

SMBC Step Change Plan for Integrated Delivery of Children's Services

Background

As part of its Shaping Solihull programme, where the vision is that in Solihull in 2018, everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous, the Council is focusing on 5 Major Projects, which are:-

- Putting People First (Transforming Adult Social Care)
- Integrated Delivery of Children's Services
- North Solihull Regeneration
- New Ways of Working
- Going Lean.

For each of the projects, a step change plan has been produced using a tool called Policy Deployment, which has identified the progress and performance to be delivered, and which presents these in a matrix - a visual plan on a page. The matrix for each project shows:-

- Strategic Objectives- the 3-5 year long term objectives,
- Goals - which are specific, short to medium term planned achievements,
- Tactics –the activities being put in place to deliver these goals
- Impact -the measures that have been identified to demonstrate success.

Integrated Delivery of Children's Services

There are three principles that underpin the Councils strategy:-

- Early intervention improves the lives of children and young people, and saves money.
- A strong, supportive extended family and community is key to achieving better outcomes for children and young people.
- Children and young people who are unable to live with their own family benefit from retaining a strong connection to their local community including school, extended family and friends.

The Step Change Plan for Children's Services

The step change plan identifies 5 strategic objectives to be achieved by 2014:

1. Schools, early years settings and other learning providers are the universal service providers at the heart of the community - working collaboratively in partnership with the local authority, public services, other agencies and organisations- providing high quality education and services to effectively meet the needs and aspirations of children, families and the community
2. All children and young people whose needs cannot be met through universal services alone are helped by evidence based early intervention services according to their needs.
3. All commissioning decisions and solutions are informed by the views of, and actively involve children, young people and their families.

4. Increase in the proportion of children in care who are in local family based placements and semi independent accommodation – 50% fewer children in care in externally commissioned placements
5. All service providers in partnership focus their assessments, and interventions more effectively and efficiently to improve the health and well being of children and young people from pre- birth to adulthood.

For each of these objectives, the goal for 2011 has been identified, alongside a range of tactics, and linked impact measures, which are in turn informing the business planning in teams and services across the Council. The tactics are being led at a strategic level by Service Directors in the People Directorate

Chris Palmer, Service Director for Learning and Achievement is leading on developing and supporting schools, including academies, to establish new or consolidate existing community collaboratives; redesigning Council services to schools; taking forward delegation of SEN funding through Schools Forum and delivering the north Solihull Schools Building Programme.

Karen Murphy, Service Director Performance Planning and Commissioning is leading on establishing the early intervention baseline from which will come the profile for 2012/14 and an early intervention commissioning plan; conducting value for money reviews on a range of services including edge of care services, children's centres, YISP , services for disabled children, parent and family support and emotional well being and mental health services; piloting personal budgets for disabled children and young people; remodelling commissioning across adult and children's services and strengthening the involvement of children, young people and families in commissioning by the Council alone or jointly with partners.

Vanessa Bishop, Service Director Children, Young People and Families is leading on confirming the overarching placements remodelling strategy and financial model; conducting service reviews around the procurement of external services such as CHESS therapeutic fostering service, Fostering and UASC services and wider service reviews/ redesign in Youth Services, Information, Advice and Guidance and LAATCH (psychological support for looked after children); and reviewing and promoting opportunities for youth, parent and intergenerational volunteering, building on the new Solihull Volunteer Bureaux.

Some of the key impact measures in the step change plan include;-

- Gaps in educational achievement narrowed
- 20% increase in the number of children and young people helped by evidence based early intervention services
- 50% increase in active participants in user groups by March 2012
- 10% reduction in placement costs

While this is the Council's step change plan, it is clear that the achievement of the plan relies on a continued approach to partnership working, not least with children, young people and families, but also other key Council partners across the statutory, private, independent and voluntary sector.