

COUNCIL, 20 NOVEMBER 2024

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STARTING WELL

SUBJECT: HAVERING'S INTEGRATED STARTING WELL PLAN (2024-27): *HAPPY, HEALTHY LIVES*

SUMMARY

The requirement to have a Children's Trust Board and a Children and Young People's Plan was revoked in 2010. Some local authorities decided to retain their boards and continued to produce a children's plan while others, like Havering, have not, favouring individual service plans and subject-matter-specific strategies instead.

A strategic decision has been taken to produce an integrated children's plan (or 'Starting Well Plan', to align with our life course approach and directorate name) so that we can more clearly articulate the Council's vision and priorities for children and young people. The plan complements our Starting Well Improvement Plan, developed following our inspection by Ofsted in December 2023.

Whilst ours is a Council owned and produced plan, it brings together a number of key strategies and areas of work that cut across multiple departments of the Council, as well as our wider partnership.

We have consulted widely with partners and with children and young people in developing the plan, which is structured around five key priorities and our vision: *Enabling our children and families to lead happy, healthy lives.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council approves and adopts the Integrated Starting Well Plan (2024-27): *Happy Healthy Lives*, included as **Appendix 1** to this report.

REPORT DETAIL

Our Integrated Starting Well Plan is called *Happy, Healthy Lives*. It brings together several key strategies which collectively respond to evidence, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) recommendations and, importantly, feedback from children and young people, in order to deliver our vision: *Enabling our children and families to lead happy, healthy lives*.

There is no statutory requirement to produce a Children's Plan but having one will allow the borough to better articulate our vision and priorities for children and young people. The plan further builds upon the visions for both People and Place, as set out in the Council's current Corporate Plan.

The Plan also complements our Starting Well Improvement Plan, developed following our inspection by Ofsted in December 2023 under the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework. *Happy, Healthy, Lives* does not attempt to replicate the required actions that have already been identified and are being implemented through our improvement journey for our services. Instead, it describes a vision for *all* of Havering's children and young people.

The plan organises the work required to achieve our vision under five priorities, which together describe our **WISH** for children and young people in Havering. The first four priorities are that we want children and young people to be:

- **Well;**
- **Inspired;**
- **Safe;** and
- **Heard.**

The fifth priority is a commitment, to doing all we can to ensure that children and young people in Havering are **treated fairly**.

Happy, Healthy Lives has been informed by the views of children and young people that have been gathered over the past two years, including through numerous SHOUT surveys and the Havering Youth Wellbeing Census.

The plan includes a high-level action plan (**Appendix 2** to this report), which sets out several recommendations made in the Starting Well JSNA chapter, published earlier this year.

On 7 November 2024, the following five JSNA recommendations (one for each priority) were formally adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board for inclusion in Havering's refreshed Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

1. Develop a joint strategy to improve adolescents' mental health and wellbeing;

2. Focus on early intervention to improve school readiness, including through increased delivering of joint 2-2.5-year checks by Health Visitors and staff in Early Years settings, and targeted checks for children who have not been brought for any check;
3. Havering statutory and voluntary sector partners to consider ways of intervening earlier to prevent admission to hospital as a result of self-harming, aligning actions to the overall suicide prevention strategy for Havering;
4. Good quality engagement with young people is required to understand how to better manage their transition from child-focused to adult services for on-going care and support, whether related to health or social care;
5. Partners to work collectively to decrease the inequalities in educational outcomes for young people.

A consultation on the draft plan opened on 3 October 2024 and closed on 31 October 2024. This was delivered through our corporate consultation platform, Citizen space, in line with our digital first approach to consultation. An email address was provided so that paper copies could be made available to anyone requesting one.

The consultation received a total of 29 responses. A number of additions have been made to the plan in response to the survey responses and to feedback provided by partners and stakeholders during meetings where the draft plan has been discussed. **Appendix 3** to this report provides a summary of the responses to the consultation and the changes and additions that have been made as a result.

The draft plan was also consulted upon with Havering's Youth Council, where it was agreed that once the plan has been formally adopted, Youth Council will work with officers to coproduce a child-friendly and accessible version.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: Reference to other documents including related strategies and the Starting Well Joint Strategic Needs Assessment are included within the plan.

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Draft Integrated Starting Well Plan (2024-27): *Happy, Healthy Lives*
- Appendix 2 - Happy, Healthy Lives Action Plan (2024-27)
- Appendix 3 - Summary of consultation responses

Financial Implications and Risks:

This report concerns the Integrated Starting Well plan which the Board is asked to note. A consultation on the plan has been undertaken. There is no new funding associated with this plan and all activities will have to be met from existing resources including the Council's General Fund budget, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Public Health Grant. All of these funding sources are under significant pressure and unfortunately this will act as a constraint on the level of ambition. However the plan will provide a framework for prioritisation.

Human Resource Implications and Risks:

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce. Recruitment into existing Havering posts will be managed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

Legal Implications and Risks:

There are no legal implications regarding the contents of the Integrated Starting Well Plan and the approach that has been taken to develop this plan.

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