

**Report To:** Corporate Governance Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**Lead Member / Officer:** Nicola Stubbins

**Report Author:** Nicola Stubbins

**Title:** **Joining Education and Children's Services Update**

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**1. What is the report about?**

The Corporate Governance Committee is asked to note the verbal update on the progress made in the joining of Education and Children's Services. These two services have been operating as a single service, Education and Children's services, since January 2016

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

This update is presented to Corporate Governance Committee, as requested in April 2016, to inform and offer assurance that progress has been made in the transition to the new service and risks mitigated.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

It is recommended that the Corporate Governance Committee note the update.

**4. Report details**

In September 2014 the CEO communicated proposed changes to the Council's organisation structure, including bringing together the Education Service and Children and Families Service to create a new service, Education and Children's Services. This has been compulsory in England for over a decade and is increasingly common in Wales.

It was agreed for a Test of Assurance (ToA) to be developed and carried out as part of the process of transition to the new organisation structure. The Test provided assurance that the Council's statutory duties towards children and young people has been maintained and strengthened through the new organisation structure. The Test was discussed by the Corporate Governance Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The Committee noted the report and requested a progress report to come back for consideration.

The new service reviewed the ToA in September 2016. This review confirmed that the new service is compliant with statutory accountabilities and that any potential risks had not emerged or had been appropriately mitigated. These risks are now reviewed through the Service Business Plan risk register. The new service had its first Service Challenge in October 2016 and the lines of enquiry explored the joining of Education and Children's Services, no actions emerged as a result of those discussions.

**5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

The main outcome of the change has been an immediate improvement in collegiate working between the different groups. The new service's ability to be "fleet of foot" in its response to the needs of children and young people in the county, to ensure their safety and support them in attaining their potential through education and social opportunities. In this respect, joining the services aligns to the corporate priority that "vulnerable people are protected and able to live as independently as possible" and the objective of "improving our performance in Education".

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

The joining of Education and Children's Services has been cost neutral

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment? The completed Well-being Impact Assessment report can be downloaded from the [website](#) and should be attached as an appendix to the report**

An impact assessment is not required for this update

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

Not required for this update

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

Not required for this update

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

Risks have been reviewed as part of the Test of Assurance and any ongoing risks are now monitored through the Service Business Plan risk register.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

A decision is not being requested