

Childrens and Young people vision

1. INTRODUCTION AND DIRECTORATE VISION

The city's sustainable community strategy has a focus on the people of Birmingham enjoying a high quality of life as its overall outcome, supported by economic success, safe and green neighbourhoods and healthy communities.

Individual partners have developed their priorities in that context. For example, the City Council is clear that its priorities are employment and skills, clean and green neighbourhoods and protecting vulnerable children, young people and adults.

In support of the above, our vision is for Birmingham to be an inspiring place where all children and young people and their families enjoy living, learning, developing and achieving together whilst feeling secure in a city that is child and family friendly. We will, with our partners, work towards this by focusing on three priorities and the underlying factors which, Birmingham data tells us, are particularly important:

- **To protect children from significant harm and improve children's social care** (by, for example, tackling domestic violence, poverty and neglect, drug, alcohol and mental health problems in families).
- **To improve engagement in learning and achievement in education and skills** (by, for example, improving school attendance, behaviour, curriculum and ethos, improving language, literacy and numeracy, social literacy, employability skills of young people).
- **To reduce health inequalities** (by, for example, reducing levels of infant mortality, childhood obesity, teenage conception, and improving emotional health).

The work being undertaken by all partners to realise our vision is shaped by four change imperatives:

- The need to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.
- The need to improve performance and make services fit-for-purpose – particularly services for vulnerable children and young people.
- The need to plan ahead for demographic pressures on services – particularly those services that are currently experiencing increased demand.
- The need to maintain affordability for required services, within a context of reducing public expenditure and significant pressures on services and resources.

The new model of service we are developing, detailed in section 12 of this Plan, reflects the above and provides opportunities for our schools, settings,

services and practitioners to support our most disadvantaged children and young people to improve their attainment, achievement and life chances.

To achieve this we will:

- Make sure that the child and family is at the heart of everything we do.
- Manage risk through ensuring that our services have a relentless focus on child protection and that those services with the greatest responsibility in this area are of the highest quality.
- Recognise that in order to keep children safe, every service has a key part to play - safeguarding is everyone's business.
- Offer integrated services for our children with more complex needs, in order to support families, and enable those children who need a specialist service to access one quickly and smoothly.
- Ensure we have suitable and sufficient provision through improving and supporting schools, colleges and children's centres to prevent and reduce risk.
- Ensure all our young people are engaged in education and training and are able to achieve.
- Deliver and commission targeted interventions that are evidence-based and proven to work.
- Maximise the use of social enterprises and increase trading with schools.
- Make sure the workforce has the training, skills and information to work effectively.

Our new model of service will be underpinned by the Leader's 7 principles:

1. Transforming our efficiency.
2. Preventing problems to avoid big costs later.
3. Reducing dependency and enabling self sufficiency.
4. Collaboration between service areas and public agencies.
5. Personalisation such as moving to individual budgets giving more choice to service users.
6. Maximising income streams.
7. Levering in funds from the private sector.

Specific examples include:

Transforming our efficiency – the City Council is already four years into a ten-year Business Transformation programme which will yield £1.5 billion of savings through more effective, efficient and economic services delivery, including savings in “back office” services and accommodation costs, wherever possible focusing on prevention, and encouraging people to switch to cheaper online ways of contacting the Council. In response to the budget challenge, we are planning 30% savings in our support services. The Directorate will play its role in the transformation programme.

Preventing problems to avoid big costs later - we know that effectively dealing with problems early can save big costs later on. We have and will continue to use evidence of “what works” to help inform and develop new

ways of working to prevent future problems, for example by better helping families where without support their children are likely to require costly interventions later.

Collaborating effectively across service areas and public agencies - better collaboration will enable us to deliver more cost-effective services. Internally, we are proposing to abolish professional “silos” and enable staff to work in multi-disciplinary teams helping to keep vulnerable children safe. We propose to develop seamless working with other public agencies and voluntary organisations towards achieving common priorities and aligned spending. We are negotiating a “Community Budget” pilot which will pool central government budgets to provide more effective integrated support to families with complex needs in the city.

The Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) Directorate is the largest directorate within the City Council. The Directorate currently provides support for safeguarding and children's social care and education and skills, and covers a broad range of functions including early years and childcare, targeted support for vulnerable children and young people including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, youth justice, and activities for young people.

We are proud of the attainment and achievements of our children and young people. There have been huge improvements over the past few years due to the commitment of our staff, Head Teachers, and Governing Bodies, across schools, colleges, settings and services. Yet there is more to do for children who leave without the educational standards and the social and emotional wellbeing, which are the necessary gateways to future education, training, work and life opportunities. We have outstanding early years and primary provision, but we also have a minority of schools and settings that are struggling to support our most vulnerable children. Social care practitioners in the city do excellent work often in tough circumstances but Birmingham has fared poorly in safeguarding inspections for some years and there has been persistent dissatisfaction with the quality of some services.