

# Public Document Pack

## Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 4th September, 2023

6.00 pm

Meeting Room A

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### AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the last meeting**  
**Children & Young People OSC June 2023** **3 - 6**
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM** **7**
4. **Youth MPs Update**  
To receive an update from the Youth MPs, including information on the Young Inspectors programme as discussed at the last meeting.
5. **Next Steps following LGA Training '6 Steps to Effective Scrutiny of Children's Services'**  
Report attached.  
**LGA training next steps C&YP O&S Committee** **8 - 9**
6. **Wellbeing Champions Update**  
As requested at the last meeting, the Committee will receive an update on the Wellbeing Champions Project commissioned by Public Health.  
Report Attached.  
**Wellbeing Champions Scrutiny Report August 2023** **10 - 13**  
**FINAL**
7. **Corporate Parenting**  
As agreed at the last meeting, the Committee will scrutinise Corporate Parenting at this meeting.

Date Published: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023  
Denise Park, Chief Executive

**PRESENT** – Councillor Sylvia Liddle (in the Chair) Councillors McCaughran, Raja, Ali, Gee, Slater Ju.

**YOUNG PEOPLE REPRESENTATIVES** – Muhammed Bapu, Youth MP, Roisa McCusker and Luca Marina (Youth Forum representatives).

**ALSO PRESENT** – Executive Member – Julie Gunn, Officers - Strategic Director – Jo Siddle, Andrea Sturgess, Head of Communications and Engagement, Liz Clarkson, Participation and Inclusion Manager and Phil Llewellyn, Corporate and Democratic Lead.

## RESOLUTIONS

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular welcomed new Members, and Officers Andrea Sturgess and Phil Llewellyn, who were carrying out new roles supporting the Committee. Thanks were passed to Paul Conlon who had now left the Council, for all his support for the Committee,

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were submitted for approval.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**3. Declarations of interest**

No Declarations of interest were made by Members of the Committee.

**4. Youth MP and Youth Forum Update**

The Youth MP verbally reported on recent events and activities including :

- The Annual Youthforia event at Ambleside.
- Ongoing work relating to the Leaving Care Service Inspection.
- As requested at the last meeting, feedback had been received on the awareness about the local elections, and Voter ID, awareness of which had been good, and also the view that more could be done at schools and colleges to educate young people why it was important to vote and what they were voting for etc.
- The Democracy Day event at the Olive School.
- Attendance at Mayor Making, with thanks to the outgoing Mayor for his support.

- The successful Climate Summit at King George's Hall held earlier in the week.
- An update on the Food for Learning / Free School Meals campaign and involvement/discussions with the Blackburn and Rossendale and Darwen MPs.

Roisa provided an update from the Young Voices Group, which included involvement with recent staff interviews, feedback on information produced by the Council and attendance by Roisa at the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum.

Luca update Members on the work of the SEN YPS members, which included participation in consultation on the new Council website and a Volunteering video.

Muhammed requested an update on the procurement of Wellbeing Champions by the Public Health Team, and Councillor Gunn agreed to pursue this.

Members discussed the updates and thanked the Youth MP and Youth Forum for the ongoing excellent work.

**RESOLVED-** That the updates be noted.

#### **5. Training Update – LGA Offer**

The Committee discussed an offer from the LGA to hold a two hour in person development session for the Committee, which would explore effective scrutiny practice in relation to the '6 steps for effective scrutiny' and the session would also focus on equipping the Committee with skills to develop effective questioning techniques, develop an effective work programme and using influence and recommendations to make a difference to lives of children and young people.

Members discussed the offer and best time to hold the training, which would be in the evening, ideally as soon as could be arranged, subject to LGA and Member availability.

**RESOLVED** –That the LGA training offer be accepted and arranged as soon as possible.

#### **6. Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership Report**

Further to discussions at recent meetings of the Committee, Jo Siddle delivered a presentation which gave further details of the shift to a Blackburn with Darwen Place based model for the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) from a Pan Lancs model.

The CSAP involved three statutory partners, the Council, Police and the Chair of the Integrated Care Board (ICB), and the Board had held a workshop day on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023, which considered and discussed:

- Setting the Vision
- Strategic Aims
- Principles
- Sub Groups – Contextual Safeguarding, Neglect and Domestic Abuse
- New Priorities
- Immediate Challenges
- Scrutiny
- Risk Register
- Support Requirements
- Proposed Structure

A Development Day would be held w/c 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023, to discuss the Business Plan.

Members discussed the update, with Jo Siddle confirming that meetings would still be held involving Blackpool and Lancashire to share good practice and learning, and that an Independent Chair was required for the Board. Members requested a report back on progress in six months, and it was suggested that this be confirmed during discussion of Work Programme topics under the next agenda item.

## 7. Work Programme 2023/24

Following information from the Executive Member and Strategic Director, the Committee discussed its Work Programme for 2023/24, and agreed the following items be looked at in 2023/24, one key item per meeting, in the following order:

- **Corporate Parenting** – to ensure the importance of Corporate Parenting is fully understood by the Council and its Partners.
- **Local Safeguarding Assurance Partnership** – Update on last six month since update at today's meeting.
- **School Improvement Strategy.**

Jo Siddle advised that workforce retention was key to all 3 of these areas, together with the need to reduce the use of agencies, which was a national issue. KPI's would also need to be discussed and considered.

**RESOLVED** – That Work Programme for 2023/24 be agreed.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Chair of the meeting  
at which the minutes were confirmed

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

**Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.**

**Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.**

MEETING: **Children and Young People OSC**

DATE: **4<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):

NATURE OF INTEREST:

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)

SIGNED :

PRINT NAME:

(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)



**TO:** Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**FROM:** Andrea Sturgess and Imran Akuji (Heads of Service)

**DATE:** 22<sup>th</sup> August 2023

**PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED:** All

**WARDS AFFECTED:** All

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**TITLE OF REPORT:** Next steps following LGA training '6 Steps to Effective Scrutiny of Children's Services'

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## 1. PURPOSE

To update the committee on next steps following the training on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2023.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The committee recently took part in the LGA training '6 steps to Effective Scrutiny of Children's Services.

This covered the general overview of the steps:

- Knowledge of children's services
- Clarity of role and purpose
- Work programming and planning
- Demonstrating value and influence
- Engagement and working with others
- A strong organisational culture

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

All of the advice and recommendations were noted and those who attended asked for feedback. Discussions are taking place about implementing as much as possible whilst recognising many are dependent on extra capacity. Reducing duplication is being considered as part of agenda setting process. There will be more focus on data and analysis – with a dashboard at every meeting with relevant KPIs. A glossary of terms specific to Blackburn with Darwen Children's Services is to be developed. Further 'deep dive' training can be accessed on any of the 6 steps

There is a view to explore with Members, Officers and partners the proposal to merge the Corporate Parenting Special Advisory Group (Members) and the Corporate Parenting Executive Board (Officers and partners) to form a Corporate Parenting Panel. A workshop is planned for mid-Sept to explore this further, once structures and membership are in place the LGA can be invited to deliver training.

Development and training offer via the LGA will aim to support the council in:



- Embedding strong governance and accountability for Corporate Parenting, with clear understanding of responsibilities and expectations.
- Achieving a whole system approach to Corporate Parenting across the wider council and partners, driven by the voice and experiences of children and young people.
- Understanding what good looks like and measuring impact.
- Achieving improved outcomes for children and young people who are care experienced.

Children's Services sector led improvement partners (SLIP) approach will also be explored to identify other local authorities that may be able to support the council on its improvement journey. The SLIP programme aims to improve the overall performance of children's social care by using the strongest performing local authorities to provide peer support to councils who are working to improve their services.



**TO:** Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

**FROM:** Public Health

**DATE:** 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED:** All

**WARDS AFFECTED:** All

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**TITLE OF REPORT:** Wellbeing Champions

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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide a report on the Wellbeing Champions project commissioned by the Public Health Team, as requested at the Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to:-
- a) Note this update report

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Wellbeing Champions (WBC) project is based on the evidence based intervention of Peer Support. Peer support is when people use their own experiences to provide help and support to each other. The potential benefits of peer support for young people has been well documented by the Department for Education and Public Health England. It has been found to reduce social isolation, increase self-confidence and improve quality of life.
- 3.2 The project aims successfully recruit, support and train young people, aged 12 – 18 to become Wellbeing Champion in schools, and youth settings. A Wellbeing Champion is a young person who has undertaken specific mentoring training in order for them to support other children and young people. Champions are recruited from settings to then deliver activities or sessions within that setting to improve the wellbeing of their peers. Activities can consist of listening, promoting wellbeing and resilience and signposting to further local support. Champions are recruited from diverse communities and neighbourhoods across our borough.
- 3.3 The aims of the project are that:
- Wellbeing Champions:
    - Are trained in Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention.
    - Have increased knowledge, skills and confidence in mental health and suicide prevention and so are able to initiate supportive conversations with peers
  - Children and young people:
    - Know where to go if they are worried about someone
    - Start to access the Wellbeing Champions within their settings for support and advice

- Have increased awareness of services and resources that support emotional health and wellbeing, including the five ways to wellbeing via the Bee Yourself website.
- Have increased awareness to a wide range of positive activities such as sports, physical activity and volunteering opportunities.
- Are more resilient and have improved self-reported wellbeing.

3.4 The WBC project began in June 2021 and was originally delivered by Realign Futures for 12 months using funding from the Public Health England Better Mental Health grant. This was time limited and ended in May 2022.

3.5 Following this, the Public Health team agreed to fund the programme for a further two year period. However, an open tender process was required in line with procurement regulations.

3.6 The current contract is now being delivered by Child Action North West (CANW) and runs from August 2022 to July 2024, with a total value of £70,000.

## 4. PROGRESS

### To date the project has:

4.1 Developed and established project processes including development of:

- New branding and logos, in collaboration with young people
- A website and online referral form for young people to register their interest on <https://canw.org.uk/what-we-do/support-children-and-young-people/wellbeing-champions/>
- A training package that is age and topic appropriate for the WBC cohort
- A sign up process with settings to manage expectations of both the settings and the WBCs. This agreement was set up to ensure that the young people were being supported as WBCs in their settings, by the setting. With an important part of this agreement being that a dedicated staff member from the setting was identified and trained up to support the WBCs to build capacity within the setting.

4.2 Engaged new and existing schools and community settings:

- The project continues to work with the schools that had, through a previous contract Wellbeing Champions within their settings. These schools are Blackburn Central High, Our Lady and St John (OLSJ) and Tauheedul Girls School.
- 3 new settings have signed up to the Wellbeing Champions Project this year, these are: Witton Park Academy, Pleckgate High School and Blackburn Rover's Community Trust (BRTC.)
- Delivered additional engagement with Darwen Aldridge Community Academy (DACA), St Wilfrid's and Blackburn Youth Zone, who are keen to sign up to the scheme. They have all identified potential WBC in their settings.
- The project has also linked in with the existing providers of mental health and wellbeing support in these settings. These are the Kooth Support Worker and members of the Mental Health Support Teams from ELHT who support Secondary Schools in BwD.

4.3 Delivered the following outputs and outcomes:

- Identified, recruited and trained up 55 new Wellbeing Champions (target was 48)
  - 14 from Witton Park High School (finished their training in June)
  - 29 from Pleckgate High School (finished their training in June)

- 12 through Blackburn Rover Community Trust (BRTC) (finished their training in August)
- 6 members of staff from these settings have also been trained to support their WBC.
- A further 27 Young People have been identified as potential WBC and are awaiting training dates via their setting.
- The training has been well received by all participants and the evaluation scores show that it is effective in increasing the participant's knowledge of mental health and their confidence to talk to others about it.
- During Mental Health Awareness Week 2023:
  - Assemblies were delivered at Tauheedul School and OLSJ.
  - WBC at Blackburn Central High School held drop in sessions for their peers. They designed and made posters advertising the sessions and describing what they could help with.
  - WBC at Blackburn Rover Community Trust held a Wellbeing Session for young people
  - The project shared mental wellbeing and campaign resources with the WBC, to display in their schools and settings to provide information, support and advice to other young people.
- During 'exam season' WBCs in Witton Park Academy have been holding informal drop in sessions, at lunchtimes.
  - The WBC have been able to provide support and advice to their peers on the following topics - friendship issues, bullying, social media, pressures, boyfriend problems
- Improvements in the Wellbeing Champion's own wellbeing is being monitored using the WEMWEBS scale. This is being monitored annually from the time of recruitment and so as yet the results aren't available but this can be provided to the board when available.
- WBCs at Witton Park Academy and Pleckgate High School have prepared posters for September when schools return after the summer break in order to promote the WBCs and to identify themselves to the new year 7's
- The project has attended local wellbeing events, in order to raise the profile of the project with families and young people eg. Family Hub Open Days, Blackburn College Mental Health Fair, Darwen Health Week.
- The project has brought some of the WBC together over the summer to strengthen their social network and work on their confidence to be able to attend external community events in the future.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no policy implications arising directly from this report.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no other resources implications arising from the contents of this report.

## **9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no equality and health implications arising from the contents of this report.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

11.1 The recommendation in this report are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer.

<b>VERSION:</b>	1
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Frances Riley, Public Health Development Manager
<b>DATE:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2023
<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b>	N/A