



REPORT SUBJECT: Best Start in Life: PSB Progress Update

MEETING: Gwent Public Services Board

DATE: 19.03.25 – Gwent PSB Scrutiny Committee
27.03.25 – Gwent Public Services Board

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1	Purpose of Report
	The purpose of this report is to provide the Public Service Board (PSB) with an update on progress relating to the Best Start in Life (BSIL) Area of Focus (AoF).
2	Background
	<p>In July 2023, the Gwent Wellbeing Plan (2023-28) was agreed by the PSB, setting out two wellbeing objectives and five steps to deliver them. The plan also embedded four overarching principles on how the PSB will work to deliver the objectives and four Areas of Focus (AoF) were later identified: Best Start in Life, Economic Chances, Safe Places and Climate Ready Communities.</p> <p>As a Marmot Region, the PSB has committed to implementing the recommendations and actions from the Marmot Report, integrating them into their Wellbeing Plan approach.</p> <p>In September 2024, the PSB received a delivery report, in relation to the Best Start in Life (BSIL) Area of Focus, detailing the progress made against the agreed objectives and recommended actions, as well as a data set for this AoF.</p>
3	Assessment of Progress

i. Best Start in Life Regional Management Group

An initial Best Start in Life meeting was held on the 7th January 2025 with representatives from all Local Authority areas of Gwent and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) to discuss how best to provide strategic support to the PSB to deliver on reducing inequity through the Best Start in Life Area of Focus.

Items discussed at this initial meeting included: A PSB update; draft terms of reference and membership for a Gwent Region Best Start in Life Management Group, draft delivery plan; reporting structures and information sharing protocols. In light of the feedback at this initial meeting further work is now underway to refine these documents for further consideration by partners.

The proposed next steps will enable the BSIL AoF to effectively address inequality in Gwent.

- Agree a definition for Best Start in Life;
- Identify priority workstreams in line with the agreed definition;
- Utilise a distributed leadership model to identify workstream leads to set up task groups and develop delivery plans;
- Ensure that the realisation of Children's Rights (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) underpin the delivery plans;
- Finalise BSIL Regional Management Group membership, and reporting.

ii. The Best Start in Life Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 0-4 Years

The Best Start in Life (BSIL) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) will provide an overview of the needs of babies, young children and families/carers aged 0-4 years. It will identify key priorities to inform services and support that give every child the best start in life.

The JSNA is being led by Gwent Public Health Team working closely with colleagues from Early Years Services across Gwent. The data analysis and engagement phases of the JSNA are now complete and the final step is to consult Early Years partners on the draft recommendations.

	<p>The final JSNA is due to be considered by the ABUHB Executive Board in mid-April and it is anticipated that it will be published by the end of April. The recommendations from the JSNA will help to inform the delivery plans for the BSIL AoF.</p> <p>Work will then commence on a JSNA which will provide an overview of the needs of 5–16-year-olds and their parents/carers.</p>
4	Recommendations to the PSB
4.1	Note and discuss the progress update relating to the Best Start in Life Area of Focus and the Best Start in Life Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
4.2	Approve proposed next steps for the BSIL Regional Management Group.
5	Recommendations to the Scrutiny Committee
5.1	Note and discuss the progress update relating to the Best Start in Life Area of Focus and the Best Start in Life Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
5.2	Provide comments and/or recommendations for the PSB to consider.
	Background Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix 1 – Gwent Wellbeing Plan Update Report (September 2024)