

Public Document Pack

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Legal & Democratic Services

Strategic Director: John Williams

📍 Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6ER

☎ 01702 215000

🌐 www.southend.gov.uk

Working to make
lives better
www.southend.gov.uk



04 March 2021

Dear Councillor

**HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD - MONDAY, 8TH MARCH, 2021
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT PACK: A BETTER START PROGRESS UPDATE**

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the next meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Board taking place on Monday, 8th March, 2021, at 5.00pm the following report that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

**Agenda Item
No**

11 A Better Start Progress Update (Pages 1 - 14)

Report from ABSS Chair / ABSS Director attached

Robert Harris
Principal Democratic Services Officer

This page is intentionally left blank

Southend Health and Wellbeing Board

Report by

Alex Khaldi, Independent Chair, A Better Start Southend

to

Health & Wellbeing Board on 8th March 2021

Report prepared by:

Jeff Banks, Director, A Better Start Southend

Agenda

Item

11

	For discussion	X	For information only		Approval required
--	----------------	---	----------------------	--	-------------------

A Better Start Southend - update

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update from the Chair of A Better Start Southend (ABSS) on key developments since the last meeting.

2 Recommendations

HWB are asked to:

1. Note the contents of the report and raise issues and opportunities with the Chair of the ABSS Partnership Board, Alex Khaldi.

3 Governance

Health and Wellbeing Board

The process of developing the ABSS Legacy and Sustainability Strategy was remobilised at the end of 2020, with a series of 18 high-level Partner conversations conducted by our Independent Chair. An informal meeting of the Southend Health and Wellbeing Board on 22nd February 2021 was held to consider future approaches and priorities, led by Parent Champions Joanne Webb and Lucy Jeffreys. Members of the Board welcomed the introduction of the Your Family service currently in design using the approach of co-production. They agreed that A Better Start Southend model of partnership between statutory services combined with using the power of families and communities to create better services is an important part of the legacy. Members endorsed the approach to further exploration of options over the coming months.

Partnership

Partner relationships and engagement continues to be strong. Partners welcomed the opportunity to engage in the 18 high-level Partner conversations as part of the Legacy and Sustainability Strategy development. Partners have also responded positively to opportunities to engage in the design of the Your Family Programme, which was considered to be timely and meaningful. SBC has welcomed the support of ABSS with commissioning research into Children's Centre provisions (see below) and ABSS is exploring similar support for the MSE children's strategies.

As a reminder, the ABSS Programme Governance structure comprises the following Groups:

- Partnership Board - Chair, Alex Khaldi
- Programme Group - Chair, Krishna Ramkhelawon, SBC
- Insight and Analysis Group - Chair, Michael Freeston, EYA
- Finance and Risk Group - Chair, Paul Grout, SBC
- Parents' Group - rolling Chair (Parent Champion)
- Executive Consultative Board - Chair, Alex Khaldi

The Executive Consultative Board continues to meet fortnightly with the agreement of Partnership Board members. This forum is integral to ensuring that decisions aligned to the ABSS Programme activity and response to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic can be made at pace, outside of the bi-monthly Partnership Board meeting forums.

The ABSS Programme continues to benefit from strong Partnership engagement, with positive participation at a range of levels for all core Partners, including:

- Early Years Alliance
- Southend Borough Council
- Essex Police
- Mid and South Essex Hospital Trust
- Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT)
- NHS Southend CCG
- University of Essex
- Family Action
- SAVS

ABSS Action Against Racial Inequality Steering Group

The ABSS Action Against Racial Inequality Steering Group held a productive meeting on 21st January 2021, with members discussing a variety of challenges and issues for the BAME community, including barriers to establishing trusting relationships, how to increase uptake of the COVID vaccination programme within the BAME population, and ways of increasing engagement within both the ABSS Programme and steering group activity. Whilst the group continues to meet, ABSS is seeking specialist support to aid the group in determining its strategic direction and key objectives moving forwards.

The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF)

TNLCF Annual Review meeting took place on 4th December 2020 and included participation from Parent Champions, in addition to key Partners from SBC, EYA, the ABSS Independent Chair and the ABSS Senior Programme Team. The meeting presentation reflected on the ABSS timeline of activity from Programme inception to current day, in addition to providing a future snapshot of the ABSS Programme Legacy Strategy. Gill Hart, TNLCF Funding and Relationship Manager, congratulated ABSS on the rapid response of the Programme in maintaining service delivery during the pandemic. ABSS remains widely recognised for the strength of its data analysis and developing evidence base.

Coronavirus/COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery and Renewal

Plans for Recovery and Renewal (R&R) for the short, medium and long-term period during and post the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic continue to be reviewed and refined through regular meetings with separate workstreams, focusing on research and engagement, partnerships, established programmes, pipeline programmes, legacy planning and arrangements for access to physical space.

4 Evidence Project

Programme Evaluation Partnership

The Programme Evaluation Partnership with the University of Essex continues to deliver well on evaluation objectives. The first round of formative evaluation reports was submitted to ABSS on 29th January 2021. These reports give an early indication of the impact that ABSS services are having on children and their families from qualitative interviews carried out with beneficiaries and self-evaluation reports from individual Delivery Partners. The research team continue their joint work with SBC's Data and Insights team to develop narratives from the ABSS Data Dashboard and Outcomes Framework.

The Insight and Analysis Group reviewed and approved the University of Essex's recommended approach to the development of peer researcher training. Phase one is underway with work planned with Work Skills and SAVS to identify parental interest in peer research skills.

An Independent Advisory Committee has been established to ensure the highest standards of research and evaluation for the ABSS Programme, including amongst its members Professor Vasilios Ioakimidis, Director, Centre for Social Work & Social Justice, Dr Adina Dudau from Glasgow University and Professor Elisabeth Bjørnstad from Oslo Metropolitan University.

A case study is attached for reference - see Appendix One

Independent Summative Evaluation

RSM UK Consulting LLP and the University of Essex have been appointed to undertake a programme-wide Independent Summative Evaluation Programme, examining the wider community/system-level 'impact' of the Programme as a whole. Phase 1 of fieldwork is due to run September and April 2022, with reporting of the first phase moving in Spring 2022. There are two further periods of field work, with reports in June 2023 and December 2024.

Outcomes Framework

Work is continuing with a review of the ABSS Outcomes Framework, scheduled for Summer 2021, including the development of detailed Outcome Measures for the cross-cutting ABSS themes of System Change and Community Resilience. The Data team at SBC are developing a web-based Programme-level Outcomes Tool which is easier to read and navigate than the existing document version.

Many of ABSS's Programme-level outcomes rely on measurements from the EYFSP. Collection of the EYFSP data did not take place in 2020, and schools have now been told that the data will only be collected from them on a voluntary basis in 2021. ABSS have started discussions around the impacts of this for monitoring progress against outcomes, and whether there are any mitigations that ABSS could put into place. These discussions are at an early stage, but once options have become clear these will be considered for action.

Data Development and Analytics

The Data team at SBC have developed a web-based system that is intended to replace the Citrix-based system currently used to host project and programme data dashboards. Once completed, this should make the data easier to use and visualise than before.

The team are also developing some very interesting predictive analytics to understand more about trends and patterns within the data. Once these have been developed further, they promise to be very useful for thinking about and planning future engagement with beneficiaries.

An extract of the ABSS Data Dashboard is attached for reference - see Appendix Two.

The data presented covers a rolling 12-month period from 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020.

5 Sustainability and Legacy Planning

Following the HWB session on 22nd February 2021, options will be further refined for presentation to the ABSS Partnership Board and Partners in the spring.

The Your Family Programme is central to developing the ABSS Sustainability and Legacy Planning. It deviates from the current model in that ABSS will move from being a commissioning organisation to one which is also a direct provider of services. This change will require ABSS to update its data strategy and develop a CRM model to support good relationships with parents, effective record keeping, signposting to other services, and to provide effective safeguarding and GDPR compliance.

Flying Start Luton has registered their interest in bringing the Your Family innovation to their Programme and have indicated that they would like to co-commission CRM tools with ABSS.

SBC Children's Centre Review

ABSS commissioned a literature review and comparative analysis of the experiences of local authorities reviewing or redesigning Children's Centre offers, which was conducted by the University of Essex. ABSS and SBC consider that the Children's Centre Review aligns closely with the ABSS Sustainability and Legacy Strategy and opportunities exist for the closer alignment of these two pieces of work. Contributors are currently being consulted on the publication protocol.

Your Family

The Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic delayed the mobilisation of the overarching Your Family Programme offer, however work is being progressed as part of the Your Family co-design reference group to refine the service requirements in collaboration with practitioners, professionals and parents. Recruitment for the Your Family Workers and Team Manager positions will be taking place over the coming weeks and the overarching governance principles for the service are being determined, to ensure appropriate procedural and safeguarding measures are put into place in order for the service to be effectively managed.

6 Programme Activity

Following announcement of the most recent Coronavirus/COVID-19 Lockdown, the majority of commissioned services reverted back to on-line and virtual delivery. This was challenging for a number of services, particularly those that have not yet commenced face-to-face delivery. However, Delivery Partners are working creatively and tirelessly to support families and engage them in the Programme.

Preparation for Parenthood had planned to commence face-to-face delivery with their first programme in February. This has now been postponed but **HENRY** are delivering digital packages and one-to-one support to families during the ante-natal period. **HENRY** have successfully secured an information agreement with Mid and South Essex Foundation Trust regarding the recruitment of

mothers to the project and now have 62 women in the early stages of their pregnancy who they will be contacting.

The **Volunteer Home Visiting** service has again suspended home visiting and is offering telephone support. The Delivery Partners, Home-Start Essex, previously undertook socially distanced outdoor meetings which again will be reinstated when restrictions are lifted. The ABSS Crèche team continue to support families through the **Volunteer Home Visiting** service and offer support to parents through a range of virtual engagement activities, whilst crèche services are suspended.

The **Bump to Breast** Programme has reverted to an online service. Where there is an urgent need for support, the Delivery Partner is able to see parents face-to-face, following COVID-secure procedures, to prevent escalation of need. The project is creatively using a range of online services to meet the needs of families such as group meetings via Teams, Facebook live stream and 1 to 1 support.

The **Perinatal Mental Health Specialist Health Visiting Service** continues to receive referrals from partner agencies across the Borough. During this third Lockdown period they have noticed an increase in anxiety around Coronavirus/COVID-19. The team are prioritising home visits for initial assessments, safeguarding, and where there is significant distress. The majority of families are supported via video or telephone appointments, with some seen outside in open spaces. A third Virtual Mindful Mums Group commenced in January and is being well attended. Due to the increase in demand and in line with the Essex-wide Perinatal Service managed by EPUT, the team are expanding the service to enable them to support families with children up to 2 years of age.

Talking Transitions has 15 settings participating this year including **Family Action**. The online eLearning training commenced in January with 16 participants accessing the live Webinar. The team are building on experience gained from last year's learning, which was similarly delivered whilst under the restrictions of Coronavirus/COVID-19.

The ABSS Programme Management Office are progressing with a number of new initiatives. The first is a proposal to work with **Trust Links**, a local independent charity promoting wellbeing and mental health through outdoor horticulture and food growing initiatives, on a project entitled '**Families Growing Together**'. The project would involve families attending one of their two allotment sites where they could take part in a range of activities run by **Trust Links**, who are also able to provide mental health support.

The opening of the **Family and Community Hub** at SAVS has been paused throughout the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The Programme have recently appointed two Community Hub Co-ordinators who will oversee all the Hub activities. Whilst the current restrictions continue, the Community Hub aims to provide virtual support, advice and guidance to families until they are able to access the Hub in a physical sense.

The remaining projects continue to provide a wide range of services that are responsive to the changing needs of families and the ongoing restrictions.

Details of all ABSS programmes in delivery are attached for reference - see Appendix Three

Community Resilience

Through the agreement of the ABSS Programme Group and TNLFCF, the extension to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 response Engagement Fund was approved to 30th September 2021, in view of the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic environment. This will continue to allow both voluntary sector organisations and parents the opportunity to obtain funding to deliver engagement events/activities to local families.

7 Programme Management Office

The Programme Management Office (PMO) operates in the following sub-teams: Business Support (including Creche), Project Management, Communications and Marketing, and Research and Evaluation, and the leads for these teams, together with the Director and Assistant Director, make up the Senior Programme Team. The PMO team continues to provide excellent support for the ABSS Programme.

Finances

As reported in the previous Quarter 2 Programme financials, there continues to be a reduction in Programme expenditure and associated TNLCF claims, due to the impact of the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic on costs related to face to face delivery and mobilisation of new projects and programmes.

The core costs of delivering the ABSS Programme is currently 31%. This is higher than target due to the reduction in Programme expenditure during the period during the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic.

The Q3 20/21 Management Accounts are attached for reference - see Appendix Four

Final drafts are in process for the 2021/22 financial year budget and the annual reprofiling exercise for the final four years of the ABSS Programme. These will be presented to the ABSS Partnership Board members on 19th April 2021 for approval.

8 Reasons for Recommendations

8.1 ABSS Governance have reviewed and approved activities at the appropriate level. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to note the contents of the report.

9 Financial / Resource Implications

9.1 There are not financial/resource implications for this report.

10 Legal Implications

10.1 None at this stage.

11 Equality & Diversity

11.1 None at this stage.

12 Appendices

12.1 Appendix One - Case Study - ABSS Work Skills: Developing confidence in the workplace.

Appendix Two - Data Dashboard Extract since last meeting.

Appendix Three - ABSS Project Names and Workstreams.

Appendix Four - Q3 20/21 Summary Management Accounts since last meeting.

Jeff Banks, Director, ABSS

1st March 2021

Appendix One - Case Study

Case Study: Developing confidence in the workplace

ABSS Project: Work Skills

Delivery Partner: Economic Development Department, Southend Borough Council

Background:

DT attended several events in Q2 and then in Q3 attended:

Interview Skills

Dealing with Stress & Anxiety

Taster session - Careers in Public Sector

Intervention:

The SBC Work Skills Project Worker met DT at an ABSS Parent Forum run by SAVS. DT said she was *“due to go back to work and I don’t see myself working there after a year so I am looking for doors to open for possibilities, I see myself working with children or A Better Start or Book Start, I’m becoming a Parent Ambassador so I can picture myself doing that. I wanted to see what’s available and it was really nice to see a lot of council jobs, ABSS jobs and SAVs jobs that I want to apply for.”*

After the Taster session about Careers in Public Sector, DT said “it’s been great, I’m just starting to open doors now. It was nice to have feedback from the police and council about what is available in the public sector. I feel like my life experience has been wasted in what I’m doing, but since I’ve been doing the Parent Champion training I feel that my experiences are being helpful. It was nice to know what responsibilities there would be and how family friendly they are, local and it’s a nicer working environment.”

After the CV support session in August, DT said “I have been able to use everything at my current work with managers and negotiate my position and know that if I needed to apply for new jobs I can. This has really helped me negotiate my position and increased my confidence at work.”

After the Interview Skills session DT said it “really helped my confidence to help me express my experiences and skills”.

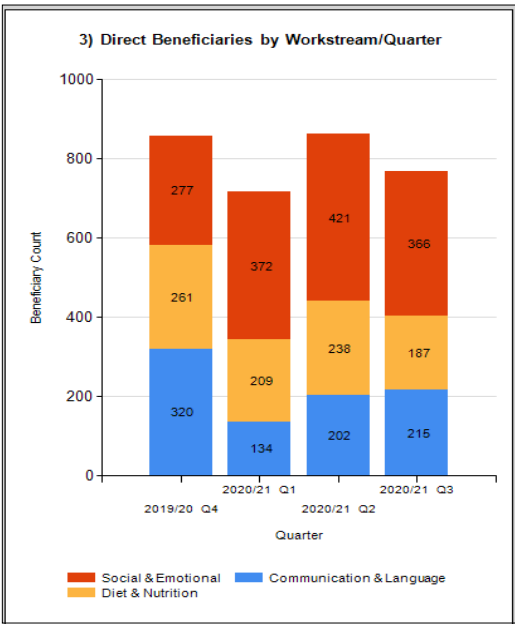
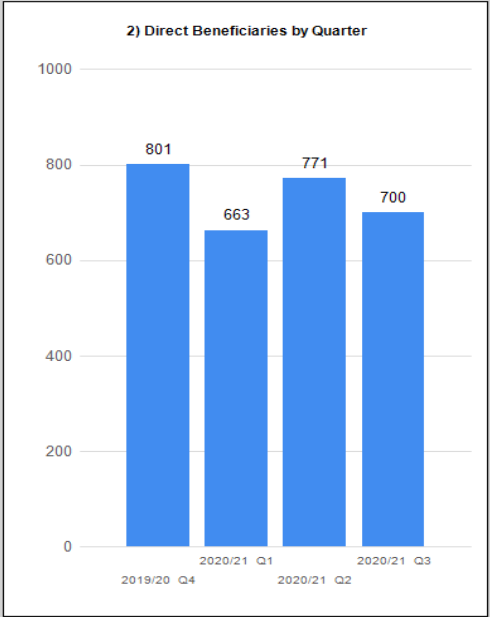
Outcomes and benefits:

Since attending Work Skills sessions, DT has developed her CV, increased her confidence, is moving on from Parent Ambassador to Parent Champion training with SAVS, and has a much clearer idea about the type of career she wants and the opportunities available. We hope to hear again from DT soon about the public sector jobs she applies for.

Appendix Two - Data Dashboard Extract

During the 12-month reporting period 01.01.2020 to 31.12.2020 the proportion of primary beneficiaries involved in the ABSS Programme was 31.3% of all eligible individuals. This may be contrasted with the 35.1% of beneficiaries engaged during the period 01.01.2019 to 31.12.2019, which demonstrates the impact of Coronavirus/COVID-19 throughout 2020.

Chart 2 below shows that Quarters 2 and 3 of the current financial year show an improvement in the number of beneficiaries involved in projects but remain below the level seen at the end of the 2019/20 year. Activity throughout 2020 shows a growth in the Communication and Language workstream, as shown in chart 3.



Project delivery has been gradually relocated to ‘virtual delivery’ in order to comply with social distancing rules but maintain project activity. Note, that some projects may not yet have been re-coded to this delivery method.

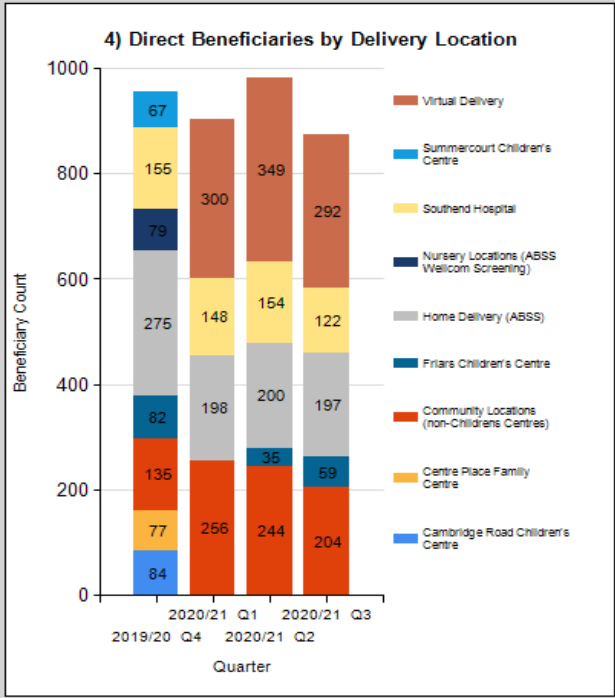


Chart 7 below shows that new beneficiaries who have not been in the programme previously continue to be engaged despite the current lockdown situation, albeit at lower levels than previously.

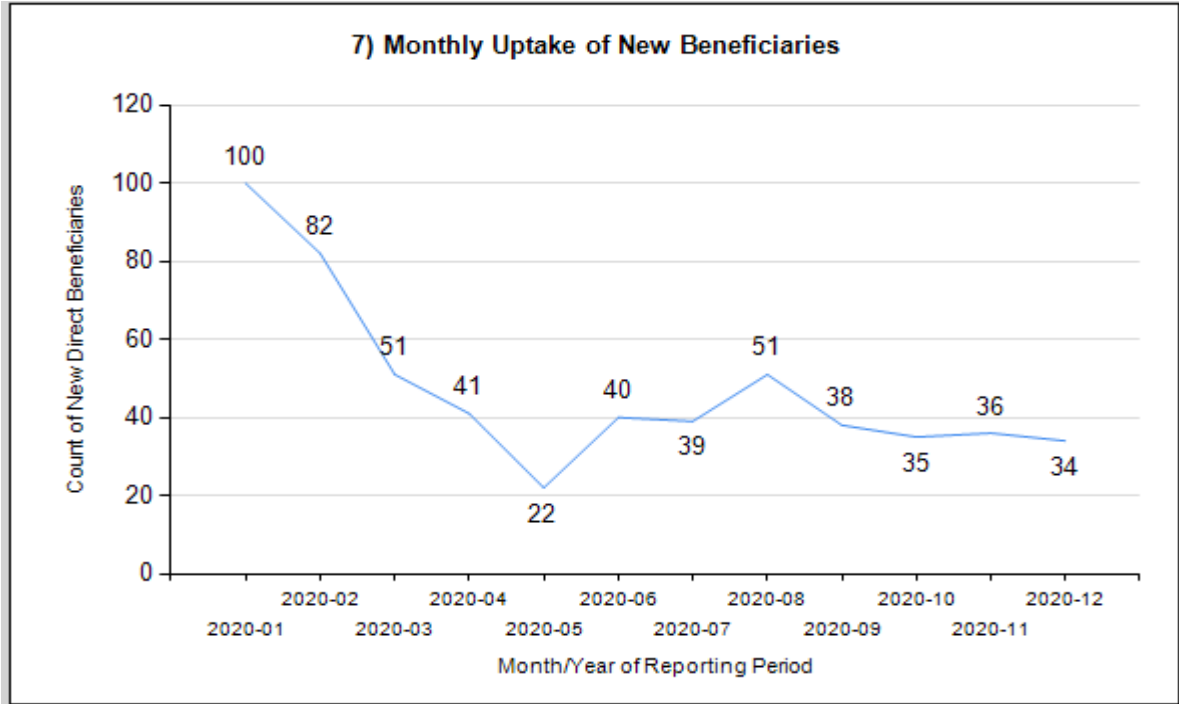
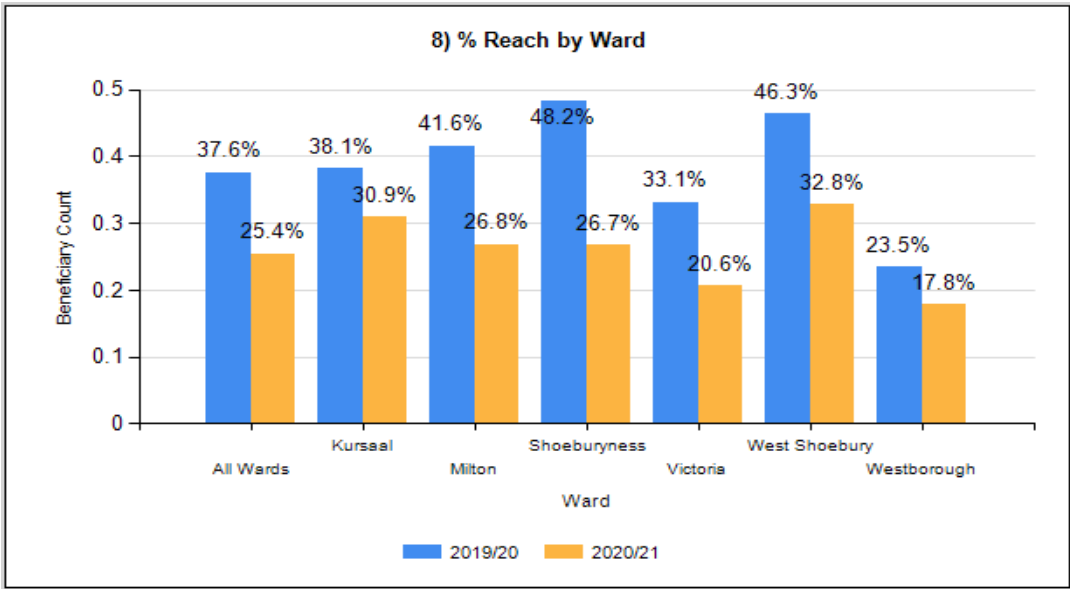
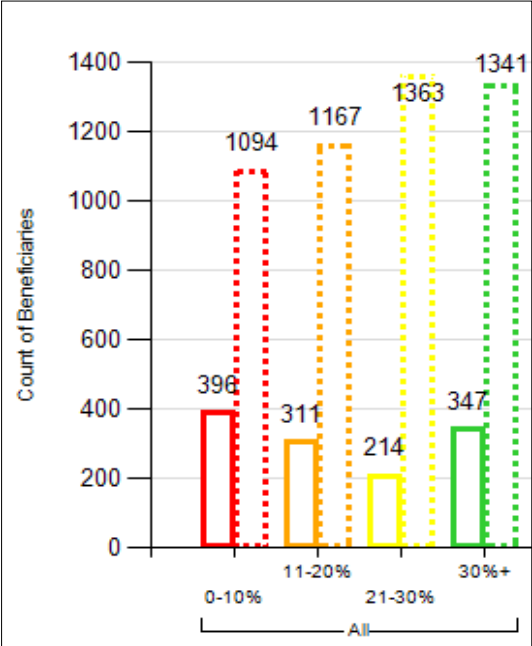


Chart 8 below shows reach for the current financial year (Quarters 1 to 3), compared to the whole of last year. West Shoebury has seen the largest reach so far this year at nearly 33%. Although Westborough has the lowest reach (17.8%) this looks likely to exceed the level of the previous year.

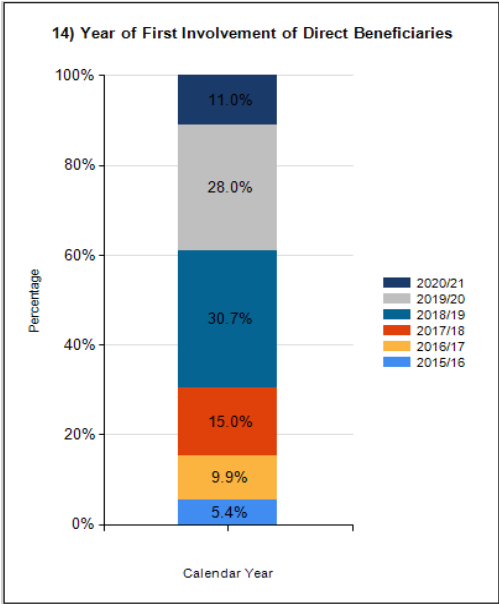


An extract from chart 9 below shows that the largest number of beneficiaries (396) are from areas with the highest level of deprivation (in the top 10% nationally) highlighting the focus of projects in these target areas. Over a third of all potential beneficiaries from these high deprivation areas have been involved in the programme over the past 12 months.



The proportion of beneficiaries that have been involved in only one project has now fallen to 52% which means that almost half of all beneficiaries have been involved in more than one project. This indicates the families are being retained on the programme beyond their initial involvement.

Chart 14 below shows that 11% of all beneficiaries since the start of the programme have been recruited since April 2020, which is an encouraging outcome in view of the current climate. As the programme matures over the 10 years the percentage of new beneficiaries would naturally decrease for each subsequent year.



Appendix Three - Project Names and Workstreams

Project Title	Work Stream	Delivery Status	Delivery Partner
121 Breastfeeding	D & N	In Delivery	MSE Hospital Trust (previously SUHFT)
Group Breastfeeding	D & N	In Delivery	YMCA
3 - 4 Month Contact	D & N	Service Design	SBC
HENRY	D & N	In Delivery	HENRY
Southend Supports Breastfeeding	D & N	In Delivery	SBC & EYA
Infant Feeding Supervisor Lead	D & N	Service Design	TBD
Maternal Healthy Weight	D & N	Service Design	TBD
Public Health Midwife	D & N	Service Design	TBD
The Food and Growing Project	D & N	Closed	Family Action
Starting Solids Workshop			
Food 4 Life			
Family Nurse Partnership	S & E	In Delivery	EPUT
Perinatal Mental Health	S & E	In Delivery	EPUT
EPEC (Being a Parent)	S & E	Project Closed	SLAM
EPEC (Baby and Us)			
FSW SCN	S & E	In Delivery	SBC & EYA
Your Family	S & E	Service Design	TBD
Preparation for Parenthood	S & E	In Delivery	HENRY
EPEC Coordinator	S & E	Closed	PACEY
Volunteer Home Visiting Service	S & E	In Delivery	Home Start
Let's Talk	C & L	In Delivery	EPUT
23 Month Screening	C & L		
Attention ABS	C & L		
Chatting Children	C & L		
Follow Up Sessions	C & L		
Project Home and Early Years Setting	C & L		
Babbling Babies	C & L		
Little Listeners	C & L		
Super Sounds	C & L		
Talking Tiddlers	C & L		
Talking Toddlers	C & L		
Talking Walk Ins	C & L		
Wellcomm Screening	C & L		

First and Foremost	C & L	In Delivery	EYA
Talking Transitions	C & L	In Delivery	EYA
Engagement	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
Engagement Fund	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
Community, Ideas and Development Fund	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
RIIF Story Sacks	CR	In Delivery	SAVS
RIIF Umbilical Chords	CR	In Delivery	YMCA
Coproduction Champion	CR	In Delivery	SAVS, EYA, SBC
ABSS Parent, Family and Community Hub	CR	Service Design	ABSS/SAVS
Work Skills	CR	In Delivery	SBC
Community Vehicle	CR	Closed	TBD
Welcome to the UK	SC	In Delivery	Welcome to the UK
Data Input - ESTART	SC	In Delivery	Family Action
First and Foremost	SC	In Delivery	EYA
The Dartington Service Design (0-19 mapping)	SC	In Delivery	Dartington
SBC Data Analysis	SC	In Delivery	SBC
Joint Paediatric Clinic	SC	Paused	Southend CCG
Programme Evaluation Partnership	SC	In Delivery	UofE
Information Governance Specialist Consultant	SC	In Delivery	K8 Data Protection Consultant

Appendix Four - Q3 20/21 Management Accounts

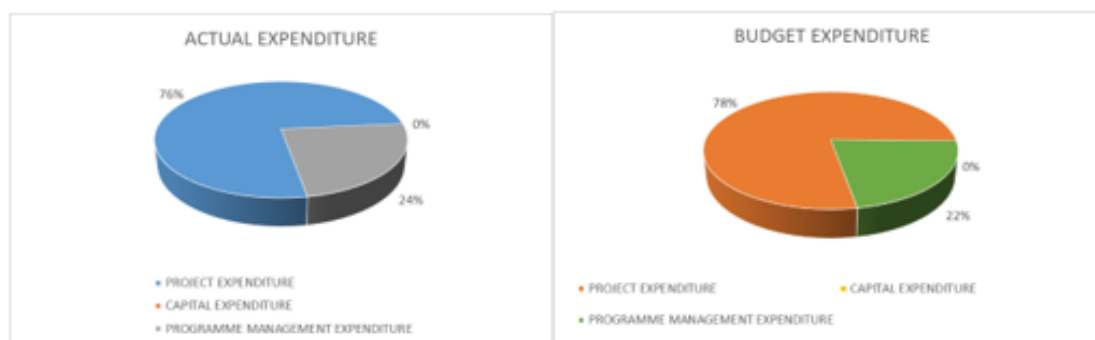


SUMMARY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – CONFIDENTIAL

THREE MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

The management accounts for the A Better Start Southend (ABSS) programme show income received, and expenditure incurred during this financial year. Management accounts are presented to the ABSS Partnership Board quarterly, coinciding with the submission of returns to the National Lottery Community Fund. More detailed monthly accounts are reviewed by the ABSS Finance and Risk Group.

The accounts for the financial period from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 show project expenditure of £1,628,000, capital expenditure of £0 and programme management (PMO) expenditure of £507,000. These are represented as a percentage of total spend in the first chart.



Underspend against budget for all project workstreams total £881,000. This is due to a number of reasons relating to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- delays in the mobilisation of new projects, some of which are substantial new initiatives (e.g. Your Family) including engagement and employment of several staff;
- pausing of some initiatives (e.g. Joint Paediatrics Clinic);
- savings on existing projects that have adopted different delivery models leading to cost savings, for example on travel, room bookings, physical resources, projected spend on irrecoverable VAT and creche;
- delivery partners being unable to recruit during this period resulting in vacancies which are not claimed for.

Summary Management Accounts - Confidential

Period: QUARTER THREE 2020-21

Period: APRIL to DECEMBER 2020

	Actual	Budget	Variance (adverse) or favourable
	£	£	£
INCOME			
REVENUE FUNDING RECEIVED FROM BIG LOTTERY FUND	1,971,000	3,213,000	(1,242,000)
CAPITAL FUNDING RECEIVED FROM BIG LOTTERY FUND	-	-	-
LEVERAGED INCOME	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME	1,971,000	3,213,000	(1,242,000)
EXPENDITURE			
PROJECTS			
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL	506,000	725,000	219,000
COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE	295,000	357,000	62,000
DIET AND NUTRITION	283,000	560,000	277,000
SYSTEM CHANGE	117,000	276,000	159,000
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE	331,000	437,000	106,000
SUSTAINABILITY AND LEGACY PLAN		56,000	56,000
CRECHE SERVICES	65,000	66,000	1,000
MONITORING & EVALUATION	31,000	32,000	1,000
PROJECT EXPENDITURE	1,628,000	2,509,000	881,000
SALARIES AND SECONDMENTS	313,000	488,000	175,000
OTHER PMO COSTS	194,000	217,000	23,000
PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURE	507,000	705,000	198,000
TOTAL REVENUE EXPENDITURE	2,135,000	3,214,000	1,079,000
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	-	-	-
LEVERAGED COSTS	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,135,000	3,214,000	1,079,000
NET FUNDING IN ADVANCE/(OWED)	(164,000)	(1,000)	(163,000)
CUMULATIVE FIGURES FROM START UP TO DATE	£		
INCOME	15,194,000		
PROJECT EXPENDITURE	8,256,000		
PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT EXPENDITURE	5,674,000		
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	542,000		
LEVERAGED	342,000		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	14,814,000		
NET FUNDING IN ADVANCE/(OWED)	380,000		

CONVENTION: Brackets around a number signify either an amount owed by the Big Lottery or an adverse variance (ie income less than budget or expenditure greater than budget)