

# Draft Swindon Early Help Strategy 2017-2022

Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2017

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Wards:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

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## 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To seek the Health and Wellbeing Board’s approval of the Early Help Strategy 2017-2022 and to recommend that both Swindon Borough Council’s Cabinet and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Governing Body adopt and implement it.
- 1.2 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy demonstrates a commitment across the partnership in ensuring that every child and young person in Swindon has a healthy start in life. Many families will achieve this with minimal support, but some families will need help to do so. Through Early Help, we can proactively support these families to tackle problems early on and reduce the need for statutory intervention. The draft Swindon Early Help Strategy 2017 – 2022 describes how, over the next five years, we will work together across Swindon to help children, young people and families build resilience and self-reliance, and, where additional support is needed, ensure the right help is given at the right time to prevent problems escalating. A copy of the draft strategy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The draft Early Help Strategy recognises the contribution and importance of the wider partnerships as well as local communities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of families, children and young people. Early Help is not a single agency responsibility and requires a whole family approach owned by all stakeholders working together to support children, young people and families. This includes Health, Police, Probation, Schools/Education, Children’s Social Care, Adult Services, Housing, Voluntary and Community organisations, Charitable Foundations and the wider public.
- 1.4 This Strategy links to Swindon Borough Council’s Priority Four: help people to help themselves while always protecting the most vulnerable children and adults. It also links to the Swindon Health and Wellbeing Strategy: Outcome 1 - every child and young person in Swindon has a healthy start in life; Outcome 4 – improved mental health, wellbeing and resilience of all; Outcome 5 – creation of sustainable environments in which communities can flourish.

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## 2. Recommendations

The Board is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the draft Early Help Strategy 2017-2022, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, and support the development of the action plan associated with this strategy to revitalise Swindon's Early Help Offer.
- 2.2 Recommend to Cabinet and the Governing Body of the Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group that they adopt the draft Swindon Early Help Strategy 2017-2022.

## 3. Detail

Early Help

- 3.1 The draft Swindon Early Help Strategy 2017 – 2022 sets out the priorities for progressing the delivery of a more co-ordinated and targeted approach to Early Help across Swindon. It outlines a vision for Early Help, national and local drivers for change, explains the Early Help Assessment and Planning process, and describes the plan for delivering and evaluating the impact of a revitalised and better integrated Early Help Offer. The draft strategy identifies key recommendations for progressing Early Help work in Swindon over the next five years.
- 3.2 National research has highlighted the importance of Early Help for improving children's life chances and delivering better outcomes for them and their families. The sooner families are helped, the less likely it is that their situations will worsen.
- 3.3 Early Help includes both interventions early in life (with young children, including prenatal interventions) and interventions early in the development of a problem (with children or young people of any age). It covers universal interventions which are offered to everyone to prevent problems developing, as well as targeted interventions which are offered to particular children, young people and families with existing risk factors, vulnerabilities or acknowledged additional needs. If delivery and support is right at the 'universal' stage, the demand for more targeted and specialist support should reduce. This will provide more cost effective solutions as well as better outcomes for children, young people and families.
- 3.4 Swindon is a borough with areas of geographical inequality and poverty. National research clearly shows that the place in which people are born, or the place they live, is likely to dictate their life chances unless actions are taken to change this. Reducing inequalities is a priority in Swindon. The Councils child poverty needs analysis shows that 64% of Swindon children living in one parent families are living in poverty (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015), and in some areas of

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Swindon, as many as one in two children are experiencing the effects of poverty through income deprivation. A coordinated approach to prevention and early intervention work, building on community strengths and resilience, offers a solution for better outcomes as well as reducing the demand on statutory services whilst also having the potential to save money over time.

3.5 Six priorities have been identified within the draft Early Help Strategy:

- 3.5.1 For the Council to work closely with key partners (e.g. schools, health, voluntary and community services, housing and adult services) to ensure that the best possible offer of early help is available for people living in Swindon.
- 3.5.2 To ensure early help support across the partnership is aligned to the Early Help principles and approaches described in the strategy and that early help is part of the core business for improving the life chances of children.
- 3.5.3 To use robust needs assessments to understand the nature and extent of the needs of local communities to effectively plan and commission Early Help services, and address any identified gaps in provision.
- 3.5.4 Provide clarity around the responsibilities of local agencies to help families early, and improve the quality and consistency of using Early Help Records and Plans (EHR&Ps) across the partnership to assess needs and plan support to improve children's lives.
- 3.5.5 To monitor effectively the impact of Early Help through a Swindon-wide Early Help Performance Framework to identify key issues, local gaps, impact and success.
- 3.5.6 To establish a multi-agency Early Help working group to be accountable for overseeing the development and implementation of a robust action plan to support the delivery of the Early Help Strategy and Local Offer.

3.6 This report was prepared while Karen Reeve was the Director of Children's Services (DCS) at Swindon Borough Council. Sue Wald is the acting DCS at present. David Haley will become the new, permanent DCS at the end of July 2017. David Haley has been consulted on the draft Early Help strategy.

## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no suggested alternative options. This draft Early Help Strategy is key to delivering better outcomes for children, young people and their families living in Swindon as well as reduce demand on statutory services. It is also expected practice (judged by Ofsted re effectiveness) to have an early help strategy.

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## 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The Council already provides resources to fund Early Help provision. No further financial resources are being sought at this time.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention Rights.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 None have been identified at this stage.

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been completed as part of the Strengthening Families Programme. No adverse or other significant issues were found. The Early Help Strategy will positively impact on vulnerable children living in Swindon's community.

### Risk Management

- 5.5 No specific risks have been identified at this stage for this report.

## 6. Consultees

- 6.1 Director of Children's Services, Head of Education, Children Families and Community Health Management Team, Director of Public Health, Director of Adult Social Care.
- 6.2 The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## 7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

## 8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Swindon Early Help Strategy 2017-2022.