

**Charnwood Borough Council**

**Children and Young People's  
Strategy 2019 – 2024**

## **Forward from Lead Member for Neighbourhood Services**

(To be inserted following Policy Scrutiny Group)

## Introduction

Charnwood Borough Council's Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 - 2024 is the result of ongoing consultation and discussion with children, young people and their families, practitioners, and voluntary and statutory partners. Children and young people are defined as 0 – 19 year olds inclusive or up to 25 where a young person has a physical or learning disability (except for some legal duties which may, for example, end on a young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday).

The length of the Strategy is intended to cover both the current and upcoming Corporate Plan, however should there be any significant change in the vision laid out in the upcoming Corporate Plan or with our statutory duties towards children and young people the Children and Young People's Strategy will be refreshed accordingly.

The Strategy builds on the significant progress made through our previous Children and Young People's Strategies. It sets out the vision and objectives for the next five years and the key pieces of work and actions that will need to be undertaken to deliver these objectives. The diagram in Appendix 1, shows how the strategic objectives of this strategy align with the local governance arrangements. The Strategy will be supported by an annually updated Action Plan and which sets out in detail how we are going to accomplish our objectives and supports wider multi agency work and plans.

Ensuring a coordinated, integrated and cohesive approach to the way we work is fundamental to the delivery of this Strategy and the achievement of our vision. It is integrated with the Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership Plan 2018-21. The Partnership is a sub group of Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board and is made up of the key organisations that work with children, young people and families across Leicestershire including Charnwood Borough Council.

The Charnwood Borough Council Children and Young People's Strategy is owned by Charnwood Borough Council and as such reflects the limited areas for which we have a legal responsibility. It is supported by our internal Children and Young People and Adult Safeguarding Policies. In addition, it incorporates those areas which the Borough Council has included within our Corporate Plan. Our legal responsibilities and Corporate Plan commitments are outlined in Section 3 of this Strategy.

A needs analysis, along with internal and external consultation, have informed this Strategy. These are the areas within which we believe the Borough Council can make the biggest difference to children and young people.

## **Section 1: Setting the scene**

### **National and local context**

The following national legislation is key to Charnwood's local Strategy for working with children and young people:

The UK Government's ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 recognised children's rights to express their views and to receive information on all matters that affect them, in accordance with their age and maturity.

The Children Act 2004 (later built on by the Children and Families Act 2014) focuses on moving towards early identification and intervention of services to help support not only the child but also their wider family and living environment. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 amended the Children Act 2004, placing new duties on the Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Local Authority (Leicestershire County Council) to make arrangements to work together and with other partners locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.

The Academies Act 2010 and Education Act 2011 has altered several areas of education policy, including introducing the possibility for all publicly funded schools to become academies, increasing free early years provision and the raising of the participation age to 18.

The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 statutory guidance states that everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. The Guidance names District Council's in general and Sport and Leisure, Housing and Homelessness departments and Environmental Health in particular as specific organisations that need to be named as part of the inter-agency safeguarding arrangements and who have key duties in relation to safeguarding children.

The Children Act 2004 and the associated statutory guidance places two core duties on Charnwood Borough Council.

Under Section 10 we have a duty to co-operate with our partners and appropriately share information between professionals to protect children. In response to this, Charnwood Borough Council has worked closely with Leicestershire County Council to establish the Charnwood Think Family Partnership. This Partnership Board is chaired by Charnwood's Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Well-being and consists of multi-agency statutory and voluntary sector partner representatives who jointly plan, co-ordinate and ensure the delivery of services to children, young people and families in our Borough (see Appendix 1)

Section 11 sets out our corporate responsibility to both safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Key features of Charnwood Borough Council's arrangements are:

- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare led by the Director for Neighbourhoods and Community Well-being
- Development and regular review of safeguarding policies and procedures for both children and adults in need of safeguarding, co-ordinated and consistent with the other Leicestershire District and Borough Councils
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding, promoting the welfare of children and reporting safeguarding concerns
- A multi departmental team of trained Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) supported by a Leicestershire wide District and Borough DSO Group
- Staff training (Bronze, Silver, Gold and multi-agency levels) on safeguarding both children and adults for all staff and available to all elected members
- Safer recruitment procedures in place including checks on strategic partners and organisations that we grant fund
- Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- Effective and lawful information sharing protocols in place
- Working with contractors to ensure that safeguarding is appropriately embedded into their service delivery

This Strategy has been designed to align with other key strategies and plans. Locally, the Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership is made up of the key organisations that work with children, young people and families across the county including Charnwood Borough Council. The Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership Plan 2018-21 has been developed and is a shared vision based on five priorities:

- Ensure the best start in life
- Keep children safe and free from harm
- Support children and families to be self-sufficient and resilient
- Ensure vulnerable families receive personalised, integrated care and support
- Enable children to have good physical and mental health

The Partnership Plan includes the cross cutting themes of communication strategy and workforce development. The priorities for which the Borough Council have a degree of responsibility and/or work in partnership to support alongside other agencies will be reflected in the Action Plan that accompanies this Strategy and contribute to the more detailed delivery plans that are allocated to themed work.

The Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership can be found on the Leicestershire County Council website:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/leicestershire-children-and-families-partnership>

## **Section 2: What we know about Children and Young People in the Borough**

### **Key facts and figures**

- It is estimated that in 2017, 9,439 0-4 year olds, 10,081 5-9 year olds, 9,160 10-14 year olds and just under 13,000 15-19 year olds were living in Charnwood
- In relation to teenage pregnancy, in 2016 (latest figures), the rate of conceptions per 1,000 women aged under 18 in Charnwood was 13.9, a year on year decrease since the rate was measured at 40.1 in 1998
- The 2017/18 figures from the National Child Management Programme (NCMP) show that Charnwood is now better than the national averages for excess weight in 4-5 (reception) and 10-11 (Year 6) year olds. 20.4% of children in Charnwood are currently overweight or obese in reception compared with 22.6% nationally
- The same figures show that for children in Year 6, 33.2% are overweight or obese compared with 34.2% nationally. Though both these figures are an improvement compared with 2014/15, excess weight is a problem across the country and therefore must remain a focus of our work
- June 2018 figures show Charnwood remains the Leicestershire district with the highest level of NEET (16-19 year olds Not in Education, Employment and Training) in terms of number and percentage of the cohort – 85 young people from a cohort of 3079 resulting in a percentage of 2.8% NEET. This is below the national target of 4% NEET and compares well with previous years
- In June 2015 3.3% of Charnwood's 16-19 year olds were NEET with 5 out of the top 10 NEET wards in Leicestershire being within Charnwood. In June 2018 this dropped to 3 of the top 10 wards being within Charnwood which is an encouraging improvement. One ward has a consistently high level of NEET due to the location of countywide emergency accommodation in the area

## **Needs analysis**

From local needs analysis with both professionals and young people the following areas have been identified as requiring support towards achieving better outcomes for children and young people:

- Intervention within the first 4 years of children's lives, promoting good outcomes for 0-4 year olds and school readiness
- Provision of targeted support to those children and young people with the highest levels of need, including intensive support to our most vulnerable families and those affected by knife crime, drugs and exploitation
- Reducing the number of NEET (not in education, employment or training) young people and promotion of high quality EET options
- Co-ordination of an offer of positive activities to young people across the Borough
- Support in delivering programmes that promote improved health and well-being for children and young people and their families
- Delivery of appropriate training and development to Charnwood's children and young people's focused workforce including shared messages around real life and online safety and provision of policies and guidance relating to our safeguarding duties

## Section 3: Charnwood's Strategic Objectives

### Improving outcomes for children and young people

The Charnwood Children and Young People's Strategy 2019-2024 builds on the successes of our previous Strategies and sets out the steps that we are committed to making in the coming years.

These steps include actions that are our statutory requirements under Section 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004. Charnwood Borough Council already provide high quality services to children and young people. The purpose of this Strategy is twofold:

- To re-emphasise our commitment to safeguarding and refresh the associated policies
- To set out the manner in which we intend to work with children, young people and our partners in order to make a real difference to their lives within the areas that we hold responsibility for

### Vision and Key Priorities Charnwood's Vision

As a named partner in the Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership Plan 2018-21 we have adopted the shared vision for children and families within our Borough:

**"Children and young people in Charnwood are safe and living in families where they can achieve their full potential"**

### Strategic Objectives

The 3 Strategic Objectives remain the same as those identified in our 2015-18 Strategy as they are the areas where we know we can and should concentrate our efforts and where we can make the most difference by working together with our partners:

**Objective 1: Keeping children and young people safe and free from harm** – we are committed to undertake high quality and effective action in relation to our safeguarding duties.

**Objective 2: Integrated working and early intervention** – working together with our statutory and voluntary sector partners to identify risks early and take



preventative action, ensuring that children, young people and families receive help as soon as they need it

**Objective 3: Children and family voice** – delivery and development of services should start by listening to the people who use our services and then consider what is achievable within the available resources

## **How we achieve our strategic objectives**

### **Objective 1: Keeping children and young people safe and free from harm**

What are Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities?

- To maintain a clear line of accountability for safeguarding (All Children Act 2004 and Working Together Statutory Guidance)
- To keep our residents safe (Corporate Plan)
- To operate a fit for purpose safeguarding policy and procedures document
- To ensure that staff are adequately trained in safeguarding in line with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (or replacement body) Competency Framework
- To effectively report safeguarding concerns in line with Leicestershire's multi-agency procedures
- To ensure that safer recruitment procedures are in place

To comply with our responsibilities our priorities we will:

- Ensure that a list of multi-departmental Designated Safeguarding Officers is available to staff and that this is reinforced within the written policy, procedures and training
- Work with the Leicestershire wide group for District and Borough Council safeguarding issues (District Designated Safeguarding Officers Group) to collaborate on policy, procedure and performance management around safeguarding concerns and undertake regular reviews
- Comply with and contribute to Leicestershire County Council and Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children's Board (or replacement body) standards and procedures
- Provide role appropriate safeguarding training to our entire staff team including elected members using a variety of delivery methods. Staff who have specific responsibility for delivering services to children and families will be encouraged to access LSCB (or replacement body) multi-agency training and we will comply with the Leicestershire Safeguarding Competencies Framework
- Facilitate and promote an inter-departmental team of trained Designated Safeguarding Officers who are responsible for assisting

staff with safeguarding concerns and ensuring consistent reporting and recording of concerns

- Strategic HR will ensure that safer recruitment practices are embedded and reviewed as appropriate, Charnwood Grants procedures will ensure that partner organisations also have appropriate safeguarding policies and practice in place

Furthermore we will work with our multi-agency colleagues to:

- Support the appropriate actions arising from Priority 2: Keep children safe and free from harm, within the Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership Plan
- Provide cross directorate assistance and appropriate information sharing to the Charnwood Children and Families Wellbeing Service (Leicestershire County Council), in order to contribute towards promoting the welfare of children
- Support a multi-agency approach to domestic violence and anti-social behaviour cases through the Joint Action Group (JAG)
- Support the functioning of the multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation Team

## **Objective 2: Integrated working and early intervention**

What are Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities?

- To co-operate to improve the well-being of children and young people (Section 10 Children Act 2004)
- Provide opportunities to participate in social, leisure and cultural activities and in community life (Corporate Plan)
- Encourage healthy lifestyles for all our residents through physical activity programmes and the provision of sports facilities and green spaces (Corporate Plan)

What will we do to comply with our responsibilities?

- Co-ordinate and develop, in consultation with young people, an offer of positive activities to young people across the Borough
- Assist partners, particularly the voluntary and community sector, to adapt to a changing funding landscape and to ensure continued delivery of a range of provision to children and young people
- Lead the Think Family Partnership to ensure co-ordination of partners and services and to ensure the best outcomes for children, young people and their families in the locality

- Work closely with the Charnwood Children and Families Wellbeing Service Team to ensure the best result for children and young people and their families
- Where families are identified as having additional needs, services will refer to Children and Families Wellbeing Service using the Request for Service arrangements to ensure that appropriate support is put in place

Furthermore we will work with our multi-agency colleagues (including the voluntary sector) to:

- Further develop the Charnwood Think Family Partnership to ensure that issues and gaps in relation to children and young people are identified and addressed
- Lead the 5-19 Action and Network Groups and to take responsibility for developing the 5-19 Action Plan alongside statutory and voluntary sector partners
- Lead the Charnwood NEET (not in education, employment or training) Aversion Group
- Assist in the governance and delivery of the Charnwood Children and Family Wellbeing Service to promote good outcomes for 0-4 year olds

### **Objective 3: Children and Family Voice**

What are Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities?

- Providing opportunity for children and young people to participate in shaping and influencing matters that affect them (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)
- Listen to and communicate with our residents and act on their concerns (Corporate Plan)

What will we do to comply with our responsibilities?

- Provide an opportunity for children and young people to have a voice and be involved in service design
- Deliver initiatives such as awards ceremonies and celebratory events to ensure that children and young people's contribution to our local community is recognised

Furthermore we will work with our multi-agency colleagues to:

- Support the voice work done by other agencies including the Children's Centre Programme and the Make Your Mark programme and proactively implement feedback
- Review need and the focus of children and young people's services across Charnwood on an ongoing basis with our multi-agency partners

## **Section 4: Delivering the Strategy**

### **Arrangements for reviewing progress against the strategy**

An Action Plan will be developed to run alongside this Strategy. The Action Plan will be updated annually and any areas of underperformance or slippage will be reported as appropriate.

We will continue to consult and engage children, young people and their families in partnership with our multi agency colleagues. Maintaining an ongoing dialogue with service users, parents, carers, professionals and advocates will be vital in driving improvement, ensuring challenge and accountability and ensuring that our priorities remain relevant.