

**Transforming Children's Services Programme
2022-23 Annual Report****Document Controls****Version Control**

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1.1	Emma Bennett	SRO	August 2023

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Executive Summary

Welcome to the Transforming Children's Services Programme (TCSP) Annual Report 2022-23.



TCSP this year is reported as a **£3.2 million pound programme** that has seen **many more great successes** across all its projects; milestones reached, risks mitigated, new ways of working implemented, stakeholder celebrations and most importantly, excellent examples of **positive impact** on the lives of children, young people, and their families.

In this year's report is an update on **assurance** providing a response to last year's programme health check. Also referenced is the second mandate review and the Board's collective agreement on changes to the TCSP **outcomes framework** so that projects can continue to **meaningfully** report **impact** and evidence **positive change**.

Also introduced in the 2022-23 report is the approach to a '**Families Portfolio**' of programmes and projects demonstrating the **growth** in both the leadership area and the Projects and Change portfolio. This section goes on to describe not only growth in these two areas but the **strategic work** that has been in development to ensure there is a **higher level of assurance** across programmes and projects that goes beyond Families and into other Our City Our Plan priorities. This not only enables **collaboration across departmental boundaries** but will also be an opportunity to **share the successes** and **good practice** delivered by the Children's Transformation programme.

The scene is set at the start of the report, with a reminder on the **vision for transformation**, and goes on to list the many achievements across the ten projects in this reporting period. **The highlights are significant with measurable impact.**

The report continues with **positive testament** to transformation from the programme's sponsor and SRO through an **annual appraisal**. It also captures praise for **successful delivery** of TCSP projects and the ongoing pipeline of new ideas and innovation alongside reflection on what will be our likely **priorities** over the coming year as we continue our transformation journey.

Then comes the focus on **evidence against outcomes**. TCSP has eight agreed outcomes with measures against each one. Every project that is scoped under the programme is aligned to these outcomes. Successes this year include:

- The continuation of the **TCSP communications plan** which this year has reached over **30,000** people through internal stakeholder briefings, City People articles and external social media posts.
- **Launch of the SEND Newsletter** to professionals and parents

- HeadStart 'Our Journey Event' which saw **200 people** - young people, community providers, schools, and other beneficiaries, come together to **celebrate the successes** of the phase 3 programme.
- Launch of the **Family Hubs and Start for Life Transformation Programme - a £3.7 million programme** that will create an accessible Family Hub community network offering family services support from several sectors including health, voluntary and social care with ensuring 'the best start for life' at its core.
- Successful closure and transition to business as usual of the Transformation of Traded Services project - **£330k of debt recovered, no new debt accrued** with trading through the life of the project closing at **£5.2 million**.
- Initiation of the first cross cutting project - the Families Front Door which will bring together a **coordinated children's, adult, and education** single point of contact into services.
- **Full training roll out of Graduated Response**, an early help toolkit for professionals working with children who have identified or non-identified additional learning needs and guidance on applying it in their education setting.
- Reaching the Supporting Families target of **453 payments by results target**, income that can be reinvested into services to the value of **£1.3 million**.
- **400 professionals trained** in the first six months of Family Hubs and Start for Life Transformation programme.
- Successful closure of SWIS project and transition to business as usual with key learning focused on **improved relationships with schools, better links to early help workers** and **earlier identification and de-escalation of need** in a school setting before reaching a statutory threshold.
- The City's first **SEND Careers Fair** attended by almost **450** students and teachers.
- Launch of the **Vulnerability Matrix**, a framework that will enable **richer data analysis** of schools and vulnerable children by considering multiple risk factors so that earlier, more targeted support to vulnerable learners can be put in place.
- Initiation of the **Future Steps** project aimed at establishing a specialist team who will **work with vulnerable mothers and partners to prevent repeat pregnancies** where a child has a previously been removed and admitted into care. This project will **improve outcomes for this cohort of parents** and will contribute to cost avoidance for the service.
- Initiation of the **Creating Family Homes for Children in Care** project that will see two **council owned children's homes** open in the area offering a temporary home from home environment for the most vulnerable children in the city – **keeping them close to their friends, family, school** and surrounded by specialist needs based support.

A financial summary is included that report and it concludes with a review of outstanding risks, and our **priorities** for 2023-24.

1. Background and context

This 2022-23 Annual Report is the third for the Transforming Children's Services Programme (TCSP).

TCSP is now in the third year of a five-year transformation programme – the second phase of an overall ten-year programme that was established in 2016. At the start of its second phase, TCSP went through a full programme refresh which resulted in an updated and repurposed TCSP Mandate setting out a clear vision, measurable outcomes, and a detailed programme business case – all approved and owned by its programme Board. Using these key documents as the basis for all future planning, TCSP produced its first Annual Report in 2021. Each report since has evidenced the impact and progress projects under the programme were making against eight agreed outcomes.

The 2022-23 report remains aligned to the programme's vision and outcomes and will set the scene for a shift towards a 'Families portfolio' of innovative improvement projects and programmes.

TCSP continues to mature as a programme with robust governance and accountability throughout. The programme remains focussed on outcomes with priorities that contribute to City of Wolverhampton Council's (CWC) corporate Our City Our Plan using a OneCouncil approach.

2. Programme Vision

***Bold** and enlarged indicates a key word important to our children and young people.

"The Transforming Children's Services Programme will have children, young people and families at the heart of all its activity. Our **ambitious** and **innovative** approach to **transformation** will improve outcomes for children and young people across the city of Wolverhampton generating **opportunities** that are **equitable** and **inclusive**.

To ensure improved outcomes is at its core, **co-production** and **engagement** will be embedded throughout the programme and lived experience used as an indicator of **improvement**.

The programme will act as a driver for change whilst supporting transition to business as usual for the services and partners it works with. This will be done with efficiency, at pace and should always aim to **support** and **empower** children, young people, families, **communities** and our workforce. Clear, consistent and relevant **communication** with all stakeholders will be key to this success.

The programme will continue to make evidence-based decisions whilst championing **creativity** in delivery. This will be true of projects that benefit children and young people universally as well as **making a difference** to

specific groups who are most in need of our support. Evidence will also be used proactively to predict future need and demand.

Working collaboratively, the programme will ensure **committed** and **enthusiastic** leadership when striving to **achieve** outcomes and will build **trust** with the those affected by its outputs”.

3. Assurance

3.1. Mandate Review 2022-23

Ahead of the 2022-23 Annual Report, the programme team undertook a Mandate Review as it did last year – an exercise that validated the agreed mandate for the programme to ensure that projects continue to be driven by outcomes – and importantly, the right outcomes.

The approach to this review covered the following assurance activities:

- Review of the programme’s strategic drivers
- Review of the programme’s vision at the time of reporting
- Review of the programme’s outcomes and key performance indicators

The outcome of this review, and the recommendations endorsed by the TCSP Board were as follows:

1. To remove 3 of the key performance indicators to better reflect TCSP projects and those that have closed in the last year.
2. To agree that evidence against outcome 8 (Increased resilience and emotional wellbeing amongst children, young people, and families) will have little evidence in this reporting year due to the closure of a large-scale project aimed solely at this outcome but that three new projects will feature more significantly in 2023-24.
3. To ensure that future priorities, specifically equalities and climate change were in the TCSP plan.

The 2022-23 Annual Report reflects these recommendations.

3.2. Programme Health Check – 2022-23 follow up

In 2021-22, the TCSP Team conducted the first programme health check of all its projects assessing the quality and compliance of project information against corporate requirements and expected standards.

The purpose of the health check was to assess if information on TCSP projects stored centrally on the corporate Project Management system Verto, could withstand scrutiny from internal or external audit.

Below describes the action taken since the health check (which will be done bi-annually by the Programme Team with spot checks done by the corporate Programme Management Office - PMO).

At the time of reporting in 2021-22, the programme health check concluded a:

- ✓ Good standard for compliance
- ✓ Good standard for quality (with minor remedial action)

Several themes were identified during the health check with recommendations made to improve the quality of information held on TCSP projects and the below summarises the action taken since:

Theme	Action taken
The Transformation team to work on immediate improvements to ensure up to date and accurate information is recorded in and linked to the Verto system.	Complete – all project information identified as being in need of remedial action was updated
The transformation team to bring together key themes and better understand if any training and development is required for the team.	Complete – business case development was identified as an area for development. Business cases are now more co-produced with the service with SME input as they develop. They also go through a more thorough scrutiny process with all key documents received by a leadership team in advance of approval at the TCSP board. Feedback from the corporate Project Assurance Group (PAG) has included ‘the best written business cases seen at PAG are from the Families Theme’
Share this health check approach with the wider Projects and Change management team to identify opportunities for improvements across the service.	Complete – the approach was shared with the corporate PMO. The PMO already has a process for project health checks and the approach undertaken by TCSP strengthens this.
Ensure project SROs are informed on the health of individual projects and are in support the process of improving compliance and quality of project information.	Ongoing – this is led by the corporate PMO and is usually targeted at projects that are at risk of going off track. TCSP Project managers continue to work closely with project SROs to ensure compliance and accuracy of project information.
An annual programme health check to ensure consistent standards and ongoing improvements.	Ongoing – this has moved to a bi-annual health check due to the time it can take a project to move through its lifecycle, this can sometimes happen over several reporting years. This change is mitigated by the more frequent spot checks carried out by the corporate PMO.
Children’s Services to engage with the Transformation Team at the earliest point when looking into funding opportunities to	Ongoing – this happens regularly through the Board and leadership team and enables the programme team to pipeline and plan for incoming projects based on external funding. This is sometimes dependent on

Theme	Action taken
ensure project resources are available and that options appraisal on funding opportunities have been fully considered.	how quickly a funder announce a successful application and how quickly delivery needs to start. The general approach is to look to include in funding applications costs for project roles and then utilise the existing TCSP governance and or recruitment process to ensure projects can move forward as expected with the right level of resource.

The health check continues to be another example of TCSP leading the way on self-assessment, commitment to the corporate project management framework and collaborative working within the programme team.

3.3. Families Portfolio of Programmes and Projects

The Families Theme grew for a second time in 2023 from Children’s, Adult and Education services, to now include Public Health, Skills and Employment and Adult Education.

This growth presents a strategic and operational opportunity to jointly work on priorities that benefit whole families across the city and to collaborate at a project and programme level to ensure a coordinated approach to delivering change across the theme.



As part of this, and recognising the successes achieved through TCSP, senior leaders have been looking into how this learning can be shared and applied across organisational themes, specifically how the project and programme framework is used within Families and how this could strengthen assurance across the organisation.

The Strategic Matrix Leadership and Assurance Challenge:

1. To ensure the right things are looked at, at the right time, by the right people.
2. To ensure that the assurance of key projects is being effectively delegated, with the right level of oversight.
3. To ensure the organisation is well-connected in terms of understanding strategic overlaps and opportunities for collaboration.

What works in Families:

- ✓ There is a central point of strategic assurance via Families' Joint Leadership Team.
- ✓ Strong leadership team arrangements are in place and provide a space to develop new ideas before channelling to other strategic/political forums.
- ✓ There is good understanding at a leadership level of service development vs transformation vs business as usual.
- ✓ New ideas are routinely discussed.
- ✓ There is a properly scoped performance framework for Families.
- ✓ Project Managers and Project Support Officers are funded on a recurring basis to coordinate programme and project level governance and to manage/support delivery of key projects – resource from other key business services including Finance and Data & Analytics is also a key part of the arrangements.

How these principles are now being applied elsewhere:

An Economy and Investment Board has been established to mirror the strategic assurance arrangements of JLT. The functions of this Board will:

- Be a central point of strategic assurance via a matrix leadership group including representation from Families.
- Provide a space to develop new ideas before channelling to other strategic/political forums.
- Develop a strong understanding of programme/project methodology vs internal transformation and business as usual.
- Develop a clear pipeline of new ideas.
- Develop a holistic performance management framework.
- Ensure sufficient operational resource is in place, properly funded and connected to key organisational governance principles to effectively coordinate and to manage/support delivery of key programmes and projects.

4. Key Achievements

**Families Programme
Apprentice finalist in
the Ladder of the
Black County Awards.**

**£330k of debt
recovered and no new
debt accrued through
Traded Services
project.**

**Supporting Families
reaches 453 PbR
target totalling £1.3
million in income.**

Co-Production

- ✓ HeadStart supported the marketing campaign for the 'Make Your Mark' vote in May 2022 Wolverhampton had a 39.31% CYP turnout – the **highest** in the West Midlands
- ✓ First **SEND Co-production newsletter** circulated to an audience of over 1000 families and professionals.
- ✓ Recruitment for #YES – the legacy strategy of HeadStart, **led by young people.**
- ✓ A 50 strong membership '**Provider Reference Group**' established for Traded Services Project representing a variety of service areas from across CWC
- ✓ Workshops with schools are held to support their '**Co-production Charter Status**' applications through Culture of Inclusion Project

Projects

- ✓ **SWIS National Project extended** for a third time to July 2023.
- ✓ Further **three years** confirmed for the Supporting Families programme.
- ✓ Successful closure of HeadStart phase 3 with '**Our Journey**' **celebration event held** at Dunstall racecourse, attended by over 200 people from partners to young people.
- ✓ **Alternative Provision Framework** established through Culture of Inclusion.
- ✓ **Joint Commissioning Strategy** for SEND published.
- ✓ **Vulnerability Matrix** created and used for collaboration when working with vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils and to monitor school performance with a focus on these learners.
- ✓ Launch of the **Graduated Response** to support earlier identification of additional educational needs.
- ✓ **Launch of the Traded Services Portal: School Business Services Wolverhampton** - branded and integrated into back-office systems.
- ✓ **SWIS Local Offer developed** and shared with schools.
- ✓ Launch of the **HeadStart Wellbeing Charter** to all schools in the city following completion of a successful pilot.
- ✓ **Review and refresh** of the statutory online Local Offer for SEND.
- ✓ **Supporting families Data Group established** to streamline processes, make data informed decisions and monitor progress towards PbR targets.
- ✓ **ICMS project moves into delivery** reducing the use of isolated spreadsheets across services in its first phase and transferring data and information to more appropriate recording systems.

- ✓ Traded Services Project **recovers £330k of historic debt** and accrues **no new debt** since the launch of the portal. Trading at year end closed at **£5.2 million**.

Programme

- ✓ **Successful escalation and mitigation of risk** from TCSP Board members in reaching the Supporting Families PbR target for 2022-23 - **453 claims made with 98% of the target achieved** in the last quarter because of effective risk and issue mitigation.
- ✓ Transformation Programme Apprentice **finalist in the Ladder to the Black Country Awards**
- ✓ TCSP Vision and Outcomes **assured for a second year**
- ✓ **First cross cutting Children's and Adults project** established and in delivery – Families Front Door
- ✓ **Families Portfolio of programmes begins development** with new posts established to take delivery forward.

5. SRO Appraisal



Emma Bennett

Emma Bennett – Executive Director for Families at City of Wolverhampton Council and Senior Responsible Owner for TCSP

5.1. As SRO, how do you feel the programme is continuing to perform following the last annual report?

The transformation programme continues to be strong, is maturing and over the past year delivered with its usual effectiveness. I am confident that the right projects remain under the programme, and I am proud to describe the programme as an exemplar of best practice to the broader organisation.

TCSP is in a good position to drive change for other areas by providing a structured framework so they too can achieve their transformation goals. The annual refresh of outcomes keeps the programme moving in the right direction and enables making links to the wider Families Theme.

5.2. As SRO, how do you feel that programme has responded to the priorities set in 2021-22?

Transformation has again been planned and delivered well this past year. With regards to priorities set last year, I am pleased that progress has been made towards our corporate approach to transformation through the Strategic Assurance work and establishing forums like that in Families that will enable transformation of services and city infrastructure to thrive.

TCSP has continued to sustain project resources and people with the right skills to keep delivery on track and escalate and mitigate risk.

The governance I think is excellent with an engaged Board who together make informed decisions and take measured risk – particularly when accepting external funding opportunities and steering the delivery of innovative test and learn projects such as SWIS.

The programme goes through regular check and balance against corporate goals and is increasingly linked to the wider Families Theme and our corporate approach to matrix working.

Responding to national policy change will become a top priority in the next 12 months as we see reform introduced in several areas such as social care and SEND.

Each project continues to learn as it goes through delivery with SROs and project teams reacting quickly and effectively to unplanned issues – Creating Family Homes is a perfect example of this agility.

5.3. As SRO and on behalf of the Board, what are the transformation goals for the next reporting year?

How we evidence the financial business case for projects remains a priority for me and something we haven't completely grasped yet, understanding project's true value against efficiencies, cost avoidance, potential income as well as improved outcomes for people would be good to fully understand.

How we evaluate projects and receive both qualitative and quantitative information about impact – and how this is shared is important. To go one step further than just closing a project would be another example of Children's services leading the way.

Using TCSP as the exemplar to support the organisation in matrix working is an ongoing ambition – particularly how we bring the term matrix working to life and bring expertise from across departments together to deliver projects. Empowering professionals to understand the role they have within a project beyond their field of expertise would enable organisational resilience, create development opportunities, and provide a platform to share success outside of Children's Services.

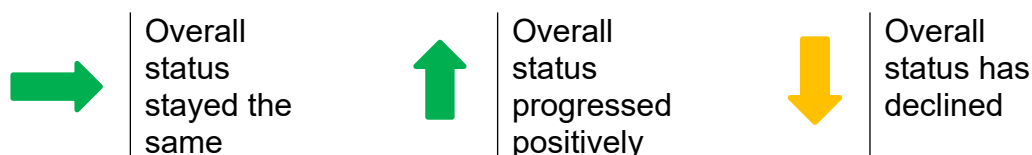
A confident approach to prioritisation is essential. With so much demand on and change within the Families Theme, strategic discussion about priorities and assurance that we are doing this appropriately is key, especially when much of the demand comes from outside of the authority and likely driven by Central Government.











Finally, considering my departure from CWC later this year, retaining our conditions for success is a legacy priority I would want the next sponsor of TCSP to retain.

Recognising that the programme could change or shift with new leadership, not losing sight of what works and why would be a priority I would want to leave for my successor. Championing TCSP over the last eight years across Families, the organisation and throughout the public sector is one of my proudest achievements.

6. Performance Dashboard

Key



Project	Gateway	Trend from 2022	Comments
Integrated Case Management Systems	Delivery		Project remains on track and has moved through its Business Case gateway and now into delivery.
HeadStart	Closure		Project closed successfully in July 2022.
Supporting Families	Delivery		Project has moved from at risk to back on track having met its 2022-23 target of 453 Payment by Results claims.
Transformation of Traded Services	Closure		Project successfully closed in March 2023.
Culture of Inclusion	Delivery		Project remains on track in delivery and is preparing for a planned closure in September 2023. Some milestones have been at risk of not being reached on time however, following a review of the scope of the project, change around assurance have mitigated this.
Social Workers in School	Delivery		Project remains on track with a planned move to closure in August 2022 possibly being extended for a further year due to a funding extension opportunity from the DfE.
Families Front Door	Delivery		Project remains on track and has moved through its Options and Business Case gateways and now into delivery. This is the first cross cutting project across Children's and Adult services as part of the Families Portfolio.
Family Hubs Transformation	Delivery		Family Hubs Transformation very quickly and efficiently moved from Business case into delivery in response and in line with funder expectations.
Future Steps Project	Delivery		Project remains on track and has moved through its Business Case gateway and now into delivery.
Creating Family Homes for Children in Care	Delivery		Project remains on track and has moved through its Business Case gateway and now into delivery

7. Projects In This Reporting Period

Project	Aim(s)
Integrated Case Management System (ICMS)	To integrate, re-configure or de-commission systems that will lead to improved information recording and reporting across children's services and education.
Supporting Families	To target the right families, at the right time, with the right support whilst adopting a whole family approach to casework aimed at achieving significant and sustained outcomes for families.
Transformation of Traded Services	A revised, relevant and co-produced traded offer that personalises products and support packages to education settings with a central point of contact for them during the life of their contract with Traded Services
Culture of Inclusion	To ensure that families of children and young people with special educational needs are provided with accurate, unbiased information, the right support at the right time and that there are clear, co-produced and inclusive pathways from childhood through to adulthood.
Social Workers in School (SWIS)	Promote better inter-agency working between education settings and children's social care to achieve better outcomes for children, young people, and their families.
Families Front Door	The aim of the Families Front Door project is to create a welcoming and accessible and early route into whole family support services that enable a single, seamless contact and an ongoing care journey for families. This will be supported by intuitive back-office practice and processes with a skilled, knowledgeable, and curious workforce at the first point of contact.
Future Steps Project	Prevent repeat pregnancy when child removal remains the most likely outcome and improve outcomes for parents, partners and children using a 'Think Family' approach.
Children's Residential Provision Project	Set up of two innovative, restorative children's homes within the city that will accommodate and support children and young people in care with more complex needs.
Family Hubs Transformation	The aim of Family Hubs Transformation is to take forward the recommendations in The Best Start for Life (a vision for the 1,001 critical days) review report. By transforming Strengthening Family Hubs in Wolverhampton into flexible hubs that are attuned to local needs and able to connect families with the right help from the right people in the right way at the right time so that everyone thrives.

8. Outcomes and Evidence

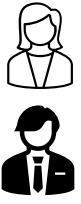





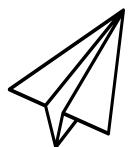

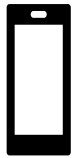
Outcome one: Increased relevant communication to all stakeholders affected by the programme.

A communications effort for the transformation programme continued in 2022-23 after being launched in 2021 – again, this is a feature of this Annual Report. There is a notable difference in our communications reach for this year which is reflective of the newer projects that have been initiated in the past 12-months.

New projects generally will have more of a public presence in their delivery phase with the earlier phases of options and business case being more for internal audiences. Our communications reach evidence this with an increase in articles published for internal audiences compared to those that have been published on public facing sites including social media.

2023-24 will likely see this change as we launch more projects that have a communications and marketing effort behind them – projects such as the Families Front Door and Future Steps.

Internal communications about programme successes for 2022-23 however has continued to grow with more colleagues and partners cited on the achievements of TCSP projects.

 <p>Annual Report shared with over 30 internal leaders</p>	 <p>Annual Report shared with over 30 Political leaders</p>	 <p>Annual report shared over 300 employees</p>
 <p>42 City People stories published</p>	 <p>7374 views on City People</p>	 <p>269 Likes on City People</p>
 <p>85 social media posts about HeadStart</p>	 <p>Reaching 5,600 people online</p>	 <p>Creating 17,600 social media impressions</p>

More work is to be done to deliver a strand of the TCSP communications plan – impact on children and young people and the sharing of lived experience.



SEND Newsletter launched January 2023 - The SEND Newsletter launched for in January 2023 and will be a key communication tool aimed at professionals and parents. The newsletter is circulated by email and contains updates from across the SEND Partnership – a forum that represents city partner organisations who provide strategic direction to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and champion their wish to live an ‘ordinary life’.

The SEND Newsletter was created in direct response to feedback from families involved in the Culture of Inclusion Project who were keen to know more about improvements to SEND services and provision.

The newsletter includes information about new or changes to SEND services, it also offers regular updates on our statutory duties and how the city’s Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is progressing following the 2022 Local Area Inspection. The newsletter also offers targeted training opportunities for professionals working with children or families with SEND.

The first edition went to over 1000 recipients, with a 97% delivery rate. Email opens stopped at 37% and the next steps for the newsletter are to increase subscriptions and work with our Communications Team on how key messages can be targeted for both parents and professionals keeping content relevant.

HeadStart ‘Our Journey’ Celebration Event

<p>June 2022 Our Journey</p> <p>Over 200 people partners, funders, providers and children take part in the Our Journey event to celebrate the legacy of HeadStart Phase 3</p>	<p>Showcases from</p> <p>Positive Participation, YMCA, Gazebo Theatre, WV10, Base 25, Changing Our Lives, Moreton Secondary and Long Knowle Primary Schools</p>	<p>Cabinet Member</p> <p>“HeadStart has delivered some ground-breaking work to help improve the mental and emotional wellbeing of children and young people in our city”.</p>	<p>Learning and Legacy</p> <p>Embedded in city services such the Youth Engagement Strategy - #YES and Yo! – Young Opportunities</p>
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Outcome two: Increased co-production and engagement across associated projects

Family Hubs Transformation (co-production) – the Family Hubs and Start for Life Transformation Programme is jointly overseen by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Education (DfE).

The programme's core objective is to improve access to universal and early help services, including Start for Life services (the first 1001 critical days), particularly in areas of the city with the highest levels of deprivation and disproportionately poor health and educational outcomes.


The programme's aim is to join up and enhance services delivered through family hubs, ensuring all parents and carers can access the support they need at the time that they need it.

As part of the programme, Parent/Carer Panels have been established to allow parents to work together with other partners to co-design, co-produce and evaluate services that are established based on ward data and identified needs within a locality.

To ensure that plans formed within the locality areas are based on the needs of those that live within it, parents are contacted and recruited based on their postcode with particular attention given to those from diverse and under-represented communities whose voices are often unheard.

A clear Terms of Reference has been established that sets out the democratic process which ensures equal input from all participants and outlines how parent/carers will be supported to understand the priorities of the programme and how they can influence and be integral to what good looks like.

A robust training programme has also been developed to encourage panel members to upskill and enhance their employment opportunities. To date, members of the parent/carers panels have been involved in shaping delivery of Stay & Play groups, decision making for capital building work schemes, co-design of the Start for Life website and branding and assisted in several recruitment campaigns.

 Parent/Carer groups have commented *"We are really excited for the future of the Hubs, are inspired by the opportunity and are looking forward to being involved in being "change makers" and representing local communities"*.

Transformation of Traded Services (co-design) – As part of the Transformation of Traded Services Project, a Provider Reference Group was established representing over 50 different CWC services who all provide a paid for service to schools across the city and beyond.

The Provider Reference Group was a new forum set up as per the project business case with the aim of increasing engagement on what the transformed service could look like.

The group together co-designed:

- A single, centralised invoicing system with improved customer ability to manage their own account.
- A global set of trading terms and conditions.
- Bundles and discounts for multiple purchases across academies.
- A digital service portal.

- A trading brand.

The results of this and by taking a OneCouncil approach to trading with schools has been:

- ✓ Upwards of £4.5m journaled and invoiced via the integrated process, using software to directly input into the Agresso billing system.
- ✓ Recovery up upward of £330,000 of historic debt.
- ✓ Significant volume of manual hours saved by automation.
- ✓ Creation of a new cost centre to centralise all traded services debt and manage billing centrally.
- ✓ Bring additional providers on board with centralised invoicing.
- ✓ Continued progress under as business as usual with providers to ensure good financial safekeeping.
- ✓ Continued progress under business as usual to have positive conversations with customers about debts before the 40-day mark to reduce the risk of debt accumulating.
- ✓ Continue progress under business as usual to liaise and communicate with banking and Debt Management to re designate unallocated funds and manage remittance from schools to ensure debt is an accurate reflection of what is owed.
- ✓ No further accrual of debt since launch of the portal in September 2022.

Future Steps Operating Model and Pathway (co-design) – The Future Steps Project aims to initially, identify sustainable funding for a new team that will operate as an extension to the Intensive Families Support team. The new pilot team will support parents who have previously experienced the removal of a child into care.

It will be a multi-agency team who work collaboratively to focus on addressing the gap in support experienced by parents between having a child removed from their care and a future pregnancy. The team will provide ongoing, flexible and person-centred support focussed on responding to a parent's individual needs, some of which will have already been identified but not fully met during care proceedings and future pregnancy.

The first activity of the project was to establish the governance and the project's Steering Group. There was a very early decision to ensure all partners were involved from the start so that there was a shared sense of ownership and a jointly agreed role and purpose for the multi-agency pilot team.

The Steering Group is operational and is made up of key stakeholders from across the Local Authority (LA) and Health – the two main agencies that would ordinarily support this particular cohort of parents independently of one another or in the case of this pilot, jointly.

A key deliverable of the project was a new operating model and pathway into the pilot team. This was developed and documented collaboratively by the Steering Group. LA and Health representatives worked together through a series of workshops to design the pathway and referral route into the new

team which has since been shared, scrutinised, and endorsed by both agencies.

Going one step further, a joint LA and Health recruitment panel is being set up to ensure that applicants for posts within the new pilot team are recruited with equal agreement from both agencies.

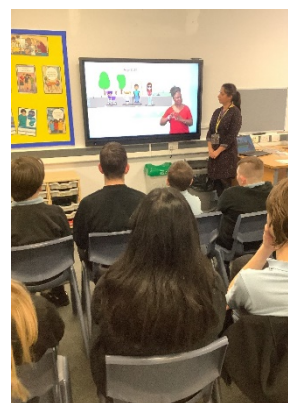
Culture of Inclusion (co-production) - During March 2023 a number of engagement sessions were undertaken with young people to allow them to share their opinions on the 'look and feel' of the new SEND Local Offer Website.

The first session was held at Aldersley High, Horizon Resource Base with nine young people from Key Stage (KS) 3, KS 4 and Sixth Form all with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This was followed by a session at Westcroft school with 18 young people from KS 3, KS 4 and Sixth Form with cognition and learning needs.

Several online visuals were shared with the groups to allow them to consider what they liked and did not like. From these discussions, common themes emerged including the desire for a colourful site with clear pictorial references for the content and how they would like written information to be presented.

Feedback from these sessions was also shared at a HY5! SEND Youth Forum and the collective views have been fed into the specification for the website – which will also be user tested with young people to ensure that it meets their needs.

This will form part of the Yo! Wolverhampton branding as the city's endorsed identify for children, young people and families.



All TSCP Project Concepts continue to ask the question at the concept stage of a project: **how will co-production be considered throughout the lifecycle? This is unique to projects in Families.**

Outcome three: Improved approach to working with children, young people, and their families across the whole system



A look forward to the Families Front Door

The Families Front Door (FFD) Project went into delivery in February 2023. Whilst impact will be seen in the 2023-24 reporting year, this Annual Report provides an opportunity to look forward at what is aimed to be achieved against this outcome through the project.

The aim of FFD is to offer a single, seamless and coordinated front door into whole family services for adults and children.

Some of the key deliverables that are likely to positively impact a system approach to working with families at the first point of contact are:

- A single route for families across the city into advice, guidance, signposting and referral - at first point of contact and most importantly, as early as possible.
- Behind the front door a knowledgeable and professionally curious workforce who will be equipped and skilled to consider both primary need and secondary needs of people of all ages enquiring about support.
- Access to resources and information that allow staff to point people to community assets and commissioned providers - those who understand local communities and can provide a needs-based service when a statutory intervention isn't required.

What might a front door enquiry look like?



An enquiry from a carer requesting an assessment for an older person who when asked the right questions is actually connected to a community service and the carers support team avoiding the need to have a social work conversation.



An enquiry from a parent who needs help for a disabled child, not only do they receive the right information about the right pathway to support at the same time they are connected to Carer's Support and pointed to online information about events across the city specifically for children with disabilities.



An adult who is elderly but independent enquires about a Blue Badge application and at the same time is also advised on other benefits they might be eligible for through one application.



An enquiry from a single Mum asking about what support is available with money is offered immediate support via a food parcel and household support money. Alongside this, the expert at the front door is professionally curious and asks appropriate questions about employment and budgeting and Mum is then directed to advisors in the financial wellbeing team to consider the longer-term financial stability options.

By asking the right questions at the right time and having access to the right resources and tools, the Families Front Door will contribute to managing demand, early identification of need, effective sign posting to other appropriate services and helping people with issues they might not realise they have. This will be done by looking across a whole system of provision and understanding what the right pathway to support is.

Graduated Response implementation through Culture of Inclusion –

Development of the Graduated Response, a guide for those that work with children and young people with special educational needs in schools on how barriers to learning could be identified and better supported, was featured in the 2021-22 Annual Report. The guidance was launched in September 2022 and was co-produced with professionals and parents.

The information and documents were developed to provide clear and consistent guidance to:


- Special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs)
- School staff
- Early years practitioners
- Home-based child carers and play workers
- Specialist services across education
- Health and care and,
- Families of children with SEND


It advised on assessing, planning, carrying out and reviewing support and intervention at each threshold of need, so all children, young people and families get the same needs led support regardless of the school they attend.


Videos guides on how to use the Graduated Response were provided and all documents are also shared within the SENCO MS Teams Channel.


21 SENCOs were polled at the SENCO Network meeting in November 2022 and reported that they felt the Graduated Response had provided a positive impact on their roles and on children and young people with SEND and their families.


SENCOs said:

 *‘Staff have a tool to equip the, with strategies for the four main areas of need’.*

 *‘Children who were on the lowest matrix bans have had their provision increased thanks to use of provision map to support our requests’.*

 *‘More teacher-home positive communications’.*

 *‘Allowed me to develop existing practice and helped staff understand’.*

 *‘It will be more powerful, accurate identification and will guide teachers into effective provision’.*

SENCOs MS Teams Area – A professional network to share best practice and share resources with regular visits to the site

Launched in July 2022	229 members	221 unique viewers	12,803 site visits
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Supporting Families Example: H allocated to a SFW, main reason was around vulnerabilities that included non-attendance at college, risky behaviour outside of college, poor mental health and self-harm, relationship issues, sexual assault and trauma.

Exploitation tool jointly completed with H and SFW, this showed medium risk. The heard at the Exploitation Panel a recommendation for further referral was made. 121 contacts with the SFW continued and an intervention on healthier relationships was completed alongside some counselling through CAMHS and further support for bulimia. Bespoke package of support put in place by DSL at college with advice given on potential careers.

During a support session for managing self-harm, a disclosure around sexual assault was made which led to a Strategy Discussion and a S47 investigation – the case stepped up to Social Care.

The support provided to H allowed her to begin to address her emotional health and wellbeing and in doing so to recognise that she was involved in an unhealthy and abusive relationship. The trust built with her counsellor enabled H to disclose the harm that she had experienced and to receive the appropriate level of support to protect her from further risk.

Positive relationships based on trust were built and maintained between H and various professionals which enabled progress and promoted positive outcomes.

Outcome four: Increased engagement with the workforce during transformation of services

Family Hubs Transformation – Family Hubs Transformation is a DfE funded programme with Wolverhampton being one of 75 LAs across the country funded to deliver against the ‘Best Start for Life (a vision for the 1,001 critical days) review report.

The programme is broken down into six action areas, one of which is ‘An empowered Start for Life workforce’.

This is very much about investing in increasing the capability of the workforce. The project training plan will focus on holistic training for early help and early years practitioners to equip them with the skills needed to provide a seamless offer of support across different services, including connecting families to wider support where required.

Training will also be provided to more senior and experienced staff who will be providing supervision and leadership. There will also be a focus on multi-agency knowledge sharing.

Since its inception and launch in September 2022, the following training has been offered through Family Hubs Transformation to over 400 multi-discipline professionals:

1. Circle of Security
2. Reducing Parental Conflict - Level 3
3. Reducing Parental Conflict - Level 2 Toolkit Training
4. Reducing Parental Conflict - Level 2 Training
5. Reducing Parental Conflict - Level 1
6. Journey of Change Parenting Programme
7. Identification and Definition of Needs
8. SENCO Induction and Development Programme
9. Graduated Response and Annual Review Training

The training plan over 3-years is extensive, and impact will be monitored and reported back throughout the delivery phase. It is designed for parents as well as professionals meaning system wide upskilling on universal family help.

SWIS – the project concluded in July 2023 having delivered the following training in participating schools to teachers, school support staff, DSLs, and pastoral teams, all in collaboration with social care:

Course	Content
Getting it Right workshop delivered by Dr Rebecca Sharpe, Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist	Educational psychologist good practice guidance to support positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing.
Kooth training session	An introduction to Kooth – a digital mental health and wellbeing platform that provides a welcoming space for digital mental health care
One Family workshop	A session run by advanced practitioners focusing on how to bring together families and their networks of support in a restorative way and how to identify solutions together.
Trauma Informed training session	A session on young empowerment, supporting with determination, resilience, and self-belief.
Restorative Practice training	Basic training on how to strengthen the relationships between people and the social connections within a community focusing on repairing harm and avoiding wrongdoing before it happens.
Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Course	A course designed to help social workers who are embedded in schools identify and respond to

Course	Content
	concerns of child sexual abuse that present within the school environment.
'Unbreakable' Harmful Sexual Behaviours sessions for schools	An understanding of childhood adversity and trauma informed practice, reinforcing the strengths in relationship-based practice.
Time to Talk Guidance universally available to schools	Guidance and further support for schools on tackling violence against women and girls.
Exploitation workshop	Looking for signs and indicators of exploitation and a demonstration of the exploitation screening tool.
Cultural competence workshop delivered by the advanced practitioners	A session around equality and diversity, anti-oppressive and discriminatory practice.



Milestone achievement for this outcome: The Families Transformation Portfolio Apprentice (Business Administration) is **finalist in the Ladder of the Black Country Apprentice Awards** in the Professional Services category.

Outcome five: Increased number of children remaining in safe and stable homes, particularly those at higher risk

Supporting statistics (*source: CWC Data and Analytics*)

*The following statistics are from the wider Children and Young People (CYP) performance framework. They cannot be solely attributed to TCSP, but it is to be acknowledged that programme projects will have contributed to improved practice, new ways of working and better outcomes for our children and young people alongside the huge service improvement effort that takes place across Children's Services.

As of 31st March 2023, provisional figures show:

- The rate of Children in Need per 10,000 of the under 18 population (CiN) was 113.9, a slight increase from 112.6 at year end 2021-2022.
- Child Protection has reported a reduction in 2022/23 with a rate of 36.5 per 10,000 of the under 18 population, a reduction when compared to the published rate of 42.3 at the end of 2021/22.
- The rate of Children and Young People in care continues to follow the downward trend of year-on-year reductions at a rate of 79.5 per 10,000 at the end of 2022/23. A reduction of 5.5 when compared to the 84 per 10,000 published for the end of year 2021/22, equating to 21 fewer children in care at the end of 2022/23.
- The published rate of children starting to be looked after in 2021-2022 was at a rate of 21.00 per 10,000; an increase of 6.00 when compared to the rate in 2020/21. The provisional rate for 2022/23 is at 19.67.
- The published percentage of children and young people in care that end via adoption in 2021/22 was 28%, a notable increase on the 15%

reported during 2020/21. The provisional rate for 2022/23 is 18%, with 25 of the exits from care resulting in adoption.

- The average number of children with Early Help Assessments (EHAs) completed per month throughout 2021/22 was 206, increasing to an average of 225 per month throughout 2022/23.

Throughout 2022/23, 5.03% of cases closed to Early Help were escalated to social care when compared to 2021/2022 when the rate was at 6.32%.

SWIS national local evaluation headlines – SWIS Project, which is due to close in July 2023, has been heavily evaluated both locally and nationally throughout its lifecycle.

The national evaluation report was published in March 2023. As a test and learn project, the evaluation concluded that there was no ‘statistically significant’ evidence to prove that having a social worker placed in a school had a positive impact on the rate of section 47 enquires or that the model would be cost effective longer term.

Despite this national headline, there were local qualitative findings however, that supported elements of the SWIS model, specifically, establishment of closer worker relationships with schools supporting identification of need and signposting to universal services *sooner* as described below:

- Children opened for a social work assessment via MASH, transferred to SWIS for the threshold assessment by the Child Assessment Team (CAT).
- This enabled the SWIS workers to get to know families from the earliest point.
- This prevented families from having multiple workers and having to repeat their story.
- It encouraged the development of a positive working relationship and has offered reassurance to schools.
- It increased awareness of the assessment process and progressing the recommendations from it.

Statistics: 187 assessments were completed by SWIS workers during the time September 2022 and February 2023, of these 122 assessments resulted in case closure, 18 continued existing plans, five children escalated to a Child Protection plan, 35 resulted in a Child in Need intervention, six transferred to Early Intervention and one stepped down to universal services.

Impact evaluation headlines:

- ✓ The SWIS intervention was implemented relatively well, despite challenges due to the recruitment crisis and COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ Social workers faced challenges in balancing different aspects of their role, but most schools received a “gold” rating for successful implementation.
- ✓ There was variation between schools and LAs in the balance between statutory social work, lower-level preventative work, and other

- activities, with enthusiasm from social workers and school staff for lower-level preventative work and non-statutory work.
- ✓ SWIS had an influence on other parts of the CSC system, particularly 'front door' processes in LAs.
 - ✓ The pathways and mechanisms identified in the pilot logic model were generally supported, and when SWIS was implemented successfully, it was in schools with a combination of compatibility between social worker and school, physical presence, and limited caseloads.

Through the project, it has been possible to identify that where the links to early help and social care are strengthened, better outcomes for children and families can be achieved. This learning will continue as business as usual going forward.



Supporting Families Example: Children F, 9 years, T, 7 years and U, 3 years. An assessment was required by a SFW following concerns regarding domestic abuse (DA) in the home, parents subsequently separated, and father returned to Nigeria,

Mum was seeking support with application for court orders to protect herself and the children.

Mum has accepted support from the Haven and is now seeking her own tenancy. She has shown good insight into the concerns raised within the assessment. Mum requested support for the children in terms of the DA and the recent loss of their Father since his return to Nigeria. Direct work to be completed with the children to make sense of their situation presently and how to move forward.

Family intervention received was made up of: Mum to explore back pain with support from a GP or specialist health support, Mum to have counselling sessions via the Haven, children to have their emotional needs met by mum and reside in an environment safe from DA with help from a safety plan completed by Mum. Mum to be supported to apply for a Wolverhampton Homes property with actions followed up by Safe Homes. Mum to look to gain employment or training, SFW to refer Mum for support from DWP Advisors.

Outcomes achieved: Mum now seen by a physiotherapist and given daily exercises to reduce any need for surgery at present. Mum learnt a lot from the counselling received and will use it to continue to protect herself and her children. Mum continues to meet her daughter's emotional needs. Children appear happy and there are positive relationships between all household members. Mum now has a Non-Molestation Order served to the father. Mum is in the process of getting a Prohibited Steps Order to prevent father from taking the children out the country. Mother is to proceed with making application of divorce.

Mother is happy with the support she has received; she feels stronger physically and emotionally, is looking forward to a fresh start in a new home and will be looking for training and employment once the housing move has been completed.



Milestone achievement for this outcome: Wolverhampton selected as **one of three first wave Families First for Children Pathfinder Programmes** – a programme that will deliver the national Stable Homes Built on Love Strategy which is a once in a generation opportunity backed by significant funding to reset children’s social care.

Outcome six: Improved partnership working with Education settings to support improved outcomes for children and young people.

Transformation of Traded Services – following the successful delivery of the Transformation of Traded Services project – a project set up to improve process and collaboration when trading with schools, a bi-product of the project has been the improved relationship with schools through one-to-one account management with a named contact.

Not only can schools now get easier access to purchasing through the portal and the use of annual orders and roll-over contracts, they also get regular one-to-one account managed meetings with a named contact at CWC to look at needs-based purchasing, discounts through bundles and multi-line billing across more than one service or school.

New finance processes have resulted in more accurate reporting of the value of traded services which for the 2021-2022 year was 146% up on the 2020-2021 year and up again 108% for the second year of the project. This is likely due to a combination of increased purchasing ability and increased use of the redesigned and rebranded portal.

The establishment of a new debt recovery process has resulted in £330k of historical debts being recovered and daily use of the Debt Management Dashboard has ensured no new debt has built up since the launch of the portal in September 2022. Of the initial £3 million invoiced to schools, zero debt remains, proof the new process is effective.



Feedback from schools has shown that the improvements implemented have made a difference and they are now consistently using the portal for all purchasing rather than using other, inconsistent methods.

SWIS - The SWIS model through its delivery lifecycle aimed to strengthen the links between the early help service and the school preventing escalation of need and enabling children to remain safe and supported.




SWIS workers have developed relationships between our early help service, Education Welfare Officers (EWO) in schools, active school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and school based pastoral teams. This has supported a deeper and more meaningful understanding of family support, safeguarding, child protection and the importance of co-working.

Schools said:





‘Having the social worker on site and based in the pastoral office has been invaluable. Our young people have valued this and the support


she has provided, not just for the young people who she is the social worker for, but others have also utilised support from her.'

-  *The social worker has supported with building the confidence and judgement for the DSL. Practically it has been beneficial having someone available to discuss concerns, particularly relating to safeguarding.'*
-  *'The social worker has provided guidance when a safeguarding issue has come up in school and the steps to take, this has upskilled the safeguarding team and meant that a call to MASH isn't needed.'*
-  *'Utilising the threshold documents, the social worker was able to support the training for educational staff and as a group they looked at different scenarios/case studies.'*

Parents said:

-  *'She was aware of the social worker at her child's school, and that she felt able to make contact with the social worker as needed.'*
-  *'She felt the social worker helped her family and would signpost other parents to the SWIS SW if they were having difficulties.'*

A young person said:

-  *'The young person reported that before she had any involvement with her, she wasn't aware a SWIS worker was based in her school. However, once she knew, she had no issues accessing SWIS for support. The young person knew where to find the SWIS worker to have conversations and discuss any issues that were concerning her.'*

Across the city, the early help offer to schools has been strengthened and now includes a named Early Help Link Worker (EHLW) who were assigned to each SWIS active school in September 2022 and have been visible in schools throughout the project.

Active schools have also been encouraged to make direct contact with their Strengthening Family Hub Partnership Manager for advice and guidance about availability of and access routes to community resources. This work has included early community mapping, signposting to prevent escalation and taking a partnership approach to restorative practice through reflective meetings and solution circles.



Milestone achievement for this outcome: through the Culture of Inclusion and ICMS projects, data sharing agreements are now in place with city wide Academy Trusts for attendance data – meaning **better collaborative working and data informed decision making when implementing strategies to improve attendance.**

Outcome seven: Improved opportunities for target cohorts (for example Children and Young People in Care, SEND, Young Offenders and Care Leavers)


City's first city-wide SEND careers fair - Nearly 450 students and teachers attended Wolverhampton's first city-wide careers fair for children and young people with SEND.

The City of Wolverhampton Council, in collaboration with The Black Country Consortium and Tettenhall Wood School, held the Career, Next Steps, Transition and Preparing for Adulthood Event at Wolverhampton Racecourse in December 2022 with contributions coming from the Culture of Inclusion Project team.

Children, young people, their parents and carers as well staff who support the children in their current educational setting were invited to come along to find out about the options available for further education, training or employment.

Councillor Chris Burden, the City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, said:

"As a council and as a city, we are determined to do all we can to ensure that children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities are able to live their lives to the full.

 *"We were delighted to be able to hold this careers fair especially for young people in Year 9 and above with SEND and an Education, Health and Care Plan, and to be joined by a range of exhibitors including colleges, providers, supported employers, social care settings and community groups on the day.*

"The event was extremely well received by parents, schools and exhibitors, and every single young person asked said they had really enjoyed the day, and found out a lot about the options that may be open to them in the future.

"We also had really positive feedback from schools and parents and carers, and I'd like to thank everyone who came along for making the event such a success."

He added: "This was the first time we have held a city-wide event like this, and given it proved very worthwhile for all concerned, it is something that we would like to repeat on a regular basis."

Supporting all our Children in Education Framework and Vulnerability Matrix – through the Culture of Inclusion project, this framework has been developed using a range of data sets with the aim that deeper analysis could be made, and specific support interventions initiated to:

- Improve the life-chances of the most vulnerable children and young people.
- Reduce challenges that potentially impact negatively on their lives.

- Bring together services and teams to share responsibility for the achievement of Wolverhampton children and young people.
- Establish pre-emptive and supportive team around the child approaches.
- Enhance confidence and capacity in educational settings.
- Assist in developing purposeful and meaningful outcomes.

Professionals from 17 different teams worked collaboratively to develop the framework with the following success factors influencing its design:

To increase	To decrease
School attendance and engagement in learning	The gap between the highest achieving learners and those with additional needs
Rates of achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, and especially by vulnerable children and young people	Numbers of pupils with SEN requiring additional external resources
Parental engagement	Pupils being educated outside of the city
The percentage of vulnerable children including children in care in good and outstanding schools	Numbers of young offenders and young reoffenders
	Number of NEETS
	Children missing education
	Persistent absence
	Exclusions

The framework is a relatively new tool and to ensure it is used for its intended purpose and for ongoing improvement, a survey was issued to users with poll results telling us:

- All users of the matrix found the pupil level vulnerability matrix useful to assist them in their role.
- All users of the matrix that responded found it easy to access.
- Some respondents found that it could be difficult to use or that they were not confident to access it and suggested training would be beneficial.

Taking on board this feedback, training has been developed and delivered to professionals to ensure they get the best use out of the framework enabling early identification of need so that a strong, pre-emptive, and supportive team can be placed around a child.

Further impact will feature in the 2023-24 Annual Report.



A Look forward to Future Steps Project – Future Steps went into delivery in March 2023, this is one of the newest projects to the programme.

The primary aim of the project will be to establish a specialist team who will work with vulnerable mothers and partners to prevent repeat pregnancies where a child has a previously been removed and admitted into care and

there has been little time for positive change with successive child removal remaining the most likely outcome.

Supporting parents during pregnancy, when they have had a previous removal is important, but this project will look to deliver a new 'in-house' service as part of the Intensive Families Support Team for non-pregnant women, and pregnant women aged 25 and above to address the root cause issues that have led to children being admitted into care and break this pattern for future pregnancies.

This project will be another example of services working together to support and small, targeted cohort of vulnerable adults whilst protecting new and unborn children.



A Look forward to Creating Family Homes for Children in Care Project – Like Future Steps, this project is also new to the

programme having only gone into delivery in March 2023. The project aims to deliver two CWC owned and managed children's homes that offer short-term specialist support to our most vulnerable children in care, some with very complex needs.

The project will be for a very small, targeted cohort our most vulnerable children but will bring about significant benefits such as supporting them within the geography of the city, close to their support network, ensuring they are safe in regulated accommodation, one to one support through trauma informed practice and input from health where clinical needs are identified.

This project Steering Group is made up of departments from across CWC including Housing, Assets, Commissioning, and Children's Services demonstrating the principles of matrix working and a OneCouncil approach. External colleagues are also part of the project further enhancing our partnerships. An appointed agent is also working on behalf of CWC to handle the purchasing and legal progress of the homes recognising that this offers better reputational and legal risk cover.

The group continue to work towards a shared goal and, as Corporate Parents, will support the broader Sufficiency Strategy priorities for residential placements.

Impact from the above two projects will feature in the 2023-24 Annual Report.

Outcome eight: Increased resilience and emotional wellbeing amongst children, young people, and families

Culture of Inclusion – In September 2022, as part of the Identification and Support Workstream of Culture of Inclusion, the Emotionally Based School Non-attendance Pathway (EBSNP) Guide for Schools was introduced.

This guidance document was developed in collaboration with CWC's Educational Psychology Service and the Attendance Support Service.

The purpose of this guidance is to support schools within the city to identify, monitor and respond to pupils whose school attendance is a concern due to

emotion-based factors. This may be linked to their individual emotional wellbeing and mental health needs, their home life, their school experiences, or a combination of all of these.

School staff and Education Psychologists said:



“A clear pathway to supporting children and young people with emotional needs affecting their attendance.”



“It allows the young person to explain what they struggle with”.



“I have found Identifying the risk/protective factors and push/pull factors and different way of obtaining the voice of the child most helpful about the pathway.”



EBSNP Case Study: J is a 10-year-old boy attending a specialist provision. J is under Special Guardianship of his grandmother. J has a history of low attendance from nursery. His attendance when the pathway was first used was 37%. J’s behaviour can be challenging both at home and school. Difficulties with eating and toileting at school have been observed. J is also experiencing poor sleep.

J had many agencies already involved and there were regular Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings held. Tools from the EBSNA pathway were used to explore factors influencing J’s attendance and this information was fed into a TAF meeting where the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) Action planning process was started. The Risk Profile identified high level of concern across all areas including psychological wellbeing, family dynamic, impact of COVID, curriculum / learning issues, loss and change and social personal. The risk profile also highlighted areas which needed further exploration such as general learning difficulties, subject specific difficulties, exam or test anxiety, death of parent, relative, friend, death of pet. Actions agreed to support J included a modified timetable, an out of hours school tour and a school transport plan. Much of the work in the meetings involved helping J’s grandmother to trust that the school were able to meet his needs.

J started to attend school on a reduced timetable. He quickly formed a friendship group and engaged well with parts of the curriculum. J’s timetable was slowly increased to improve his attendance. J experienced some difficulties with transport, eating and toileting however received support to overcome these barriers; these were all planned for through regular TAF meetings. J overall attendance rose to 51% and his attendance for the summer term was 75% - a significant improvement 37%.



Milestone achievement: SWIS project presents its model and local evaluation findings at the ***Trauma Informed Practice in Schools Conference** – a conference aimed at Education professionals about trauma informed best practice.

*Trauma Informed Practice is an approach that addresses past trauma from an event, series of events or circumstances deemed as harmful or life threatening. This practice looks to address trauma exposure and recognise the impact it has on physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional health with a view to empowering an individual to look at what they need rather than what is wrong with them.

As described in the Mandate Assurance review (see section three), it is to be noted that impact against this outcome is not significantly evidenced in this Annual Report recognising that HeadStart – a major contributing project to this outcome closed in July 2022 with measures and case studies featuring heavily in the 2021-22 report.

It is anticipated that projects such as Family Hubs Transformation, Future Steps and Creating Family Homes will contribute to this outcome as they move through their delivery phase.

9. Learning

During the last two Annual Reports, the Transformation Team have taken time to reflect on learning and what makes the programme an ongoing success.

9.1. Governance

Good governance continues to be fundamental to successful project delivery and decision making as well strong leadership and improved outcomes for children, young people and their families being at the centre of any project business case.

Last year there was a sentiment to how TCSP can collaborate more closely with Adult Services under a Families Theme. There has been even more thinking around this as projects across Children's and Adult's Transformation have developed, particularly around membership and representation throughout governance from both areas of the Families Theme.

Eclipse Adults has a dotted line to the Children's Finance Early Adopters pilot, representatives from Children's and Adult Services are present on the Transitions Workstream of Culture of Inclusion Project and Families Front Door – the first truly cross cutting project has both a Children's and Adult's SRO leading delivery.

Good governance also goes beyond just Children's and Adult services with the growth of the leadership area to now include Public Health, Skills and Adult Education.

Projects such as Future Steps, Family Hubs and Creating Family Homes for Children in Care have seen many disciplines coming together to jointly to steer projects including experts from Public Health, Assets, Planning, Commissioning and even into the realms of health.

Collaboration, integration, and matrix styles will continue to be a key feature to the ongoing success of TCSP and as new programmes are established and

the role of Joint Leadership Team (JLT) as a Strategic Assurance forum begin to add value programme governance.

9.2. Joining up projects across the portfolio

In January 2023, the TCSP Board received a report that looked at how projects across the portfolio were managing dependencies, overlaps in scope and recommendations on how to ensure programmes and projects are delivered in a coordinated way.

Methodology:

A Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) approach was applied to this activity called 'Managing the Tranches'. This review was seen as the first 'Families Tranche' where an agreed set of projects move forward in a coordinated way.

The projects in scope of this exercise were either currently part of the TCSP governance in one of the four main project gateways; concept, options, business case and delivery or were a project that crosses over with Families and registered in Verto.

The approach taken was to work collaboratively with Project Managers and Project Officers through a series of face to face and Teams workshops to gather the aims, objectives, key deliverables, and timescales of in scope projects to identify significant cross overs or dependencies - the aim being to escalate or assure where there were themes.

This approach can continue to be built on as the programme develops and was seen as the first iteration in fully understand the links between multiple complex projects within and crossing over the Families Theme.

Themes identified:

Most projects:

- Require Data and Analytics input throughout the project lifecycle.
- Offer a training or CPD element to delivery.

Some projects:

- Have a universal, advice, information or guidance in scope
- Are co-producing with children, young people and families
- Require Commissioning input throughout the project lifecycle
- Are aimed at a particular cohort of children and young people but also involve adults creating an opportunity for whole family working

Fewer projects:

- Had transitions (from childhood to adulthood) in scope.
- Had a system implementation in scope.

Recommendations:

From doing this exercise and taking a holistic view across the Families Portfolio on programmes and projects, several exceptions were raised and a series of opportunities that reduced the risk of duplication and could ensure a more joined up way of working within Families but also outside of it. An action plan is currently operational to implement the recommendations and a further assurance update is expected at the TCSP Board on progress in December 2023.

This will also feature in the 2023-24 Annual Report.

9.3. Conditions for Success

TCSP is now in its 3rd year of a 5-year refreshed programme, eight years over its full lifecycle. It has achieved many great achievements during this time from award winning projects, to reaching savings targets, testing new ways of working and importantly, improving the lives of children and young people across the city. Reflection on why the programme continues to thrive and why external funders have assurance that CWC can deliver high value programmes comes down to creating an environment where the right conditions for success are regularly reinforced:

- ✓ Strong and supportive leadership
- ✓ An engaged Board
- ✓ Good governance
- ✓ Empowered SROs who are encouraged to lead and deliver transformation.
- ✓ Investment in project resources – this includes money to fund a budget where a grant is not available (for example Families Front Door, Culture of Inclusion, Transformation of Traded Services) and project teams to coordinate them (Programme Managers, Project Managers and Support Officers)
- ✓ Investment in the wider project infrastructure including Data and Analytics, Communications and Finance.
- ✓ Clear objectives and remaining in scope of our vision and outcomes.
- ✓ Wider context from across the organisation to ensure we also learn from the achievements of others.
- ✓ Compliant with the corporate approach to programmes and projects and using the delivery framework to full effect.
- ✓ Ability to reflect and recognise areas for improvement.

These principles should continue to underpin the remaining years two of the programme.

9.4. Managing Risk

Acknowledging when things are off track or not going according to plan is equally as important to highlight as the achievements through TCSP.

In 2022, Supporting Families increasingly became at risk of not meeting its PbR target set by its funders Department of Level Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC). By quarter 3 of the financial year (October to

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December 2022), Supporting Families had still only reached seven of its 453 PbR claims target for that year.

The risk had been monitored up to this point with mitigation on place to utilise data from our Wolves at Work programme to identify families eligible for us to make a claim against the headline of sustained employment. When this data did not prove fruitful, the risk quickly became an issue and was escalated to the TCSP Board in November highlighting the challenges and actions taken so far and further recommendations to implement mitigation.

These included the setting up of an urgent task and finish effort to in the short-term:

- Identify a named operational lead for Supporting Families given the departure of the former lead.
- Structure the team so that resources can be allocated to Supporting Families with a focus on PbR’s until identification processes were restabilised.
- Consult with the former Supporting Families Project Officer to understand and document previous processes for Supporting Families claims.
- Re-establish the weekly data group, led by Data and Analytics, to ensure consistent support in identifying eligible claims, processing data, escalation of data quality and ownership of the outcomes framework in the context of collecting and analysing Supporting Families Data.
- Co-ordinate a review of closed cases since April 2022 to understand if eligible families worked with have not yet been claimed for.
- Co-ordinate a cross match of One System data (for poor attendance and Free School Meals) and Exploitation Hub data with data from Eclipse and Care First. Look for a third criteria where relevant and consider consent.
- Reclaim for eligible families worked with from between 2015 and 2020.

Longer-term recommendations were also made to avoid the same issue reoccurring in the future.

From this and through Board challenge and support, in the last quarter of the programme (January to March 2023), a further 446 families were identified as having met Supporting Families criteria and achieved sustainable income meaning that our overall target of 453 families was met with income of £1.3 million received to be reinvested in services.

10. Response to 2021-22 priorities

Our commitment	Our response
Planning future transformation up to 2025 with commitment to project resources	This continues through regular transformation discussion at leadership team meetings. The Transformation team also respond regularly to successful funding applications for new and innovative projects. A twice-yearly resources paper is considered at TCSP Board – the first planning resources for that year,

Our commitment	Our response
for the full life of the programme	the second securing the funds to maintain those resources in line with budget setting. The result of this has been a secure team for 3 out of 5 years, growth within the team and projects planned up to 2025.
Delivery and drive of concept projects	In the last 12-months three new project concepts have come to TCSP for various projects of which all of them have progressed to full lifecycle projects. Concepts for TCSP are often so thorough and well thought out they form the basis of the project business case.
Alignment to corporate principles	All TCSP projects consider digital elements, equality and data and climate conscious opportunities at concept which then travels through into options appraisal and business case development. As many TCSP projects are social value, environmental factors such as climate change become harder to consider however, data on equality, diversity and inclusion features heavily in our project planning as we use data to inform decisions about the case for change. Drive by digital is also increasingly featuring in TCSP projects such as Families Front Door where the scope of potential online on transactions is being explored.
Continuation of Good Governance	TCSP governance has remained stable over the last year with projects now considering the role of Senior Leadership Team and Joint Leadership Team where a project is cross cutting. and we are branching out now into matrix assurance and collaborative governance through SLT when a project is cross cutting. A full governance review is recommended at this stage given the growth of the Families Theme and subsequent portfolio of programmes and projects.
Implementation of National policy and legislative change across children's, adults, and education services using the programme as a vehicle to do this.	This continues to be monitored at a leadership level and through the three times yearly transformation discussions. As reform and national policy change is introduced, this filters through services with the transformation team recognised as a key enabler to delivery. Often project teams are quickly deployed either through pipeline planning or through investment from services in resources. This model has worked across Families and will be applied to upcoming reform in children's social care and SEND.
Sharing best practice and ensuring that the model used for successful transformation in Children's Services is shared across the organisation	This work is now being channelled through the strategic assurance arrangements being implemented at JLT and the new investment and economy Board. Since showcasing the TCSP 2021-22 Annual Report to various forums and following a SEB away day where using a programme and project approach in other areas of the organisation was explored, new roles in Projects and Change at a Programme, Project and Support level have been funded to take other areas of the organisation on a similar transformation journey.

11. Priorities for 2022-2023

- ❖ Evaluate projects qualitatively and quantitatively and use this more holistically across Families to understand impact as opposed to just closing a project and sharing the learning.
- ❖ Manage programme growth boldly but realistically.
- ❖ Continue to share our achievements and best practice across the organisation and ensure conditions for success remain constant.
- ❖ Respond accordingly to national reform.
- ❖ Review programme governance to ensure collaboration and joined up discussion at a programme board level to maximum the opportunity for good governance across the portfolio and not just within mature programmes.

12. Programme Finance

TCSP does not have a dedicated budget, each project agrees its own budget arrangements and manages its finance through individual project Boards.

Project	Funding type	Lifetime Spend £000	Spend 2022-2023	Project purpose	Original projection	Value of savings / avoidance
HeadStart	Grant	11,672	926 (to July 23)	Improved outcomes	-	-
Future Steps	Supporting Families in 2023-24	Budget 600 (not starting until Sep 23)	See staffing costs in table below	Improved outcomes	-	-
				Cost avoidance		
Transformation of Traded Services	-	There was no specific budget allocated to this project apart from project staff listed below		Improved outcomes	-	There were no specific savings, but the overall level of debt decreased as a result of this project
SWIS	Grant	996	408	Improved outcomes	-	-
Culture of Inclusion	Revenue	No specific budget allocated as spend met by service		Improved outcomes	-	-
ICMS	-	-	See staffing costs in table below	Improved outcomes	-	-
				Cost savings		
				Cost avoidance		

Project	Funding type	Lifetime Spend £000	Spend 2022-2023	Project purpose	Original projection	Value of savings / avoidance
Family Hubs Transformation	Grant	510	510	Improved outcomes	-	-
Creating Family Homes for Children in Care	-	No spend in 2022-2023 in excess of staffing listed in table below		Improved outcomes	-	-
				Cost savings		

12.1. Supporting Families Income

Project	Total grant as of 01/04/2022	Receipt 22/23	2022-23 spend	Grant balance as of 01/04/2023
Supporting Families	£5.0 million	£1.3 million	£1.7 million	£4.6 million

12.2. Core Programme Team Costs

Role	Grade	Hours	FTE	Funding source	2022-23 salary costs
Programme Manager	9	30	0.8	Supporting Families	28,418
Project Manager 1	7	37	1.0	0.4 HeadStart 0.6 Supporting Families	60,748
Project Manager 2	7	37	1.0	Supporting Families	50,229
Project Manager 3	7	37	1.0	0.3 Family Hubs 0.7 Supporting Families	45,658
Project Officer 1	6	37	1.0	0.5 HeadStart 0.4 Family Hubs 0.1 Supporting Families	41,267
Project Officer 2	6	37	1.0	Supporting Families	49,149
Apprentice	3	37	1.0	Supporting Families	11,749
					287,218

12.3. General finance summary

- The tables above shows that additional project spend funded by grant in 2022-2023 was £3.2 million.
- The cost of the project team cost which coordinated this expenditure, along with various projects involving existing service budgets, was £287,000.
- The net budget for Children's services in 2022-2023 was £51.4 million and the outturn was £49.1, meaning an underspend of £2.3 million.

There is an obvious opportunity to plan projects better financially from the outset and ensure a robust business case that supports delivery and sustainability of transformation. This is captured as one of our priorities for the next reporting year.

13. Risks and Issues

Unresolved programme risks (at end of reporting period):

Category	Risk description	Risk Impact	Mitigation	Owner
Programme	There is a risk that programme projects all require input from several core support services potentially creating capacity issues on the wider organisation (Finance, Data and Analytics and IT as examples)	<p>Impacting input into projects from colleagues from across the organisation.</p> <p>Impacting a OneCouncil approach to delivering projects.</p> <p>Impacting other priorities and or day-to-day functions across the organisation.</p>	<p>Work with Board members from across Families to establish the infrastructure demands of programmes and make recommendations on gaps to ensure maximum use of people and funding.</p> <p>Outside of these arrangements, agree the tolerances on demands on core support services and utilise the Core Services leadership team to look across departmental boundaries to ensure resilience.</p>	Emma Bennett (SRO) and Andrew Wolverson (Programme Executive)