

Cheshire West and Chester Council Helping the Borough Thrive

Thriving Residents



Vulnerable adults and children feel safe and are protected

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

Outcome Owner: Emma Taylor

Outcome Contributors: Jennifer McGovern and Helen Brackenbury

What is the problem we are trying to solve?

One of our major responsibilities is to put in place clear processes and services to protect both vulnerable adults and children. As well as a legal duty, we believe this is a moral responsibility. There is now a greater awareness and focus on issues such as child sexual exploitation (CSE) and other complex safeguarding issues, including domestic abuse, the financial exploitation of adults, radicalisation, and the impact these have on vulnerable children and adults. This heightened awareness is driving more demand for services as professionals are identifying risk more effectively more often. For example, domestic abuse incidents have risen in recent months. Experience tells us that only by working in partnership with other agencies such as the Police and NHS can these needs be met, and families supported, without falling between the gaps across separate organisations.

What are we good at?

At the beginning of 2016, OFSTED recognised the Council's children and families services as 'good' overall in relation to safeguarding children, with elements of 'outstanding' in relation to leadership and management and adoption services. The Council is therefore one of the highest performing areas in the country in relation to safeguarding children.

For both adults and children's safeguarding services domestic abuse is a key area of focus for the Council and our partners. Within this important theme a key measure of impact is repeat domestic abuse incidents, as this shows whether our services are getting things right first time and stopping the cycle of abuse. Currently, Cheshire West performs better than other areas in Cheshire and Warrington in terms of repeats (under 18% of total domestic abuse incidents). The proportion of people that use adult social care services that 'feel safe' is an area of comparative strength for Cheshire West and Chester when compared to the national picture. In 2014/15, 76% of people using our services felt safe compared to 68.5% nationally.

The percentage of repeat referrals to children's social care is also an area where West Cheshire performs better than statistical neighbours. This is an important measure of how effective our social work practice is, as well as our supporting 'specialist' services such as targeted family support at level 4 on the continuum of need. The percentage of repeat referrals to children's social care has increased during 2018-19. Cheshire West and Chester's result of 21.2% at March 2019 remains slightly better than comparative averages.

Our percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time (repeat activity) was also better than our statistical neighbour peers at the end of the last financial year (16.6% in March 2018) and in line with national levels. Another area of relative strength is our accommodation offer for care leavers. Our numbers of care leavers reported as being in suitable accommodation at 31st March 2019 was 92.4%.

Finally, our adoption service was recognised as outstanding in our last OFSTED safeguarding inspection. We perform consistently well against a challenging set of measures within the national adoption scorecard. In CW&C, 65% of children wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family, compared to 56% nationally, which represents impressive performance compared to most other local authorities.

What areas do we need to improve on?

We currently have a comparatively high number of children in care when we look at our statistical neighbours: 496 children at 31st March 2019. Our rate of looked after children per 10,000 is now 74.4 per 10,000, higher than national rates but below the North-West. 18.3% of these children were in placements out of our borough and 20 miles from home. We recognise we need to do more to reduce the total numbers of children in care and distant placements in line with our peers to fall under the North West average.

We can improve the timeliness of our decision making at the initial point of contact (the 'front door') for children and families, to ensure that appropriate support is provided as quickly as possible. At the end of 2018/19, 70.8% of children's and adults service contacts were triaged to onward services within 24 hours. Although this figure is improving, we would like this to be 95% by 2020. This is something we are addressing through a multi-agency re-design of this key component of our children's social care and early help services, in conjunction with partners, to ensure there is 'no wrong door' for professionals and members of the public concerned about a child, family or domestic abuse victim or perpetrator.

We know we can work in a more integrated way with partners to support vulnerable adults with challenging behaviours and this will be a key focus for our partnership going forward.

What will good look like?

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

- even more vulnerable children and adults telling us that they feel safe and secure;
- a reduction in repeat safeguarding referrals for both children and adults;
- an increase in the number of children, families and adults being helped in the community without the need for more intrusive statutory services
- an increased impact of domestic abuse support, and a sustained reduction in repeat incidents;
- reduced numbers of children and adults needing full time care by the Council
- fewer children and adults being placed in care in areas outside the borough;
- reduced number of children who need to move care placements;
- increased number of care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training, including apprenticeships;
- more adult care homes are rated as good or excellent by the Care Quality Commission;
- more children in care placements that are rated good or better
- Ofsted – our regulator for children– recognise the outstanding quality and impact of our local services that provide support to children in need of protection, children in care, and care leavers.

Resources and Partners that will help us to get there:

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

Council Services or Functions

- Adult Safeguarding
- Commissioned Adults services – including Housing Support, Substance Misuse etc.
- Domestic Abuse services
- Mental Capacity Act (Safeguarding)
- Children’s Commissioning
- Integrated Early Support
- Children in Care/ care leavers
- Children in Need
- Children with Disabilities
- Fostering & Adoption
- Edge of Care
- Safeguarding Unit for Children and Families

Partners

- Clinical Commissioning Groups;
- Community and acute health providers;
- Community Rehabilitation Company;
- National Probation Trust;
- Cheshire Police;
- Neighbouring Local Authorities;
- Housing Associations;
- Police and Crime Commissioner;
- Crown Prosecution Service;
- Her Majesty’s Court Service;
- Child and Adolescent Family Court Advisory Service;
- Care Providers;
- Commissioned services for children;
- GPs
- Local Armed Forces and Veterans

By 2020 we are planning to spend £30.5 million 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:

Phases 1 and 2 of the Edge of Care pilot in place and since the launch of the pilot, 75% of cases have led to avoiding the need for the child to enter care and the programme is saving around £1million annually.

An innovative new approach to Children in Need in Northwich, Ellesmere Port and Winsford was launched in May 2017. Numbers are increasing each month and data is being provided to inform the evaluation of the project's success in 2018.

The Regional Adoption Agency was launched in September 2017.

Review of the quality assurance framework across children's services has been

Evaluation of the front door model completed, focusing on the learning gained.

A joint approach to Deprivation of Living Safeguarding is embedded.

An updated Transitions Policy supports the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards

Perpetrator Programme in place to support male and female perpetrators.

Successful social impact bond application for 'fostering better outcomes.'

The Sufficiency Duty Strategy has been reviewed and updated.

A review of pay arrangements has led to new rates in place for carers from 2018-19.

Additional emergency flats have been made available for homeless 16/17 year olds

Updated guidance for health assessments and the progression of these assessments is a key priority.

A training needs analysis is supporting a full development programme in place for all Social Workers

Additional emergency flats have been made available for homeless 16/17 year olds

Strengthened Practice Improvement Meeting structure involvement from team managers and workers across the service, and dedicated PIm for health and educational attainment of CIC

Successful targeted fostering marketing campaign has led to specific targeted campaigns for carers for 11-16 year olds.

Delivery of the Fostering Collaboration, Foster4.

How will we measure our impact on the outcome:

KPI	Measure	Baseline	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
KPI	Reduce the proportion of children who become subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	14.5%	14.0%	16.0%
KPI	Reduce the proportion of referrals to children's social care that are within 12 months of a previous referral	19.7%	16.0%	19.0%
-	Increase the proportion of front door decisions that are made within 1 working day	64%	80%	85%
-	Increase the proportion of single assessments that are completed within 45 days	75%	90%	95%
-	Increase the proportion of children who sustainably step down to IES (not in receipt of CSC services six months after being stepped down)	80%	82%	83%
KPI	Reduce the rate of Looked After Children (children in care) per 10,000 population 0-17 years old	73.0	66	64
-	Increase the proportion of LAC who had an annual health assessment (for children who were looked after continuously for at least 12 months)	86%	91%	95%
-	Increase the proportion of children aged 9–15 and 0–2 year old who are prevented from becoming LAC (not in care six months after Edge of Care has completed)	-	77%	77%
-	Increase the proportion of LAC who are in the same placement for 2+ years (for children who are aged under 16 and in care for over 2.5 years)	68.0%	70.0%	70.0%
-	Reduce the proportion of LAC who are placed out of the borough and 20+ miles from home	13.0%	12.8%	12.6%
-	Increase the proportion of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (3 year average, 1 year time lag on data)	59%	59%	59%
-	Increase the proportion of care leavers who are living in suitable accommodation	82.0%	97.0%	97.0%
KPI	Increase the proportion of cases where action was taken and the risk was reduced or removed	-	92.0%	95.0%

KPI	Measure	Baseline	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
-	Increase the proportion of cases where the individual's desired outcomes were fully or partially achieved	-	90.0%	93.0%
-	Increase the number of concluded Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries	-	301	348
-	Reduce the number of registered care homes rated as 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' by CQC.	-	-	5
-	Increase the proportion of people that use adult social care services that feel safe (annual survey; provisional results May, confirmed results Oct)	73.0%	74.5%	76.0%
-	Reduce the proportion of domestic abuse incidents that are within 12 months of a previous incident (total repeat incidents recorded by Cheshire Constabulary)	18.0%	15-30%	15-30%

How we will deliver our outcomes:

Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives
<p>1. Embed a range of targeted specialist services that prevent need escalating within statutory services for both children and adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review commissioned services for children and families designed to prevent the need for more intensive statutory support, with a particular focus on ensuring we tackle the 'toxic trio' of domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse. • Explore other interventions to help families address difficulties and prevent entrants into care • Further improve services that identify and tackle domestic violence and abuse at all levels of risk • Intervene earlier with families where Domestic abuse has been identified. • Fully utilise the 'channel' process to identify young people and adults at risk of being drawn into violent extremism, to assess the nature of that risk and to develop the most appropriate support for the individuals concerned. • Implement Domestic Abuse services and ensure their

	<p>effectiveness across the continuum to ensure that it meets need for victims, children and perpetrators t</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a particular focus on Children in Need, review CSC services to ensure they are effectively aligned with IES services and wider partners, with the aim of preventing escalation to statutory services wherever possible. 	
What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this Initiative?	Action Owner	Action Deadline
A.2.1.1 - Review 0-8 commission & improve performance /impact	Director – CSC	August 2018
A.2.1.2 – Review impact of Children in Need project and agree next steps.	Director - CSC	June 2018
A.2.1.3 - Review all commissions for vulnerable children and adults to ensure they are fit for purpose, provide best value and are evidence based.	Director – Early Help and Prevention	March 2020
A.2.1.4 - All relevant professionals trained in WRAP3 (Workshop to Raise Awareness of PREVENT – Home Office Accredited Programme) as part of ‘train the trainer’ approach to ensure partner agencies are equipped to deliver this within their own organisations	Director – Prevention and Wellbeing	March 2020
A.2.1.5 - Implement and embed iART review recommendations	Director – CSC Director - EHP	March 2019
A.2.1.6 - Improve parenting programme provision across the borough as a standalone programme rather than requiring core assets as CiN model.	Director – CSC Director - EHP	March 2019
A.2.1.7 – Recommission refuge provision	Director – CSC Director – EHP	September 2019
A.2.1.8 - Work with the Cheshire West Domestic Abuse Partnership to develop a robust response for children impacted by Domestic Abuse	Director – CSC Director – EHP	December 2019
A.2.1.10 - Endorse EDT recommendations & begin progressing	Director – CSC	March 2019
A.2.1.11 - Embed CWD model	Senior Manager - SEND	March 2019
A.2.1.12 - Explore and understand the problem profile for teenagers in abusive relationships	Senior Managers - EHP	March 2020
A.2.1.13 - Review the CWaC DVA service using performance data to inform service provision so that the resources meet demand and provide robust, effective interventions	Senior Managers - EHP	March 2019
A.2.1.14 - Ensure all key staff working with children, young people and adults at risk have access to training on prevent and Channel, that	Director – CSC	March 2019

supports the continuation of working with partners on the Pan Cheshire Channel strategy.		
A.2.1.15 - Develop a joint approach to managing need & risk, with a view to extending this across children's workforce	Director – CSC Director – EHP	August 2018
A.2.1.16 - Review the effectiveness of the new service for medium risk DVA service supported through Growth Bid funding	Director – EHP	March 2020.
A.2.1.17 - Monitor progress on delivering the actions agreed in the Cheshire West Scrutiny Review of Domestic Violence and Abuse	Director – EHP	March 2020.

Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives
<p>2. Ensuring high quality and safe care placements that are sustainable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the timeliness of health assessments for looked after children • Ensure all care plans for looked after children have timescales and actions that can be clearly measured • Further strengthen adoption services and support for adopters by taking a regional approach with Warrington, Wigan, St Helens and Halton (WWISH) • Strengthen links with housing services to avoid young people using temporary accommodation • Increase the number of local foster care placements rather than independent fostering agency (IFA) placements by improving marketing and recruitment and the wider support package for fosterers • Explore further collaboration opportunities with Children's Services across neighbouring authorities • Ensure we address any emerging risk areas from adult safeguarding referrals such as financial abuse and medication management through a multi-agency approach working with providers • Improve the assessment of and the monitoring and supporting of family/ friend placements. • Develop initiatives for 16 and 17 year old young people to preventing them from coming into to care wherever possible.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear framework regarding exit planning. • Develop effective implementation of SGO support. 	
What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this Initiative?	Action Owner	Action Deadline
A.2.2.1 - Agree sustainable approach to undertaking and recording health/ dental assessments	Director- CSC	August 2018
A.2.2.2 - Embed escalation process between CSC and Health	Director- CSC	August 2018
A.2.2.3 - Ensure all plans at every level are written for the child	Director- CSC	August 2018
A.2.2.4 – Embed culture change across TfA	Director- CSC	December 2018
A.2.2.5 - Establish and formalise joint working arrangements between CSC and commissioned housing provider	Director- CSC	September 2018
A.2.2.6 – Develop business case for fostering collaboration phase 2.	Director- CSC	September 2018
A.2.2.7 – Consider viability of Pause project sub-regionally	Director- CSC	October 2018
A.2.2.8 - Ensure effective case management re timely referrals to the CPT so optimal time can be spent assessing carers to complete a robust/ thorough assessment.	Senior Manager – Adoption	November 2018
A.2.2.9 - Raise awareness of earlier permanence through achieving SGO from initial viability.	Senior Manager – Adoption	September 2018
A.2.2.10 - Promote use of evidence based interventions i.e. TEND, Fostering Changes for carers and special guardians.	Senior Manager – Adoption	September 2018
A.2.2.11 – Strengthen links with housing colleagues, including training of housing staff to be able to deal with 16/17 yr old issues, with less emphasis on a sanction based approach	Director – CSC	September 2018
A.2.2.12 - Ensure support plans contain realistic/achievable measures, including timely referrals to ASF to access specialist therapeutic services.	Senior Manager – Adoption	November 2018
A.2.2.13 - Continue to develop and build on effective SGO support being delivered by the protection of a dedicated worker to centralise and co-ordinate any support that is required.	Senior Manager – Adoption	September 2018
Strategic Theme	Key Initiatives	
3. Further strengthen the quality of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further improve the recording of child protection assessments, plans and interventions 	

<p>safeguarding practice across the adults and children’s workforce to ensure outstanding practice is consistent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a wider range of partner agency engagement in child protection strategy meetings • Ensure readiness for the new children’s social care improvement agenda including approved child and family practitioner status, practice supervisors and leaders • Support councils with inadequate children safeguarding services to improve through advice and peer challenge • Review adults safeguarding services across the council and partner agencies to raise awareness, improve support plans for victims of abuse, and improve access to services for vulnerable adults • Ensure we tackle emerging risks such as FGM, honour based violence, modern slavery, trafficking and self-neglect • Ensure the public and professionals have ‘no wrong door’ for children and families/domestic abuse contacts as part of our long term strategy to ensure children/families and victims of DA are safeguarded and supported early through appropriate services. • Develop a new approach to workforce planning, training and development across children’s and adult services • Ensure a holistic, integrated approach between children’s and adult services in respect of mid- long term workforce planning and development taking into account the west Cheshire offer & Learning from each other’s processes both strategically and on the ground. • Improve use of IT in multiagency in meetings. • Further strengthen the Audit/ QA and Practice Improvement Meeting framework. • Ensure the CSC operational and practice system reflects the values and principles of the service and effectively meets the needs of children and young people in the Borough. 	
<p>What are the key actions that need to take place to deliver this Initiative?</p>	<p>Action Owner</p>	<p>Action Deadline</p>
<p>A.2.3.1 - Progress new Ways of working, including research of evidence-based interventions across children’s workforce.</p>	<p>Workforce Development Lead</p>	<p>September 2018</p>
<p>A.2.3.2 – Embed the case management/audit system in adult services.</p>	<p>Director – Prevention & Wellbeing</p>	<p>December 2018</p>

A.2.3.4 - Embed KSS for Child and Family Practitioner and Practice Supervisor and Leader into Supervision Framework	Director – CSC	September 2018
A.2.3.5 - Agree approach to peer challenges across sub region	Director – CSC	August 2018
A.2.3.6 - Arrange bespoke training across partnership	Workforce Development Lead	March 2019
A.2.3.7 - Progress iART recommendation re Domestic Abuse pathways	Director – CSC	August 2018
A.2.3.8 – Refresh Workforce Strategy	Workforce Development Lead	September 2018
A.2.3.9 - Align roles of Principal Social Workers across adults/children	Director – CSC Director – Prevention & Wellbeing	August 2018
A.2.3.11 – Establish training themes based on audit findings.	Director - CSC	March 2019
A.2.3.12 - Increase use of advocacy and how voice of child influences service improvements	Director - CSC	September 2018
A.2.3.13 – Improve profile of private fostering	Director – CSC	September 2018
A.2.3.14 - Develop and launch ‘our approach to permanency and placement stability’	Senior Manager - Adoption	October 2018
A.2.3.15 - Raise profile of corporate parent role and extend to private businesses/ local companies as part of care leaver offer	Director – CSC	October 2018

Risks

Risk	Mitigation	Owner
Staff recruitment and retention in light of national difficulties facing social workers and following our good OFSTED judgement – other organisations could head hunt staff	Strengthen and publicise our unique offer to staff including staff benefits and progression	Director - CSC
Appetite from other LAs to share services with CW&C	Ensure a robust engagement plan which targets key stakeholders, tailors messages and emphasises the business case for collaboration	Strategic Director – C&F
Demand for services may increase as a result of the	Invest in evidence based demand reduction	Director - CSC

impact of economic and societal external factors, including the cohort of children needing safeguarding services, and better awareness of risk/need in the community	programmes i.e. early intervention and technology to ensure efficient processes. Review systems and processes regularly to maximise efficiency and ability to cope with demand.	
The ageing population places increasing demand on services	Demand for adult social care is likely to continue rising throughout the period through to 2020 and therefore prevention, community-based and self-care solutions, incorporating technology, are critical to manage demand on high cost services.	Director – Prevention and Wellbeing
New national initiatives, programmes, outside bodies (e.g. Court) and legislative changes that result in changes in practice and decision making - all potentially impacting on practice and cost	Regular staff briefings and training so changes are adhered to. Ensure finance colleagues are fully briefed on changes.	Director - CSC
The availability and quality of placements for children and young people.	Our dedicated access to resources team, expanding the Council's residential care provision and exploring a new approach to block contracting of residential care.	Director – CSC

Interdependencies

Programme / Project / Activity	Describe the dependency
<i>Older People and Vulnerable Adults are Compassionately Supported</i>	Ensuring that vulnerable adults are both well supported and protected are two sides of the same coin. Therefore, these two plans need to closely align to ensure care services are designed with safeguarding in mind.
<i>All of our families, children and young people are supported to get the best start in life</i>	Supporting people early to prevent safeguarding concerns is critical in enabling children's social care to function effectively and sustainably. The same is also true for controlling demand on adult services in service areas such as Learning Disabilities.