

REQUEST FOR TOPIC TO BE CONSIDERED BY SCRUTINY

Title of report – Looked After Children – Out of County Placements	
Purpose of Report	<p>To provide members with more detail regarding the current situation relating to Looked After Children (LAC) who are placed ‘out of county’.</p> <p>To enable members to understand how and why children are placed ‘out of county’, how long such a placement might last, and to receive assurance that children with complex needs are placed correctly.</p> <p>This is in relation to increasing numbers of LAC and out of county placements and the resultant budget overspend.</p> <p>To consider what actions are planned to improve the situation.</p>
Expected Outcomes	<p>To ensure members have a full understanding of the issue and to enable them to contribute to plans for improvement.</p> <p>To consider regional working and / or collaboration</p>
Value of bringing to Scrutiny	As above.
Information Required	<p>Clarification as to what constitutes ‘out of county’ and reasons why LAC may be placed ‘out of county’</p> <p>Impact on children of ‘out of county’ placements</p> <p>Current and trend information showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of LAC and number of those placed ‘out of county’ • Impact on budget
Suggested Officer / Lead Member attendance	<p>Senior Manager Social Care</p> <p>Service Manager Care & Support</p> <p>Service Manager Safeguarding</p> <p>Policy & Projects Officer</p> <p>Lead Member People – Children’s Services</p>
External involvement and benefit	
Lead Member / Head of Department Comment	<p>Senior Manager Social Care has commented as follows:</p> <p>I support the Topic Selection Form. The most recent report to scrutiny (December 2018) explained that the Authority currently has insufficient in-house carers to meet the increase in children entering the care system and the resultant increase in children placed in Independent Fostering placements and residential placements has had a significant impact on our budget with the cost of this provision rising from £2.1m in 2016/17, to £4.1m in 2017/18, with the final figure for 2018/19 predicted to be on a par with 2017/18 if not higher.</p> <p>The Children’s Services 6 monthly performance report which is due to be considered in June will provide figures on the number of LAC in Wrexham together with the most up to date budget information.</p> <p>We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the issues surrounding LAC in more detail with members at this June meeting.</p>

	<p>My recommendation would be that we provide a presentation for members to include case studies, to enable members to gain a full understanding of the issues – however, this may necessitate the exclusion of the press and public ('part 2'). This would still enable members to be able to make recommendations as appropriate.</p> <p>The Lead Member People – Children's Services supports the comments provided by the Senior Manager Social Care.</p>	
Submitted by:	Councillors Derek Wright, Krista Childs, Brian Cameron	
Date:	4 April 2019	
	<p>This Scrutiny topic request is supported by the following Members (optional).</p> <p>1. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p> <p>2. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p> <p>3. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p> <p>4. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p>	
<p>Please tick all that apply and ensure that you have provided the necessary supporting detail.</p>		<p>Please tick √</p>
1	Referral from other Committee / Council / external body or partnership	
2	Committee steer / recommendation for Lead Member or Head of Department (not proceeding to Executive Board or Council at this stage)	√
	Committee steer / recommendation for Executive Board / Council (please provide date of Executive Board / Council meeting)	
	Information Only	
3	Official Consultation Document (e.g. proposed Government Legislation / Guidance)	
4	Does the issue involve public dissatisfaction with Council's performance? Insert relevant Council Priority Outcomes number(s) which are listed overleaf:-	
5	Has the issue been considered in the last 12 months by any other Member Forum? Please specify:- The SCWSC reviews children's social care performance 6 monthly – this report would consider the issue of looked After Children in more detail.	√
6	Please specify which meeting of the Scrutiny Committee you wish to submit the report to and why:- To be considered at the same time as the regular Children's Social	

COUNCIL STRATEGIC THEMES AND PRIORITY OUTCOMES

ECONOMY OUTCOMES:

- E1 – Encouraging people to live, work, learn, visit and invest here
- E2 – Supporting Businesses to locate and grow here
- E3 – Helping Tackle Poverty

PEOPLE OUTCOMES:-

- Pe1 – Supporting people to have positive aspirations, learn and achieve their potential.
- Pe2 – Supporting people to live active, independent lives within their community.
- Pe3 – Safeguarding those who are vulnerable.
- Pe4 – Working with our partners to make Wrexham a safe place where people feel included.
- Pe5 – Enabling access to leisure and cultural activities.

PLACE OUTCOMES:-

- PI1 – Promoting good quality homes and regeneration.
- PI2 – Pride in our environment.
- PI3 - Communities with sustainable, attractive settlements, neighbourhoods, buildings and spaces.
- PI4 – Well-connected and sustainable communities.

ORGANISATION OUTCOMES:-

- O1 – Continuing to modernise our services.
- O2 – Supporting a resilient Council.