

# 2010 Annual Progress Report

▶▶ *FAST FORWARD* ▶▶





One Borough: an equal chance for all

# Solihull Partnership 2010 Annual Progress Report

▶▶ *FAST FORWARD* ▶▶

## Contents

Introduction	1
Report by Head of Partnership Commissioning	2
Building Healthier Communities	3
Safer Solihull	6
Building Stronger Communities	9
Prosperous Communities	12
Brighter Future for Young People	15
The Financial Picture	18
Refocusing our Priorities	19
Fast Forward	20
Glossary	22

# Introduction

I took over as chair of the Solihull Partnership eight months ago when I became Leader of Solihull Council. What has impressed me most during this time is the commitment of individuals from across Partner organisations working together to secure better services that make a difference to the quality of lives for the people of Solihull.

My commitment, when I came into office, was to put people first and ensure we are listening to local people. During this last twelve months we have demonstrated that commitment through ensuring a wider public involvement in a number of major consultations relating to the transport and the physical development of the borough. This has allowed local people to influence where new affordable housing and employment sites could be provided in the future. In addition, local people have had a say in how regeneration in certain parts of the borough can be taken forward while protecting the local character of Solihull, and for it to remain an attractive place to live and work. The Partnership Forums have played a key part in this process.

Another key concern for Solihull over the last twelve months has been the effect of the economic downturn, and the levels of unemployment in the borough, particularly amongst young people. Amongst our key successes are the opportunities the Partnership has provided for a number of young people through the Future Jobs Fund scheme. Since its introduction in November 2009, nearly 200 young people and long term unemployed have been given the opportunity to gain six months work experience, which has acted as a springboard for more than 50% of them to get back into employment or further training.

One of the highlights of the year was the Partnership's Open Day, which was well attended by members of the public, particularly families. The event showcased partnership working at a local level between emergency services, the Council and the community and voluntary sector. The live reconstruction of a road traffic accident, police arrests and mock court trials really brought to life the positive work being carried out across the borough everyday.

So please take a little time to find out more about the work of the Partnership over the last twelve months and the real difference our collective work is making to people's lives across the borough.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Hedley". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Councillor Ian Hedley  
Leader of Solihull Council  
Chair of Solihull Partnership Governing Board

# Report by Head of Partnership Commissioning

When I look back over the last twelve months, two words spring to mind: progress and uncertainty. Very different words however, together they sum up the pace of change we have seen over the last year. We have seen significant progress in delivering against some of our key priorities. For instance, we have achieved the majority of the reward targets in our Local Area Agreement; and in doing so securing improvements in outcomes like increasing the rates of breastfeeding, reducing the number of young people not in employment, training or education, and increasing the number of new businesses that have been up and running for more than a year. However, this has been achieved in a context of uncertainty with the knowledge that resources are tightening and significant shifts in national policy are restructuring the way services are commissioned and delivered.

A year of two halves then, punctuated by the general election and the dawning of a new age of austerity. With the new national coalition government, we also saw its emerging vision for the Big Society: transferring power and responsibility to local communities and individuals rather than unnecessary government involvement. This very much resonates with the work of our Stronger Communities Strategic Group which is actively building the foundation for the 'Big Society'.

Central to delivering this agenda are a number of key decentralisation actions including the removing bureaucracy and empowering communities to do things their way. We have already seen some of this in action with the demise of the range of performance arrangements like the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

The Partnership is responding to this changing landscape by refreshing our priorities ensuring that by working together we make the greatest impact on improving outcomes for the people of Solihull. You can read more about our future priorities on page 19.

This year has also seen the introduction of four Partnership Forums across the borough, bringing together Partners with local community representatives. Although still relatively new, we have already seen what a difference they can make through supporting community action. Later in February, we will see the roll out of Citizens Advice Bureaus in four GP practices in south Solihull as a direct result of an idea generated through our first Forum meeting last July.

Although the year ahead will be challenging with changes to the Partnership I have no doubt that by working together in Solihull we will continue to strengthen as we focus on our priorities in the year ahead.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melanie Lockey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melanie Lockey  
Head of Partnership Commissioning

# Building Healthier Communities

## Working on our priorities:

These are challenging times when we are witnessing economic and social obstacles to building healthy communities.

Health is everyone's business and large scale changes can only be achieved through concerted large scale action, working with partners in the public, private and third sector organisations to involve local people; through the communities in which they live to secure health improvements.

This year has seen the publication of our Healthier Communities Strategy, which will direct our work over the next three years. Complementing the strategy is our Health Inequalities action plan, which was informed by the Department of Health National Support Team, who visited in early 2010.

## What progress have we made?

The focus of work in 2010 has been the delivery of an integrated programme of initiatives that target lifestyle changes, addressing inequalities.

### Achievements:

- ✓ Extended our Coronary Vascular Disease screening service to all GP practices in south Solihull (the service in north Solihull is already well-established).
- ✓ Two additional smoking cessation specialists recruited to provide programmes in the workplace and secondary care.

- ✓ Working with the Alzheimer's Society to redesign services, including provision of the Alz Café at the Bosworth Centre, which provides much needed advice and support. This has contributed to a significant rise in the numbers of people accessing services from the centre.
- ✓ Redesigned dementia services that included increased investment in a dementia advisor and advocacy as well as purchasing a range of dementia-assisted technology.
- ✓ Additional financial investment made to support more Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT). Referrals to the service have increased rapidly over recent months, resulting in 153 people supported off benefits and back into work from January to September 2010.
- ✓ Redesign of adult mental health services to ensure they are fit for the future.
- ✓ Establishment of a hospital liaison service to carry out detailed assessments, and signposting onto specialist services for patients entering hospital with alcohol-related admissions.
- ✓ Support for dependent drinkers in communities, as well as raising awareness of alcohol harm and early prevention work.
- ✓ Successfully initiated two projects to develop resident-led groups in Smith's Wood (SWANN) and Fordbridge (CAFÉ). These projects are bringing together residents and local service providers to develop an action plan to tackle the health issues that matter most to local people in these areas.

### Making a Difference Case Study

#### ***Moving to independence***

Starling Grove is a supported housing scheme for 11 adults with learning disabilities in north Solihull. The service works with individual tenants to maximise their independence.

At the heart of the project was to create a scheme that considered the needs of individuals to ensure the transition to more independent living was as smooth as possible. The Care Trust, working with the landlord (Bromford Housing Association) completely refurbished the accommodation in January 2010. Together, they worked alongside the housing-related support provider (Bromford Support), Mencap and the local advocacy service, Solihull Action through Advocacy, to support 11 people. Through their support, they were able to make the transition into living more independently within their own tenancies. This is quite an achievement for a number of individuals who have lived in hospital and residential care for over 50 years prior to this transition.

As part of the scheme, housing support and domiciliary care provides a supported environment that builds resilience and independence. The service has also enabled some adults with learning disabilities to live in a safe and supported environment, independent of older family carers. Working with Solihull Community Housing, the level of night time support has been reduced through the introduction of a range of assistive technology.



*Darran at work in his kitchen*

Just one of the success stories is Darran, who had previously lived in a 24-hour care home for 10 years, sharing this accommodation with two other tenants. When Darran was told his care home was due to close he asked his care staff and social worker about moving on. Jo from Solihull Advocacy informed Darran of the new scheme at Starling Grove and asked if he would like to be nominated for a flat.

Darran enjoys being independent. Making the move from care to more independent living at Starling Grove has allowed him to go out and about in the community with no support and take ownership of his day-to-day routine. This experience has given Darran more confidence. He can arrange his own weekly schedule and is very organised, always planning for the week ahead.

We are working with Bromford to develop another similar service in south Solihull, which will be ready for occupation in February 2011.

### Making a Difference Case Study

#### Be a Star

The Partnership has funded the 'Be a Star' social marketing campaign which has made a significant difference in encouraging young mums to breastfeed. Since its launch in January 2010, it increased the rates of young mums to start breastfeeding, which contributed to the achievement of a local area agreement reward target.

In addition, some of those mums at the forefront of the campaign have secured personal achievements from their involvement.

Danielle said: *"I loved being part of Be a Star. I have breastfed my daughter, gained confidence and now I am a qualified Breastfeeding Peer Supporter."*

In January 2011 we launched two breastfeeding cafés in Shirley and Smith's Wood. At these cafés, antenatal 'feeding your baby' sessions are available for pregnant women, delivered by the breastfeeding team with the help of newly qualified breastfeeding peer supporters.



Encouraging young mums to breastfeed

#### Fast Forward

The next twelve months will require a continued focus on service delivery. We will effectively coordinate the use of our resources and continue to help transform people's lives for the better. Key areas of focus will be:

- ▶▶ Establishment of a Health and Wellbeing Board with membership from elected representatives, GP consortia, Director of Public Health, Director of Adult Social Services and local HealthWatch.
- ▶▶ Increased focus on interventions that address the wider determinants of health (e.g. housing, transport).
- ▶▶ Engaging with and developing communities to achieve their aspirations and address their health and wellbeing needs.
- ▶▶ Promoting joined up commissioning plans across the NHS, social care and public health.
- ▶▶ Continue to work in Partnership to focus on preventative approaches to ensure that emotional wellbeing for our population is an outcome at the heart of all our strategies and services.

# Safer Solihull

## Working on our priorities:

Our residents have told us that their greatest concerns are about crime and anti-social behaviour in the borough as well as reducing the harm caused from drugs and alcohol. The focus of our work within the Safer Solihull Partnership is to tackle these concerns in order to make our communities feel safer.

Last year we continued to see a reduction in the overall crime levels in Solihull, which in turn has led to fewer victims. This reduction is most significant in vehicle crime and criminal damage offences, which has contributed to an overall reduction in serious acquisitive crime by 15%. There have also been reductions in serious violent crime and woundings with over a 6% reduction on last year.

The levels of re-offending in Solihull are low (6.35%) and reducing, with a significant reduction (20%) over the last twelve months. This is the lowest in the region and the second lowest rate nationally. However, we know that a small number of individuals commit the most crime; therefore we continue to identify and target these offenders through a multi-agency offender management programme.

While crime levels are reducing, building trust and confidence for the public that we are tackling crime and anti-social behaviour remains a key priority for us. A number of consultative forums are now in place to strengthen the dialogue with residents on their concerns around safety in the borough, creating a better shared understanding and resolution of problems.

The Safer Solihull Partnership Open Day in September enabled Solihull residents to see first hand the work of Partners to keep Solihull safe.

The live reconstruction of a road traffic accident, police arrests and mock court trials at the police station, magistrates' court, and the civic suite, provided an insight into the whole process of the criminal justice system.



*Solihull Partnership Open Day*

## What progress have we made?

The tightening of resources for all Partners including the voluntary and community sector has ensured we have targeted our efforts on those priorities of most concern.

### Achievements:

- ✓ Levels of crime continue to reduce, with a 15% reduction in serious acquisitive crime and 6.5% reduction in serious violent crime.
- ✓ Reduced the number of arson-related incidents through the continuation of the work of the Community Fire Advocate.
- ✓ Working with Healthier Communities, £1million has been secured for a re-designed Alcohol Service, with implementation in hospital, primary care and the community.

## Safer Solihull

- ✓ Domestic Abuse and Reducing Reoffending Strategies developed and in operation. Both are reshaping the way we manage offenders and provide support to victims.
- ✓ £178,000 Department of Health grant secured to develop a Recovery Café to support recovering drug and alcohol users, which will be delivered through a Social Enterprise model.
- ✓ Through a full service review of how the Partnership deals with anti-social behaviour (ASB), we have redesigned our processes to improve the customer experience and improve our response in dealing with ASB.
- ✓ Reduction in the number of people being killed and seriously injured on our roads through engineering, enforcement and improved awareness and education.
- ✓ Implemented a multi-agency Integrated Offender Management programme to case manage offenders causing most harm.

## Making a Difference Case Study

### Making Amends

Centro, the region's transport authority, joined forces with Solihull Youth Offending Services' reparation team and the local police to help improve the bus routes in Chelmsley Wood and Kingshurst areas of Solihull. Work started on 9 June 2010 and continued until mid October 2010.

The work had a practical effect in improving the area for both residents and passengers on these bus routes and saw offenders putting something back into the community.



*Community Payback in action*

This project is a good example of community payback work, which aims at dissuading the young people from reoffending, as well as delivering benefits to the local community. This is one of the many and varied payback schemes carried out across Solihull supported by Partners.

The emphasis on all of the community payback work is firmly on crime reduction and reparation, with the ultimate aim to encourage people back into employment and hopefully reduce the risk of re-offending in the future. It is estimated that schemes throughout the year have provided a cost saving of over £40,000 in Partnership resources.

### Making a Difference Case Study

#### ***Integrated Offender Management***

The aims of integrated offender management are to work with recognised prolific offenders and support them to rehabilitate and divert them from re-offending in the future.

One example of this working in practice is Simon, who started to use drugs and became addicted to heroin and crack cocaine while truanting from school, which in turn led to a life of crime to fund his habit.

Over a period of 15 years, Simon had 57 convictions for a total of 162 offences, ranging from assault, burglary, possession of an offensive weapon and drug offences. While Simon received a number of custodial sentences he declined any assistance which resulted in him remaining addicted to drugs and continuing to commit crime.

In September 2008 Simon was sentenced to 36 months for burglary; this time through the support of a healthcare worker he underwent a 'detox programme' for his drug use. Prior to his release, Simon saw his Drug Intervention Programme worker to agree an action plan and services to help him remain drug free. As a Prolific and Priority Offender (PPO), his case was referred to a multi-agency meeting where each organisation reviewed his offending behaviour and support him to remain drug free and to stop offending.

A whole range of people and services were involved, including: Probation officer, Police offender manager, Solihull Integrated

Addiction Services (SIAS) drug treatment services as well as Job Centre Plus to help him get job ready and find work. Citizens Advice Bureau were on hand to help him with his debts and benefit advice. He has also engaged with the fathers group at the local children's centre, recognising the effect his behaviour has had on his daughter. Simon has also enrolled on a basic skills course at the college to improve his literacy and maths skills.

Simon has remained drug free and there is no evidence of any offending behaviour now. Although it is still early days Simon is now a much happier and contented family man.

#### ***Fast Forward***

Nationally, a programme of reform around policing and community safety is being rolled out, which has a much stronger focus on local accountability to citizens through the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners from May 2012.

The next twelve months will require a continued focus on delivery through strong partnership working on those areas that matter most to local people. These include:

- ▶▶ Domestic abuse
- ▶▶ Substance misuse including drugs and alcohol
- ▶▶ Anti-social behaviour and the fear of being a victim of crime
- ▶▶ Tackling crime hotspots, both serious acquisitive and violent crime
- ▶▶ Reducing reoffending by persons who live in Solihull
- ▶▶ Road safety.

# Building Stronger Communities

## Working on our priorities:

The Stronger Communities agenda is a key aspect of partnership activity, providing the glue that binds much of our partnership work. A three-year plan has been agreed which sets out five main priorities:

- Strengthening community cohesion
- Improving community engagement and empowerment
- Building capacity in communities
- Developing volunteering
- Encouraging wider participation in sport, the arts and leisure.

Partners have come together in a focused way to lead and direct the activities that support these priorities. Stronger Communities now has a dedicated Partnership Manager who will also take the lead in developing the borough's capacity in Volunteering.

A key aspect of the Stronger Communities agenda is improving the capacity of our community and voluntary sector so they are ready and able to have a greater involvement in the running of public services in Solihull for the future. Central to the way partners in Solihull work with the community and voluntary sector is our Compact, which was recognised nationally, for the second year running, for the progressive way we work together.

## What progress have we made?

We have made a good start on the Stronger Communities agenda.

### Achievements:

- ✓ Partnership forums established in four localities of Solihull, which are providing wider community involvement in the work of the Partnership.
- ✓ Sponsored and helped to broker two projects to establish resident-led groups in Smith's Wood (SWANN) and Fordbridge (CAFÉ), which bring residents and local service providers together to develop an action plan to tackle the issues that matter most to local people.
- ✓ Agreed and now implementing a Cohesion Strategy, Building from Strength, informed by a survey of residents, visitors and young people commissioned by the Solihull Partnership.
- ✓ Worked with the Faiths' Forum, introduced a programme of faith festivals celebrating festivals like Chanukah and Vaisakhi as well as promoting tolerance and racial harmony through Holocaust Memorial Day in Solihull town centre.
- ✓ In October, a celebration of black history and culture provided an extended range of events from previous years highlighting diversity of our cultural heritage.
- ✓ Supporting the continued development of the Solihull Festival to achieve a 50% increase in the number of community-based events in the 2010 Programme.

## Building Stronger Communities

- ✓ Set up a Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) Focus Group for Solihull and implementing research into the views of local LGBT communities: Your Views Count.
- ✓ Set up Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Focus Groups for Solihull building greater connectivity with these communities through improved community engagement.
- ✓ Improved the quality of community involvement in Solihull by creating a community involvement network to support activities and implemented community involvement standards.
- ✓ Strengthen working to compact principles through the application of the Compact Codes of Practice and Common Commissioning Framework by public and private sector Partners.

## Making a Difference Case Study

### ***Celebrating Cultural Diversity***

Solihull Faiths' Forum, supported by SUSTAIN, the Council, the Police Chaplain and the Sixth Form College organised our first multi-faith festival in September. An audience of all ages from across various faiths were treated to an electric and entertaining mix of dance, music, reading, testimony and prayer. Each faith sought to share a little about its beliefs and a glimpse of its traditions. There was also a bit of 'crossover' in the programme, when the mostly non-Asian youth group Asian Flava showcased their Bollywood style dance. The evening finished with conversation and food, where the combination of samosas and gateaux might have sounded strange, but tasted fabulous!

In a very similar vein, our aim through Black History Month is to raise awareness of the diversity of our cultural heritage and to celebrate the history, achievements and contributions made by African, African Caribbean and Asian Communities within Solihull.

Last October was the fifth year of Solihull's Black History Month festival. Throughout October, Partners organised a wide range of

events and activities, including theatre performances of The Tragedy of King Christophe; and the musical drama Not Quite Gospel, which tackled the difficult topic of intergenerational issues of understanding and tolerance within families and communities.

Solihull College organised a range of events, including African carnival mask-making, African drumming, a Black Heroes exhibition, arts and live music. Asian influences included Mehndi henna hand painting workshops and a Khabaddi Tournament.

One of the most successful events was the Caribbean Family History Exhibition, attracting media interest from both TV and Radio.



*Students create their own African mask art*

## Building Stronger Communities

### Making a Difference Case Study

#### **Environmental Champions**

Solihull's Environmental Champions are members of the public who care enough about their local area to give up their free time to make the borough look and feel safer and more pleasant.

In 2010, the Champions completed a total of 91 projects, carrying out litter picks, painting over graffiti, planting shrubs, organising community clean-ups, making mosaics, and installing a willow tunnel; to name but a few.

One of the Champions' resounding success stories was their involvement in building a spectacular garden for BBC Gardeners' World Live – Alice in Biodiversity Land. The garden, designed by students from a range of schools across the borough, was showcased at the popular NEC event in June to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity.

Their hard work and commitment helped the garden to become one of the show's most memorable gardens, with its water feature crafted from an old grit bin, and a Dodo made entirely from recycled drinks cans. Their efforts received a well deserved silver award from the show's judges.

The Champions have also been successful in getting to the last eight, from a total of 94 entrants, in the



*Award-winning Dodo on show at BBC Gardeners' World Live*

Local Government Chronicle Community Awards, and Patricia Willetts and John Ford went to London in December to give a presentation on the Environmental Champions. We will find out the result in late March 2011.

#### **Fast Forward**

2011 will bring a sharper focus on delivering against our priorities with an increased pace of improvement, including action to:

- ▶▶ Map the extent of commissioning activity by public sector partners for delivery by third sector organisations, develop commissioning guidance and mitigate, where possible, the impact of the economic downturn.
- ▶▶ Respond to the Big Society agenda, to ensure that in Solihull we continue capacity building support for the Voluntary and Community Sector so that it continues to strengthen and thrive.
- ▶▶ Work with our schools, academies and colleges to promote integration, resilience and to respect diversity, to strengthen our communities and minimise the risk of violent extremism.
- ▶▶ Continue to develop forums for engaging with marginalised groups, such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender communities.
- ▶▶ Raise the profile and maximise the potential of our cultural and faith festivals to promote greater understanding and tolerance.
- ▶▶ Establish and support the development of two volunteer bureaux, in the north and central Solihull.
- ▶▶ Deliver a range of projects that will raise the level of residents' participation in sports, arts and leisure activities.

# Prosperous Communities

## Working on our priorities:

Prosperous Communities Strategic Group through its work directing activities to secure economic growth and improved housing, transport and environmental sustainability, learning employment and skills, has played a key role in narrowing the gap of inequalities between north and south Solihull. This is complemented by the regeneration and social inclusion/anti-poverty activities linked with the Regeneration Programme of North Solihull.

The Partnership arrangements for Prosperous Communities have been strengthened over the last twelve months with the development of Prosperous Communities Strategic Framework and Action Plan. Prosperous Communities priority areas of focus are:

- Promoting enterprise and economic growth
- Addressing worklessness and improving skills
- Tackling homelessness and housing needs
- Transport accessibility
- Responding to Climate Change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment

To facilitate efficient delivery of our priorities, Prosperous Communities has restructured to enhance cross-agenda working.

## What progress have we made?

### Achievements:

- ✓ Partners have helped 193 young people into six months employment and training through the Future Jobs Fund programme, with a further 52 placements due to be delivered before September 2011.
- ✓ Solihull's Enterprise for Success scheme has supported over 86 new business starts across Solihull, with 23 north Solihull businesses so far achieving twelve months of trading.
- ✓ The Public Sector Hub project has engaged 35 public sector organisations in Solihull to look at opportunities to employ workless people, secured 91 guaranteed interviews and assisted 32 people into employment.
- ✓ Establishment of the Private Landlords Forum, to maximise the contribution of the private rented sector to meet housing needs.
- ✓ The Partnership's Winter Warmth campaign was launched in October providing a range of advice and support through its promotional campaign. Emergency advice and support was provided to 130 vulnerable people.
- ✓ Secured continued funding of Centro's award-winning WorkWise scheme in north Solihull until December 2013. The scheme is helping jobseekers back into work with free travel tickets for interviews and three month travel passes for successful candidates gaining employment.
- ✓ Solihull has achieved official 'Fairtrade Borough' status, for its commitment to supporting Fairtrade and use of Fairtrade products.
- ✓ Development and implementation of a Sustainability Appraisal Toolkit to improve integration of sustainable development objectives across Partnership policy and activity.

### Making a Difference Case Studies

#### ***The Pied Piper's Successful Enterprise***

Many people dream of one day turning their hobby into a business and that's exactly what Kingshurst resident Gary Jakeman did when, after 20 years of working in training, he found himself out of work.



*Gary Jakeman (centre) now runs his own successful business*

Gary, 43, retrained and in November of last year he turned his interest in country sports and wildlife into a business. Pied Piper Pest Control specialises in wildlife management including bird control using trained hawks and falcons as well as the full range of pest control services such as insect, rodent, rabbit and mole control.

Gary was helped to set up his thriving new business by Solihull's Enterprise for Success programme which provides free, confidential

business support in the local area, including help with business planning; finding funding; premises search; financial forecasting - and anything else that a new business needs to know!

Gary has now reached a twelve-month trading position, and has received further support on setting up a customer database to help manage his contracting success.

Gary Jakeman said: *"My Enterprise for Success advisor Marcus helped me with working out my business plan and strategy as well as finding funding to help start the business."*

#### ***The Future's Bright!***

Young unemployed people in Solihull have been supported into employment through the government's Future Jobs Fund, which was introduced in 2009 to address the impact of the economic downturn. A number of Future Jobs Fund placements were made available with Solihull Community Housing (SCH) as Painters and Decorators from November 2009; their role included working in a supervised team to paint communal areas within local housing sites.

Their supervisor commented: *"Future Jobs Fund enabled the support to be provided for employees to learn a trade while on the job. Solihull Community Housing provided the framework to ensure employees learn from their work and routine, and can apply this knowledge in the private sector or sub-contracting environment. One of the successful employees used their time on the scheme to*

## Prosperous Communities

*build up their confidence and capabilities, which enabled them to take a Level 1 diploma in professional painting, and from that course went on to get a permanent job with a local painting firm."*

The success rate of the scheme so far for the first tranche of painters is impressive with 27 of the 44 originally employed going on to further employment/training, and 11 of those 27 gaining permanent employment as a direct result of the scheme.



*Successful Future Jobs Fund trainees graduate with a decorating toolkit and personal portfolios as they prepare for full time employment.*

## Fast Forward

The next twelve months will require a continued focus on delivery through strong partnership working. Key areas of focus will be:

- ▶▶ Solihull's Economic Recovery and Support Taskforce is continuing to see increasing issues around personal finance, including debt, benefits and homelessness. The challenge ahead will be for Partners to work ever more closely and efficiently together to meet increasing levels of demand within the constraints on public finances.
- ▶▶ Respond to the housing needs of the borough with a particular focus on preventing homelessness.
- ▶▶ Agreeing our Action Against Poverty strategy, which provides overarching coordination of activities to tackle the underlying causes of poverty.
- ▶▶ Developing a Work & Skills Plan for Solihull ensuring that services are planned to target reducing worklessness.
- ▶▶ Helping the Partnership tackle Climate Change and encouraging partners to adopt carbon reduction strategies and targets.
- ▶▶ Responding to the challenges and opportunities identified from Solihull's Local Economic Assessment.
- ▶▶ Supporting new enterprise and self employment, helping businesses to succeed and grow, and attracting new investment.
- ▶▶ Ensure the coordination and alignment of Prosperous Communities with the priorities of the new Local Enterprise Partnership.

# Brighter Future for Young People

## Working on our priorities:

2010 has been a busy year in the world of children's partnership working, including a new plan, scorecard and Partnership Board. The Children and Young People's Trust Assembly launched the new arrangements in October to an audience of more than 200, with workshops, speeches and song and dance.

The new plan identifies eight priorities for improvement:

1. Safe from harm
2. Supporting parents and carers
3. Raising achievement for all
4. Good physical and emotional health
5. An equal chance for vulnerable children and young people
6. Things to do and places to go
7. Active involvement
8. Looking after the environment

## What progress have we made?

The headlines for the year have been all about political and financial change. Hidden beneath the headlines has been a year of steady progress for Solihull:

Achievements:

- ✓ Our first Ofsted inspection of a children's centre scored the Rural Centre in Meriden as 'good with outstanding features'. The report said 'Outcomes for users are good. Multi-agency partnerships are strong and particularly responsive to meeting the needs of families'.

- ✓ Solihull's DCATCH Project (Disabled Children's Access to Childcare) has received national praise for delivering both innovation and to budget - £1.4million in 2010-11.
- ✓ LiNCS, (Local Integrated Needs-led Coordinated Support) which includes the common assessment process, has really taken off over the last nine months and more than 200 children and young people will have benefited from a LiNCS support plan by the end of the year. We now have a revised menu of support, modular training delivered in settings, one-to-one coaching and targets for key services.
- ✓ The Solihull Family Intervention Project won the Regional Chair's Award at the West Midlands Health & Social Care Awards in November. The award was given to recognise innovation, quality of multi-agency team work, and commitment to working with challenging families.
- ✓ Solihull's Family Information Service achieved the national Families First quality award in October, with particular strengths in public facing standards and no identified areas for further development.
- ✓ Solihull's new Parents Network now has 700 members and two parents sit on the Children and Young People's Trust Board. The Parents Forum and Solihull CAN (parents of children with additional needs) continue to grow strongly.

## Brighter Future for Young People

### Making a Difference Case Study

#### **Making the Connections**

Through LiNCS, a wide range of agencies came together in a coordinated way to make a real difference for Laura\* and her children. This is her story:



Laura was a single parent with three children under five-years-old. When her eldest son, James\*, started at nursery school he was very intelligent but lacking social and emotional skills and staff became concerned. The head teacher spoke with Laura and found that she had limited help at home; lived in a two-bedroom flat with no garden; and that James had been assessed as having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

*“... Laura must be fed up of sharing her personal difficulties with all these different agencies. Now she was having to retell her story again! She was strong, resilient and a devoted mother but she needed some help.”*

The teacher talked to Laura about the ‘CAF’ and she asked if the school’s Child and Family Mentor could coordinate things. Finding a time and date for the first meeting wasn’t easy, but the team around Laura’s family included Children’s Centre staff, Birmingham Housing, the school nurse, a Consultant Paediatrician, a Special Educational Needs Coordinator, a health visitor and Solihull Council’s Emotional, Social & Behavioural Difficulties Team. Three years on and the family lives happily in a three-bedroom house with a garden.

James attends a special school, which he enjoys and is making good progress. Laura is employed thanks to the support of the Child and Family Mentor and Children’s Centre, and is able to confidently support her family without relying on others.

*“The CAF was the ‘trigger’ that led to Laura and her family achieving new confidence and a vastly improved life experience.”*

#### **The Hub of the Community**

There are 14 Children’s Centres operating across the borough; three managed by schools and 11 managed by Action for Children, with 30% of children under the age of five participating in services from these centres. They provide a wide range of support services to families from a range of Partners, including:

- Welfare advice by the Citizens Advice Bureau, with at least 60 families each year in north Solihull benefiting from these services.
- Speech and language therapy as well as health advice by the Care Trust.
- Health visitors run baby wellbeing clinics in every children’s centre.
- A wide range of parent support groups.
- Two employment and learning coordinators help parents into education, training, employment and volunteering opportunities across the borough.

### Making a Difference Case Study

There are many examples on how the services within the Children's Centres have made a difference to young families. One example is Sharon\* who was struggling to cope with her three-year-old son's tantrums and sleeping problems. She was feeling isolated, low in confidence about her parenting skills and worried about her relationship with her son, Tom\*. Her health visitor suggested that she make contact with her local Children's Centre.

When she came in to the Children's Centre, through a 'request for service' it was agreed what support they could provide. Over the next few months, Sharon received weekly home visits from Children's Centres Outreach and Inclusion Team who gave advice on stimulating play activities for her son and other techniques to prevent challenging behaviour as well as joining a parenting support group.

The support has turned Sharon's life around. Her confidence has grown and she is better able to cope with her son's behaviour, which has improved thanks to her more consistent and calm approach. Sharon has now returned to work because she feels more confident about how Tom will cope in part-time day care.

\*Names have been changed in both case studies.



### Fast Forward

The next twelve months will require a continued focus on delivery through strong partnership working. Reducing resources will require us to be creative and innovative – something which Solihull already has a reputation for. Key areas for partner focus will be:

- ▶▶ Securing and further developing our early intervention and prevention services, supporting partner agencies to help children, young people and their families to tackle issues before they become a crisis.
- ▶▶ Safeguarding the most vulnerable children and young people, and supporting partner organisations to act according to the Solihull Safeguarding Standards.
- ▶▶ Cost reduction for specialist care, health and education placements by innovative partnerships and local solutions.
- ▶▶ Schools partnerships to sustain progress in pupil achievement and a wider extended services offer.
- ▶▶ Involvement of children, young people and their families in finding solutions to meet their own needs, through individual budgets where appropriate.
- ▶▶ Continue developing a partnership approach to improving mental health and emotional wellbeing.

# The Financial Picture

## Making the Most of Resources

This year has seen a significant shift in the way funding is provided to local areas to support the delivery of shared priorities. Over the last three years, Area Based Grant (ABG) supported a wide range of strategies delivering Partnership priorities for adult and children services; supported housing and safer, stronger communities. This ABG added to mainstream public funding and enabled the development of multi-agency early intervention approaches.

In this period of austerity, the national coalition government's spending review has changed the approach to ABG. The first spending review announcement, in June 2010, focused on reducing in year £1.5million (11%) of ABG. While it was difficult to manage, all priority areas of expenditure were protected and savings delivered without reducing posts or termination of existing contracts.

Spending review announcements in October have further reduced the levels of funding for 2011/12 levels. In addition, allocations will no longer be paid through Area Based Grant, with majority of funds transferring to Local Authority Formula Grant and Early Intervention Grant.

## Securing Reward Money

Over the last three years the Partnership has been focusing on delivering its Local Area Agreement (LAA), which included 12 outcome measures that, if achieved, would receive significant reward grant of nearly £6million. During that three year period performance and financial monitoring ensured that Solihull secured as much of this reward grant as possible. Subject to confirmation by central government, the Partnership achieved 87% of the maximum

Performance Reward Grant (PRG) payable (£5.206m out of a possible £5.972m), though the amount receivable has been reduced to £2.603m following the Government's decision to halve the amount payable for LAA achievement in light of the budget deficit.

In the future, this reward grant will be used to support improvements in Partnership key outcome priorities.

## Delivering Joint Partnership Commissioning Activity

Commissioning is about getting the best services to meet the needs of local people. To do this we need to use Partnership funding in a 'needs led' approach to commissioning service delivery to be provided in partnership or as a single agency as appropriate.

Over the last 12 months the Partnership has focused some of its commissioning activity on two strategic areas. In the review of services to prevent homelessness it is seeking to put the funding for the service onto a more sustainable basis while supporting a greater role for the community and voluntary sector. With the review of services for chaotic families the Partnership is seeking to develop a more holistic earlier intervention approach which will reduce the demand for more intensive services in the future.

# Refocusing our Priorities

This year has seen a major review of Partnership priorities. The Partnership recognised that there had been significant changes since the Sustainable Community Strategy was originally agreed in April 2008. In particular, the refresh of the partnership priorities needed to respond to:

- The economic downturn
- Increasing demands for services
- The reduction on public funding

In addition, the refresh of the Strategy needed to identify more clearly the inequality gap and the actions required to achieve a step-change in reducing this gap.

The approach adopted follows the principles of the Partnership Common Commissioning Framework ensuring that the prioritisation process was evidence-led based on an assessment of need as well as involvement from a wide range of stakeholders in the prioritisation.

Following a wide consultation with Elected Members, community representatives within Partnership Forums as well as an online survey, the following draft set of priority outcomes have been identified. The next stage in the process is to involve a wide range of people in the development of the commissioning plans for each of these priority areas.

## Draft Outcome Map



### Economic Growth

- increase enterprise and business growth to secure more prosperity and jobs
- develop young peoples' skills for the future jobs market
- tackle housing stress due to the lack of appropriate housing.

### III Health Prevention

- promote healthier lifestyles
- reduce the impact of substance misuse (drugs and alcohol)
- secure the best start in life for our most challenging families.

### Involved and Inclusive Communities

- create stronger and more resilient communities
- reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
- keep the vulnerable safe from harm
- increase numbers of people volunteering.

# Fast Forward

## Developing Partnership Commissioning

The Partnership over the last twelve months has developed the Common Commissioning Framework, which provides the overarching principles to the way Partners will work to commission services. These services will be designed around the needs of local people now and into the future, while at the same time securing value for money and sustainable delivery of those services. Our strategic focus for commissioning services will be to increase preventative services, which can support people to tackle issues before they become problems.

Our approach is structured so that we:

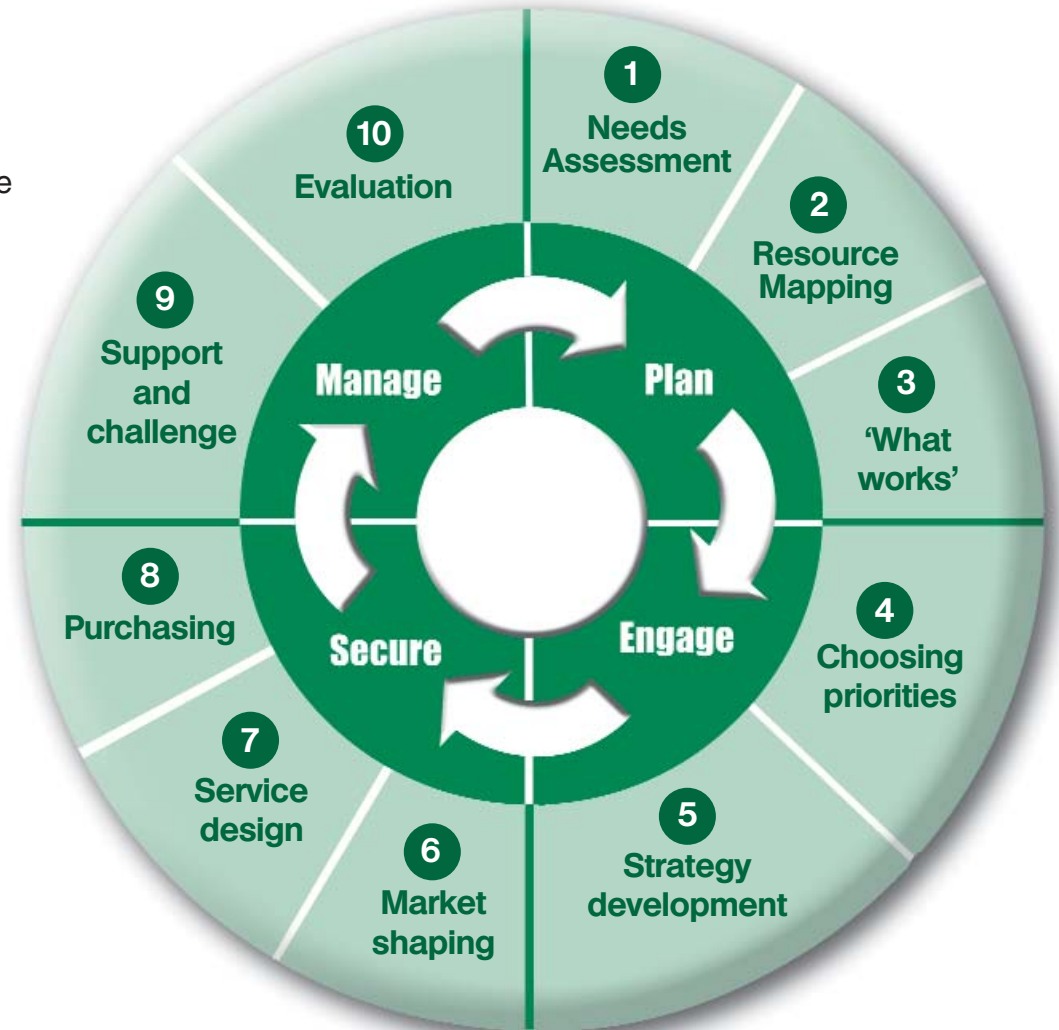
**Plan** – understand where we want to get to

**Engage** – involve stakeholders including the public

**Secure** – make or buy the right services to meet needs

**Manage** – ensure good performance and inform planning

The future development of support to partnership working in Solihull will secure the right type of capacity and skills to enable the Partnership to become a commissioning partnership, and work to the 10 principle steps of the Commissioning Cycle, opposite.



## Fast Forward

Over the last twelve months we have strengthened the way that we plan and engage when commissioning services.

### Needs Assessment

The Solihull Observatory has been established to further develop the Partnership capacity to understand the community needs as well as the capacity within the community that could be potentially released to address those needs. Over the last twelve months the Observatory has supported:

- **Strategy Policy**, for example, anti-poverty strategy, local economic assessment, unified needs assessment, etc
- **Improved Customer Insight**, for example, understanding more about hate crime, teenage pregnancy, etc
- **Understanding Solihull**, for example, Ward profiles, narrowing the gap matrix, etc.

By bringing together the analytical capacity from across Partners we have been able to achieve a much more coherent picture of needs across the borough. This Unified Needs Assessment will be published alongside the refreshed Sustainable Communities Strategy. In addition, we have been able to undertake a number of cross-cutting analyses to identify causal links for some of our more challenging issues, which will shape services in the future.

### Community Involvement

The Partnership Involvement Network was established to ensure a more coordinated approach to securing wider stakeholder involvement and customer insight in the commissioning of services. The Network has developed Community Involvement Standards which provide the framework for all the Partnership's engagement activity. We have also invested in engagement tools 'Echo' and 'Voice' which together support the development of community capacity to influence decisions that affect them.

A major development in the last twelve months has been the establishment of four Partnership Forums. These are providing a channel for communication and consultation with local stakeholders about the work of the Solihull Partnership, informing the Partnership's priorities and help to ensure that what local partners are doing contributes fully to achieving the aims of the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Two rounds of Partnership forums have been held so far; in July and November with a third round due to take place in February and March. Discussions at forum meetings have generated useful feedback for service providers and are beginning to generate discussion and agreement about what participants can do to tackle issues in their local communities. For example, the Rural Forum has discussed their concerns about access to jobs and services via public transport. Through the Forum, a dialogue has been established between residents, Solihull Council's Transport Planners and Centro about the issues. The next stage (at the March forum meeting) is to explore potential community based solutions to some of the issues surrounding transport.

# Glossary

**Area Based Grant** – Funding provided to Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) to fund their priorities.

**Big Society** – Where people, neighbourhoods and communities have more power and responsibility to create better services and outcomes.

**Commissioning** – The process by which the needs of the local population are identified, priorities set, then appropriate services are purchased and evaluated, to meet those needs in the most appropriate and cost effective way.

**Common Assessment Framework** – Process of using a common assessment tool to promote information sharing and joint planning between agencies around the needs of individual children and young people.

**Community Involvement** – An umbrella term which encompasses a broad spectrum of activities from seeking views to consulting on specific options for a service or area to work together with local people to solve a local problem. The Solihull Partnership has agreed six standards for community involvement.

**Compact Plus** – A long-standing agreement that sets out shared commitments and guidelines for working between the public bodies of the Partnership and third sector organisations, and that by working better together can make a greater impact for the benefit of local residents, neighbourhoods and communities in Solihull.

**Comprehensive Area Assessment** – CAA was used to assess local public services in England. It examined how well councils were working together with other public bodies to meet the needs of the people they serve. It has since been cancelled.

**Decentralisation** – Giving away power to individuals, professionals, communities and local institutions.

**Early Intervention Grant** – A new funding grant for local authorities to help support a range of services for children, young people and families.

**Future Jobs Fund** – FJF is a project fund announced in the 2009 budget aimed at creating 150,000 jobs nationally for long term unemployed young people and others who face significant disadvantages in the labour market.

**LiNCS** – Local Integrated Needs-led Coordinated Support - The Solihull Model for Multi-agency support of Children, Young People and their Families incorporating the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Lead Person (LP). Includes agreed procedures to be used in identifying, assessing and supporting children, when more than one agency is involved.

**Localism** – Doing everything at the lowest possible level and only involving central government if absolutely necessary.

**Local Authority Formula Grant** – An aggregate funding of Revenue Support Grant, plus income from redistributed business rates – national non-domestic rates and police grant.

**Scorecard** – A document which includes a range of measures to evaluate how we are doing in a particular area e.g. the Partnership has a scorecard to assess the impact of the economic downturn.

**Social Inclusion** – Recognising that some people are marginalised in society and therefore we must put into place policies, procedures and practices that help them take part in normal social activities and decision-making which affects their lives.

**Solihull Observatory** – Is a network of data analysts from across Partner agencies coordinated by two analysts employed centrally by the Partnership. Together this shared data analysis capacity is developing a shared information resource, which is providing the evidence base to inform Partnership priority setting and commissioning activity.

**Sustainable Community Strategy** – A strategy outlining the vision and specific ambitions of the Solihull Partnership for the next 10 years and beyond to meet the future needs of Solihull – a document formally agreed by the organisations which make up the partnership.



One Borough: an equal chance for all

**Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council**  
**PO Box 18, Council House, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 9QS**  
**Tel: 0121 704 6000 Fax: 0121 704 6114**  
**[www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullpartnership](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/solihullpartnership)**