

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
PANEL****13 NOVEMBER 2020****WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST PROGRESS REPORT**

Summary

1. The Panel is presented with a joint report by Worcestershire County Council (the Council) and Worcestershire Children First (WCF), which has been submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) and sets out details of the progress made during Worcestershire Children First's first year of operation delivering children's services in Worcestershire.
2. As part of the DfE's Statutory Direction, Worcestershire County Council is required to provide a joint report with WCF to the DfE on the first full year of the company's operation, along with further quarterly joint reports thereafter.

Background

3. WCF was launched on 1 October 2019 and has operational responsibility for the delivery of Children's Services on behalf of the Council.
4. The decision to develop WCF as a wholly owned Council company was made in direct response to the statutory direction published on 19 September 2017, with the Council agreeing to work in partnership with the DfE.
5. During the development of the company, the Council decided to include education and early help services within the company in order to facilitate a structure that minimised fragmentation of the system in Worcestershire.
6. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel has continually been updated throughout the development of Worcestershire Children First, so it is appropriate to receive the report submitted to the DfE.

Purpose of the Meeting

7. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:
 - Note the Worcestershire Children First progress report presented by the Director of Children's Services and the Strategic Director of People
 - Agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Families.

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 - Worcestershire Children First – Covering letter and report on first year of operation (attached)
- Appendix 2 - [WCF Annual Report](#)
- Appendix 3 - [WCF Financial Statements](#)
- Appendix 4 - [WCF Interim Business Plan](#)
- Appendix 5 - [WCF Business Plan](#) (April 2020- March 2021)
- Appendix 6 - [Business Plan Review - Impact of COVID-19](#)
- Appendix 7 - Social Care and Safeguarding Self-Assessment (available electronically)
- Appendix 8 - [WCF Service Plan](#) (included in Business Plan pages 16-18)

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- [Agendas and minutes of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel](#) on 23 November 2017, 25 January 2018, 22 March 2018, 16 November 2018, 29 January 2019, 17 July 2019, 11 September 2019 and 13 November 2019

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website](#)