

APPENDIX 1A: CONSULTATION SUMMARY

1.1 Recommissioning 0-5 Service: Consultation & Engagement

1.1.1 To support the recommissioning of the Health Visiting service, a public consultation was launched on 29 June 2018 to gather views on people's experiences of the service, what's most important to both parents and practitioners and how the service can be improved through innovation.

1.1.2 The formal consultation process closed on 3 August 2018. It included online surveys (289 responses received: 246 from parents/carers and 43 from practitioners/professionals), a co-production workshop (with six parent champions), five parent and carer focus groups (c.24 attendees) and several one-to-one stakeholder meetings across various children's services. The engagement and co-design process will also continue beyond the end of the formal public consultation, including:

- an online ideas forum is being launched on Stickyworld to support continuing co-production;
- additional feedback is being gathered from first-time teenage parents as part of a wider consultation process regarding housing;
- emerging themes from Southend 2050 are being recorded and highlighted to ensure alignment.

1.1.3 The public consultation was supported and promoted across the borough with the support of A Better Start Southend, Public Health, the Early Years Team, existing stakeholder networks, Children's Centres, social media and with support of the Corporate Communications Team to maximise responses.

1.1.4 A full copy of the Public Consultation report is attached as Appendix 2.

1.1.5 Some of the key themes from the Public Consultation are:

- 77% of parents/carers and 84% of practitioners/professionals supported SBC's vision for an integrated 0-19 children's and young people's service. Where respondents raised issues about integration, their concerns largely related to fears of budget/staffing cuts, a dilution of skills / reduction in service quality if services were combined, and worries that 'integration' meant 'privatisation'.
- 70% of parents/carers rated the existing service as 'excellent or 'good'. However, some were not clear on what areas of support and advice were available from the Health Visiting service, or that they could contact the service in between visits with an impression that they are 'discharged' after the 2-2½ year visit;
- 65% of parents/carers felt there were gaps in the service. Their comments suggest there is a desire for a broader range of services which parents could access depending on their needs. These included requests for additional checks (e.g. during the first 18 months to cover weaning, behaviour management, potty training, social interaction, developing speech and language, and at 3½ and 5 years to discuss immunisation and school

readiness), requests for separate support programmes (e.g. Delta, additional peer-led groups, CPR training and baby massage) and requests for additional information sources (e.g. approved website resources).

- Consistent, up to date advice and local knowledge on signposting to other services, groups and activities was said to be very important to parents as is receiving the same level of input and support from the service for first time mothers as for any subsequent children;
- The use of technology was suggested (apps, websites, social media) as a way to support appointment booking, advice and information and to contact the service to help to link mothers with local parenting groups, courses and events;
- Parents who gave extremely positive feedback on the service identified that this was a result of seeing the same person and being able to build up a relationship as well as support to continue breastfeeding and signposting to other services as required;
- As well as constraints on time / budgets / resources, practitioners also specifically identified a lack of parking, adequate office space, web-enabled devices (to show parents online resources) and communication/integration with other services as barriers to effective service delivery;
- Co-location of staff was suggested by some practitioners as a way to improve integration and that links could be strengthened with Early Help and Social Care, building upon successes achieved through MASH+ and MARAT in improving closer working arrangements;
- Practitioners/professionals highlighted the role health visitors play in safeguarding in supporting vulnerable families and helping reduce the need for referrals to social care, and more multi-agency learning and working were suggested to support this.