

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Organisational Assessment (Summary version)

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Provided under embargo



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for an independent overview
of local public services

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Overall, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council performs well

Managing performance	2 out of 4
Use of resources	3 out of 4
Managing finances	3 out of 4
Governing the business	3 out of 4
Managing resources	2 out of 4

Description of scores:

1. An organisation that does not meet minimum requirements, Performs Poorly
2. An organisation that meets only minimum requirements, Performs Adequately
3. An organisation that exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Well
4. An organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Excellently

Summary

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council performs well overall. The Council is managing performance adequately and giving good value for money. It is involving local people in setting priorities and improving services. The people of Solihull are very satisfied with the borough and the public services they receive. 87.7 per cent of the people in Solihull are very satisfied with the area as a place to live. This is higher than average and higher than in 2006.

Solihull scores 2 out of 4 for managing performance, which is adequate. This is because there has not been consistent improvement against all priorities. The Council engages well in partnership to tackle inequalities. The Sustainable Community Strategy identifies closing the inequality gap between north and south Solihull as a significant challenge. But there is limited evidence that gaps are closing. There has been a positive response to the recession. However, long term work on reducing unemployment has not been having a significant impact in the most deprived areas.

The Council has ensured that adult social care is integrated with health care through delegating services to the Solihull Care Trust. However, major organisational development of the Care Trust has caused delays in delivering services. Adult social care is described by the Care Quality Commission as being delivered adequately. Health inequalities are being tackled. Solihull compares well in 'all age all cause mortality' rates, and is consistently above the England and Wales average. However there is a significant gap in health outcomes between the north and south of the borough. Despite several initiatives, this gap is not closing.

There is a relatively low overall crime rate, compared with the West Midlands

as a whole. The people of Solihull are very satisfied with the borough and the public services they receive. An inspection in housing in 2008 found that housing services are excellent with excellent prospects for improvement.

The Council performs well in providing services for children, Solihull is in line with or better than the England average for most indicators of education performance. The quality of education provision is variable. Education outcomes for different ethnic groups are inconsistent; mixed race and black groups do not do as well, and the gap between the north and south in educational attainment is not closing.

Solihull scores 3 out of 4, which is good, for the use of resources. This is because the Council has strong financial processes in place. These have helped the Council deliver over £26 million of savings since 2006/07. There is a sound understanding of service costs and performance levels and a good track record of managing budgets and achieving efficiencies.

Compared with other metropolitan councils, Solihull receives the lowest amount of central Government grant per head of population, and Council Tax levels are low. Overall costs have also been kept relatively low. The Council has a good track record of reviewing service provision to enable the service to be refocused on user needs, and contributing to wider social, economic and environmental objectives. For example, £1.4million has been saved from its Strategic Environmental contract by reducing duplication and achieving economies of scale.

The Council manages its assets well. It invests where necessary and sells the assets that are surplus to operational needs. As a result, the Council has an asset base that is fit for purpose and with low levels of maintenance backlogs. It has made a good start in understanding its use of natural resources, with aspirational target setting and a strong corporate commitment to addressing carbon emissions.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>



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