

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Slough Wellbeing Board
Date:	15 th March 2023
Subject:	Slough Early Help Partnership Strategy
Chief Officer:	Sue Butcher
Contact Officer:	Donna Briggs
Ward(s):	N/A
Exempt:	YES/NO - [if Part 2 cite reason based on Access to Information Rules]
Appendices:	Slough Early Help Partnership Strategy

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out the purpose and expected impact of the newly developed Early Help Partnership Strategy in delivering a cohesive approach to early intervention and prevention for children, young people and families across the Borough.

Recommendations:

Council/Committee is recommended to:

Approve the adoption and implementation of the Early Help Partnership Strategy and note that a 2 year implementation plan will be developed to be overseen by the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

Reason: To have an improved impact on the lives of children and young people in Slough by providing support when problems first arise in a timely way that prevents escalation of need

2. Report

'The Early Help Partnership Strategy sets out our collective vision to share knowledge and resources to support children, young people and families who need help as soon as they need it, to prevent problems escalating.

The strategy feeds directly into all of Slough Borough Council's priorities (2022-2025) in the following ways:

2.1 A Council that lives within our means, balances the budget and delivers best value for taxpayers and service users

The delivery of a multi-agency early help offer through shared responsibility, will have a direct impact on the pressures placed on directly delivered local authority services as partners agencies will be better placed to support children, young people and families within universal and community services. As the needs of families are met earlier and they are empowered to make positive change, this will result in a reduction of pressure

on more costly statutory and specialist services over a number of years, supporting the Local Authority with savings targets.

2.2. An environment that helps residents live more independent, healthier and safer lives

A key principle of the strategy is to ensure residents can find support more easily and increase their use of universal services to meet their needs before issues arise in order to build independence and self-efficacy. A cohesive early help offer will help us to build an improved picture of the early help needs of children, young people and families. Through this we will be able to proactively work towards improving key areas of need, which will include health and social support in line with identified shared outcome.

2.3 A borough for children and young people to thrive

The vision for children and young people from our Early Help Strategy speaks directly to this third priority;

‘Children and young people feel happy, safe and loved within their families and wider community, where they are helped to thrive, not just survive’

Specific areas identified within the Corporate Strategy in relation to preventative help via family hubs and working collaboratively with schools are set out within the delivery plan for the Early Help Strategy. Breaking the cycle of poverty and striving for generational change are at the heart and purpose of working in a preventative way, to build on the resilience and resources of each generation of families.

2.4 Infrastructure that reflects the uniqueness of Slough’s places and new vision for the town centre

With a clear focus on ‘strengthening families and strengthening communities’, we plan to link with existing locality and community networks via the work being undertaken on community hubs to develop the early help offer within communities by communities. This will empower our communities and support them to take ownership and pride in their own neighbourhoods, reducing inequalities and improving the context within which our children and young people live.

Background

As a partnership we collectively agree that we want the best for all children, young people and families. The development of a common vision and shared principles for our new Early Help Strategy is key to our approach if we are to work in partnership towards this common overarching goal.

Young people and parents have told us that they want Early Help services to be easily accessible, enabling self-referral and to offer flexibility in providing the right support before problems get bigger. The delivery of the Early Help offer needs to be built on positive relationships where there is mutual respect, and children, young people and families feel heard, unjudged and encouraged to make positive changes in their lives. In developing this strategy we listened to our children, young people, families and partner agencies, to develop the vision and related principles for our Early Help Strategy:

In the past 4 years, early help has been considered by stakeholders as a service delivered directly by the Local Authority, rather than a multi-agency approach. The updated Early

Help strategy provides a clear, collective vision about Early Help being all of our responsibility and gives a clear commitment to children and families in our community.

The independent review of children's social care provides us with further opportunities to develop our partnership response to early help for children, young people and families, from prevention through to targeted support. This and the review by the National Panel into the deaths of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes have led to wide ranging recommendations being made to the Government and will feature significantly in the national development of early help services going forward.

Directed via the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, a Task and Finish Group was set up in November 2022 to focus on developing our new Early Help Strategy, with key statutory partners included at both and strategic and operational level. As part of the strategy development, we consulted with a number of stakeholders (professionals, parents/carers and young people) to develop our common language for early help and the principles that underpin the strategy.

We present the Early Help strategy for agreement by the Wellbeing Board having been agreed by the Children and Young People's Partnership Board

3. Background Papers

Early Help Partnership Strategy