

Cheshire West and Chester Council **Helping the Borough Thrive**

Thriving Residents



All of our families, children and young people are supported to get the best start in life

The following document summarises how the outcome outlined above will be achieved by 2020 in the context of significantly reduced resources. The plan provides a clear overview of the major strategic changes over the forthcoming years to ensure that customers and communities experience the best possible outcomes.

Your Outcome

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What is the problem we are trying to solve?

The number of children and young people aged 0-19 was estimated at 74,200 in 2015, and this is forecast to increase to over 77,500 by 2022. If the Borough is to thrive we must start with our children, young people and their families.

We know a child's family background and circumstances have a huge influence on their later life. For example, children living in poverty may be, developmentally, up to nine months behind children from more advantaged backgrounds by the age of three. Child poverty rates are broadly an area of good performance for our Borough compared to the national picture (13.1% locally in data released in 2017-18). However, at a very local level some small areas record rates of child poverty of around 40%, for example in parts of Ellesmere Port. We also know that children in some of our more deprived areas have significantly higher rates of excess weight and hospital admissions for accidental injury and health conditions.

The life chances of children and young people are hampered if families experience wider issues around poor health, parenting, drug and alcohol abuse, worklessness and poor housing.

What are we good at?

Cheshire West and Chester's approach to supporting children, young people and their families at an early stage is producing results. Cheshire West and Chester 'turned around' 100% (525 families) of its government-set target under the 'troubled families' approach. For context, the national average was 87.4%. The strength of Cheshire West's approach has been reinforced again during Phase 2. In January 2017, DCLG undertook a Troubled Families Spot Check Audit on outcomes submitted to date. Their feedback highlighted how they are impressed with the local approach as well as the evidence provided and that Cheshire West are leaders nationally thanks to the partnership working between the local authority and partners. From 2018, Cheshire West has been chosen as one of a small group of local authority areas to move to the next phase of the Troubled Families approach, known as Earned Autonomy.

Evidence and local experience shows that providing help at the earliest stage and the earliest age makes a significant difference to outcomes later on in life. Working in partnership with the family, increasing the reach of children centres for our most vulnerable children, tackling the root causes of problems, and effectively targeting support, are all key enablers in achieving outcomes. This needs partners, including the Council, NHS, early years' education professionals and the voluntary sector to all work together. Our school readiness performance for the Borough as a whole is positive, in that the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of reception is above the national average. This equates to 2,691 children (68.8% of all children at that age). However, when we look at the same measure for those on free school meals our Borough drops slightly below the national average (49.6% in West Cheshire compared to 51.2% nationally).

What areas do we need to improve on?

As a Borough we now have around 250 children on a Child Protection Plan. Although this figure has fallen since 2016, there remains more we can do to further promote early intervention and offer more robust Social Care support. However, it is worth noting there has been a significant drop in the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care received since 2013. Unfortunately, this drop in the rate of referrals into the system has not translated into a comparable reduction in numbers of children in the social care system at any one time as children are staying in statutory services for longer periods of time. This is a pattern that is being seen within social care across the country. We would also like to target those partner agencies not leading sufficient Team Around the Family (TAF) assessments and plans.

We have recognised the need to improve outcomes for our children in need and reduce the instances of escalation to looked after status. Building on learning from best practice nationally, including through the DfE Innovation Programme, we have developed an innovative new model for Children in Need services. This will provide intensive multi-agency support for children at statutory level. The piloting of this model went live in 2017.

We also want to continue to improve the support and outcomes for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), continuing to implement the changes required by national reforms. There will be a particular focus on learning opportunities for early years and school readiness, identifying SEND and support earlier and reducing the proportion of children in very specialist provision as part of a drive towards more inclusion for children and young people with SEND. Currently, Cheshire West and Chester has proportionately fewer primary and secondary school children and young people with SEND in mainstream provision than the national average and we would like to change this. Implementing personal budgets to provide choice, and making sure we continually improve services based on feedback, will be a key focus for our services moving forward.

Some particular health inequalities we would want to improve include breastfeeding rates, with a particular focus on the worst performing parts of the Borough, and tackling childhood obesity, which now stands at almost a quarter of all school reception age children and one third of key stage 2 children in their final year.

Throughout many of our more deprived areas significant challenges still remain, such as:

- The rate of children on free school meals achieving a good level of development at reception age is below the national average.
- Breastfeeding prevalence rates at 6-8 weeks are below the national average.
- Although we have recently seen improvements in the proportion of overweight or obese school reception aged children – down from 23.1% to 20.5% this remains a significant area of focus.
- 1 in 3 children at year 6 school age are overweight or obese
- In some pockets of Ellesmere Port, Winsford and Chester over 20% of families with a child 0-4 are in receipt of housing benefit and/or a council tax reduction
- The results of the most recent Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire with our Looked After Children suggests a growing issue with their emotional health.

What will good look like?

If we are successful, by 2020 we would expect to see:

- increased access to children's centres by children living in areas of deprivation;
- a reduction in child poverty;
- improved emotional health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families;
- stabilising families with complex needs at an early stage, including families that have children with SEND;
- improved physical health for children including reductions in childhood obesity and an increase in breastfeeding;
- increased levels of school readiness;
- parents and carers feeling more satisfied with the transition from children's to adult services for our most vulnerable young people including SEND;
- a reduction in our children in need numbers and fewer re-referrals;
- less children subject to Child Protection Plans;
- robust prevention services in place across all partner agencies in Cheshire West;
- The Team Around the Family process fully embedded across partner agencies.

Resources and Partners that will help us to get there:

The Key Council services or functions and Partners that support the delivery of this outcome are:

Council Services or Functions

- Children's Commissioning – early intervention programmes
- Healthy Child Programme
- Youth Offending Service
- Integrated Early Support including children's centres
- SEN teams
- Disabled Access to Resources
- Direct payments/ domiciliary & community care
- Early years practitioners
- Short breaks
- Children with Disabilities - Social Care teams
- Children in Need teams
- Work Zones and Adult Learning Partners

Partners

- GPs;
- Clinical Commissioning Groups;
- Community and acute health providers;
- Job Centre Plus;
- Schools;
- Police;
- National Probation Trust;
- Community Rehabilitation Company;
- Sub Regional Complex Dependency Programme;
- Voluntary and Faith Sector Groups;
- Childcare providers and wider commissioned services;
- Local Armed Forces and Veterans
- Poverty Truth Commission
- Cheshire Fire & Rescue
- Housing Providers

By 2020 we are planning to spend £11.5m a year on this priority

What have we already achieved?

Since this Outcome Plan was first agreed in 2016 we have already achieved a number of key actions through our work with all of our partners. The key achievements so far include:

Analysis of existing commissioned services has informed commissions around Healthy Child Programme and Starting Well.

Analysis of achieved outcomes and stakeholder feedback has led to provision of more evidence-based parenting interventions.

Outcomes Framework approach adopted to complex case work within Team Around the Family to measure family progress.

Development of i-ART service including Police, Health and Domestic Abuse services alongside existing staff.

Action plan is being delivered for the first Poverty Truth Commission and funding in place to support second Commission.

The roll out of the new short breaks service, which was commissioned in line with the review of Disability Services.

Daily Mile initiative now embedded within most priority schools in Cheshire West.

The Eat Well Be Active Framework has been embedded within service delivery.

The 'Best Beginnings' breastfeeding approach has been implemented.

Agreement and implementation of a number of strategies and action plans to continue to bring real change and improvement:

- Child Poverty Strategy and action plan.
- Co-Production Strategy
- Joint Commissioning Strategy
- Physical Activity & Growth Strategy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy
- Early Years Strategy
- Youth Strategy and action plan

A range of measures around mental health in place:

- Appointing mental health practitioners.
- Establishing a CYP Emotional Health & Wellbeing Board and sub groups.
- A new children and young people's passport app has been developed.
- Strengthened links with CAMHS through a daily consultation service.
- Mental Health first aid course for the children's workforce rolled out and evaluation being produced.

The Cheshire West Troubled Families Model continues to be the highest performing Model sub-regionally and is seen as an example of good practice nationally, as reflected in the DCLG spot check in January 2017. In 2018, Cheshire West successfully achieved Earned Autonomy status to unlock further funding to support transformational work between 2018 and 2020.

The Local Offer is continually evolving and an action plan is in place combining self-evaluation in preparation for inspections and feedback from stakeholders. The transition from Statements of SEND to Education, Health & Care Plans has been completed and reported to the Department for Education.

The Starting Well Service launched in January 2018.

The review of complex level 3 services has been completed and implemented from January 2018.

Actions implemented to support the increased multi-agency use of the TAF assessment tool.

How will we measure our impact on the outcome:

KPI	Measure	Baseline	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
KPI	Reduce the rate of children in need per 10,000 population 0-17 (all children aged 0-17 with an open referral, CIN, CPP and LAC)	338.9	310.0	300.0
-	Increase the proportion of Team Around the Family (TAF) assessments that are closed with outcomes met	52%	70%	75%
-	Increase the proportion of families accessing services in Children's Centres, for families with children 0-5 years old living in the top 30% most deprived areas of the borough	70%	75%	80%
KPI	Increase the number of complex families achieving significant and sustained outcomes (reported cumulatively over 4 years)	43	1,400	1,820
-	Increase the number of complex families achieving sustained employment outcomes (reported cumulatively over 4 years)	2	225	364
KPI	Maintain the take up of free early education for eligible 2 year olds living in the top 30% most deprived areas in the borough	107%	91%	95%
-	Increase the take up of free early education for eligible 2 year olds in the borough	79%	91%	95%
-	Increase the take up of free early education for eligible 3-4 year olds living in the top 30% most deprived areas in the borough	89%	85%	90%
KPI	Increase Parent/Carer satisfaction with the final SEND Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	89.5%	80.0%	80.0%
-	Increase the proportion of primary school age children with SEND who have an EHC Plan who are taught in mainstream provision	41.3%	43.5%	41.3%
-	Increase the proportion of secondary school age children with SEND who have an EHC Plan who are taught in mainstream provision	56.0%	56.0%	48.0%
-	Increase the proportion of children eligible for Free School Meals achieving a Good Level of Development at the Early Years Stage	50%	52.5%	54.0%
-	Increase the proportion of all children achieving a Good Level of Development at the Early Years Stage	69%	National Average	National Average
-	Increase the proportion of infants that are breastfed at age 6-8 weeks	35.4%	41.7%	43.8%

-	Reduce the proportion of children aged 4-5 years who are classified as overweight or obese	23.1%	20.0%	20.0%
-	Reduce the proportion of children aged 10-11 years who are classified as overweight or obese	32.3%	30.6%	30.0%
-	Improve the emotional health of LAC – measured by the child’s Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire score (a lower number is a better result)	12.8	13.0	13.0
-	Reduce child poverty in under 16 year olds – measured by the percentage of children in low income families for under 16s	14.9%	14.1%	13.2%

How we will deliver our outcomes:

Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives		
1. Further develop integrated services that support families with complex needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver early help and prevention services collaboratively embedding a Think Family through the Team Around the Family process, targeting families with multi needs which include mental health, poor parenting, worklessness poverty, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour. Review the Domestic Abuse offer to ensure that it meets need for children and families affected. Working with our partners, continue to embed and deliver troubled families programme as part of the EHP approach to support a further 1830 families with multiple needs through a TAF approach Continue to champion use of the ‘Team Around the Family’ assessment tool for families with two or more unmet needs through the embedding of a multi-agency early help strategy. This means residents don’t have to repeat their story to every organisation, and will provide a more consistent and joined-up approach to services to avoid people falling between agencies Manage and monitor progress of recommendations from the Poverty Truth Commission and support the roll out of the second Commission, ensuring full engagement with individuals experiencing poverty and associated challenges. 		
What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this Initiative?	Action Deadline	Action Owners	
A.1.1.1 – Further develop the parenting offer for wider Early Help partners through a range of initiatives	July 2018	Director – Early Help & Prevention	
A.1.1.2 – Embed and further roll out RONI (Risk Of NEET Indicator)	September 2018	Director – Early Help & Prevention	

A.1.1.3 - To ensure that all frontline workers from Early Help and Prevention are initiating and contributing to TAF and e-TAF processes	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.1.4 - Youth workers to facilitate TRA (teenage relationship abuse) awareness assemblies in secondary schools and further education colleges in top 30% LSOA's and evidence the impact of this service delivery	July 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.1.5 – Explore opportunities for capturing outcomes for Troubled Families from further local authority and partner services.	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.1.6 - Enable and support the implementation of cultural change in relation to TAF initiation within the starting well service, nurseries, schools and within Further Education	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.1.7 – Support the development of a second Poverty Truth Commission	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.1.8 - Commission a road map of services to understand the complexity of services and initiatives currently undertaken by the Council, particularly services which address poverty.	September 2018	Director – Early Help & Prevention

Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives	
2. Improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families by integrating council and health services in key priority areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure commissioned services focus on improving the Health and Wellbeing outcomes for children and their families. • Ensure there is a strong, accessible offer in place to support emotional health and wellbeing for children, young people and their families. • To understand the profile of risk-taking behaviour in young people across the borough and ensure appropriate action is taken. 	
What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this initiative?	Action Deadline	Action Owners
A.1.2.1 - In line with NHS Transformation Plan, work collaboratively to ensure improvements in mental health services.	March 2020	Director – Public Health
A.1.2.2 - Secure relevant information to ensure service resources are targeted at mental health needs.	March 2020	Director – Public Health
A.1.2.3 - Extend provision to 25yrs in line with SEND over the next 4 years.	April 2020	Senior Manager, Special Educational Needs
A.1.2.4 - Develop a partnership approach through the Eat Well Be Active Strategy re. childhood obesity and healthy weights	March 2019	Director – Public Health

A.1.2.5 - Through the support of the refugee resettlement programme in Cheshire West and Chester, monitor take-up of services from the cohort.	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.2.6 - Further development and enhance the parenting information site for service users	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.2.7 - Secure links with Work Zones to support parents (adults) with referral health issues into employment/access appropriate support (resource) available.	March 2019	Director – Places Strategy
A.1.2.8 - Ensure all operational staff have the same approach in their conversations with young people around risk-taking behaviour.	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention

Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives	
3. Improve the support offered to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to ensure it better meets their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure joint working on transition assessments to enable both children’s and adult assessments to be completed, minimising disruption for the young person and their family. This also supports clear planning for the future, making sure that services are designed around a young person’s future, enabling them to achieve their maximum autonomy and independence. • Continue our work to implement changes that improve services for children with SEND. We will also focus on the transition of young people, as they move from children to adult services by working together with education and health partners. • Agree on redefining service offer for appropriate services for children with SEND • Define and develop the youth offer for children with SEND • Review engagement of YPS service with children with SEND and refresh quality assurance processes. • Ensuring systems are able to identify and report on children with SEND. • Continue to support and encourage Disability Service Teams to utilise the TAF as its assessment tool. • Working closely with the Cheshire West Education Improvement Board, improve inclusion in mainstream schools. • Further develop the implementation of personal budgets to enable greater flexibility for families to organise the support they need for children with SEND. 	
What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this Initiative?	Action Deadline	Action Owners
A.1.3.1 - Continue to ensure co-production of the Local Offer with stakeholders to provide a full	Ongoing	Team Manager External Relations

range of advice, support and services that can be accessed by children, young people, parents, carers, providers and professionals as a “one stop shop” that enables families to develop greater self-help skills and independence.		
A.1.3.2 – Review the impact of the Local Offer website and ensure that we respond to feedback received and reviews undertaken.	Ongoing	Director of Education
A.1.3.3 - Implementing the outcome of the joint Council/CCG review of the existing Child Development Service, in collaboration with key health providers and introducing an overarching service specification or service level agreement amongst health providers, including key local quality requirements.	March 2019	Senior Manager Specialist Services
A.1.3.4 - Working with a range of providers, further develop provision, pathways into adulthood, supported internships and employability skills, across the 16-19/25 phase.	March 2020	Senior Manager Special Educational Needs
A.1.3.5 - Improve inclusion in mainstream schools in partnership with the Cheshire West Education Improvement Board through the sharing of data, intelligence and evidence of the pattern of need/provision across the borough, seeking greater school ownership within this process.	March 2020	Director of Education
A.1.3.6 – Implement the findings of the review of services for disabled children and young people, redesigning services to provide greater integration and more consistency of access to services.	March 2019	Director of Education
A.1.3.7 - Ensure that the LA and its partners (health, schools, settings, colleges, and voluntary sector) are well prepared for the introduction of a new OFSTED Inspection Framework for Special Education Needs.	Ongoing	Director of Education
A.1.3.8 – Implement and promote the use of Personal Budgets, learning from the Integrated Personal Commissioning Programme, which has trialled personal budgets for children and young people with Learning Disabilities.	December 2018	Manager for Disabled Children and Personal Budgets
A.1.3.9 - Further develop the joint commissioning strategy across education, health and social care in response to at least an annual review of need. This links to our work being done on a multi-agency basis around mental health, speech and language and early years SEND support.	Ongoing	Director for Commissioned Services

Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives		
4. Implement a programme to improve school readiness particularly in more deprived areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Starting Well service will support families to access services through their children centre, particularly in more deprived areas, to improve take-up of early years entitlement so children are ready for school. • Improve the transfer of information from early years settings through to schools. • Encourage schools to use pupil premium funding to ensure the early identification and specialist support is in place from their starting points. • We will promote the development of children in the Early Years so that the gap in outcomes between vulnerable children and their peers is closed, with a particular focus on language and communication • We will support settings to provide high quality childcare. 		
What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this initiative?	Action Deadline	Action Owners	
A.1.4.1 - Ensure promotional Early Years entitlement material is shared as part of the EHP Communication strategy.	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention	
A.1.4.2 - Continue to develop capacity and quality within the childminder provision, particularly in areas where there is insufficient provision	Ongoing	Director of Strategic Commissioning	
A.1.4.3- Working on a multi-agency basis, continue to monitor the Early Years Strategy and associated action plan, establishing a common understanding of what is meant by “school readiness”	March 2019	Director of Education	
A.1.4.4 – All EHP staff to encourage and support parents of young children to access their entitlement and liaise with Early Years workers in Starting Well service.	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention	
A.1.4.5 - Ensure that the Starting Well service continues to have clear targets around ensuring that all children in the top 30% Super Output Areas are school ready.	Ongoing	Director of Strategic Commissioning and Director of Education	

A.1.4.6 - Promote the use of WELLCOMM as an assessment tool and the means to measure progress over time regarding early language development	Ongoing	Director of Strategic Commissioning and Director of Education
A.1.4.7 – EHP staff to continue to implement the use of C-CAT in the assessment of speech and language in children under the age of 5.	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention
A.1.4.8 – Promote the use of Pupil Premium where appropriate across the service	March 2019	Director – Early Help & Prevention

Risks

Risk	Mitigation	Owner
Evaluation of early intervention – there is a risk that benefits can't be articulated fully and partners may not invest as result	Put a robust evaluation framework in place.	Director - EHP supported by the Finance Service
Troubled families national funding stream could change post 2020 putting a range of early intervention services at risk	Work with central government to ensure a funding stream is maintained given the impact this funding has had to date. Seek alternative sources of funding locally and nationally.	Director – EHP
Early intervention could flush out demand for services through better identification of need could place pressure on resources	Focus on interventions that are proven to support people early to prevent escalation and reduce reliance on services.	Director – EHP and Director – Strategic Commissioning
Welfare policy changes at the national level could negatively impact demand for services	Put contingency plans in place with partners to mitigate the impact of any further national policy changes	Director – EHP and Director – Place Strategy
Clawback from the DfE could be invoked if DfE are not satisfied that there is sufficient provision in certain areas of the Borough regarding children's centres	Ensure that all provision in each area is mapped and captured for DfE. Ensure that any linked site agreements include clear stipulations on use of the building.	
Risk if EHP cannot succeed with interventions put into place that more families will continue to move into social care	Focus on interventions that are proven to support people early to prevent escalation and reduce reliance on services.	Director – EHP
Risk that settings, schools and other providers do not respond to the call for greater inclusion of children and young people with SEND	Provide clear data and evidence of the pressures/demands and communicate that well. Continue to invest in partnership working with schools. Challenge all providers and, if necessary, sponsors, Regional Schools Commissioner, etc.	Director of Education
Risk that parents and carers	Ensure that there is thorough consultation.	Director of

do not respond positively to the redesign of services for disabled children	Work closely with the Parent and Carer forum. Invest in co-production seeking advice from subject matter experts as appropriate.	Education
Risk on demand on services if Children in Need numbers continue to rise.	Ensure the continued integration of preventative services within the Integrated Early Support Model and supporting the Children in Need pilot approach that will look to reduce pressure on service resources.	Director – Children’s Social Care
Risk around ensuring funding is in place for full Starting Well service integration	Within the procurement process a number of bidders have submitted proposals for the full integration within the cost envelope, suggesting the specification around the vision for the integrated service is deliverable.	Director – Public Health

Interdependencies

Programme / Project / Activity	Describe the dependency
<i>People are well educated, skilled and earn a decent living</i>	Supporting families with multiple needs into employment relies on both employment and skills specialists and a broader range of early intervention services. They should work together to maximise impact.
<i>Vulnerable adults and children feel safe and are protected</i>	Working with complex families inevitably means working closely on the ‘step up’ and ‘step down’ with children’s social care i.e. stepping up/down cases seamlessly so as not to create uncertainty/confusion for the family.
<i>Older people and vulnerable adults are compassionately supported to lead fulfilled and independent lives</i>	The transition between children’s and adults services is critical to outcomes for our vulnerable young people.
<i>Vibrant and healthy communities with inclusive leisure, heritage and culture</i>	Many of our early intervention strategies rely on a range of universal community based services such as leisure facilities to help ensure vulnerable groups make healthy choices.
<i>Cleanest, safest and most sustainable neighbourhoods in the country</i>	Our services are working closely with our Community Safety partners to ensure that our families can help to redesign services around issues such as anti-social behaviour focusing on the issues that really concern them. These issues include the factors that drive perceptions of ASB, ASB itself and the use of enforcement powers.