

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

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CONTACT OFFICERS: Michael Jarrett, Service Lead - Early Years and Prevention Service
Anjli Sidhu, Strategic Parenting Officer - Early Years and Prevention Service

(For all Enquiries) (01753) 476556

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

PARENTING IN SLOUGH – A MULTI-AGENCY STRATEGY

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides an overview of the work that is underway on the production of and launch of a Multi-Agency Parenting Strategy for Slough.

The report provides a more detailed overview of the key areas of development including the:

- Development of the multi-agency Parenting Strategy for Slough
- Implementation of Slough's Parenting Offer
- The roll out of training opportunities across the system.

The multi-agency parenting strategy is currently being developed and will be published by 31st March 2020.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Panel is asked to note and comment as appropriate on the work that has been undertaken amongst key stakeholders and partners to develop the multi-agency strategy.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community and reduce inequalities for all ages across the borough. It uses the JSNA as its evidence base. *Priority 1: Protecting vulnerable children*. Additionally the Parenting Strategy has a focus on Improving the wellbeing of slough's residents (parents, carers & families), so links to the priority 3.

3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

The work of the Multi-agency parenting strategy contributes to the following outcomes in the Council's Five Year Plan: <http://insite/media/3558/five-year-plan-2019-2024.pdf>

1. *Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful*
2. *Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs.*

4. Other Implications

(a) Financial - There are no financial implications

(b) Risk Management; None

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications - None

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment - None

(e) Workforce: A 6 month secondment for a Strategic Parenting Officer was secured for the period October 2019 to March 2020.

5. Supporting Information

Background to the development of Slough's Multi-agency Parenting Strategy

5.1 The national emphasis on Parenting is driven by statutory guidance such as *Working Together* (2018), alongside evidence from research such as the Allen (2011) and Munro (2011) reviews, and fits within the context of the national Troubled Families programme (known in Slough as The Strengthening Families programme). The strategy also recognises evidence which supports the claim that good quality parenting can help to address the structural causes of poverty, and is one of the key elements of sustaining families' social mobility (All Parliamentary Group Report, 2015).

Government guidance requires local authorities to adopt a multi-agency approach to supporting parents and families and promoting inter-agency co-operation to improve the welfare of children. Services should also focus on improving family functioning and building the family's own capacity to solve problems; this should be done within a structured, evidence-based framework (*Working Together* 2018).

5.2 Our local data compiled from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2018 (JSNA) and Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020 provides a strategic overview of trends in Slough, and a clear understanding of the factors that influence local needs of parents and families.

Some of the cross cutting headlines relevant to Early Help include the following:

- With a population of approximately 149,000, Slough Borough Council (SBC) is made up of a significantly younger than average population compared to any of the south east local authorities – approximately 42,180 (**28%**) under 18s.
- **39.2%** of all households contain dependent children - this is the third highest proportion across England and Wales.
- Slough is one of the most ethnically diverse areas outside of London with **46%** of the population identifying as White British or White Other, **40%** Asian or British Asian, **8.6%** Black or Black British, and **3.4%** as mixed heritage.

- Slough ranks 78 out of 152 for deprivation amongst upper tier authorities. **19.5%** of children under 16 live in low-income families in Slough.
- Compared to the South East, Slough has relatively low employment (**78%**) and high economic inactivity (**18.6%**).
- At **3.6%**, family homelessness is significantly worse in Slough than national (1.6%) and regional (**1.9%**) averages.

Across Slough, parenting has been identified as a priority and is a recurring theme in the majority of Strengthening Families and Early Help cases. In addition, feedback from schools in the recent audit identified parenting as a significant issue. Parents within the Strengthening Families programme often manage a range of problems that are likely to affect their inter-parental relationship and their ability to parent effectively.

Since April 2015, Slough has worked (or completed an intervention) with a total of 671 families who meet the Strengthening Families criteria. Issues range from children being in need (by default) coupled with additional needs/issues such as health, domestic abuse, crime/ASB involvement, issues around education or unemployment. **48%** of the 671 families who have had an intervention had some form of domestic abuse or violence prevalent in the household.

It was also found those suffering from abuse will start presenting with other issues such as 'health'. In fact **54%** of families worked with under the Strengthening Families programme suffered from a range of health issues relating to physical, emotional or mental health (low self esteem, anxiety, depression for example).

Additionally, based on data for April 2019, Slough Children's Services Trust – Front Door received 1,042 contacts relating to children and of those contacts 650 (**62.4%**) could be classed as issues caused by parental factors (alcohol misuse, abuse/ neglect).

5.3 Parenting in Slough – A Multi-agency Strategy relates to families with children aged 0-25 (including SEND) and essentially aims to drive good professional practice and improve outcomes for families and parents in Slough. The strategy sets out our vision, the local and national agenda, our parenting offer, and what we are aiming to achieve (our priorities) in Slough. The draft strategy document can be found at Appendix 1:

5.4 The strategy action plan (available at Appendix 2) has been established in collaboration with key partners/stakeholders and outlines the key actions and processes to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy/parenting offer.

5.5 Key Priorities for Implementation

- **Early intervention and Prevention-** Resources will focus on meeting families' needs at the earliest point. The purpose of the parenting offer is to deliver the right level of parenting support to parents who require at the earliest possible time, before problems and issues become entrenched. By supporting parents early, it is anticipated that outcomes will be more positive, ultimately reducing the need for statutory involvement.
- **Co-ordinated Multi-Agency Approach** – A co-ordinated and integrated approach to service delivery is planned to support parents, carers and families. Partner agencies will share information and best practice to ensure a holistic parenting offer is provided in Slough. We are developing referral pathways and processes for parents/carers, ensuring that access to support is timely and

appropriate. Service delivery will utilise the skills and expertise of practitioners across services to match delivery with individual expertise and need.

- **Quality Standards** – Clear, consistent quality standards for family and parenting support will be established. Practitioners will be trained as Train the Trainer for nationally recognised evidence based programmes. Service delivery will be quality assured to ensure a continuum of desired standards. We will ensure that that support is needs-led rather than being responsive to availability. We will develop a quality standards framework for Slough which describes a core set of competencies and knowledge/skills/experience for workers.
- **Participation** – Wherever possible parents and carers will be involved in the planning and delivery of services. We will also involve families in the decisions made about their support, to increase their level of participation with services, and ensure that interventions offered are relative to their needs. Families' experiences and opinions are essential to achieving effective feedback. By taking a 'whole family' approach, the voice of the child and family will define the effectiveness of our service delivery and the development of our future provisions.
- **Accessibility and Engagement** – A needs led approach is key to delivering appropriate and effective provisions. We will source a range of methods to ensure families can access the entirety of the support provision, especially families with complex needs or who are hard to reach through traditional approaches. For example, providing transport and crèche facilities, ensuring provisions offered are run at suitable times of the day and accessing translation services where required.
- **Workforce** – Workers providing family and parenting support will be adequately competent, confident, experienced and qualified. Training for practitioners will be relevant, planned, coordinated and appropriately resourced. Practitioners accessing training for evidence based parenting programmes commissioned by SBC, have completed Expressions of Interest (available at Appendix 3) affirming their competencies, experience, skills and commitment to future co-delivery. Management feedback and ongoing support processes will be established to improve standards of delivery via A Memorandum of Understanding (available at Appendix 4) which underpins the role, responsibilities, and expectations that partner agencies will be signing up to as part of their commitment to the multiagency parenting strategy.

5.6 Tools used and Guidance resourced to aid the development of the Slough Parenting Offer include:

- National/statutory guidelines – Parenting as a national priority
- NICE (2011) Guidelines (social learning, attachment, CBT approaches)
- EIF recommendations for evidence based programmes
- Statistical Neighbours Data
- Tried and tested via local authorities (east Berkshire and across the region)
- Audit of current provisions and identified gaps
- Parental feedback

A range of evidence-based, accredited and universal parenting programmes have been incorporated into Slough's Parenting Offer forming part of the strategy. The Parenting Offer for Slough in its current form is available at Appendix 5, 6 and 7.

5.7 The illustration below briefly outlines work undertaken to date and plans moving forward:

What's been done (November-December 2019)	We are currently working on: (January-February 2020)	Next Steps - plans / timelines (March 2020 onwards)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-funders / co-delivery partners identified • Formation of Parenting Strategy Task & Finish Group • Task & finish group terms of reference & action plan shared • Audit of current parenting provisions in Slough (ongoing) • Distribution of parent survey • Gaps / needs analysis • Commissioning plan for evidenced based/bespoke parenting programmes • Procurement business cases submitted • Development of Slough's parenting offer (universal-targeted provisions) • Draft Parenting Strategy produced • Workforce development plan for co-delivery of provisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of: referral process / pathway; a single parent screening tool; generic parenting offer 'evaluation tool' • Identification of Parent Champions across services • Roll out of 'Reducing Parental Conflict' training (evidence based) for staff across partner services. Includes Train the Trainer. • Development of Solihull Antenatal online programme • Training schedule for Triple P Train the Trainer programme across workforce • Service Level Agreement to be shared across partners as part of the multi-agency delivery plan • Finalising Slough's parenting offer • Implementation of parent 'drops ins' across Slough's children's centres • Publicity material & webpage development for Slough's parenting offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official launch of parenting strategy / offer & website • Implementation of evidenced based parenting programmes – Triple P, Reducing Parental Conflict, accredited and bespoke programmes i.e. Browns, Family Links etc. (phased implementation). • Implementation & monitoring of: referrals; referral systems & screening process • Implementation of robust monitoring and evaluation processes to assess impact and outcomes of programmes and interventions • Review outcomes (qualitative & quantitative) of provision delivery to measure impact, future development areas • Continued work with multiagency partners & workforce development including Train the Trainer

6. Comments of Other Committees

This report has not been considered by any other committees.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The multi-agency Parenting Strategy has been developed to drive good professional practice and improve family outcomes across Slough. The strategy sets out our vision, the local and national agenda, our parenting offer and our priorities for implementation.

7.2 The Parenting offer has been developed to ensure services and support are accessible at all levels – from universal to targeted support and for families with children aged 0-19 (up to 25 for SEND)

7.3 Next steps include the official launch of the strategy and parenting offer (April 2020), the development of Slough's parenting webpage for parents and practitioners and the implementation of robust monitoring and evaluation processes to measure impact outcomes and the effectiveness of Slough's Parenting Offer.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Parenting in Slough: A Multi-agency Strategy

Appendix 2 - Strategy Action Plan

Appendix 3 - Expression of Interest

Appendix 4 - Memorandum of Understanding

Appendix 5 - Parenting Offer - A Guide for Practitioners

Appendix 6 - Parenting Offer – A Guide for Parents/Carers

Appendix 7 - Parenting Support – Useful Contacts & Online Resources