

## **Swindon Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy 2013-2016**

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### **Foreword**

As the Chair of the Swindon Children's Trust Board, I am pleased to introduce the new Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy 2013-2016.

Supported by Cllr Fionuala Foley, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and John Gilbert, the Director of Children's Services at Swindon Borough Council, the Swindon Children's Trust Board is committed to and focused on improving outcomes for children, young people and families in Swindon, and this Plan sets out how we will do that.

Our determination to plan our services based on what children, young people and their families tell us about what is important to them is demonstrated at the start of this Plan – we have handed responsibility for the Foreword to the Plan to our two Youth MPs for Swindon, who as part of Swindon's Youth Forum are fully involved in the development and delivery of the Plan.

### **Foreword by the Swindon Members of the Youth Parliament**

Swindon Borough Council has always taken the voices of young people seriously, and listened to our views to direct change; which is why we are pleased to have the opportunity to support the Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy for 2013–2016.

As representatives of the young people of Swindon, we regularly meet up with locality teams, members of the Council and other decision makers, to feedback on what we have heard from other young people.

The issues we raise, the campaigns we are involved with, have had a true influence. Not only on us young people but, hopefully on adults too.

During the April 2013 Swindon Youth Forum residential, we consulted with a number of young people from all areas, and backgrounds in Swindon, and we decided on our top three priorities from the Swindon Children and Young People's Plan 2013-2016. They are as follows:

- People in Swindon have the right education and skills to compete successfully for job opportunities in our towns and villages - promoting excellent academic and vocational attainment for children and young people
- All young people are participating and enjoying sports, leisure and culture

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- More people feel in control at times of crisis, are protected from abuse and family breakdown, and are more resilient and more able to regain their independence

These priorities were nominated after a lot of thought and discussions.

We strongly believe that education and jobs are one of the most dominating issues in our society today as these define not only our future, but the future and success of our town. Therefore we will be working to look at ways that young people in Swindon have the best start in life, post education.

The second priority was chosen because we feel strongly that young people need to give out positive images of themselves, and by participating in sports and cultural activities we will break that stereotype that is reinforced by many in the media.

The final priority was very easy to choose. As young people, we are often naïve and innocent. There are times when we feel alone and as if the whole world is against us. Which is why, we believe that instead of being neglected, these people should be supported and helped both emotionally and psychologically, after all, we are 25% of the population today, but, 100% of the future.

We believe that these priorities work alongside our own campaigns (having a zero tolerance on discrimination and improving leisure facilities) which was voted by the young people of Swindon, but they are also supported by the UKYP national campaign: 'A curriculum for life,' which collected over 250,000 votes from 11-18 year olds. The curriculum for life is a campaign based on citizenship/PSHE, which we believe is important for growing, developing and teaching vital life skills including: politics, sex and relationships education (SRE), financial skills, cultural awareness, community cohesion and sustainable living. Which we feel will help us in the future. This just goes to show that Swindon does have its finger on the pulse of what's important to young people.

We honestly can't thank everyone enough for allowing us to take on this responsibility and achieve what we have today. It's been a privilege to represent the young people of the community and get their views heard. We hope we've done the young people today proud and will continue to in the future.

*Grishma Ramesh – Member of Youth Parliament for Swindon*

*Naheda Miah – Deputy Member of Youth Parliament for Swindon*

### **Introduction**

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This Plan has been developed by the Swindon Children's Trust Board, and includes priorities developed and agreed by children and young people in Swindon. The Swindon Children's Trust Board includes representatives from all agencies working with children and young people in Swindon, including Health, Police, Probation, Job Centre Plus, early years, schools and colleges, Children's Social Care, Adult Services, Housing, and the voluntary and community sector.

This **Swindon Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy 2013-2016** sets out our vision and the long term improvements that we want to see in the lives of children and young people - their health, well being, safety, aspiration and achievement, and their contribution to and participation in their communities in Swindon.

The Plan applies to all children and young people in Swindon aged pre-birth to 19 years, and beyond for children in care and those who have a disability.

We acknowledge that the different agencies providing services to children, young people and families in Swindon will each be addressing their own distinct priorities and will have their own individual plans. This Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy 2013-2016 aims to provide a set of principles, actions and outcomes for all agencies to contribute to and be measured against.

*The Plan was taken in draft form to the Trust Board in March 2013, with members of the Board invited to consult with their own agencies on the Plan during March and April 2013.*

*The Youth Forum reviewed the priorities in the Plan at their residential in April, and their priorities are included in the final draft.*

*The final Plan, including the completed Action Plan, will be agreed at the Trust Board in June 2013. Progress against the Plan will be monitored quarterly through performance reports to the Trust Board.*

### **Our vision and ambition – our 'Statement of Early Help'**

Our work as a Children's Trust is focused on integrated 'early help' and driving good outcomes for children and young people in Swindon. This approach is based on extensive evidence that it is better to identify and deal with problems early, with a holistic response working with children and their families, rather than respond when the issues become more serious and complex, and when children and young people may require more specialist support.

Our '**Statement of Early Help**' is set around three key areas:

- Prevention
- Targeted Early Help

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- Specialist and Therapeutic support

Our vision is that children in Swindon have the best start in life and grow up in supportive, confident and resilient families and communities. This is what we describe as '**prevention**'.

We want to build the capabilities and skills of communities, families and our workforce so that children grow up in stable and safe families and be better able to realise opportunities to improve their lives. We will make the most out of our shared resources. This is '**targeted early help**'.

Working with the Local Safeguarding Children Board in Swindon, we will ensure that we continue to protect and care for the most vulnerable children in Swindon, and that young people are motivated and safe, living in a supportive and appropriate environment. We want children in care to live in stable families or in specialist placements where that is necessary and appropriate, for them to have a good education and become confident and successful adults. This is '**specialist and therapeutic support**'.

We work closely with the Swindon Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), and their focus is on safeguarding and child protection and the systems that keep children and young people safe and where children and young people have more complex needs. Part of our role as a Children's Trust Board is to hold the LSCB to account so that we can be confident that early intervention is strengthened by their contribution.

We recognise that this Plan has to be managed and delivered within decreasing resources across the public sector and voluntary sector, and where budget savings have to be found most probably throughout the period of this Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy. This financial challenge, and the change in complexity of children and families' difficulties means that we must work collectively as partners in the Children's Trust to deliver this Plan, through the following **key principles**:

- Create a culture that is proactive and promotes health and well being and reduces inequality
- Support children, young people and families to realise opportunities to improve their lives
- Children's needs are best met when addressed in the context of the whole family. Services should therefore work with families in an integrated and holistic way.
- Prevent crisis and maintain stable, safe and self reliant families by enabling families to make well informed choices, have access to parenting advice and support from other families and communities, so that they are less dependent on public services
- Enable families to maintain good relationships and attachment by building their skills and capabilities and regaining those where they have been lost, particularly after crisis

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- Support and protect the most vulnerable children who are not able to live with their families
- Understand the link between worklessness, child poverty and negative outcomes, and keep the partnership and our business partners focused on academic and vocational attainment of children and young people
- Live within our financial means recognising the economic situation we live in

**What outcomes are we trying to achieve through this Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy?**

### **Prevention**

#### What are we trying to achieve?

We want children in Swindon to have the best start in life and to be healthy, and to grow up in supportive, confident and resilient families and communities.

We want children to grow up in loving and stable families where the relationship between children and parents is good.

#### Why should we do this?

- Children who live in stable and loving families are more likely to be confident and ready to learn when they start school
- If attachment between children and their parents is strong, then children are more likely to be safe and feel loved
- So that children and families able to contribute to their communities and are encouraged to help those who need support. Parents bringing up their own children are best placed to support other parents and through their experience are then able to learn from each other
- Carers of disabled children must know what is available so they can continue in their caring role.
- Families need to be able to access services early on before a crisis point and to do that they need clear advice and information.
- Health and well being is fundamental to appropriate development and achieving good outcomes. Healthy and active lifestyles will help reduce illness and long term health conditions such as diabetes. We know that children who grow up in households where adults smoke are more likely to smoke themselves. The majority of smokers start before they are 18 years old, and 50% of smokers are likely to die an early death through smoking related disease.

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- Obesity levels among children and young people continue to cause concern, given the impact on their health now and in the future.
- We have an increasing population of children under the age of five. Our population is also more diverse and many families moving to Swindon may not have the support of extended families. We need to create communities where families are able to support each other and where we take account of cultural diversity and enable children from poorer families to do well at school.
- Evidence consistently points to the higher incidence of difficulties during childhood amongst single homeless people. Most of the rough sleepers in a recent study (Fitzpatrick et al) had experienced troubled childhoods marred by school and/or family problems, with many also reporting traumatic experiences such as sexual or physical abuse, homelessness or neglect.

### **Targeted Early Help**

#### What are we trying to achieve?

Through our support for families, children grow up safe, stable and healthy and make a contribution to their community.

Where parents have lost confidence in their parenting ability or where relationships come under pressure, to support families to adapt to a potentially new situation.

We want to achieve a different balance weighted toward practical, direct, targeted support when parents most need help, and to support parent carers so that disabled children are supported at home or live in supported accommodation where possible

#### Why should we do this?

- To support families best, our services need to focus on recognising the strengths and skills of parents and young people and building capability rather than a deficit model of focusing on what people cannot do
- Some parents need support in 'rediscovering' their capabilities when these have been lost, for example through a crisis, losing employment, managing children with challenging behaviour or parental mental ill health
- We need to hear the voice of the child - there must be a robust system adopted by all agencies to ensure the voice of the child is heard, analysed and acted upon (ensure that where possible, the statement has come from the child not the family)
- Families and carers make an important contribution and we must maximize their input and listen to them, recognising that some families need targeted

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early help - offering a family friendly alternative to assessment is more likely to resolve issues early

- There needs to be greater emphasis on direct work and practical help because parents often need advice and help outside of 9 – 5 Monday to Friday
- Supporting volunteers reduces the need for some targeted and specialist services. Community and voluntary sector groups provide important flexible services either informally or as part of a local authority contract
- Working effectively together enables us to ensure we have a complete view of current provision, previous initiatives and future opportunities and are able to share 'what works'
- We need to support those families where no adult is working, children are out of education and or involved in anti social behaviour, so that families are able to contribute to their communities and children achieve well at school and enter employment and training
- Timely access to high quality health services helps to reduce poor outcomes, for instance breastfed babies are less likely to be obese and the mothers more likely to return to a healthy weight.

### **Treatment/Specialist Support**

**We will work in close partnership with the Swindon Local Safeguarding Board to achieve this outcome**

#### What are we trying to achieve?

Children are protected from harm. Young people are motivated and safe, living in a supportive and appropriate environment. Children in care live in stable families or in specialist placements where that is necessary and appropriate, have a good education and become successful and confident adults.

Children have timely access to health services. Integrated care is provided for children and young people with long-term health conditions, disability or complex needs, and there is effective transition into adult services for those young people who need continued support.

All agencies in Swindon must work in partnership to protect vulnerable children and adults

#### Why should we do this?

- We need to protect our most vulnerable children particularly when we are faced with significant challenges for delivering our services



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- One of the Signs of Safety is empowering and strengthening parents, giving responsibility to parents to parent their child
- Through facilitating enduring, consistent relationships, outcomes for children and young people improve
- We should support families in crisis as quickly as possible, so children are protected and a plan is developed with the family that states what has to change so that children live safely
- Children in care need stability so that they achieve well at school, access training and find employment and stable accommodation when they leave care
- Children and young people in care need to be supported locally so they maintain links with their wider family, friends and school
- Foster carers need support and training in order to maintain a stable home for young people
- Families believe that it is important to have a health system that puts prevention, quality, experience and safety high on the agenda.

### Local and National Policy Drivers

This Plan comes at a time of great challenge for the public and voluntary sector in Swindon.

- There is a growing need for savings to be found across public sector finances, including health and social care services
- The recession is putting a strain on businesses and families and the youth unemployment rate is high
- The population of Swindon is growing, and ageing
- There is a growing burden of lifestyle related ill health, particularly due to physical inactivity, obesity and smoking
- The number of children in care has risen significantly, and cases are more complex

#### Key national legislation and guidance which inform this Children and Young People's Plan

The importance of early help in enabling children and adults to reach their full potential has been set out in a number of government reports. These, along with other published national research have helped us to shape our plans.

They include:

- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Education Act
- Police Service reforms
- Health Service reform and the introduction of Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Children and Families Bill - *The Children and Families Bill incorporates a new single assessment process and an 'Education, Health and Care Plan' by 2014 from birth to 25 and will include support into employment. Local*



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*Authorities will retain their duties to provide young people with learning difficulties or disabilities up to the age of 25, with targeted support to enable them to participate in education or training.*

- Munro Review of Child Protection
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People – Strategy for Public Health in England 2010
- Raising the Participation Age
- Early Education places for 2 year olds
- Child Poverty Act 2006
- Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility 2011
- Troubled Families initiative
- Positive for Youth
- Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Strategy
- Fair Society, Healthy Lives, Sir Michael Marmot 2010

This Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy will be reviewed annually, and the Trust Board will be responsible for amending and adapting the Plan to respond to new government legislation and guidance, and changes to local policy.

### Swindon's Strategies and Plans

In 2011 and 2012, we built a **One Swindon** Plan with all our public sector and voluntary sector partners and the priorities in this new Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy are clearly linked to our One Swindon priorities:

- We can all benefit from a growing economy and a better town centre
- I like where I live
- Everyone is enjoying sports, leisure and cultural opportunities
- Living independently, protected from harm, leading healthy lives and making a positive contribution

The One Swindon focus is about how, as public sector and voluntary sector partners, we create good places to live, how we help local people achieve their aspirations for training and work, promoting good health, positive relationships, feeling safe and a sustainable environment. We know that this can only be achieved by public services, businesses, the voluntary and community sector working together with local people.

We have used the One Swindon priorities as the basis for this Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy.

Swindon's **Health and Well Being Strategy 2012-2016** sets out the vision and long term improvements in local people's health and well being that we want to achieve in Swindon. It focuses on the health and social care issues for everyone living in Swindon, but also recognises the wider factors that affect health and well being including education, employment, housing and leisure. It

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is based on a detailed assessment of need, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which also informs this Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy.

The Health and Well Being Strategy is aligned to One Swindon and sets out 5 priority outcomes:

- Every child and young person in Swindon has a healthy start in life
- Adults and older people in Swindon are living healthier and more independent lives
- Improved health outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, including adults with long term conditions, learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health problems
- Improved mental health, wellbeing and resilience for all
- Creation of sustainable environments in which communities can flourish

Swindon's **Economic Strategy 2012-2026** sets out the agreed shared objectives from the private and public sector to create the conditions for a return to economic growth and delivering changes in Swindon's economy that will benefit businesses, residents, the workforce and visitors over the next 15 years. Creating new jobs, developing the skills of its residents and ensuring many more young people are working in Swindon are key priorities in the Strategy, and those priorities are carried into this Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy.

Priority actions in the Economic Strategy that relate directly to children, young people and families are:

- Create a place of opportunity for young people
- Develop higher education facilities for Swindon

**The Swindon LSCB Business Plan 2013/14** sets out the priorities for the Board. These priorities clearly impact on our own agenda of early intervention, and joint work between the two Boards ensures that the work of each Board is not duplicated, and that good practice and issues of concern are shared.

Swindon Borough Councils **Corporate Strategy Corporate Strategy to 2015** builds on One Swindon and sets out five priorities to give clear direction to support budget planning and decision making. The priorities that relate directly to children and young people are:

- Right skills, right jobs in the right places
- Together, find new ways to reduce vulnerability and improve health for all
- Work with people and families to help them fulfil their potential
- Make the best use of Swindon's resources

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This Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy provides an overarching umbrella for the delivery of all early help services for children, young people and families in Swindon.

This Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy will help consistently focus the children's workforce on addressing our most important challenges and opportunities. It provides a clear sense of purpose and direction against which decisions and plans can be made, implemented and reviewed, and spending reprioritised.

The Plan clearly states:

- **what** the priorities are
- **why** we've chosen them
- **how** we will achieve them
- our **measures** of success
- **who** will contribute to the successful delivery of the priorities

It will be supported by a range of Programmes, including the **Strengthening Families Programme** of work led by the Head of Children and Families at Swindon Borough Council.

### What we know about children, young people and families living in Swindon now

The **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** provides evidence to help us all improve health and wellbeing in Swindon and can be found at: <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/healthandwellbeing>

The resident population of Swindon was 209,000 people at the Census in 2011. This was an increase of 16% since the 2001 Census. About 14,000 people were aged under five years (6.7% of the total), and 38,800 under fifteen years (18.55% of the total).

The JSNA is supplemented by regular 'bulletins', which focus on different areas of identified need. In 2013, a bulletin is being developed on domestic violence and the impact on families.

The **Children and Young People's Needs Assessment** was published in May 2011 and can be found at: <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/sc/sc-childrenfamilies/Pages/sc-childrenfamilies-performanceselfassessment.aspx>

The **Child Poverty Needs Assessment 2011** starts to describe how poverty affects the lives of families and the impact this has on children's life chances

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and can be found at:

<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/pages/search.aspx?k=child%20poverty%20needs%20assessment>

This Children and Young People's Early Plan incorporates actions to address Child Poverty in Swindon. A priority identified from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment directly relating to the Child Poverty Needs Assessment is addressing inequalities and their causes.

We know that health and wellbeing inequalities stem from many causes and that worklessness, poverty and poor educational outcomes are fundamental and can have an enduring effect on health issues such as smoking and obesity.

The overall level of poverty in Swindon in 2010 was 17.4% which is below the national figure of 21.8%. 7,285 children were classed as living in poverty in 2009

**A Learning Disability Needs Assessment** has been developed during 2012 as a JSNA bulletin. This informs the development of services for people with Learning Disabilities in Swindon. This will be published during 2013 and will inform further development of the Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy.

### Our strengths and areas for development

#### Key Strengths:

- Leadership around safeguarding and child protection from the whole council and its partners is visible and strong
- Partnership working is healthy, and constructive challenge is promoted. Partners are ambitious and have a strong, collective desire to improve outcomes for children, young people and families through good practice
- Elected Members are closely involved in and engaged with the Child Protection and Safeguarding agenda, through membership of the Swindon Children's Trust Board, LSCB, Fostering and Adoption Panels, Corporate Parenting Advisory Board and Children in Care Council and the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Strategic planning, based on One Swindon, is thorough, and is constructed around quality and outcomes. Priorities for children, young people and families have been clearly included in the Council's Strategic Priorities (Corporate Plan).

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- Children, young people, parents, carers and all our partners are closely engaged with us on service planning and development, and their views have influenced change
- There is commitment to trying new ideas, and continually evaluating to establish their effectiveness, for example the Family Nurse Partnership, LIFE Programme, and Signs of Safety
- Effective Performance management and reporting ensures that the LSCB, SCTB and Overview and Scrutiny can regularly monitor, analyse and scrutinise and challenge performance

### **Areas for further development:**

- Move towards a multi disciplinary single point of contact for all matters relating to children, young people and families, through which there will be better information sharing to route to the appropriate help and support
- Move away from thresholds and referrals to a more seamless help based approach through smaller multi disciplinary teams with a focus on children in need
- Introduce a single assessment process, bringing together family health assessments, CAF, initial assessments, core assessments, troubled families and SEN
- Move towards outcome based joint family plans, whilst keeping children's welfare paramount and informed through our learning through Signs of Safety and other evidence based practice models
- Make sure that our approach is responsive to the child's story rather than the child to fit into ours
- Develop ways to better measure the impact and effectiveness of early intervention and prevention
- Further improve the speed of adoption of looked after children through closer working with the courts
- Increase and improve help for families with complex needs and thereby reducing the number of children in need and children in care placed in independent placements outside of Swindon
- Increase the number of unemployed 18-25 year olds, vulnerable families and disabled adults in sustainable employment.

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- Ensuring continued development of common core skills in the workforce during a programme of change
- Continue to improving attainment at KS4 (5+ A\*-C GCSE in English, maths and science)
- Continue to improve the quality of our work by sharing the learning from audits of casework, ensuring that feedback enables practice to improve, and that we can evidence that

### **What children, young people and families tell us about what is important to them**

#### **Re-Design Programme of services for children, young people and families**

During 2011/12, Children's Services led a re-design programme of services for children, young people and families. Children's Services face significant challenges to future service provision because of increasing demand and reductions in government spending. We understood that we must radically re-think the assumptions on which services are provided to protect our ability to delivery front line services and achieve more for less. It is acknowledged that safeguarding remains at the centre of all our work

The Programme of re-design of services for children and families defined our core business and addressed changes in developing government and local policy. It set the agenda for us to collectively drive down demand whilst delivering better outcomes and relationships for children, young people and families in Swindon. It established a common set of skills and competencies amongst the children's workforce to ensure that all staff are able to build strength and resilience when working with children and families. Our partners, including the voluntary sector, were involved in the programme.

We understood from the start that any re-design can only be successful if we talked to, and listened to front line staff and services users.

Our approach was to have 'conversations' with the people who receive our services. During February and March 2011 we spoke to 600 young people, parents and our partners. We asked them what they think of the services that they receive from us, and for them to describe their experience of dealing with the Council, where things have worked well, and where they have perhaps found things more difficult.

From those conversations, we were able to draw up a list of 'behaviours' that they wanted our staff to have when they were working with them. They were:

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- A good listener who doesn't judge
- Takes time to understand and build a relationship
- Approachable and friendly
- Constructive and positive
- Knowledgeable and able to offer guidance and strategies to help, and not do it all for us
- Consistent and creative
- Honest and confident – able to have difficult conversations

In September 2011, we had a further 100 conversations with our service users and staff. This time we asked them to give us examples of when staff working with them had used these behaviours, or not, what difference it made, and very importantly, how it made them feel. The Council undertook a reorganisation of its functions and structures through the Stronger Together programme and these behaviours were used to recruit the senior management of the organisation. The work is also influencing the Workforce Development Programme.

The full report of the Re-Design Programme is available here:

<https://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=816&MId=5189&Ver=4>

### Young People's Priorities

The Youth Forum includes representatives from the Children In Care Council, Young Carers Forum and Chatterboxes, a participation group for disabled children and young people. The Youth Forum met in April 2013 to discuss and agree their priorities for the Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy, and to make a plan of how they can best contribute to the Plan.

#### This is what they said:

'We reviewed the priorities in the Plan at our residential and our priorities are also going to be included in the final draft. Young people to split into 4 groups, to answer the following questions:

- What does the priority mean to you / do you understand it?
- Can you put it into your own words?
- What changes would prove this is working?
- Which priority would you like to sign up to and why?

The young people were really pleased with the priorities chosen; and felt that they were a good reflection of what's important to them. Other comments and suggestions included:

*The language is very 'adult'- could something be written in more appropriate language for young people - **which we did!!** Could WE produce posters to*



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*raise awareness – making the information child and young person friendly - to include; Pictures / colour / cartoons / sketches? **Which we will be doing!!!**  
We are also going to help get the information out to schools / youth organisations'*

They said:

'Swindon Youth Forum are fully supportive of these priorities and we have agreed to adopt these alongside our other priorities. We are going to be working with the Children's Trust Board to make sure everyone is doing their best to work to these principles.'

Representatives of the Youth Forum meet with the Trust Board on a regular basis, and their priorities will be included in the monitoring of the Plan.

**In response to what the young people told us, we have amended the words that we had originally used to describe the priorities, and have used the words that the young people suggested.**

### How do we improve the quality of our work and continue to learn?

The Local Safeguarding Children Board Quality Assurance programme is a three yearly cycle focusing on cross- and inter-agency themes and issues. The LSCB Quality Assurance sub-group leads multi-agency themed reviews with the LSCB driving the overall framework. The programme consists of the following elements:

- Annual in depth analysis of one or two priority areas each year, for instance a domestic abuse case. This has led to a joint strategic needs assessment on the effects of domestic violence on children so that early support services address the needs of this group of children
- Annual light touch review across two or all agencies – strategy discussions with the Police and Health were undertaken in October 2012
- Annual audit of the experience of frontline staff (multi-agency audit and questionnaire to staff on safeguarding supervision March 2013)
- Annual Internal Review of children and family services, including mystery shopper, observed practice visits, children and young people's questionnaire, case file audit, focus groups for staff.
- A one off SCIE Learning Together case review of a neglect case to ensure learning on the importance of working with neglect cases is shared and children have good protection plans.
- Annual analysis of safeguarding Section 11 self-assessments
- Quarterly performance data, summary report and "performance spotlight". When required Individual local case reviews and serious case reviews (local and national)

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- Regular Information from individual organisation's safeguarding quality assurance activity

The findings from audit activity undertaken are shared with the relevant teams and included in action plans which inform learning.

### **Equality and Diversity**

A Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed for One Swindon and for this Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy.

<http://10.154.104.226:9070/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=47757>

### **Our Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy priorities for 2013-2016**

#### **Priority 1 – We can all benefit from a growing economy and a better town centre**

**People in Swindon have the right education and skills to compete successfully for job opportunities in our towns and villages – promoting excellent academic and vocational attainment for children and young people**

#### **Young people's words:**

- *Young people in Swindon have the right sort of education, skills and opportunities – whatever their circumstance, to be the best they can be; including good transport to access work, further education and training. We need to promote academic and vocational learning as a good lifestyle choice.*
- *Having confidence, skills and qualifications that are right for you, can help you achieve what you want from your life, and make Swindon a better place*
- *Swindon can be a better place in the future, by offering more opportunities for young people like education, work experience and vocational opportunities*

#### **Young people's comments:**

- *More schools supporting work experience programmes – this is really important*
- *Work in schools to support skills needed in the workplace*

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- *Volunteer chances to give work experience*
- *Career advice in schools – good, not half an hour*

### **We will ensure that employees have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience to compete successfully for job opportunities.**

- Open a University Technical College (UTC) by 2014 so that we increase the number of young people who have the right skills to complete apprenticeships, obtain jobs and as appropriate access Higher Education within the fields of engineering, business and enterprise
- Increase the active involvement of employers in education provision, building on the model developed for the UTC.
- Meet the requirements of the Raising Participation Age legislation:
  - Engage with all stakeholders to achieve RPA priorities
  - Engage with schools to gain a presence at parents evenings to promote Raising Participation
  - Engage with the business community to support participation in learning
- Work with partners to increase the number of jobs and apprenticeships through the Skills and Employment Board
- Partners to actively engage with unemployed 18-25 year olds, vulnerable families and disabled adults to increase their take up of sustainable employment
- Maximise the use of the Troubled Families Programme to focus opportunities for Job Centre Plus to improve the economic independence of families by increasing take up of sustainable employment or moving closer to work
- Deliver an accessible and diverse range of school places across the Borough as far as possible located in the heart of local communities

### **Work with schools and colleges to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided in order to deliver year on year improvement and increase attainment levels at age 16 to 19 to reach and exceed the national average**

- Challenge all schools below floor standards and with 'requires improvement' graded Ofsted inspections to improve to 'good'
- Challenge, quality assure and support Early Years settings to prepare children for school and support parents in assisting learning
- Deliver Education Aspiration Strategy by October 2013
- Request a report from the Youth Forum and Children in Care Council on their response to the attainment agenda

### **Work with schools and colleges to narrow the gap in attainment in young people receiving free school meals, children in care, and their peers**

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- Track and offer support to young people who are vulnerable including those at risk of NEET, children in care and care leavers, children who are disabled and those at risk of offending to enable them to achieve their potential
- Meet the requirements for early education for 2 year olds

### Priority 2 – I like where I live

**Working together, people feel that crime and anti social behaviour is being tackled**

#### Young people's words:

- *Everyone working together to make their communities a safer and nicer place to live*
- *By working together, we all think that crime and bad behaviour can be dealt with*

**Implement projects specifically designed to build a strong sense of community to prevent the likelihood of crime and anti social behaviour, focussing particularly on reducing numbers of first time and repeat offenders.**

- Commence development of preventing re-offending – focusing on early interventions and development of the integrated offending management scheme
- Work with Criminal Justice partners to increase the use of Restorative Justice, in YOT, Neighbourhood Justice Panels, Police Community Resolutions and new prevention disposals (Cautions and Conditional Cautions)

#### Young people's comments:

- *We need a list of anti social behaviour so that young people know: damaging property, violence, graffiti, drugs, drinking, loud music, danger dogs, crime, bullying, upsetting older people – it would be good to have pictures for younger children*
- *Start community clean ups – take responsibility for where you live and be proud of it!*
- *Police to do more specialist work within schools around gangs and knife crime. We want to feel safe when we go out at night*
- *Lots of people are scared of anti social people and won't tell the police*
- *Give those who commit anti social crimes a punishment to help their community and more positive things to do*

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### **We will endeavour to keep roads safe, working to reduce accidents and raise awareness of road safety in school**

- Encourage and support school communities to address local road safety and travel issues through initiatives including the School Travel Ambassador Scheme.

## **Priority 3 – Everyone is enjoying sports, leisure and cultural opportunities**

### **All young people are participating and enjoying sports, leisure and culture**

#### **Young people's words:**

- *Encouraging young people to take part in different activities and explore culture*
- *All young people should be able to enjoy a range of positive activities and can experience new things at a price they can afford*

#### **Young people's comments:**

- *More sports, leisure and culture would mean fewer young people hanging around and less anti social behaviour*
- *We need cheaper buses and cheaper activities, and more leisure and sports facilities*
- *All the play areas need to be cleaned up*
- *Use spare land to turn into play parks and football pitches*
- *Leisure and culture needs to be better publicised with good adverts*
- *Schools should do sports teams for people who aren't the best – cos we still like playing*
- *Young people to have a say in what we want and how the money is spent*
- Target the development of physical activities and sports on areas and population groups at risk of ill health through delivery of:
  - Healthy Sports Programme – cookery, healthy lifestyle classes for parents of under 5s
  - MEND Programme for 5-7, 7-13 and teens (13+)
  - Soccer Centre Programme – structured football development programme for age 2 and over in partnership with Swindon Town Football in the Community Trust
  - Youth Sports Swindon Project
  - Community Sports Triactive around increasing participation in running, swimming, cycling in targeted areas of Swindon
  - Holiday activity programme for disabled children, plus 2 access days
  - Sports Forums – 2 volunteer network meetings per year

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- Promote a good range of accredited learning opportunities eg coaching certificates, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, The Arts Award
- Target support for young people through cultural opportunities such as the Swindon Music Service, Swindon Dance, Sixth Sense Theatre for young people and Cre8 studios.

### **Priority 4 – Living independently, protected from harm, leading healthy lives and making a positive contribution**

**More people feel in control at times of crisis, are protected from abuse and family breakdown, are more resilient and more able to regain their independence**

#### *Young people's words*

- *People in Swindon should be in control of their own lives, living comfortably, healthy, enjoying life and making a difference. When things go wrong, they should be able to get help easily and quickly*
- *Young people feel in control at times of trouble, are safe from being hurt and able to get the right support when things go wrong*
- *Swindon people should be able to live as independent lives as possible; when they have difficulties in their lives, they should know where to get help, and be supported to overcome these problems and stop them happening again.*

#### *Young people's comments*

- *People need education from an early age on how to deal with life stuff*
- *Help young people to be confident so that they can cope with their life*
- *Less people needing help from social services – and dealing with their own problems if they can*
- *Advertise in schools where you can get help for different things*

**Invest in working models which are evidence based, improve outcomes and protect children and vulnerable adults**

- Work holistically with families identified as meeting the Troubled Families criteria using evidence informed practice to reach 370 'Troubled Families' so that we strengthen families and protect children
- Use the Signs of Safety model to further develop our approach to planning with children, young people and their families

**Children under five and their families are supported to achieve healthy social and emotional development**

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- Join up services for children and families including linking children's centres and increasing the number of Family Nurses (Family Nurse Partnership) and Health Visitors
- Midwives, Health Visitors, children's centres and early years providers share information to identify families that need most support and promote the benefits of healthy lifestyles and breastfeeding which support attachment and reduce the risk of obesity.
- Review children's centres so that they act as a community resource where families support each other, enabling staff to focus on supporting the most vulnerable. Re-evaluate the services provide at all children's centres to focus on the whole family and ensure a good common assessment is in place for families who have additional needs.
- Make the most of appropriate technology to provide information where it is most needed and in a way which allows our communities and partners to contribute to and support the key messages of parenting and healthy lifestyles through inclusive advice services and parenting groups where parents can support each other.
- Provide information and advice to parents, carers and professionals to encourage safe travel behaviour, including in-car safety for babies and young children, child pedestrian safety and promotion of active travel.

### **There is an effective range of activities and interventions that keep people safe, help people feel positive and reduce their vulnerability to harm**

- Delivery of Strengthening Families Programme
  - Single Staged Assessment
  - Care and Placements
  - Single point of contact – triage for child protection and early support rapid response
  - Workforce Reform/Development
  - Co-location of relevant staff groupings around client needs
  - Multi disciplinary local family practices around early support and children in need
- As part of the **Strengthening Families Programme** (above), develop a multi agency hub – a single point of advice and guidance plus improved information sharing and decision making for professionals to determine the right help at the right time for children and families

### **Use commissioning to improve value for money and increase choice for users of services**

- All partners to involve communities, parents and carers and service users in the creation of service developments and reviews to ensure services are based on their views and address their needs.
- Work with communities (including children, young people, parents and carers) to contribute their experience to the Joint Strategic Needs



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Assessment (JSNA) and share messages from data with them so that they develop the solutions to those challenges with us.

- Ensure that all our contracts and service specifications include a consideration of how providers consider the mental health of the people they engage with
- Review and re-commission our placements from independent providers of residential and foster care to achieve increased value for money, increased choice and improved outcomes for looked after children.

### **Develop the capacity and confidence of our workforce so that it seeks at the outset to build on individual resilience and skills by working with people to find solutions**

- Train staff within the whole children's workforce to help families to develop their ability and skills in parenting so that children are protected and live in stable families.
- Ensure our workforce is prepared and trained to deliver a child centred approach which starts with 'what people can do for themselves, what they need help with and what choices they want to make in the way that they receive help'. We recognise that our workforce is critical to this success and will actively encourage and support their development. We will deliver a range of core training as identified through the Children's Workforce Development Plan

### **Work with partners to support individuals and communities to improve their own well-being**

- Based on agreed priorities in the Health and Well Being Strategy, work with partners to determine deliver of programmes including targeted work with vulnerable children and families to reduce risky behaviour and encourage healthy lifestyles such as:
  - Breastfeeding support
  - Sexual health advice
  - Preventing the uptake of smoking
  - Alcohol and substance misuse prevention and support
  - Family weight management eg through the MEND Programme
  - Determine and target those most vulnerable to poor sexual health outcomes, such as teenage pregnancy/parenthood, STI infection including HIV and sexual violence, to reduce risk and provide appropriate support.
  - Obesity in Year 6 through Health Weight Strategy
  - Safe and active travel
- Develop a locality listening model that will promote and enable positive healthy lifestyle choices
- Use local intelligence and data to identify specific areas of need and develop social/community networks locally to:

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- Promote messages and deliver activities about active and healthy lifestyles
- Make the most of appropriate technology to provide information where it is most needed and in a way which allows our communities and partners to contribute to and support the key messages of parenting and healthy lifestyles through inclusive advice services and parenting groups where parents can support each other
- Vision screening is provided and identified children referred to local services
- Reduce hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to 5-18 year olds and to under 5s.

The **voice of the child** is clearly evidenced in all our interactions with the child, young person and family. We know because their opinions, views and aspirations have been noted and linked to measurable outcomes.

### **Children, young people and their families are active and empowered through the delivery of the education health and care plan**

- Provide joint leadership through education, health and care professionals to develop an effective response to the need for transformed provision for 0-25 year olds with learning difficulties and disabilities

### **Work with communities and partners, including our partners in the voluntary sector to agree the priorities and improve the health of the population and reduce inequalities**

- Work with communities (including children, young people, parents and carers) to contribute their experience to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and share messages from data with them so that they develop the solutions to those challenges with us
- Take steps to end child poverty and improve the life chances of the poorest
- Embed homelessness prevention as widely as possible in everything that we do
- Work together with the voluntary/3<sup>rd</sup> and community sector so that we can understand their strengths and the contribution they make and vice versa. We will commission effectively for better outcomes and support the voluntary/3rd sector in measuring their contribution to outcomes. We will create a culture of trust and transparency through the joining up of resources, sharing information, collectively managing the overlaps and gaps in our services

### **Increase the number of and maximise the impact of volunteers**

- Create more volunteering opportunities to support the delivery of services
- Continue to develop and grow community dialogue, relationships and networks to enable improved communication on potential changes and opportunities that could involve local children, young people and families in the design and development of local solutions.

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- Develop an awareness campaign to ensure that all professionals and voluntary and community sector are fully aware of the total resources available to support families
- Work with community groups and local people to determine what can be done locally to support families to be stable and safe, tapping into new initiative such as networks, timebanks etc.
- Collaboratively develop our key messages with professionals, service users, carers and communities in order to develop and create community capacity and capability

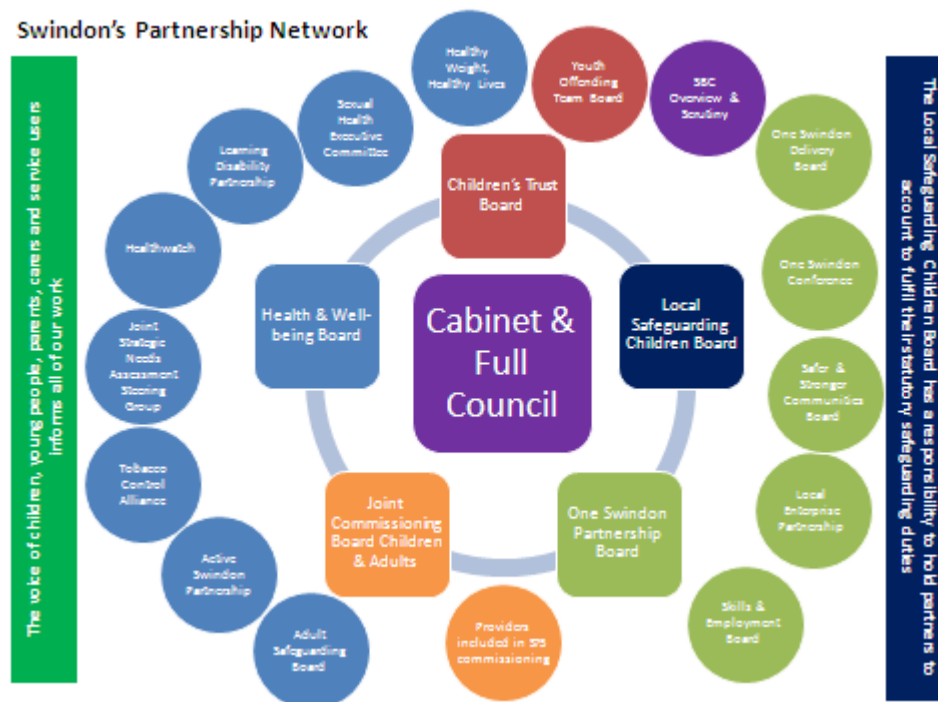
### **How the Children's Trust is structured**

Partners on the Children's Trust Board include:

Independent Chair  
Elected Members  
Headteachers  
Trade Union  
School Governor  
Clinical Commissioning Group  
Youth Forum  
Voluntary Sector  
Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Child and Adolescent Mental Health services  
Diocesan representative  
Police  
Board Director Commissioning (DCS/DASS)  
Adult Services  
Equalities  
Community Safety  
Schools Forum  
Fire Service  
Local Safeguarding Children Board  
Jobcentre Plus  
General Practitioner  
Parent and Carers Advisory Group  
Probation Services  
Swindon College  
New College  
Sure Start Children's Centre

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### Finance – our resources

The table below represents the current financial resources in respect of services that support the Children and Young People of Swindon.

#### 2012/13 Net Budget Allocation

| Service Area Funding Source                   | Amount<br>£'000 | %          |
|---|-----------------|------------|
| <b>Swindon Borough Council (General Fund)</b> |                 |            |
| Children - Social Care                        | 17,196          |            |
| Education & Other Children Services           | 12,471          |            |
|   | <b>29,667</b>   | <b>16%</b> |
| <b>Health</b>                                 |                 |            |
| Jointly Commissioned with SBC (Swindon PCT)   | 9,779           |            |
|   | <b>9,779</b>    | <b>5%</b>  |
| <b>Dedicated Schools Grant</b>                |                 |            |
| Education & Other Children Services           | 18,376          |            |
| Schools Delegated Budgets                     | 121,823         |            |
|   | <b>140,199</b>  | <b>77%</b> |
| <b>Pupil Premium Grant</b>                    |                 |            |
|   | <b>2,100</b>    | <b>1%</b>  |

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|                    |  |                |             |
|--------------------|--|----------------|-------------|
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b> |  | <b>181,745</b> | <b>100%</b> |
|--------------------|--|----------------|-------------|

The 2013-14 budget has been subject to a number of changes;

- A net decrease in the Swindon Borough Council (General Fund) allocation of approximately 7% as a result of council wide savings programmes in response to overall reduced Local Government income as well as adjustments to the budgeted cash-flow profile for Schools PFI.
- An estimated net decrease in the Health funding of 1.8%.
- A net increase in the Dedicated Schools and Pupil Premium Grant allocation of approximately 7% as a result of additional responsibilities in relation to 2 year olds and post 16 services plus increased demand for services.

Further savings are planned for future years, recognising the funding challenges that Local Governments face, using six new change programmes that have be established to achieve the Councils overall strategic priorities.

### How the Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy will be delivered – Our Delivery Plan

This Children and Young People's Early Support Strategy 2013-2016 is owned by the Swindon Children's Trust Board. It will be reviewed annually by the Board and through quarterly exception performance reports.