



To: **Members of the Protecting the Most Vulnerable Policy Committee**

Professor Steven Broomhead
Chief Executive

Councillors:

Cllr P Bretherton - Chair
Cllr Creaghan - Deputy Chair
Cllrs K Buckley, A Dirir, S Krizanac, B Lines-Rowlands, K Morris, M Smith and J Wheeler

Town Hall
Sankey Street
Warrington
WA1 1UH

24 March 2016

Protecting The Most Vulnerable Policy Committee

Tuesday 5 April 2016 at 6.30pm

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Sankey Street, Warrington, WA1 1UH

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A G E N D A

Part 1

Items during the consideration of which the meeting is expected to be open to members of the public (including the press) subject to any statutory right of exclusion.

Item

**Page
Number**

1. Apologies for Absence

To record any apologies received.

2. Code of Conduct - Declarations of Interest Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when the item is reached.

3. **Minutes**
- To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2016 as a correct record. 5 – 14
4. **Welfare Reform And Work Act 2016**
- To consider a report of Katherine Fairclough, Deputy Chief Executive, and Eleanor Blackburn, Strategic Partnerships Manager, on the latest position on welfare reforms, the potential impact on Warrington residents and the work that the Council is undertaking to help prepare residents. 15 – 22
5. **Edge of Care**
- To consider a report of Steve Reddy, Executive Director Families and Wellbeing, and Fiona Waddington, Assistant Director Children and Young People’s Targeted Services, on Edge of Care. (to follow)
- Warrington’s population of children in care is showing a significant increase over the last 18 months. Edge of Care seeks to reduce admissions to care. The Council’s proposals will be presented to the Committee for comment.
6. **Regional Adoption Agency**
- To consider a report of Steve Reddy, Executive Director Families and Wellbeing, and Fiona Waddington, Assistant Director Children and Young People’s Targeted Services, on the Regional Adoption Agency. (to follow)
- All local authorities are required to join a Regional Adoption Agency. The proposals for the Council will be presented to the Committee for comment.
7. **Work Programme 2015/16**
- To consider a report on behalf of Councillor Maureen Creaghan, Deputy Chair of the Committee, on the Work Programme 2015/16 and the Monitoring of Actions and Recommendations. 23 – 34

Part 2

Items of a "confidential or other special nature" during which it is likely that the meeting will not be open to the public and press as there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.

NIL

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**PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE
POLICY COMMITTEE
10 February 2016**

Present: Councillor M Creaghan (Deputy Chairman in the Chair)
Councillors: K Buckley, L Dirir (for A Dirir), S Krizinac and
J Wheeler

PTMV22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors P Bretherton, A Dirir and K Morris.

PTMV23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

PTMV24 Minutes

Decision,

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record by the Chair.

PTMV25 Overview of WSAB Proposed Prevention Strategy

The Committee considered a report of the Warrington Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB), Steve Reddy, Executive Director Families and Wellbeing, and Rosie Lyden, Safeguarding Adults Board Manager, on the draft multi-agency strategy for preventing abuse to adults. Ms Lyden, Sarah Callaghan, Operational Director for Universal Services / Deputy Director of Children's Services, and Margaret Macklin, Head of Service, Adults Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, were in attendance to highlight key elements of the report and to deliver a presentation.

Members were informed that, in an effort to develop a clear plan for preventing abuse of adults at risk, the WSAB had undertaken a consultation process with its own Board members, organisations participating in the Safeguarding Adults Forum and service user groups in the community. The Committee considered a copy of that consultation document. The consultation had asked service users and partners to consider what activity they felt was needed to enhance the approach to prevention work locally. The feedback had then been collated and reviewed to identify key priorities for the area and potential activity to improve the local approach.

The Strategy had also drawn on the area's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Annual Report of the WSAB. The findings from those documents alongside best practice guidance from the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) had all influenced the focuses and activities within the report. Subsequently, the Prevention Strategy now had six key priorities:-

- Identifying people at risk of abuse;
- Providing good quality information, advice and advocacy;
- Strong interagency collaboration;
- Improving public awareness;
- Access to training and education; and
- Promoting empowerment and choice.

For each priority there were key activities that the consultation had highlighted and that the WSAB would oversee during the next three years to reduce the likelihood of adults at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect. The report included further explanation of the priorities and activities identified and Ms Lyden spoke in more detail about those at the meeting.

The Strategy's Action Plan would become part of the WSAB's Strategic Action Plan. The WSAB would then identify sub-groups to implement the actions contained within it, supported by the WSAB Board Manager. Monitoring would take place on a quarterly basis by the main Board and the Action Plan would be reviewed annually to identify and amendments or updates required.

The presentation included information on the statutory background to preventing abuse and the overall ambition for Warrington. Some facts were provided, including that 61% of referrals were women and 35% were adults with physical support needs. The presentation also explained the priorities in the Prevention Strategy in more detail. A picture of an elderly lady in an upright chair was displayed, which was a popular image of older people in receipt of care. Members were challenged to identify whether the lady was at risk. The exercise highlighted that risk was not always clear from the anecdotal evidence and that identifying people at risk was a critical task.

Members asked questions or commented on the following matters and officers responded as indicated:-

- A councillor reported that a resident whose father was in receipt of home care had raised the issue of 97 different people entering his home to provide care and had commented on the disruption and confusion caused to the service user. It was suggested that the situation might be linked to low wages in the sector and a high turnover of staff. Carers need to know the person that they were caring for, but high turnover could lead to the service user being treated like an object. - Officers indicated that a key priority was about promoting empowerment and choice. Turnover of staff was an issue. The Council had commissioned a domiciliary service and had challenged the service to develop a small team approach to the delivery of personal or person-centred care;
- A Member indicated that he had attended Woodleigh Care Home during the Dignity Action Day and had witnessed users and staff interacting in a caring and loving environment. It was sad that this environment was not replicated in the wider community. Small

number of people with relevant expertise could make a difference. - Officers agreed to report back the comments, although the issues fell within the remit of the Operational Director Adult Services, rather than WSAB. The issues in domiciliary care were more complex than in a care home and included travelling as well as low pay;

- A Member asked if there were enough people in post to assess people for services - Officers responded that work was on-going in Adult Social Care to redesign the services for adults, with an emphasis on the creation of stronger preventative services. The WSAB would continue to challenge partners about what they were doing, for example Housing Associations and Healthwatch provided some advocacy services. There was a need to ensure input from and co-operation between all partners;
- A query was made about whether WSAB partners included the Police, and in particular PCSOs. Engagement between the community and PCSOs was generally considered to be good. - Officers confirmed that the Police were a partner organisation and that individual officers and civilian personnel within the Constabulary could also undertake voluntary roles.
- Members commented that there were numerous voluntary organisations who helped to look after the elderly, for example Outrington Lunchtime Club. Would those groups receive the messages about safeguarding and could councillors help to disseminate information? - Officers confirmed that they worked closely with the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) locally to ensure that key messages were filtered back to relevant groups. Statutory organisations routinely provided training for staff, but the picture was less clear in the voluntary sector. The WSAB might wish to develop a Communications Strategy, but would first need to map relevant organisations before deciding how best to circulate key messages.

Officers commented that initial feedback on the Strategy had been positive, but some comments had been received that the two column style was not very accessible and that more information about partner activity should be included. The deadline for responses was 19 February 2016 and the results would be reported to WSAB on 11 March 2016. The final Strategy would be a living document. Members were advised that the document comprised the Prevention Strategy only and was not the full Strategic Plan for the WSAB.

Decision,

To note the report and to endorse the content of the Warrington Safeguarding Adults Board Strategy for Preventing Abuse to Adults at Risk.

PTMV26 SEND Reforms and Autism Provisions / Personal Budgets for Children and Young People - Update

The Committee considered a report of Steve Reddy, Executive Director Families and Wellbeing and Terry Jones, Head of Integrated Services, which provided an update on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Reforms and progress as to the implementation of personal budgets. Sarah Callaghan, Operational Director for Universal Services / Deputy Director of Children's Services, was in attendance to introduce the report. The Committee was reminded that it had last considered the matter in January 2015.

In 2011, a consultation document had been published that eventually became the Green Paper "Support and Aspiration for all, A New Approach". The proposals within the document related to children with SEN and their families and eventually became legislation in the Children and Families Act 2014. At the heart of the SEND Reforms was putting children at the centre of services. The main proposals remained unchanged in the Act and could broadly be summarised as:-

- Every child deserved a fair start;
- Every child deserved better outcomes across all areas but specifically around education and health;
- Early identification and support;
- Joint planning (which eventually became Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans);
- More parental control;
- Better preparation for adulthood; and
- Services seen to work together and better joint commissioning of services.

Warrington had made excellent progress in the transformation of services for SEND. The three participating organisations (Health, Education and Social Care) were jointly accountable to the Integrated Services Partnership Board for the delivery of the service. The Health and Wellbeing Board had agreed that WBC Families and Wellbeing Directorate would act as the host organisation for the Integrated Service and the Head of Service would be based in Universal Services Department under the leadership of the Operational Director for Universal Services / Deputy Director of Children's Services. The Integrated Team had moved to its new premises in February 2015 and had co-located members from all services. Additionally the service was on the same campus as both Green Lane and Foxwood Schools, ensuring even greater opportunities for co-working.

The Head of Service had been recruited in November 2014 with involvement from participating organisations, young people and other key stakeholders (including parents and carers). The new Head of Service, Terry Jones, had come into post on 2 March 2015.

The report included detailed information on the following matters and Ms

Callaghan provided additional comments:-

- Department for Education Visit;
- Parental and young people's involvement;
- Inspections;
- Measuring success; and
- Personal budgets.

The Visit from the DFE, in August 2015, had identified that the authority was working well with local schools, but needed to further develop its relationships with private and voluntary sector providers to broaden the offer for Warrington children and young people. The authority was continuing to develop its relationship with organisations such as Bright Futures and Chaigeley School.

Other changes included amending the designation of Green Lane School to enable it to take young people up to the age of 25 and to develop their skills for independent living. Work was also taking place within the Free School Meal Service to provide life skills at an early age. Overall, there was a focus on the transition of children into adults.

A survey of what was working well/not so well for families and young people across all services had been carried out recently, which would form the basis of how the service would progress.

A joint OFSTED and CQC inspection of local areas would take place at intervals of up to five years to look at the effective identification of need, effectiveness in meeting needs and local arrangements to achieve better identification and outcomes. A range of accountable bodies would be included in the inspection, including the local authority, NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, maintained nurseries and schools and academies and colleges. The first inspections were anticipated in May 2016 and would draw upon information from the local areas self-assessment and evaluation. Early feedback for Warrington was that it should be in a good position if inspected. The focus would be on whether Warrington was making a difference.

Information was provided on what success would look like and included detailed outcomes for the following:-

- Positive experience of the SEND system for children, young people and their families
- Positive outcomes for children and young people and their families; and
- Effective preparation for adulthood

Members asked questions and made comments on a number of issues as follows:-

- The use of the word 'think' in Sentence 2, at Paragraph 5.1 of the report seemed a little unusual. - Officers agreed that this sentence was badly phrased, as the Authority knew exactly what services were

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available locally and those details were published in the Local Offer.

- It was noted that Bright Futures had already carried out some works in relation to Lymm allotments;
- A Member commented that she had recently read a book entitled 'All Dogs have ADHD' which had provided insight into children with learning difficulties by using comparisons in a story about dogs. It was known that many famous and influential people in modern history had ADHD to some degree. - Officers commented that many children with ADHD were high functioning and that the Authority wanted to unlock that potential. Narrowing the attainment gap had been discussed at the last Scrutiny Committee meeting;
- A Member indicated that a key challenge for teachers was knowing how to deal with children with ADHD so that those pupils did not disrupt the class, but at the same time were not treated differently to the other children. - Officers commented that at a recent ADHD Conference, an inspirational teacher, part of the London Challenge (schools working together), had spoken. His approach comprised a combination of measuring the mood of the child, the class and yourself. If your mood as a teacher was not right, you could not manage the class or the individual child;
- A Member enquired to what extent the timescales set to achieve a positive impact would be affected by funding considerations. - Officers indicated that the Council was working hard with its partners to ensure delivery of the priorities for the service. A key approach would be to ensure that early years support and other interventions were linked to education. The recent Annual Report by Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2014/15, indicated that the gap for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs had not closed in some areas of the country. In Warrington, budget pressures were forcing the authority to join up the various agendas. Academies were able to commission services independently, so it was necessary to work closely with them to achieve consistent outcomes. Most schools in Warrington were good at alerting the authority to any issues identified. The future picture was exciting with many opportunities to support vulnerable children through schools in a more holistic manner. The OFSTED inspection framework was increasingly focused on vulnerable children. A larger budget would certainly help, but effective partnership working was the key.

Ms Callaghan indicated that the introduction of personal budgets was another big change. Parents could choose from where to buy support.

Decision,

- (1) To note the report and to acknowledge the progress so far in the

implementation of the SEND reforms in Warrington; and

- (2) To acknowledge the Council's and partners' roles in the future inspection process as outlined in the report.

PTMV27 Work Programme 2015/16

The Committee considered a report of Councillor Paul Bretherton, Chairman of the Committee, on the delivery of its Work Programme for 2015/16 and the monitoring of actions and recommendations arising from the Committee and any of its Working Groups.

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 23 June 2015, it had approved a number of themes for its draft Work Programme 2015/16, including some topics brought forward from the previous year's Work Programme. Subsequently, further work had taken place to refine the detailed content of the draft and a final Work Programme had been agreed by the Committee on 29 September 2015.

The Work Programme was a living document and was updated periodically in response to changing priorities and other factors. The following amendments to the published programme had been proposed since the Committee's last meeting:-

- Overview of Warrington Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) Proposed Prevention Strategy –New Item seeking feedback on a live consultation draft
- Self-Neglect Policy –Deferred from 10 February 2016 to enable information to be provided to all Members at a Member Development Session
- Care leavers –Deferred from 10 February to next meeting on 5 April 2016
- SEND Reforms and Autism Provisions/ Personal Budgets for Children and Young People –Items combined into a single report

A revised Work Programme was provided along with schedules which provided dates of future meetings, monitoring information on actions and recommendations made, referrals received and recommendations of Working Groups. The two Working Groups identified for 2015/16, were as follows:-

- Child Poverty Framework; and
- Dementia.

It was envisaged that the Working Groups would commence their activity early in 2016.

Ms Macklin, provided some background information in relation to the Self-Neglect item. Neglect and abuse were featured in the Care Act 2014. Warrington was doing work to support professionals wherever they were employed. Everybody had contact with people who were at risk of

self-neglect. The Warrington Safeguarding Adults Board was due to hold an event on the subject, to include Healthwatch Warrington, in March or April 2016. Work was on-going to meet with practitioners and an information booklet had been drafted. The Council would also link in with safeguarding services provided by Housing Associations and the Police, who might be best placed to influence vulnerable residents. It was hoped to be able to provide some case studies for Members of the Committee at a future meeting.

Members raised a number of issues and officers responded as follows:-

- In relation to fostered children it was noted that children were out of foster care at age 18, but not eligible for adult social care until age 21. What happened in the intervening years? Were there any budget implications? - Officers responded that, in spite of the inconsistencies in the system, Warrington aimed to support those in foster care and residential care until the age of 21. The Council had a responsibility to all children in care as a corporate parent. Adult safeguarding services were also mindful of the fact that young people needed to be safeguarded. In terms of financial implications, early intervention might mean that services were not needed at the latter stage following the transition between children's and adults safeguarding. The local authority had to carry out a Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiry under of the Care Act. That section placed a duty on local authorities to make enquiries, or to cause other agencies, such as NHS Trusts to do so, to establish whether action was needed to prevent abuse, harm, neglect, or self-neglect to an adult at risk of harm.
- A press article had been published recently about a young man who had come to the UK but who was homeless and living on the street. Was there any discrimination in the way that the individual was treated, such that he was not being looked after? Was a refugee automatically considered to be a vulnerable adult? - Officers responded that a meeting of the Safeguarding Adults Forum would take place tomorrow and was due to discuss the needs of immigrants. The matter was particularly relevant because of the Syrian Refugee crisis. The Council was thinking about what services might be needed. The issue might be a particularly challenging one for Warrington, because it might not have all the services required in the area. It was open to interpretation as to whether a refugee was automatically vulnerable, but probably not. Similarly, those at risk of modern slavery and victims of domestic abuse might not automatically be vulnerable. Further work was required to gain a reliable overview of the situation. Notwithstanding that, the Council still worked with those individuals who did not meet the threshold for consideration as vulnerable adults.
- Homelessness was an important issue and it was noted that there were proposals in the Budget to cut funding for the YMCA night shelter. People could find themselves in a position of having nowhere to stay at night. An e-mail had been circulated to members recently by

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Councillor Steve Parish on that matter. Warrington was considered to be an affluent town and ought to be able to address the issue. It was noted that partners agencies were doing all that they could to help and to advise people, but some individuals remained challenging despite excellent intervention. People were able to make choices and some simply chose to remain outdoors. Members felt that the Committee should look into the issue in more detail. A member of the public in attendance also raised the issue of cuts in grant funding to the YMCA and was advised to submit any information in writing, so that further consideration could be given to the matter.

- In respect of the proposed Working Group on Dementia it was noted that the subject area was vast and, perhaps, the focus should be narrowed to considering those most at risk due to isolation at home. - Officers indicated that a recent conversation with Steve Peddie, Operational Director Adult Services, had also identified a need for the Working Group to narrow the scope of the review, as its first task.
- In respect of the proposed Working Group on Child Poverty, it was noted that the Framework had only recently been established. - Officers suggested that it might take time for any outcomes to be realised and that the Working Group would need to allow a reasonable period of time to elapse before commencing its review.

Decision,

- (1) To note the updated Work Programme 2015/16, as presented;
- (2) To note the Schedule of future meetings;
- (3) To note the Schedule of Progress on Actions and Recommendations, Referrals from Other Bodies and Final Recommendations from Working Groups;
- (4) To note the contents of the e-mail dated 10 February 2016 from Councillor Steve Parish regarding proposed changes to direct access provision for the homeless, to request the Clerk to write to the Executive Board expressing the concerns of the Committee as to the issues identified and to request that the relevant Portfolio Holder report back to the Committee to explain the situation.

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WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE POLICY COMMITTEE – 5th April 2016

Report of the: Katherine Fairclough – Deputy Chief Executive
Report Author: Eleanor Blackburn – Strategic Partnerships Manager
Contact Details: **Email Address:** eblackburn@warrington.gov.uk **Telephone:** 01925 443874

Ward Members: All

TITLE OF REPORT: WELFARE REFORM AND WORK ACT 2016

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide committee members with the latest position on welfare reforms, the potential impact on Warrington residents and work the council is undertaking to help prepare residents.

2. CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT

- 2.1 This report is not confidential or exempt.

3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 gained royal assent on 16th March 2016, imposing a series of changes to welfare provision and child poverty legislation to be phased in from April 2016. This adds to reforms initiated in 2012, some of which are still being rolled out.
- 3.2 Key welfare changes are listed in Table A below. The Government has recently announced it has scrapped planned cuts to Personal Independence Payments (PIP), and the Treasury has indicated there are no plans for further welfare cuts. However, the scrapping of the cuts to PIP leaves a national shortfall in planned welfare savings of £4.6bn. It is currently unclear how this will be filled.
- 3.3 The Act effectively repeals the Child Poverty Act, renaming it the 'Life Chances Act'. It removes the targets, measures, reporting duties and requirements for national and local child poverty strategies, although the Secretary of State will be regularly reporting child poverty statistics to Parliament.
- 3.4 The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission will be repurposed and renamed the Social Mobility Commission.

3.5 These changes come into force two months after Royal Assent – 16 May 2016. An additional reporting obligation on troubled families will come in at an unspecified time.

4. IMPACT ON WARRINGTON

4.1 We are expecting a significant number of people in Warrington to be impacted. However, exactly who, how many and when is not clear.

4.2 The timetable for the reforms has not been published in full, and experience of previous reforms suggests target timescales often slip. In addition Warrington Borough Council does not have data about recipients of DWP or HMRC regulated benefits. This data is not shared with us except under some specific and regulated circumstances, such as assessing social care charging, and does not currently include analysing the impact of welfare reforms.

4.3 However, we can make some assumptions based on available data. The table below sets out the key reforms, the expected timetable of roll out, and potential estimated impact:

Table A – Key welfare reforms set out in Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016	
<p>Housing Benefit changes</p> <p><i>April 2016</i></p>	<p>The April 2016 changes to Housing Benefit (HB) are currently being implemented by WBC. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the maximum backdating period for working age customers from 26 weeks to 1 month. • A freeze in HB for working age customers (as part of a wider freeze of working age benefits) • A reduction in the maximum HB awarded for HB recipients temporarily leaving the UK from 13 to 4 weeks – <i>From 30th May 2016</i>
<p>Most working-age benefits and tax credits have been frozen at 2015-16 rates for four years, including tax credits, local housing allowances, JSA and ESA WRAG payments.</p> <p>Pensioner benefits, some disability benefits and statutory payments are unaffected.</p>	<p>It is difficult to give a definitive number on how many Warrington households are impacted by this, given some residents will be claiming more than one benefit at a time, and only some benefits that make up the Universal Credit package will be impacted. However, recent figures for each of the affected benefit groups are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11,900 families were receiving Child or Working Tax Credits in December 2015. These families contain 19,200 children. 2,600 of the families were out of work¹. • 1,390 Jobseekers Allowance claimants (from Nomis on 23 March 2016) (non-Universal Credit) • 7,929 working age Housing Benefit claimants (non UC) (as at 23/03/2016) • Up to 2360 Out of Work Universal Credit / JSA Claimants (Feb 2016 Claimant Count data taken from Nomis 23 March 2016) • 1,290 ESA WRAG (from Nomis on 23 March 2016) <p>This follows on from a series of below inflation uprating decisions over a number</p>

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485150/cwtc_geog_Dec15.pdf, 23/03/2016

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<p><i>April 2016</i></p>	<p>of years. For example, according to the Child Poverty Action Group charity between 2010- 2020 Child Benefit is projected to lose 28% of its value.</p>																		
<p>Reduction in Tax Credit Income Disregard</p> <p><i>April 2016</i></p>	<p>A cut to tax credits will be made through a cut in the 'income disregard'. Families who see an unexpected 'in-year' rise in their income of over £2,500 will have to pay back some of their tax credits. Previously this only happened if the rise in income was over £5,000.</p> <p>Nationally, the Treasury estimate around 800,000 families will be impacted, losing an average of £200-300 per year. This is around 18% of all families who were claiming tax credits in the UK as at December 2015. Using these figures the best estimate for Warrington is that around 2100 families could be impacted.</p>																		
<p>RSLs to reduce social housing rents by 1% a year for 4 years from a frozen 2015 to 2016 baseline and to comply with maximum rent requirements for new tenancies.</p> <p><i>April 2016</i></p>	<p>In each of 4 'relevant years' RSLs must reduce the total rent payable by a tenant in year by 1% (though the Act is not prescriptive regarding how this 1% rent reduction is implemented, it could be by a 1% reduction from the beginning of a year, or a larger reduction later in the year). If a tenancy starts or ends during the year, the reduction would be on a pro-rata basis.</p> <p>For social rent properties, the reduction applies to the rent element and not to service charges. For most Affordable Rent properties, the reduction applies to the total amount, inclusive of service charges. Where the social rent is used as a rent 'floor' for an Affordable Rent property, the reduction applies to the rent element only.</p> <p><i>April 2017 for supported housing schemes</i></p>																		
<p>Benefit Cap reduced to £20,000 (£13,400 for single people)</p> <p><i>Autumn 2016</i></p>	<p>DWP have indicated the revised cap will be introduced in the autumn. We have been advised to expect between 200-399 households to be impacted.</p> <p>To help with introducing the cap DWP have awarded an additional £40k in Discretionary Housing Payments.</p> <p>PIP / DLA recipients are exempt, but ESA recipients in the Work Related Activity Group are not.</p>																		
<p>Reduction in Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) work related activity benefit.</p> <p><i>April 2017</i></p>	<p>Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is an income-replacement benefit for people identified as having a "limited capability for work" as a result of sickness or disability. From April 2017 <u>new</u> claimants of ESA in the 'Work Related Activity Group (WRAG)' will see a reduction in benefits to JSA rates. This will also affect claimants who take a break in their claim of over 12 weeks. Affected claimants will receive up to £1,500 a year, or £30 per week, less.</p> <p>The number of ESA claimants in Warrington as at August 2015 (taken from Nomis 23 March 2016) was:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>ESA phase</th> <th>Total</th> <th>% Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6,900</td> <td style="text-align: right;">99.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assessment phase</td> <td style="text-align: right;">880</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work related activity group</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,290</td> <td style="text-align: right;">18.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Support group</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4,480</td> <td style="text-align: right;">64.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown</td> <td style="text-align: right;">250</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	ESA phase	Total	% Total	Total	6,900	99.5	Assessment phase	880	12.8	Work related activity group	1,290	18.2	Support group	4,480	64.9	Unknown	250	3.6
ESA phase	Total	% Total																	
Total	6,900	99.5																	
Assessment phase	880	12.8																	
Work related activity group	1,290	18.2																	
Support group	4,480	64.9																	
Unknown	250	3.6																	

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<p>Child element in tax credits and Universal Credit</p> <p><i>April 2017</i></p>	<p>The Child Element in tax credits and UC will be limited to 2 children for new claims and births after April 2017.</p> <p>There will be protection for families already getting support for third and subsequent children born before April 2017, and for other “exceptional circumstances”.</p> <p>It is not possible to get an accurate estimate of how many families this is likely to impact. However, at current claimant levels it is likely that less than 1,000 families would not receive the higher level of tax credit / UC they would previously have seen.</p>
<p>Housing benefit abolished for 18-21 year olds</p> <p><i>April 2017</i></p>	<p>This will not affect those with a child or those deemed as vulnerable. However, there is concern from homeless charities that this will increase levels of homelessness amongst young people.</p>
<p>Roll out of Universal Credit</p> <p><i>2018</i></p>	<p>In February DWP announced the plan to move to full Universal Credit. The process will start in May 2016 and is expected to take 2 years to complete.</p> <p>DWP have only confirmed the sites due to migrate in 2016 – Warrington was not among the LA’s named (only Halton & Lancaster from the North West). Anecdotally we have been advised that Warrington’s migration date is likely to be 2018 – due to size of the UC caseload. UC live caseload in Warrington is around 1750 (1100 unemployed/650 employed)</p> <p>When this is complete DWP intend to start the move to full migration of existing Housing Benefit customers – and this is expected to be complete by 2023.</p> <p>It should be noted however, that the timetable for UC roll out has changed frequently.</p>

5. PREPARING FOR THE REFORMS

- 5.1 Following the 2012 reforms Warrington Borough Council developed strong working relationships with key partners to co-ordinate a series of projects and activities to help prepare local residents for the coming changes. We formed a group called the Welfare Reform Action Partnership, which led on, for example, a shared communications campaigns, targeted support for at risk communities, and training for hundreds of frontline staff.
- 5.2 The ethos of partnership working around this challenging agenda remains strong, and we have already held two meetings of the Welfare Reform Action Partnership in 2015, with a third planned for later this month.
- 5.3 However, it is important to recognise that 3 years on all organisations find themselves with less resource than they previously had, and therefore it will not be possible to undertake the same scale of activities as we previously took.

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Therefore even more careful targeting of resource, as well as making the most use of existing services and new opportunities, will be paramount in our approach. A forward plan will be produced that will pull together key, achievable activities for throughout 2016 and 2017. Below are listed some key highlights.

- 5.4 Working with partners we will again undertake a communications campaign, which has already been started by Cllr Maureen McLaughlin – Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing, with Council announcements being picked up by local press, and a recent press release following the Government Budget (see Appendix A). This will add to national media coverage, through targeted messages both to local residents and staff.
- 5.5 We are beginning to explore the opportunities for targeted employment support through new European, Big Lottery and Skills Funding Agency funding that is being invested into Cheshire and Warrington over the next 3 years, in particular working with disabled and vulnerable residents who, with support, can move towards employment. This is activity that is happening anyway, but through the WRAP we would like to target activities towards our at risk households wherever possible within the structure of the funding streams.
- 5.6 Access to information and advice has improved over recent years, for example with the development of a Third Sector led Warrington Advice Network website, which enables access to a huge range information - <http://www.warrington-advice.co.uk/>. Working with our partners we would like to build on this work to provide high quality information and advice that reduces crises such as debt, evictions, and benefit sanctions.
- 5.7 We are particularly concerned about poor and vulnerable residents becoming increasingly isolated as they struggle further with reducing income. Evidence tells us that welfare cuts can have a significant impact not only on physical wellbeing, but also on emotional wellbeing. Therefore we will be exploring options for support close to home, linking in with neighbourhood and wellbeing services, organisations such as Warrington Voluntary Action, Warrington Disability Partnership and others about how we can enable the development and growth of local support networks.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Any reduction in income for vulnerable residents will impact upon their quality of life and physical and emotional wellbeing, which in some cases will mean an increased need for public services. There is also likely to be a direct impact on Council income and expenditure linked to, for example, social care charging policies. This is linked to 7.1 below. Further work is required to understand the full impact of this.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The potential impact of welfare reforms relates to two items on the Strategic Risk Register:

- Risk number 5 - Changes in national policy and legislation lead to increasing demands for services and increased statutory requirements.
- Risk number 7 – Failure to reduce community level inequalities in quality of life through the Closing the Gap ambition.

7.2 In addition the RASC Directorate Risk Register includes the following:

- Risk number 5 - Impact of forthcoming Welfare Reforms: Will lead to a fall in household incomes; Potential for loss of revenue which would have a detrimental impact on the Council's finances; Increased demands on council and other services & staff as a result of the impact of welfare reform.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY / EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 The impact of welfare reforms has been a key consideration of the current refresh of the Council's Equality Objectives. A draft priority (to be consulted upon) under the Equality Objective of 'Helping to Improve Life Chances' is:

- Look at the collective impact of national and local policy decisions and how they impact on young people and people living with a physical and / or mental health disability.

8.2 This will concentrate on considering the collective impact of both welfare reforms alongside local policy changes and service cuts.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 Consultation has taken place with partners through the Welfare Reform Action Partnership. A workshop was held in December 2015 which brought together partners from a range of agencies and teams to consider the impact on residents, their own service areas, and ideas for mitigation activities.

10. RECOMMENDATION

10.1 That Protecting the Most Vulnerable Committee members note the ongoing partnership approach to prepare for our communities for further changes, acknowledging the challenging reduction in organisational resources.

10.2 The committee is asked to support the key messages for residents of:

- seek support early,
- never ignore correspondence from welfare providers,
- let welfare providers know straight away of any change in circumstance,
- always attend appointment with welfare providers on time.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers.

Contacts for Background Papers:

Name	E-mail	Telephone
Eleanor Blackburn	eblackburn@warrington.gov.uk	01925 443874

APPENDIX A – PRESS STATEMENT 17TH MARCH 2016

Worried about benefit changes? Seek advice urgently

That's the message from Warrington Borough Council after Chancellor George Osborne yesterday (Wednesday 16 March) confirmed the latest in a raft of welfare reforms to be introduced from April onward.

The cost-cutting measures, which include changes to tax credits, housing benefit and an extension of the benefit cap, are likely to affect hundreds of local families. [Researchers at Sheffield Hallam University](#) estimate that some couples with two or more dependent children will lose an average of £1,450 a year, while lone parents with two or more children will lose an average of £1,750.

For many individuals and families there will be no escaping the devastating impact of the cuts announced today and in recent weeks.

It's vital that anybody who is worried about any letters or notifications they receive contacts their benefits provider immediately. The problem isn't going to go away.

“And if you need urgent face-to-face advice and assistance, please contact Warrington Citizens Advice Bureau on 01925 246994 or visit www.warrington-advice.co.uk.

The Sheffield Hallam research team says the harshest effects of welfare reforms will be borne by people outside the south of England – particularly those living in social housing. Some social housing tenants may be able to get help from their landlord.

These reforms risk further entrenching inequality in Warrington, where poorer areas will be hit hardest by new changes. The cuts will take hundreds of thousands of pounds out of the local economy and push vulnerable people, especially low income families, into hardship.

Anybody in receipt of benefits should let benefits providers know immediately of changes in circumstances to avoid overpayment and ensure that they make every appointment on time to avoid any risk of benefits being suspended. It's absolutely critical.

This, along with massive cuts being made to local authority services, will make life even tougher for some of our most vulnerable residents.

Other welfare reforms over the coming months and years include:

- new claimants of employment and support allowance (ESA) who are classed as fit for 'work related activities' will lose £30 per week from April 2017. This will also affect existing claimants who interrupt their claim (such as by getting a job) for more than 12 weeks; and
- a £1 billion cut to tax credits will be made through a cut in something called the 'income disregard'. Families who see an unexpected 'in-year' rise in their income of over £2,500 will have to pay back some of their tax credits. Previously this only happened if the rise in income was over £5,000.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE POLICY COMMITTEE – 5 April 2016

Report of the: Councillor Maureen Creaghan, Deputy Chair of the Protecting the Most Vulnerable Policy Committee
Report Author: Julian Joinson, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Contact Details: **Email Address:** jjoinson@warrington.gov.uk **Telephone:** (01925) 442112
Ward Members: All Wards

TITLE OF REPORT: WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16 AND MONITORING OF ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE POLICY COMMITTEE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of the report is for the Committee to consider an update on the delivery of its Work Programme for 2015/16 and to monitor the actions and recommendations arising from the Committee and any Working Groups.

2. CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT

2.1 Not applicable

3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1 The Committee, at its meeting on 23 June 2015, approved a number of themes for its draft Work Programme 2015/16, including some topics being rolled forward from the Work Programme 2014/15. Subsequently, further work was undertaken to refine the detailed content of the draft Work Programme and a final programme was agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 29 September 2015.

3.2 The Work Programme is a living document and is updated periodically in response to changing priorities and other factors. The following amendments have been proposed to the published Work Programme 2015/16 since the last meeting:-

- Edge of Care – New Item seeking feedback on proposals in relation to admissions to care;
- Regional Adoption Agency – New item seeking feedback on proposals to meet the requirement to join a Regional Adoption Agency;
- Homeless – New item comprising Portfolio Holder comments on changes to direct access provision for the homeless; and

- Care leavers – Deferred from 5 April 2016 to next meeting to 21 June 2016.

3.3 The revised Work Programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

3.4 The report also contains an update on the monitoring of actions, recommendations and referrals for this Committee, at **Appendix 2**.

4. WORKING GROUPS

4.1 The Committee has agreed to establish two Working Groups for 2015/16, as follows:-

- Child Poverty Framework; and
- Dementia.

4.2 It is envisaged that the Working Groups will commence their activity early in 2016. Members may wish to consider if they are in a position to serve on either of the Working Groups.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 When carrying out activity Members are reminded of the general financial climate and the Council's commitment within our Council Strategy 2015 -2018 of "*using our resources wisely*"

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 The following potential risks have been identified: recommendations not accepted by Executive Board, or not acted upon; partners unwilling to engage; insufficient capacity within Directorates to support activity following service redesign; selection of inappropriate topics, which have minimal impact or are undeliverable; capacity within the work programme to deal with matters arising.

6.2 Risks are regularly monitored and managed by the Policy Committee Chairs, with the advice and support of relevant officers. Links with Partnerships and Performance are well established to enable key risks to be identified and the delivery of the Work Programme is routinely monitored.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Democratic and Member Services has an up to date Equality Impact Assessment for its policies and services.

7.2 Equalities issues relating to policies, services and other topics under scrutiny are the responsibility of the individual Directorates concerned. However, the committee will monitor the compliance by Directorates on equality and diversity issues when carrying out its functions.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation with Protecting The Most Vulnerable Policy Committee members and officers from relevant directorates is undertaken on a regular basis.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 To approve the updated Work Programme 2015/16 (**Appendix 1**); and
- 9.2 To note and comment on the Monitoring of Actions, Recommendations and Referrals (**Appendix 2**).

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Protecting the Most Vulnerable Policy Committee Work Programme (Revised) – June 2015 - April 2016

Work Programme Topic	Purpose of the item	Type of Policy Development Work	Methodology	Role of Members	Lead Officer
Theme – Business Meeting Date of Meeting 23 June 2015					
Personal Budgets Policy	Consultation on personal budgets policy for children and young people	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Officer Report	Make comments on policy to officers	Sarah Callaghan Ann McCormack (Sally McGrail Terry Jones)
Child Poverty Strategy	Receive the Child Poverty Strategy.	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Officer Report	Awareness raising	K Fairclough (E Blackburn)
Summary of the Committee's Achievements in 2014/15	Review the work of the Committee in 2014/15	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Officer Report	Awareness raising	J Joinson
Draft Work Programme 2015/16	To set the 2015/16 work programme	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Chair's report	Make decision on work programme	J Joinson H Hill
Theme – Carers Date of Meeting 29 September 2015					
Carers Strategy	To provide an update on the provisions of the Care Act in respect of charging carers; to give an indication of the current and future budget implications created by our new duties to carers as set out in the Care Act 2014 and since its inception in April 2015; to propose charging models and ensure compliance with fairer charging; to propose how we would consult with carers; and to describe the potential risks associated with charging	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Report/Scrutiny session	Make recommendations	S Peddie (B Hollingsworth)
Complex Dependencies	To introduce the work in Warrington on developing the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Chair's report	Awareness raising	A McCormack (Harriet Wilkins)

Agenda Item 7 - Appendix 1

	Complex Dependencies model and to provide an update on progress to date				
Achievement for All Strategy	Assist in the development of the Strategy	Policy Development – Provide critical challenge to the emerging Policy	Officer Report	Make recommendations	S Callaghan Jacky Forster
Theme – Mental Health Date of Meeting 15 December 2015					
Care Providers	Review application of procedures to monitor care providers and outcomes	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Scrutiny session	Submit findings to EB	A McCormack M Macklin
Deprivation of liberty and mental capacity	To develop an understanding of the concept of deprivation of liberty and mental capacity	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Workshop session with case studies	Awareness raising	A McCormack M Macklin
Mental Health Strategy	To review the delivery of the mental health strategy and outcomes <i>(National Policy Information – links to Health & Social Care Bill and increased access to mental health services)</i>	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Scrutiny session	Submit findings to EB	S Peddie
Theme – Children and Young People Date of Meeting 10 February 2016					
Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Reforms & Autism Provisions	This topic was considered by the PC in January 2015. The purpose of this item is to consider an update from officers on the work that has been undertaken since January 2015 and outcomes. This topic will also look at:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress on the delivery of the actions contained within the Autism Strategy • Building capacity in schools to minimise out of borough placements 	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Scrutiny session	On-going monitoring	S Callaghan Terry Jones
Personal budgets for children and young people	Update on the pilot project	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Officer Report	Awareness raising	S Callaghan Terry Jones

Agenda Item 7 - Appendix 1

Warrington Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) Proposed Prevention Strategy	To receive an overview of the proposed WASB strategy for preventing abuse to adults at risk and to provide feedback on the consultation draft document	Policy Development – providing critical challenge to an emerging partnership policy	Officer report	Submit comment to WSAB	A McCormack R Lyden
Theme – Impact of Welfare Reform/Financial Inclusion and Children’s Care Issues Date of Meeting 5 April 2016					
Impact of Welfare Reform & Financial Inclusion	This topic will look at the impact of proposed new government policies on further welfare reform measures. In addition it will also look at closing the gap in social inequalities and financial inclusion. <i>(National Policy Information – One of the key themes emerging from national government are their plans to reduce the welfare budget. Plans already announced include a reduction in the benefits cap from £26,000 to £20,000 per household per year and a freeze in working benefits.</i>	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Workshop. (Partners such as the CAB could also be invited to take part in the workshop).	Submit recommendations to EB	K Fairclough (E Blackburn)
Edge of Care	Warrington’s population of children in care is showing a significant increase over the last 18 months. Edge of Care seeks to reduce admissions to care. The Council’s proposals will be presented to the Committee for comment.	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Officer Report	Submit recommendations to EB	F Waddington
Regional Adoption Agency	All local authorities are required to join a Regional Adoption Agency. The proposals for the Council will be presented to the Committee for comment.	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Officer Report	Submit recommendations to EB	F Waddington
Theme – Care Leaver Date of Meeting 21 June 2016 (Items subject to agreement of Work Programme 2016/17)					
Care leavers	Support for care leavers in transitioning into adulthood <i>(National Policy Information – This topic links to the launch of an independent review by the Prison Reform Trust to examine why so many children in care end up in the criminal justice system. The inquiry will look at how often children change home</i>	Reviewing – Look at what we currently do	Initial officer report	Awareness raising	F Waddington

Agenda Item 7 - Appendix 1

	<i>and how authorities deal with behaviour. Fewer than 1% of children and young people are in the care of local authorities, but a third of boys and 61% of girls in custody either are in care or have been</i>				
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)	The Executive Director Families and Wellbeing was requested at the meeting on 15/12/15 to provide a further update in 6 months' time and to include within the report a focus on progress as to cases prioritised as Red.	Reviewing – Look at what we currently do	Update report	On-going monitoring	P Davidson

Theme – Legal Highs					
Special Meeting – Date to be confirmed					
Legal Highs	Research the extent of the problem in Warrington and national trends (National Policy Information - links to proposed new Psychoactive Substances Bill)	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Officer report	Submit recommendations to EB	Dr R Robertson (C Fitzgerald)

All Member Development Session					
Self-Neglect Policy	To look at the delivery of the self-neglect policy and outcomes. This item will also assist members to develop an understanding of the various forms of self-neglect including hoarding and the impact on public services	Looking ahead – impact of emerging local needs	Developmental session	Awareness raising	A McCormack M Macklin

Working Groups					
Child Poverty Framework	To consider how the Child Poverty Framework has been implemented and whether the anticipated outcomes have been achieved, or whether a more detailed Child Poverty Policy is required to supplement the Framework	Reviewing - Look at what we currently do	Working Group	Submit recommendations to EB	K Fairclough (E Blackburn)

Agenda Item 7 - Appendix 1

<p>Dementia</p>	<p>To consider a key theme in relation to dementia. It is acknowledged that this is a very broad subject. A scoping exercise will need to take place to identify where the Committee can add most value. Possible issues might include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What level of service is provided in the home or community, ie. not within formal residential or nursing home provision; • What is the scope of the Dementia Strategy and if it is working; • Are there any gaps in service provision, should these be addressed and is the provision affordable ; • There are national stretch targets to diagnose dementia – what services do people receive after diagnosis and what services do GPs provide; • How can we recognise people in the community with dementia and encourage them to be assessed without feeling ashamed; • Rolling out the lessons learned from the dementia suite at Great Sankey Hub. • Coordinating nationally available information and sign-posting people to services. 	<p>Reviewing - Look at what we currently do</p>	<p>Working Group</p> <p>Visit to Forget Me Not Ward at Warrington Hospital being arranged</p>	<p>Submit recommendations to EB</p>	<p>S Peddie (J Joinson)</p>
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Date Revised: 24 March 2016

Schedule of Future Meeting Dates

Meeting Dates		Where possible, draft documentation to be provided no later than	Final documentation to be provided no later than
2016	5 April	16 March	23 March
	21	3 June	10 June

Committee Recommendations & Actions

2014/15

Minute No & Date	Recommendation/Action	Referred to & Date	Response/Comments	Progress
PTMV27(4) 10/02/16	<p><u>Work Programme 2015/16</u></p> <p>To request the Clerk to write to the Executive Board expressing the concerns of the Committee as to the issues identified and to request that the relevant Portfolio Holder report back to the Committee to explain the situation regarding proposed changes to direct access provision for the homeless,</p>	S Reddy/ Councillor P Wright 24/03/16	The item will be added to the Work Programme for inclusion in the 21 June 2016 meeting	✓

Referrals to Committee

2015/16

Referred from & Date	Minute Details	Response/Comments	Progress
N/A	There are no referrals made to the Committee	N/A	N/A

Working Group Final Report Recommendations

2015/16

The Committee has established the following Working Groups:-

Recommendation	Referred to & Date	Response/Comments	Progress	Review Date
Child Poverty Framework	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dementia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A