

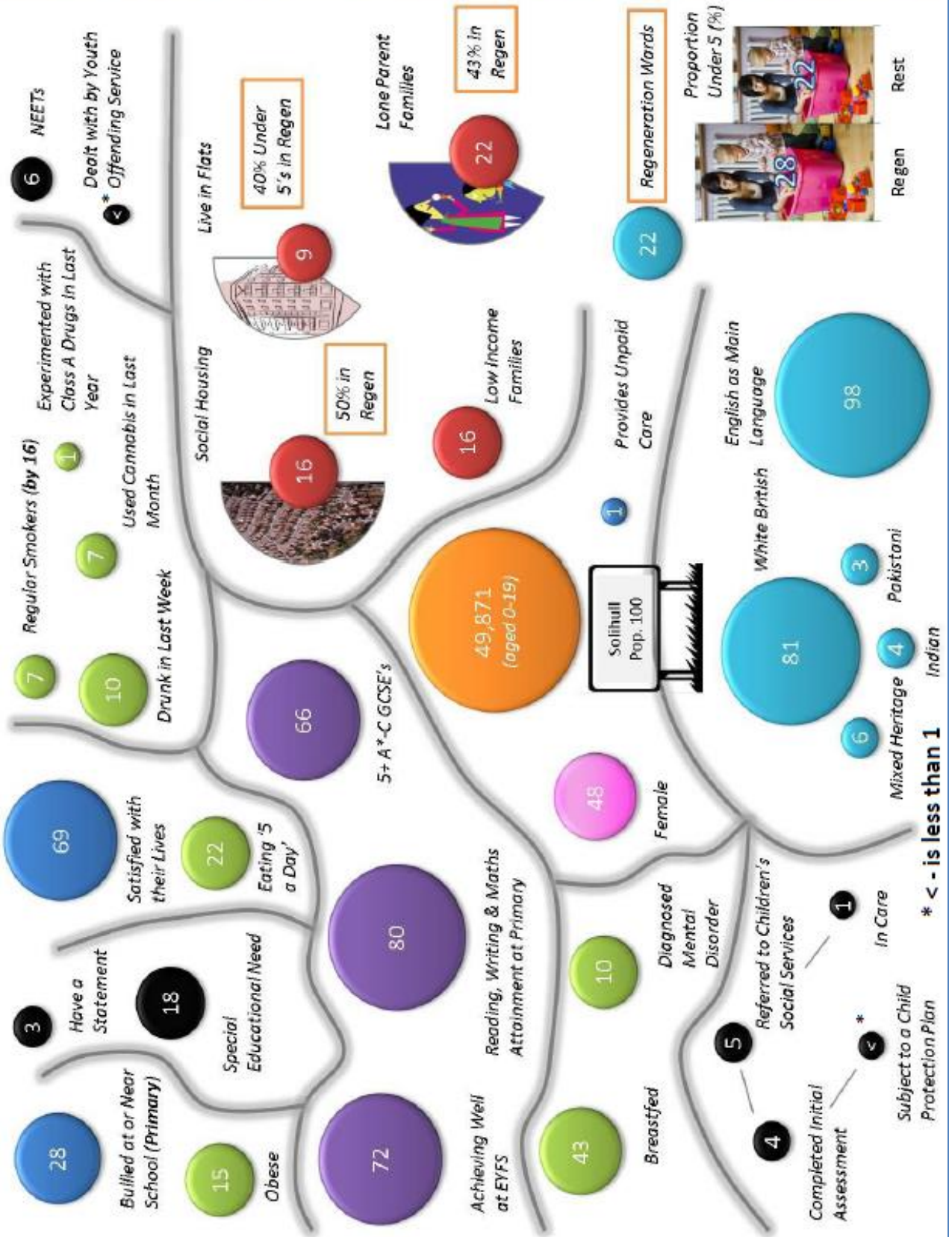


CHILDREN & SKILLS BUSINESS PLAN 2014-17

REFRESH AUGUST 2015

IF SOLIHULL WAS A VILLAGE OF 100 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WHAT WOULD IT FEEL LIKE

Note that the figures sometimes represent probabilities for the 100 CYP throughout their formative years rather than a pure count



1. INTRODUCTION

Solihull is a great place to grow up for most children and young people. But we know that not every child and young person gets the best start in life and our job in Children's & Skill Services is to do something about it, whether that be supporting schools to improve, keeping children safe, or helping families and communities to do things for themselves.

The Council's vision is for Solihull to be a place where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous. This means making Solihull a place where all children and young people thrive and have a good quality of life, learn, are safe and secure, and get support at the earliest point, regardless of where they live in the Borough.

Our purpose is to be an organisation that improve lives, and our ambition is to be an organisation that citizens and staff say is a great one. In Children & Skills Services this means:

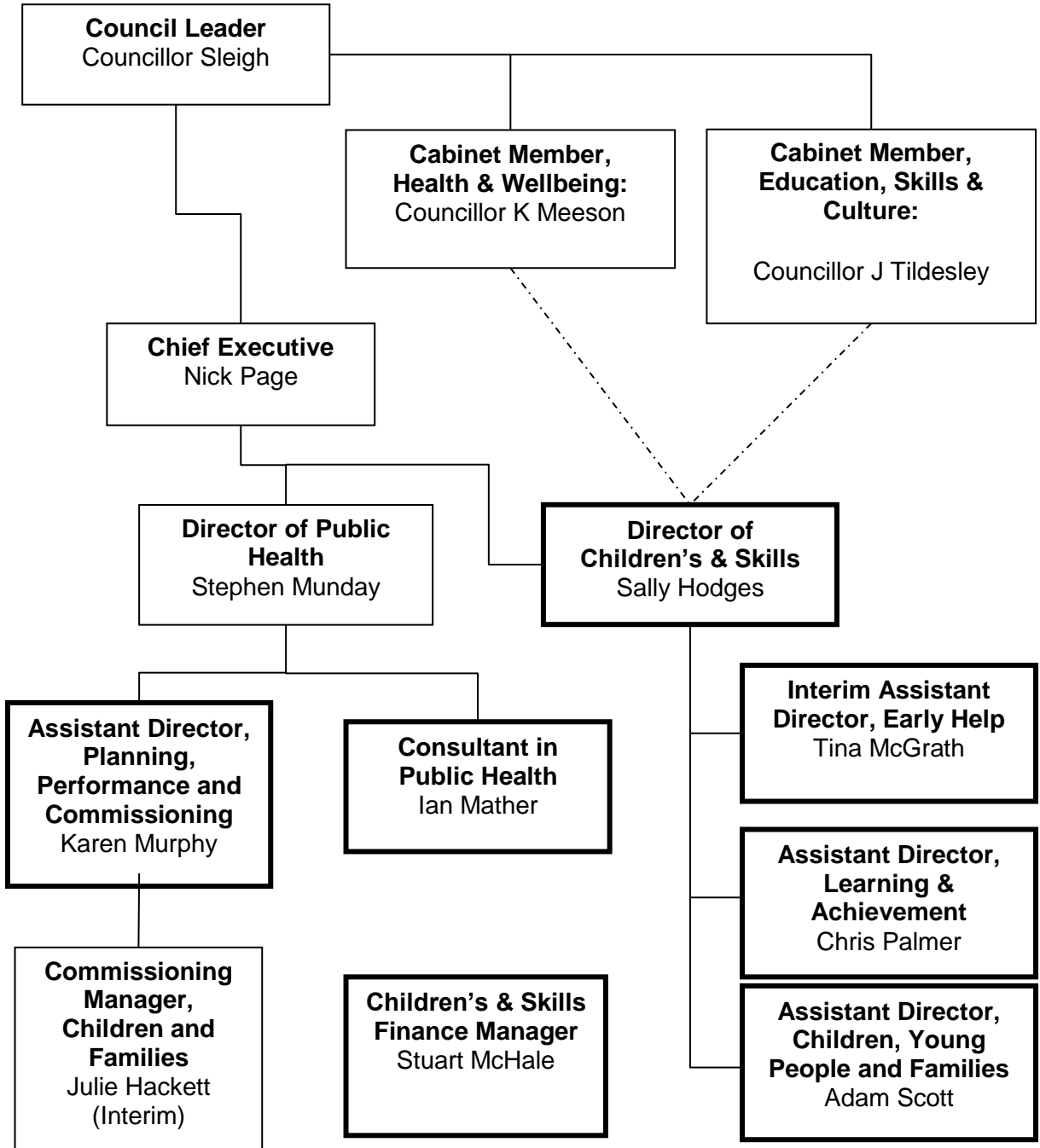
- Living our brand: Solihull's brand defines the personality of the Council. It was developed by local people who said this is how they expect the Councillors and Council staff to behave: open, honest, approachable and keeping our promises.
- Aiming for great: Solihull is one of the best places to live in the UK. There is no reason to accept average here - we have big aspirations. It is our job to help children and young people to be the best that they can be. We will measure ourselves against the 'best in class' and learn from those who succeed by innovating. To be the best we will employ staff who are engaged, informed, well supported, and who strive to be the best in everything that they do for the children of Solihull.
- Engaging with families: A strong and supportive extended family and community helps children and young people to achieve better outcomes. We will support children, young people, families and communities to act on their own ideas, concerns, and aspirations and help them to build their own capacity for independence, resilience and problem solving. We will involve children, young people and families in Council decision-making, taking what they say seriously and acting on their views and ideas.
- Whole life planning: Children are individuals, but they also live in families, and become adults. We will help children, young people and their families to cope with transitions and prepare for adulthood and independence, particularly those that are more vulnerable such as Looked After Children and those with special needs and disabilities.
- Integrated Working: Services which are joined up make it easier for children, young people and families to get the support that they need. Studies show that families with disabled children see on average ten different professionals and have more than 20 clinic visits a year. Families with key workers to coordinate services report improved quality of life, better relationships with services, better and quicker access to services and reduced levels of stress. Integrated working is particularly important in keeping our most vulnerable children safe and protecting them from harm.
- Early Help: Early help improves the lives of children and young people, prevents difficulties being passed from one generation to the next and can help make long-term savings in public spending. We will make Solihull an early help place by helping

families at the earliest point, improving children and young people's life chances and reducing demand for crisis services.

- Skills: We will ensure business skills are met locally and improve skills and employment opportunities, include opportunities for troubled families.

1.2 ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS

Key decision-makers (Children's & Skills Directorate Leadership in bold boxes)



2. OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS

The Council Plan outlines Solihull's key objectives and outcomes to improve lives for the people of Solihull. The Council Plan is key to improving our services from good to great through the Council's 4 strategic priorities:

1. Improve Health & Wellbeing
2. Managed Growth
3. Building Stronger Communities
4. Deliver Value

The Solihull Council Plan 2014 to 2020 on a page			
Our Vision - Solihull: Where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and prosperous			
Our Purpose - Lives not Services: To be an organisation that improves lives			
Our Ambition - Good to Great: To be an organisation that our citizens and staff say is a great one			
Improve Health and Wellbeing Priority a) Give every child the best start in life b) People in Solihull are enabled to maintain their maximum degree of independence and quality of life c) Strengthen the impact of ill-health prevention and wellness services	Managed Growth Priority a) Achieve growth that enhances Solihull's competitive advantage, future economic success and leading role in the regional and wider economy b) Maintain and enhance Solihull's character and sustainability	Build Stronger Communities Priority a) Create the conditions for strong communities (which are cohesive and resilient) that make Solihull a great place to live, learn, work and play b) Strengthen and extend community networks through growing co-production and community participation c) Increase social inclusion and access to services	Deliver Value Priority a) Make the best use of our resources by aligning them to our Purpose, Ambition and Priorities b) Achieve financial self-sufficiency c) Deliver maximum value to the customer through The Solihull Way d) Value and treat our staff correctly
Key Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Social Care Redesign Phase 2 - deliver improvements in the standards and quality of services • Change how services for children and adults work together to provide support-planning for people with disabilities • Implement the special educational needs & disabilities elements of the Children and Families Act 2014 • Improve engagement with children and young people • Develop prevention and early help services for children and adults, including support to carers and families first • Create access to high quality information, advice and support-planning services that promote health, safeguarding and independence (includes implementation of the Care Act 2014) • Integrate care and support services with the NHS • Enable an effective and quality-assured care and support market that people can have confidence in using 	Key Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering UK Central • Maximising the opportunities of High Speed 2 • Local Plan delivery and review • Making the transition to a sustainable, low carbon Solihull • Creating healthy and well designed places and spaces • Solihull for Success - (inward investment programme) • Ensuring business skills needs are met locally • Completion of Solihull University Technical College • Development of the 14+ education agenda 	Key Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure greater service integration to reduce demand for services • Building community capacity to identify and meet local needs and reduce the demand for services, including supporting the role of Councillors • Investing in priority communities, with a focus on North Solihull • Maintaining and investing in the public realm • Improving physical and digital connectivity • Making the most of social media to build strong and confident communities • Providing the right kind of housing to meet local needs, support growth and prevent homelessness 	Key Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Medium Term Financial Strategy • The Solihull Way - systematically improving the effectiveness of Solihull MBC • Solihull Together - delivering a single public sector offer for the people of Solihull • Review of the Commissioning Function • Review of the Business Support Function • Review of the ICT Function • Redesign of Solihull Town Centre Offices to support Touchwood expansion - Council House, Data Centre, Central Library & Arts Complex • Regional Devolution - working across the West Midlands Region to deliver a devolution model that is right for Solihull
Measured by our success in improving lives			

One of Solihull Council's strategic objectives is to 'Give every child the best start in life.'
 This objective will be delivered through **Key Programmes**

Children's Social Care Redesign Phase 2- deliver improvements in the standards and quality of services.	Change how services for children and adults work together to provide support-planning for people with disabilities	Implement the special educational needs & disabilities elements of the Children & Families Act 2014.	Improve engagement with children and young people.	Develop prevention and early help services for children and adults, including support to carers and families first.
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The Key Programmes are underpinned by Projects to deliver Children's & Skills Services.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in new management arrangements • Maintain and recruit staff • Improve the quality of the Children's Social Care Service and its delivery • Development of 0-25 service for children with special educational needs and disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and agree a 0-25 Autistic Spectrum Disorder Framework and Strategy by end of 2016 • Develop appropriate SEND specialist and alternative provision in Solihull • Convert all SEN statements to Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCP) by 2018 according to published timescale • Develop a robust and shared system of sign off of EHCP across education, health and social care by end of 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and embed the engagement strategy • Complete the management of change process to implement the Early Help Service in 2015 • Design a new early help assessment and outcomes framework (delivered through the 5 work streams) • Develop community capacity element of early help which encompasses an all-age approach to early help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Business skills needs are met locally. • Improvement of the skills and employment opportunities for troubled families • Completion of UTC and Support and facilitate the UTC Partnership working group to ensure that the successful build, completion/handover and opening of the UTC by September 2016 • Development of 14+ Education Agenda and continue to work with secondary schools, colleges and other providers to meet the 14+ offer • Convene and support the three working groups comprising education and business partners: Offer to Young People (including curriculum), Models of Delivery and Governance • Agree the freedoms and flexibilities which might be required from Government to implement the curriculum offer
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KEY PLANS AND STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THESE PROJECTS

KEY DELIVERY PLANS & STRATEGIES			
EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS	HEALTHY START	VULNERABLE	LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN & CARE LEAVERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Needs & Disabilities Strategy • SEND 0 – 25 years Service Project Plan • Asset Management Plan • School Organisation Plan • Employment & Skills Project Plan • Employment & Skills Re-balancing Supply & Demand • Skills Masterplan HS2 Version 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy • Obesity Strategy • Sexual Health Strategy • Autism Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Help Strategy • Safeguarding Board Business Plan • Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy • Domestic Abuse Commissioning Plan • Engagement Strategy • Homeless Strategy & Action Plan • Children’s Improvement Board Action Plan • Youth Justice Board Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked After Children Strategy • Children’s Improvement Board Action Plan • Supported Accommodation Strategy
<p>Other Key Strategies and Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter Terrorism Board Project Delivery Plan • Workforce Development Strategy • 3 year Medium Term Financial Strategy • Team and Service Plans • Individual Performance Plans (PDRF) 			

BUSINESS FUNDAMENTALS

CHANGE PRIORITIES

The business areas which the Council wants to transform to improve quality, services and value for money.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 0-25 Service • School places • Alternative education • Local SEND services • Statutory Assessment Team • Education, Health and Care Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Early Help Service Develops as Planned • Ensure a suitable range of Housing & Accommodation is available to vulnerable young people • Understand key Risk Factors for Vulnerable Group within the borough. • Community peer support • Team working for families • Journey of the Child • Public Law Outline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Social Work Practice in Key Areas: Assessment, Planning, Chronology, PLO; • Support staff recruitment & retention • Ensure ICT records management systems support Social Work Service delivery.
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The core services which the Council delivers or commissions to improve the lives of children and families.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and challenge for schools and early years settings • Plans for children with special educational needs • Specialist inclusion support • 14 – 19 planning • Family information & brokerage • Solihull Music Hub • Speech and Language Therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop Smoking Service • National Child Measurement Programme • Breastfeeding education • Solihull Healthy Schools • Sexual health services • Str8 Up • School nurse service • Paediatric Occupational Therapy • Parenting education • Emotional wellbeing and mental health services • Meadow Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection, including from sexual exploitation, & care planning • Youth Offending Team • Children Missing Education • Young Runaways • Young Carers • Counselling • Domestic abuse services • Children's Centres • Short breaks for disabled children • Advocacy for learning disabled parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care planning for Looked After Children • Safeguarding children in need • Adoption support services • commissioning and procurement support for external placements • Independent Visiting • Advocacy • Psychological support
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3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – STUART UPDATING

- 3.1 The Council has a duty to use public resources wisely. This means being careful with our time, money and assets such as buildings so that we can make the biggest positive difference. This also means making an active choice about whether we are best organisation to provide a service to families, or can we get better results by paying another organisation with skilled and experienced staff to do this for us. It also means giving some families personal budgets to buy their own support.
- 3.2 The Council's services for children and young people are funded from Council Tax and Government grants including the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Budget (£M)	2014/15	2013/14
Core Council (Council tax)	35.2	38.5
Early Intervention, UASC and other grants	3.2	3.1
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)		
- delegated to schools	136.2	136.4
- non delegated services	26.2	21.6
YPLA Sixth Form Funding to schools	2.0	2.0
Public Health (Children & Young People)	0.9	0.9
Head Office costs	6.2	4.7
Total	209.9	207.2

- 3.3 65.8% (or £138.2m) of the budget is delegated to schools and 6th forms. This leaves 34.2% (or £71.7m).
- 3.4 The Council also commissions a further £4.7m of children's health services under a Section 75 agreement with the Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group.
- 3.5 The Council's 3 year financial strategy to 2017 requires savings as further reductions in government funding continue. Over the period of this plan Children's Services will need to find £4.8m of savings. In addition, in year pressures outside of the MTFS could be up to £1m.

4. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Managing performance is a critical component of the leadership role of managers at every level of the organisation, and this Plan seeks to strengthen the focus on the performance of individuals, teams and Divisions, through to the organisation itself. As well as involving performance measurement, performance management is about the way people within the Council operate and work together to take decisive action in a timely manner to improve performance. This means that leadership, decision-making, engagement, motivation, innovation and assessing and managing risk are crucial to support improvement.
- 4.2 The Council's performance management framework is designed to:
- Be customer focused, understanding the impact of its policies and the success of its strategies and what impact it is having on the lives of its residents;
 - Be intelligence led and able to act on facts and reliable data and forecasts;
 - Be accountable to Elected Members and local residents because of the ability to make a range of information about council performance easily accessible;
 - Ensure employees are able to understand their individual and unique contribution towards the achievement of the Council's priorities.
- 4.3 The Council's change priorities are recorded using a planning tool called a policy deployment matrix. Progress against the priorities which impact on children, young people and families is monitored at the Children's & Skills Leadership Team on a monthly basis, and reported to the Corporate Leadership Team.
- 4.4 Children & Skills takes part in West Midlands regional self assessments and peer challenges, and has taken part in a Local Government Association (LGA) Safeguarding Diagnostic peer challenge, all of which provide independent challenge and feedback on performance, the quality of services, progress on our priorities and change programme, and safeguarding in Solihull.
- 4.5 A Children & Skills Improvement Board, supported and attended by the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing, is established to support the prioritisation of the Business Fundamentals in this plan and a project plan to deliver these is in place.
- 4.6 At divisional level, Learning & Skills and Children & Young People's Services, have established senior leadership teams and monthly meetings, which include monthly reporting on a range of performance matters, including performance scorecards, workforce information, quality assurance, complaints, and other performance related information. This provides management information for the leadership teams, heads of services and is shared with teams and is used to inform timely decision making, identify actions to improve performance and areas for further development. This process supports our self assessment.
- 4.7 The Children's & Skills Leadership Team has drawn on the review of Performance Management Functions in the West Midlands (January 2014) conducted by ADCS to strengthen performance management culture in five areas:
- **Leadership and governance**, relating to the implementation and delivery of ICT, performance and data management requirements of Children's & Skills Directorate, creating a performance culture; and evaluating the effectiveness of the

performance system.

- **Planning and setting expectations**, using business process mapping for data collection, analysis, reporting and performance management to ensure processes are Lean and accurate; ensuring ownership of ‘telling the story behind the data’ and action planning sits with the appropriate people in Children’s & Skills; senior leadership on performance, and clarity of roles, responsibilities and expectations.
- **Communication** between each aspect of data and performance management (IT, data production, analysis performance management and the specialist service), acknowledging that the best use of data is made when the data specialist and service specialist work together to interpret the data.
- **Staffing**, ensuring staff skilled in Children & Skills data, especially in education and children’s social care, because of the complexity of statutory returns, legislation and range of services; and operational professionals in services taking accountability for their data as part of their day to day work.
- **IT systems support the business**, maximising self-service to performance data by operational managers within Children & Skills Services through IT system outputs; and adapting IT systems in line with business requirements, providing for a single child record.

5. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 To achieve our vision set out in this Plan we need an excellent workforce, one that is diverse, flexible, competent, confident, respected, safe, and able to build empowering relationships with children, young people and their families. Our workforce is our most important resource. We need employees that have the right attitude and approach alongside their skills, knowledge and abilities in the workplace. Our staff need to understand the ‘Solihull Way’ and how they can make a positive difference to lives of people in the Borough.
- 5.2 The workforce of the future will need to work in very different ways and in different kinds of buildings. The Council has a workforce practices modernisation programme which encompasses agile working, hot desking and remote working.
- 5.3 Staff numbers have reduced year on year:

DIVISION	Number of Staff Year on Year by Division				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	% difference 2012-2015
Children, Young People & Families	502	454	439	287	-43%
Learning, Achievement & Skills ¹	436	387	407	238	-46%
TOTALS	938	841	846	525	-44%

¹ includes 10 Skills staff recently transferred to the Directorate and staff in Learning & Achievement (previously under Performance, Planning & Commissioning).

- There has been movement of teams between divisions which accounts for some of the fluctuation in staffing numbers for individual divisions. There has been an overall reduction in staff of -44% since 2012.
- 33.40% of staff are aged between 45 and 54, the largest age bracket. The Children, Young People and Families Division has the youngest staffing profile, and the Learning and Achievement Division the oldest with more than 50% of staff over the age of 55.
- 4.87% of staff say they have a disability, which is slightly higher than the Council average of 3.81%. 19.92% choose not to say.
- 11.42% of staff are black or minority ethnic, higher than the Council average of 10.65%. 80.50% of staff are female. 61.98% of staff do not disclose their sexuality and 64.75% do not disclose their religious belief.
- A rising number of staff (70.33%, up from 58% in 2012) have worked for the Council for more than 5 years.

5.4 Average sickness absence rates per full-time member of staff are 9.58 days per year, which is slightly lower than the organisational average of 10.06 days. Absence due to stress is the most common reason for absence, particularly in the Children, Young People and Families division where it accounts for some 37.64%.

5.5 Moving forward

5.5.1 The Council has refreshed its Performance & Development Review framework, particularly in relation to core qualities and behaviours and training has been provided to begin the revised approach from 2015-16. The documentation has been simplified to facilitate better understanding of objectives and core competencies for staff and managers and how these link to organisational and divisional goals.

5.5.2 A Workforce Development Steering Group oversees the Directorate Workforce Strategy. To date the Group has focused on the Children's Social Work workforce to increase the retention of social workers and the recruitment of more experienced staff. The Early Help services have gone through a management of change and the new service is in place. The next two phases are transition and implementation where there are project plans in place.

5.5.3 Children's Social Work Services have gone through management of change and this was completed in January 2015. Workforce development has been a key element of developing the new teams and work continues to support the services. A new Children & Young People's Continuous Professional Development Programme is available to staff to support their learning and development.