



Our Way Forward- Strategic Priorities 2022 -2023

Children's Services provides a wide range of support for children and families. This document publicly sets out the strategic priorities for 2022-23. Whilst not exhaustive, the priorities highlight some of the key areas of activity that will contribute to the achievement of the Council's priorities in relation to the delivery of excellent services, enabling healthy and fulfilling lives for our residents, a cleaner and greener environment and the achievement of sustainable responsible growth. Please read this document alongside: 'Our Way Forward- Plan for Children and Young People 2021- 2026' which sets out more information about our ambitions and what they mean for children and young people.

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A cleaner and greener environment
- 
Sustainable, responsible growth in our county
- 
Healthy and fulfilling lives for our residents
- 
Excellent council services for all

Children's Services
Our Way Forward



1. To meet the needs of Hertfordshire's children within their local community.

Contributes to the Council's Corporate priorities: A cleaner, greener environment and Healthy, fulfilling lives

School Improvement Strategy

What We Want To Achieve

The vision is that 'every child in Hertfordshire will attend a great school where they are safe and happy and enabled to reach their full potential'.

This will be done through improving the attainment and progress of all pupils, but especially disadvantaged pupils, and closing the gap between underachieving groups and all children and young people in Hertfordshire.

All schools have an important role to play with their pupil and parent communities in helping the move to Net Zero Carbon, as well as in their and Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) responsibilities for school buildings and operations. HCC, working with schools, will deliver multiple programmes of work to support in the delivery of the council net zero carbon target across our school's portfolio, in line with the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy and the Council's priority for a cleaner greener environment.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious

Ensuring the right children are in Care

What We Want To Achieve

Ensure healthy fulfilling lives and improved outcomes for Hertfordshire's children in care and children on the edge of care:

- Ensuring children do not come into care unless absolutely necessary;
- Enabling children to leave care as soon as possible;
- Ensuring the right children are in the right type of placement, locally wherever possible, to meet their needs, at the right time.

Outcome Bee: Be Resilient

School Place Planning Strategy

What We Want To Achieve

To meet the demands and changing needs of school setting provision across the county by developing new provision aligned to the SEND Strategy for developing specialist provision as well as support for SEND in mainstream schools.

Outcome Bee: Be Included

Continued development of Therapeutic Services

What We Want To Achieve

To work with Health providers to ensure that the needs of children and young people are met by timely assessment and intervention through a model of prevention, early intervention and a trauma informed therapeutic approach to service delivery.

Outcome Bee: Be Healthy



2. To plan, commission and deliver services that meet the individual needs of children and young people

Contributes to the Council's Corporate priorities: Excellent services and Healthy, fulfilling lives

Continue to develop excellent services that are fit for the future

What We Want To Achieve

- To embed a joined-up continuum of support across early help and specialist services, ensuring that children and families get help early if or before problems escalate.
- To provide a more integrated Children's Services' front door to ensure requests for support or advice (contacts) are effectively triaged and families and partners receive the right advice and support as quickly as possible.
- To ensure Care Leavers are able to develop positive relationships and receive the support they need

Outcome Bee: Be Safe

SEND Strategy Programme - Phase 2

What We Want To Achieve

Continue to transform services for children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) and families so that they are responsive, caring, joined up, inclusive and close to home; easy to access and maximise the benefits of digital technology; and better prepare young people for adulthood through improved access to independent living, employment and training.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious

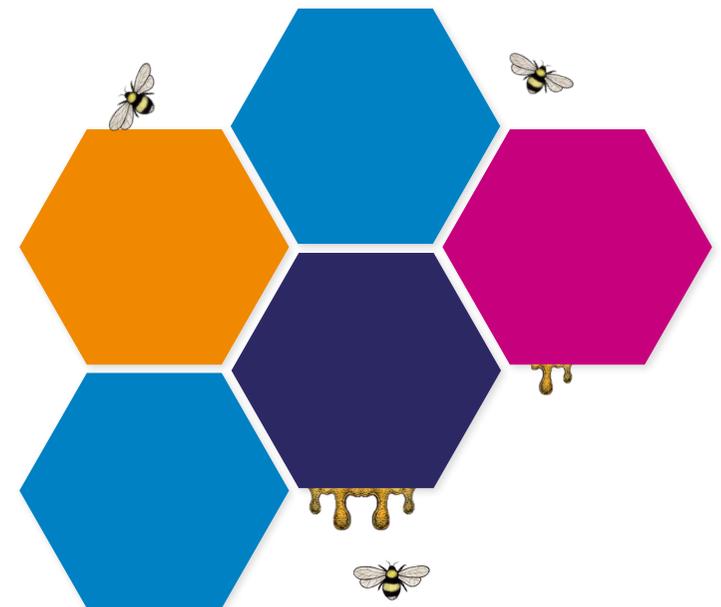
Commissioning for the future

What We Want To Achieve

Following partnership analysis of Covid impact data including CAMHS system re-design:

- To review existing contracts in the light of the learning from service delivery during COVID-19 and amend specifications and KPIs as appropriate
- To support key markets in order to ensure that they are sustainable and can adapt to the post-COVID-19 service demands
- Work with the Integrated Care Partnership to improve integrated commissioning

Outcome Bee: Be Resilient



3. Support children and young people to get their lives and education back on track

Contributes to the Council's Corporate priorities: Sustainable and responsible growth

Hertfordshire Skills and Employment Strategy

What We Want To Achieve

To embed a strong skills and employment offer to young people and adults across the county:

- Work in partnership to ensure the county's skills provision addresses the local skills challenges and opportunities, meeting the employment needs of the future, whilst supporting all residents to reach their potential.
- Work with further education partners to help young people, and care leavers in particular, to gain in-demand skills and open up further job opportunities;
- Providing information, advice, guidance and careers education, including on the green economy, for young people to take advantage of new environmental career opportunities;
- Enable employers and businesses to collaborate and invest in skills of the future and to build their future workforce.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious

'Coming Back Stronger'

What We Want To Achieve

Lead a child-centred programme of recovery to help children and their families to recover from the longer term impacts of the COVID pandemic and live healthy and fulfilling lives.

To embed a trauma-informed approach in all schools, especially for those with additional vulnerabilities including Children Looked After and those known to Children's Services, to drive up attendance and achievements including further education and training.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious



Early Years

What We Want To Achieve

Improving outcomes for families with children under five through effective support for parents and a focus on closing the attainment gap for children in their early years of development.

Continue to further develop a multi-agency 0-19 offer through Family Centres.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious



4. To have a skilled and flexible workforce who are proud to work for Hertfordshire

Contributes to the Council's Corporate priorities: Excellent services

Children's Services' Diversity & Inclusion Programme including Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards (SCWRES)

What We Want To Achieve

To actively promote Diversity, Equality, Equity & Inclusion within the Children's Services' workforce and the communities it serves through identified work streams that link to HCC's Diversity & Inclusion Strategy. We will also commit to listening and responding to the voices of children, young people and families as well as our employees. We have now published our action plan, and will start working on the actions that will bring about positive change where it is needed.

Outcome Bee: Be Included

A fully staffed service with a diverse and skilled workforce committed to improving outcomes for children and a cleaner, greener and healthier Hertfordshire

What We Want To Achieve

Continue to develop and implement the comprehensive induction offer for all new starters who take up a post every year in Children's Services so that they settle well and quickly and efficiently develop the knowledge and skills required for their new role. There will also be a focus on recruitment, and promoting Hertfordshire Children's Services as an inclusive place to work and great place to do social work.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious

Become a centre of excellence for professional development including leadership

What We Want To Achieve

Continue professional development in models of practice including Family Safeguarding and trauma informed practice and training of Education Psychologists; and as a training centre in partnership with Front Line and the universities of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

Outcome Bee: Be Ambitious

Our Way Forward – Ways of Working

What We Want To Achieve

Move to a 'flexible & balanced' way that Children's Services' staff use offices in the future. Our Way Forward will provide a balance between meeting service and individual needs to support children and young people in Hertfordshire, underpinned by staff empowerment, wellbeing and trust.

Outcome Bee: Be Resilient



5. To work in partnership to deliver early help and support to children, young people and families and prevent them from living in poverty

Building Stronger Families

What We Want To Achieve

To embed a strong and proactive continuum of support across Early Help and Family Safeguarding, providing multi-agency support to children and their families who are at risk of poor outcomes to prevent problems occurring, and to tackle them before they get worse and prevent escalation into safeguarding services.

Outcome Bee: Be Safe

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)

What We Want To Achieve

We will continue to support and work on HSCP current priorities which are:

- Adolescents - Tackling risks to adolescents and support in their recovery
- Neglect - Ensure that the issues of neglect receive due prominence in early identification, assessment, prevention and intervention particularly in relation to Domestic Abuse, parental mental health and substance misuse
- Continuous Learning and Improvement – Responding to local and national learning and ensuring appropriate scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements through audit and other quality assurance activity.

Outcome Bee: Be Safe

Serious Violence Strategy, Youth Justice Plan and Contextual Safeguarding

What We Want To Achieve

Reduce the risk of experiencing serious violence and child exploitation amongst Hertfordshire's young people by working in partnership to continue to develop and improve intelligence sharing to meet the evolving needs and increase in demand for services; including a focus on prevention of adolescents coming into care and the youth justice system by building resilience in families and community services.

Outcome Bee: Be Resilient

Building Life Chances

What We Want To Achieve

To embed a partnership programme to address the economic and health challenges created by the COVID pandemic and its impact over the next few years, focused on 4 key themes:

- A good start in life including early years and early intervention.
- Education and skills including lifelong learning.
- Health inequalities.
- Employment and jobs growth.
- Crisis and immediate support for residents
- Food insecurity

Outcome Bee: Be Healthy

