

**‘Our Plan’ – the Somerset Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2019 – 2022 Cabinet Member(s): Frances Nicholson, Lead Member for Children and Families**

Division and Local Member(s): All

Lead Officer: Julian Wooster Director of Children’s Services

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<b>Report Sign off</b>	<b>Seen by:</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
	County Solicitor	Honor Clarke	29.4.19
	Monitoring Officer	Scott Wooldridge	29.4.19
	Corporate Finance	Sheila Collins	Sent on 24.4.19
	Human Resources	Chris Squire	24.4.19
	Procurement / ICT	Simon Clifford	29.4.19
	Senior Manager	Julian Wooster – Director of Children’s Services	29.4.19
	Local Member(s)	N/A	
	Opposition Spokesperson	Cllr Jane Lock – Opposition Spokesperson for Children and Families	Sent on 24.4.19
	Relevant Scrutiny Chairman	Cllr Leigh Redman – Chair of Scrutiny Children and Families	Sent on 24.4.19
Cabinet Member	Cllr Frances Nicholson – Lead Member for Children and Families	Sent on 24.4.19	
<b>Forward Plan Reference:</b>	FP/18/12/05		
<b>Summary:</b>	<p>‘Our Plan’ – the Somerset Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2019 – 2022 (see link in background papers) sets out the ambition of the County Council along with its partners to improve outcomes for ALL children and young people (in relation to Care Leavers and young people with Special Educational Needs duties extend to 25)</p> <p>This is the second plan and builds on the achievements of the first plan which has taken children’s services from an ‘inadequate’ judgement to areas which following an Ofsted Inspection (Focused Visit) this year confirmed that aspects of the service are now rated ‘good’. However, it is recognised across the partnership that further substantial improvements in relation to children in care and children with special educational needs and disabilities is required. These are addressed through the</p>		

	<p>Plan priorities. The priorities of 'Our Plan' are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported Families – strengthening families and building resilient families</li> <li>• Healthy Lives – families making the right choices to support happy healthy lifestyles</li> <li>• Great Education - high aspirations and achievement for all</li> <li>• Positive Activities – getting the most out of life through play, leisure, cultural and sporting opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p>	<p><b>That the Cabinet:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approves 'Our Plan' – Somerset's Plan for Children, Young People &amp; Families 2019 – 2022</b></li> <li>• <b>Recommends Full Council to endorse 'Our Plan' – Somerset's Plan for Children, Young People &amp; Families 2019 – 2022</b></li> <li>• <b>Requests that relevant partner agencies (as set out in S11 Children Act 2004) formerly endorse the plan through their executive arrangements.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Reasons for Recommendations:</b></p>	<p>The Somerset Plan for Children, Young People &amp; Families 2019 – 2022 is the strategic plan for the statutory children's partnership arrangements, providing the focus for partners' actions and investment and the means by which Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will judge the Council's and its partners capacity to improve. The Plan is now completed, following engagement with key boards and stakeholders, including children, young people and their families and practitioners across many organisations. The involvement of children and young people in setting the priorities distinguishes this plan from the previous plan which was a response to the then ministerial direction by government.</p>
<p><b>Links to Priorities and Impact on Service Plans:</b></p>	<p>'Our Plan' picks up the themes for children and young people identified in 'Improving Lives' - Somerset's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its four priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A county infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services</li> <li>2. Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment</li> <li>3. Fairer life chances and opportunity for all</li> <li>4. Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer</li> </ol> <p>The Plan will be reported annually to the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board though Priority 3: Fairer life chances and opportunity for all.</p>

	<p>The plan recognises the importance of partnership working, providing the tools for families to help themselves and intervening early when we need to.</p>
<p><b>Consultations undertaken:</b></p>	<p>In drawing up “Our Plan” - the new Plan for Children, Young People &amp; Families - all those covered by the duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004 must be consulted - as well as children, young people and their parents and carers and other key partners. This has been achieved through workshops and multi-agency meetings.</p> <p>Consultation undertaken with over 200 children, young people and parents throughout 2018 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somerset UK Youth Parliament Advisory Group</li> <li>• The Unstoppables (SEND)</li> <li>• CAMHS Participation Group</li> <li>• Somerset In Care and Leaving Care Councils</li> <li>• Somerset Parent Carer Forum</li> <li>• Voluntary sector children and young people’s organisations</li> <li>• The Voluntary and Community Sector Forum</li> </ul> <p>In addition, a steering group made up of representatives of the above groups was established to oversee the writing of the plan. Staff consultation took place via multi-agency roadshows in 2018 and monthly updates have been discussed at the Children’s Services Management Team meetings.</p> <p>The Draft plan has also been taken to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board and Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p><b>Financial Implications:</b></p>	<p>‘Our Plan’ has been prepared in a context of rising need in the population and reducing funding for public services. The four priorities outlined in the plan are intended to be met within the agreed budgets and staffing resources of SCC and its partners, taking into account anticipated spending reductions over the next three years.</p> <p>The Council’s commitment to provide good or better services to improve outcomes for ALL children is reflected by the rebasing of the Children’s Services Budget in 2019/2020 based on Need and the effectiveness of services.</p> <p>Generally, well performing local authorities spend less on children’s services conversely there is likely to be a negative impact on the budget should performance not improve in the context of declining resources and rising demand.</p>
<p><b>Legal Implications:</b></p>	<p>The children’s partnership arrangements are underpinned by the “duty to cooperate” (Section 10, Children Act 2004). The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in the authority’s area so far as relating to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Physical and mental health emotional wellbeing</li> </ol>

	<p>b) Protection from harm and neglect  c) Education, training and recreation  d) The contribution made by them to society; and  e) Social and economic wellbeing</p> <p>The safeguarding aspects of the partnership are further strengthened by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and arrangement currently being consulted on to hold its individual members to account for delivering their agreed contributions to the shared plan. The partners have agreed to review progress against the Plan on a quarterly basis.</p>						
<b>HR Implications:</b>	There are no specific workforce issues arising from this report						
<b>Risk Implications:</b>	<p>The principal risk lies in the failure to secure improvement across the partnership. This would impact on the delivery the Council's ambitions in relation to improved outcomes for children and young people in Somerset and could result in poor inspection results from regulatory bodies.</p> <p>There is a Corporate Risk for Safeguarding Children (ORG0009) and its current score is 15. There are a number of management actions and mitigations for managing this risk. The Directorate Management Team and the Cabinet Member regularly monitor the management of this risk.</p>						
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<b>Other Implications (including due regard implications):</b>	<p>In addition, the plan requires agencies across the partnership to tackle inequalities and narrow gaps, paying suitable regard to the 2010 Equality's Act general duty.</p> <p>As with the previous plan there will be annually reviewed detailed plans to deliver on the four priorities. These will have additional metrics.</p> <p>As part of the review of the safeguarding aspects of the partnership approved by a previous Cabinet, the multi-agency delivery groups are under review.</p> <p>One of the areas to be strengthened by the new plan under the 'Supported Families' priority is support to parents and carers who are facing difficulties with their parenting through domestic abuse, mental health or substance misuse issues, or a combination of the three.</p>						
<b>Scrutiny comments / recommendation (if any):</b>	The Scrutiny Committee for Children and Families has been regularly updated on the Plan during its design in 2018/2019; their recommendations are incorporated into the Plan. The Committee will receive quarterly updates on progress and are looking forward to working with partners on its successful implementation.						

## **1. Background**

- 1.1. 'Our Plan' – the Somerset Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2019 – 2022 (the Plan) is a three-year Plan which will influence commissioning decisions and is likely to be effective in furthering and sustaining improvement of children's services in Somerset. The partnership holds its individual members to account for delivering their agreed contributions to the shared plan and has agreed to review progress against the Plan on a quarterly basis.
- 1.2. The Plan aligns with 'Improving Lives in Somerset 2019 - 2028' – the health and wellbeing strategy for the local area which sets out a 10-year vision for all organisations to work together to meet the needs identified in the JSNA and improve the lives of all Somerset's residents.
- 1.3. During 2018 and 2019 4 focus events were held to facilitate children, young people and key decision makers and practitioners in the Partnership to work together on the priorities identified by the young people that they felt would have the most impact on Somerset's 116,000 children and young people. Between each event, surveys and workshops were held with the wider network of organisations who work with children and young people. This resulted in over 200 young people contributing in the production of the new Plan.
- 1.4. The draft Plan was considered by the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee in three meetings in 2018/19 and members comments have been taken into account of in the attached Plan. The Plan was approved by the Partnership on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

## **2. Options considered and reasons for rejecting them**

- 2.1. A variety of designs of Children and Young People's Plans were researched before this style was selected as being most likely to be effective in furthering and sustaining improvement of children's services over the next 3 years.
- 2.2. No other options have been considered

## **3. Background Papers**

- 3.1. 'Our Plan' – the Somerset Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2019 – 2022  
<http://online.pubhtml5.com/fuxz/rvcf/>
- 3.2. For further information please contact the report author.