“an ambitious set of aims”

“excellent that the council is so committed to education within the city for the foreseeable future”



“a very positive message about Wolverhampton at the moment with some great plans for the future of the City”

3.2 The main sections of the Vision are:

- The education vision statement and definition of a city of learning
- Foreword from Councillor Darke
- Journey of Education
- Education Transformation in the city
- Delivering our vision

3.3 The Education Vision Statement is:

The City of Wolverhampton Council’s vision is to create an education system for all of our children and young people that:

- Promotes the very highest standards.
- Raises their attainment and closes the gap.
- Inspires them to reach their full potential.
- Delivers a city of learning\*
- Ensures a bright future in a fast changing, progressive city.

3.4 The Vision outlines the rapid journey of transformation that education in the City has undergone over the past three years:

- Moving from 65% good or better schools in September 2013 to 83% September 2016 (now at 85%)
- Highest ever percentage of young people achieving five or more good GCSE’s including English and Maths at 52%
- Performance at GCSE for Looked After Children well above national averages.
- In line with national for Basics Measure (A\*-C in both English and maths) at 58%
- 79<sup>th</sup> best LA for end of KS2 results – up 25 places in three years
- Top 3 LA nationally for Post-16 vocational results
- 91% of 16 year olds get jobs, apprenticeships or continue their education.
- £300million investment in world class school facilities

3.5 The document then outlines how the Vision 2030 will be delivered through:

- Partnership working
- Supporting the most vulnerable
- Educational leadership
- Commercial and digital transformation

Each of these strands outlines the commitment that the council and the schools and providers will make to ensure that the Vision 2030 is delivered and has the desired impact on educational outcomes for the children and young people of the City of Wolverhampton.

#### **4.0 Financial implications**

4.1 The cost of implementation of the Vision will be met from the approved budget of the Education Directorate and schools delegated budgets. [MF/01032017/M]

#### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 Under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 the Council has a duty to contribute to the development of the community by securing efficient primary and secondary education and promote high standards in the city. [TS/02032017/Y]

#### **6.0 Equalities implications**

6.1 Some pupils and some schools face greater challenges in achieving educational success; there are therefore profound equalities implications to the LA and to schools in ensuring that every child and young person achieves their full potential and every school provides good educational outcomes.

#### **7.0 Environmental implications**

7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report

#### **8.0 Human resources implications**

8.1 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report

#### **9.0 Corporate landlord implications**

9.1 There are no direct Corporate Landlord implications arising from this report

#### **10.0 Schedule of background papers**

10.1 N/A.

# The vision for education 2030

Shaping a city of learning

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[wolverhampton.gov.uk](http://wolverhampton.gov.uk)

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

# Our vision for the City of Wolverhampton in 2030

**In 2030 the City of Wolverhampton will be a thriving university city of opportunity where we...**

Page 124

**CELEBRATE ENTERPRISE, EDUCATION AND SKILLS**  
Icon: Wrench, graduation cap, gears, clock, and pound symbol.

**HAVE A CITY CENTRE WE'RE PROUD OF**  
Icon: City hall building.

**ARE SERIOUS ABOUT BOOSTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING**  
Icon: Heart with pulse line.

**retain more of the value produced by our economy to benefit the whole city**  
Icon: Hand holding a coin.

**have a buoyant and resilient economy that includes international manufacturing companies with local roots and a strong, vibrant and innovative business base**  
Icon: Gear with pound symbol and upward arrow.

**care and are confident about our diversity**  
Icon: Three stylized human figures.

**all play our part in creating a confident, buzzing city that's synonymous with ambition, innovation and inclusion**  
Icon: Three stylized human figures.

**have world class public services that continually improve and have collaboration and co-production at their heart**  
Icon: Two hands holding three stylized human figures.

**have a vibrant civic society that's focused on the future, empowers local communities and is supported by local businesses and institutions**  
Icon: Grid of stylized human figures.

**have a buoyant and resilient economy that includes international manufacturing companies with local roots and a strong, vibrant and innovative business base**  
Icon: Gear with pound symbol and upward arrow.

**care and are confident about our diversity**  
Icon: Three stylized human figures.

**make it easy for businesses and visitors to access the city and are well connected to the wider world through our infrastructure**  
Icon: Bus, tram, and car.

**are committed to sustainability for future generations**  
Icon: Lightbulb with leaf inside.

**care and are confident about our diversity**  
Icon: Three stylized human figures.

# Our education vision for 2030

**The City of Wolverhampton Council's vision is to create an education system for all of our children and young people that:**

Page 125

- Promotes the very highest standards.
- Raises their attainment and closes the gap.
- Inspires them to reach their full potential.
- Delivers a city of learning.\*
- Ensures a bright future in a fast changing, progressive city.

## **City of Learning**

\*We aspire that the City of Wolverhampton becomes a city of learning where:

- An ethos of quality underpins the provision of continuous learning opportunities for all children, young people and citizens within the city.
- Partners work together to create an education system that provides local solutions to local challenges.
- Access to learning is available for all levels and to all ages with increased participation from hard to reach/disadvantaged communities.
- Learning is innovative, technologically advanced and narrows the skills gap to develop a highly skilled workforce, joining skills to future business needs.



## Foreword from Cabinet Member for Education, Cllr Claire Darke: shaping the city's future

**We have an ambitious vision to make the City of Wolverhampton a place people come to from far and wide to invest, work, shop, study and play.**

We want to become a thriving 'smart city', internationally renowned for its booming economy and skilled workforce, rich diversity and a commitment to fairness and equality which ensures everyone has the chance to benefit from its success.

Education has a key part to play in ensuring we make this vision a reality, and we are committed to ensuring that our young people have outstanding opportunities at every stage of their education – from nursery through to university and beyond. Wolverhampton is committed to becoming a city of learning that celebrates and develops continuous learning opportunities.

More than 42,000 students attend schools in the City of Wolverhampton, with thousands more studying at our thriving college and university or on apprenticeships with local employers.

Our schools have been on a rapid journey of improvement in the last few years, with the council investing more than £300 million rebuilding or refurbishing every secondary school and expanding primary schools to cope with demand.

Pupils and teachers are responding well to this investment in their future – Ofsted outcomes have improved dramatically, with 83% of the city's schools now rated good or outstanding, compared to 65% just three years ago.\*

Results have also improved rapidly during this period, with outcomes for our youngest children improving for four years running and performance at Key Stage 2 the best in

Birmingham and the Black Country. GCSE results achieved the national average level for the first time in 2016, and post-16 results continue to be among the best in the whole country.

These improvements have been possible through the strong partnership working between the council, schools, further and higher education providers and local businesses.

We recognise these improvements are just the beginning of our education journey. Today's children are the workforce of tomorrow and central to our city's future success, and we will strive to ensure that we give everyone the very best education – and the very best chance to succeed.

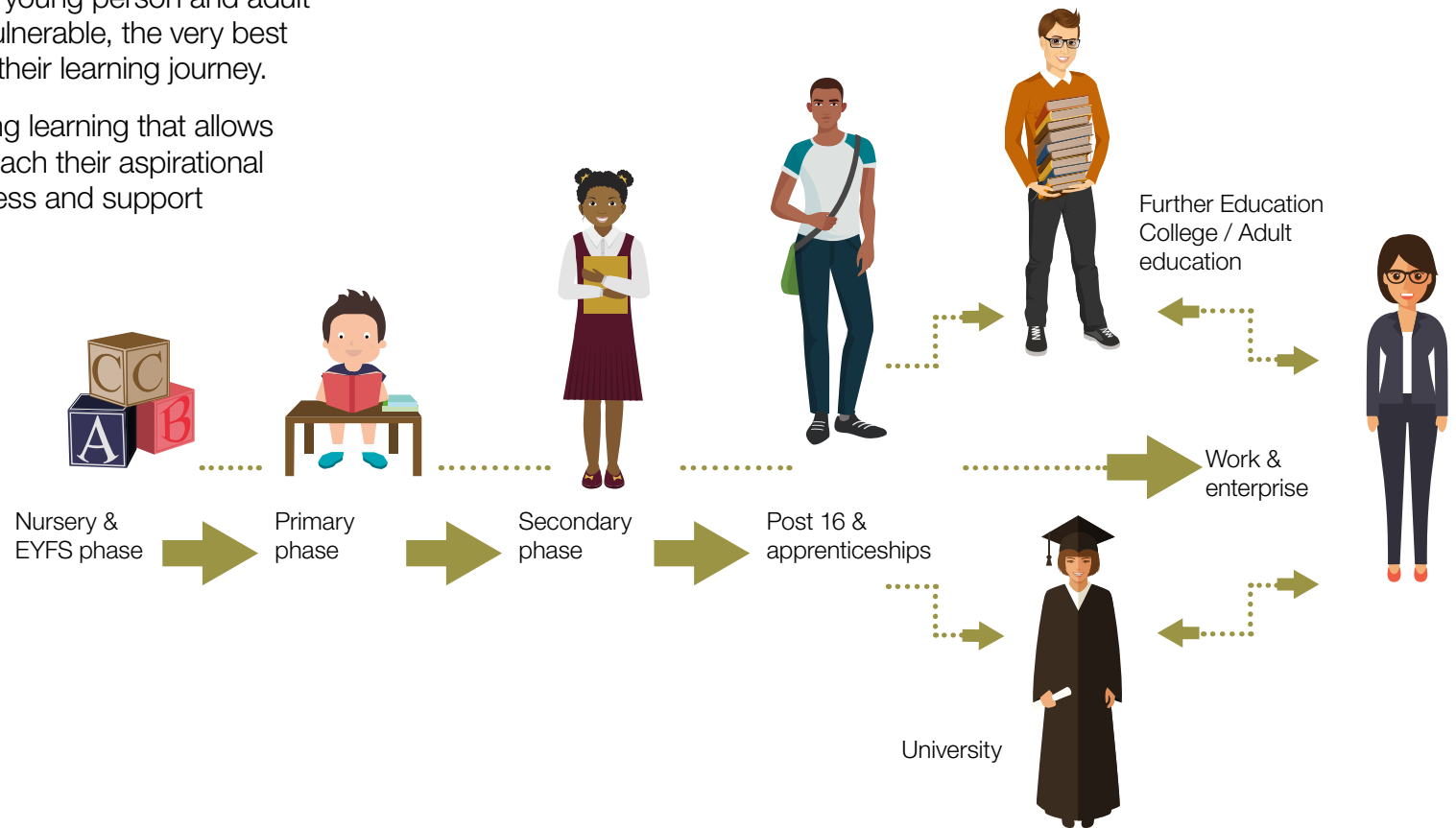
\*As of September 2016

# The journey of education in the City of Wolverhampton

The council aspires to offer every child, young person and adult learner in the city, including our most vulnerable, the very best educational provision at every stage of their learning journey.

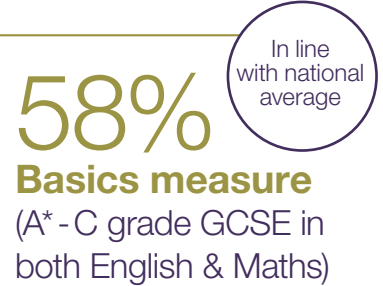
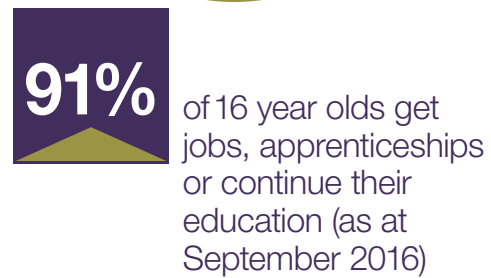
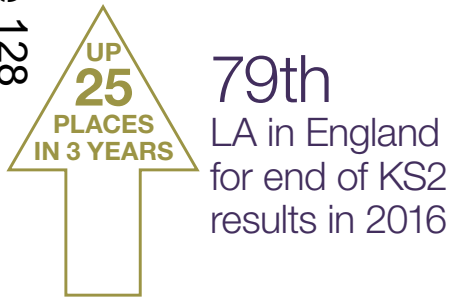
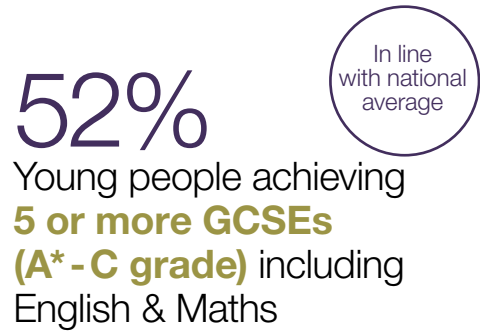
We encourage a commitment to life-long learning that allows them to believe in their own ability, to reach their aspirational potential, improve their economic success and support the city's regeneration and prosperity.

To help promote lifelong learning across the city, Wolverhampton is committed to becoming a city of learning that supports individual empowerment and social inclusion. This is supported by our city commitment to promoting equality and social justice supported by economic, educational and cultural regeneration.



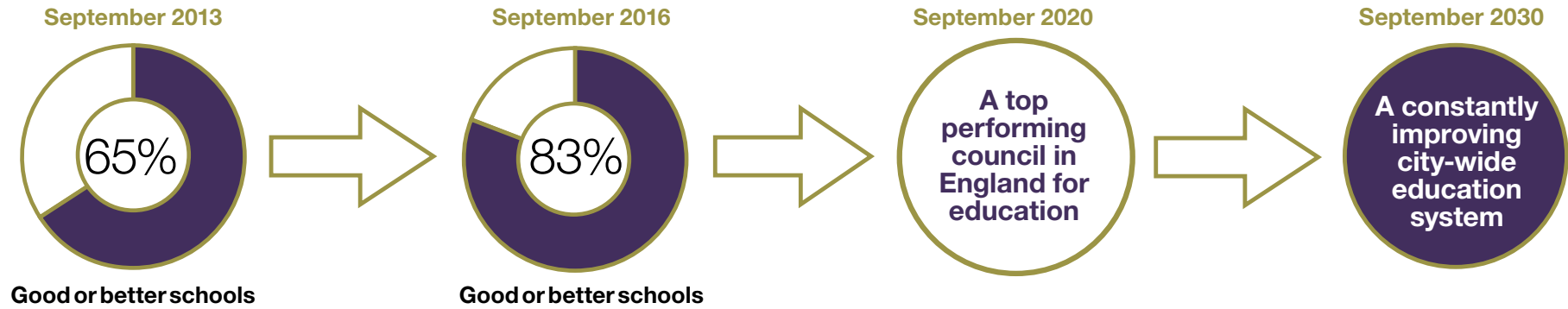
# Our journey of education transformation in the city so far:

Page 128

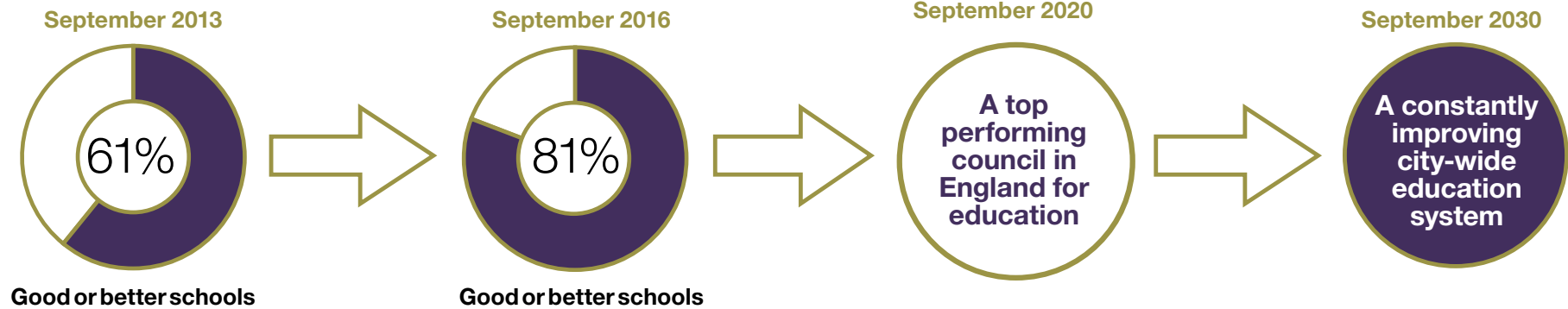




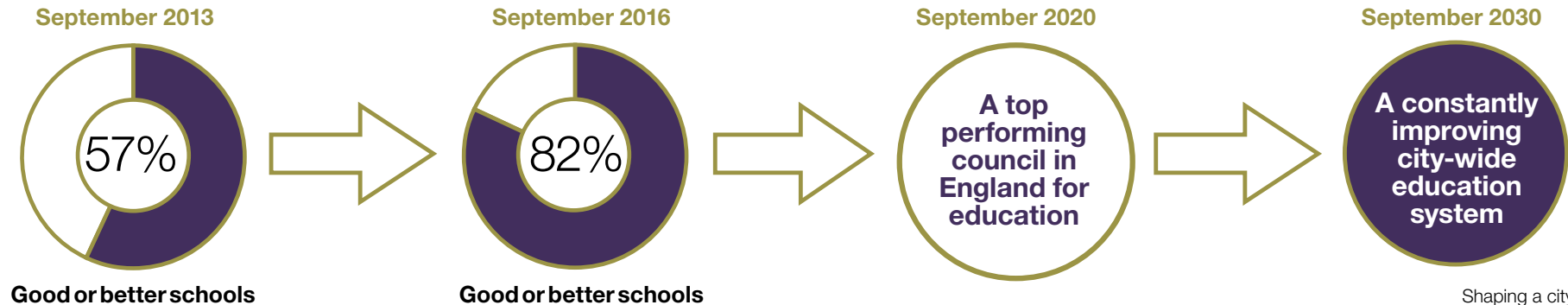
### Ofsted outcomes – all schools



### Ofsted outcomes – primary schools



### Ofsted outcomes – secondary schools



# Shaping the future: delivering our vision for 2030

## Partnership working to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people:

### The council will:

- Promote outstanding standards of early year's provision to ensure that all children are school ready.
- Relentlessly focus on the highest levels of support, challenge and intervention to ensure every school and provider in the city provides an outstanding level of education that meets the needs of every learner, from the most vulnerable to those who are gifted and talented.
- Continue to support the development of teaching school alliances and the establishment of local school support networks in order to support school autonomy, whilst continuing to raise educational standards regardless of a school's designation.
- Work closely with education providers to develop strong links with local businesses and ensure that employability and enterprise skills underpin every provider's curriculum

offer. These strong partnerships will better prepare our young people for the world of work. This commitment will continue to be supported by the city's Business Champions.

- Provide all young people access to a full-range of impartial careers advice and guidance that enables them to make informed future choices. The offer to young people will be inclusive and promote access to all academic and vocational pathways, including apprenticeships and other further and higher opportunities.
- Continue to work with schools and partners to ensure that appropriate levels of high quality school places, in inspiring and cutting-edge world class schools, are available for every learner and ensure that parents have a realistic chance of gaining a place in a preferred school for their child.

### Schools and providers will:

- Work in close partnership with the council and their established school support networks to provide an outstanding level of education that meets the needs of every learner, from the most vulnerable to those who are gifted and talented.
- Create and maintain inspiring and cutting edge educational environments that offer high quality places to every learner in the city.
- Ensure that employability skills underpin curriculum development for all learners and that they build effective partnerships with local businesses in order to prepare our young people for the world of work, support economic success and to enable them to contribute to the future regeneration of the city.
- Engage effectively with the full-range of impartial careers advice and guidance that enables all learners to make informed future choices.

## Supporting the most vulnerable:

### The council will:

- Ensure, with the support of local partners, stakeholders and providers and with the engagement of parents/carers and learners, that there is in place a well planned continuum of provision from birth to age 25 that meets the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and maximises their progression into employment.

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- Ensure that Looked after Children (LAC) are given top priority and support to access the best possible educational experience and achieve their future potential and economic success.
- Continue to provide outstanding support for young people at risk of offending to ensure that they have excellent life chances and experience economic success.
- Support the emotional wellbeing and resilience of our children and young people through the HeadStart programme and beyond.

### Schools and providers will:

- Ensure that their provision is fully inclusive for all learners across the city regardless of background, disability or special educational need.
- Support the emotional wellbeing and resilience all of their learners.



## Educational leadership:

The council will:

- Maintain a strong Education Directorate led by a Director of Education that ensures we can continue to effectively fulfil our statutory role as well as continuing to strive for excellence for every learner in the city.

Continue to deliver high quality leadership training and development to schools and providers that ensures that staff at every level, from teaching assistant to head teacher, have outstanding leadership skills that drive up standards and improve outcomes for all of the city's learners.

- Challenge and intervene in any schools, regardless of designation, where standards of leadership, including governance, do not promote the very highest standards of education.
- Strive to ensure that school governors have the skills, determination and resilience to challenge and support school leaders to drive continuous improvements in the schools they have responsibility for.

Schools and providers will:

- Ensure that staff, at every level of the organisation, have the appropriate skill set to be effective leaders of education and drive up standards for all learners.
- Ensure that governors have the skills, determination and resilience to challenge and support school leaders to seek continuous improvements in the schools they have responsibility for.



## Commercial and digital transformation:

The council will:

- Develop a city of learning that includes an innovative, technologically advanced city centre learning quarter offering academic, vocational, return-to-learn, adult education and higher education opportunities. The city's schools and providers will be supported to meet challenges and transform education and training for future learners.
- Continue to support the development of digitally innovative and future-proofed learning environments and curriculums that ensure that our learners leave school as some of the most technologically capable young people in the country.
- Establish an arms-length, wholly owned trading company that offers a range of high quality services to schools - in the city, regionally and nationally.

Schools and providers will:

- Engage effectively with the council and partners to support the development of a city of learning that includes an innovative and technologically advanced city centre learning quarter.
- Ensure that learning environments and curriculums are digitally innovative and future-proofed to ensure that learners leave school as some of the most technologically capable young people in the country.





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