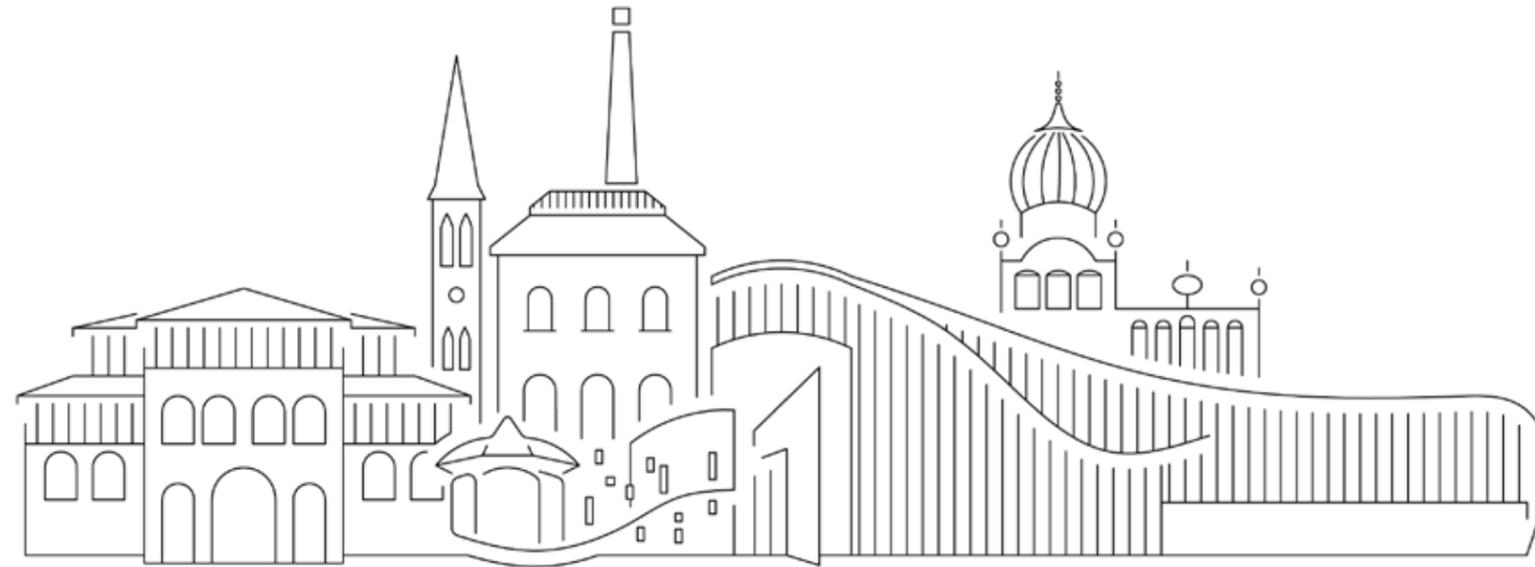




VISION 2030 SANDWELL

Children's Services Directorate Business Plan

2018 – 2021



Ambition 1



Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.

Ambition 2



Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer, and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.

Ambition 3



Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy.

Ambition 4



Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.

Ambition 5



Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods.

Ambition 6



We have excellent and affordable public transport that connects us to all local centres and to jobs in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, the airport and the wider West Midlands.

Ambition 7



We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.

Ambition 8



Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.

Ambition 9



Sandwell has become a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow.

Ambition 10



Sandwell now has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people's lives and communities.

Section 1

What is Children's Services?

Children's Services has responsibility for a wide range of services for children, young people, their families and schools in Sandwell. These include: social care; early help, targeted services; young people's services; and education, skills and employment services.

Children's Services comprises: Children and Families (children's social care); and Education, Skills and Employment (ESE).

Our vision is for Sandwell children and young people to have the best start in life, and for them to be nurtured and supported by those who care for them so that they will develop into healthy, socially responsible and achieving adults. They will, in turn, show the same level of care when raising their own families.

2018-2019 will see the children's social care element of Children's Services moving to an independent trust. Sandwell Council will hold Sandwell Children's Trust accountable for the delivery of children's social care.

The council will be retaining responsibility for Early Help and Education, Skills and Employment services, and will continue to hold responsibility for the statutory function of children's social care.



Children and Families (children's social care)

Jim Leivers - Interim Director of
Children's Services

Councillor Simon Hackett

Cabinet member – Children's Services

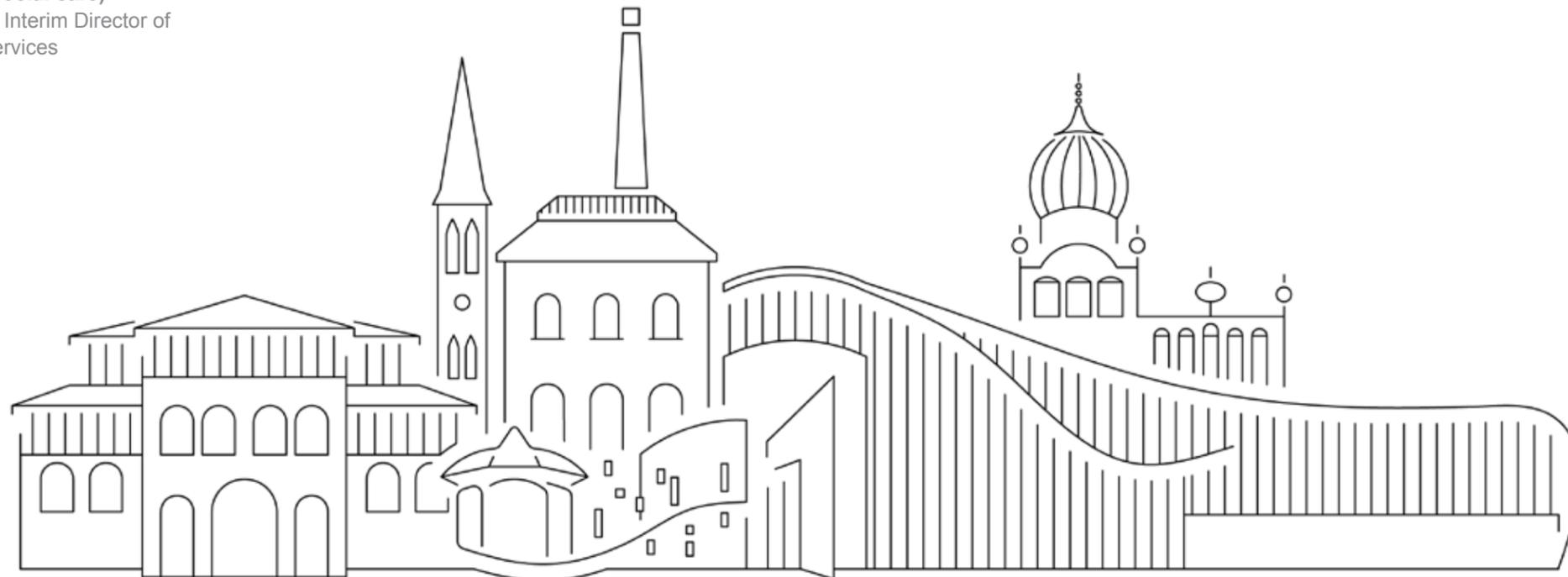
Our role in Children's Services is to make sure children get the best possible start in life and with our partners we want to provide the best services for families in Sandwell.

We want to make sure every child is ready for school and we have enough primary and secondary places. We will work with educational professionals to raise standards as all children in Sandwell should have access to a good education.

We will support children as they prepare for adulthood and help to provide the best opportunities for further education and careers.

The new Sandwell Children's Trust will work with the Council and partners to deliver quality services that meet the needs and demands of vulnerable children and their families.

This business plan sets out how we will achieve our ambitions in-line with Sandwell's Vision 2030.



Section 2



Children and Families

Children and Families provides a statutory service to children in need, looked after children, children at risk of harm, private fostering and children with disabilities.

The improvement of children's social care services is a priority for Sandwell. The service has a long history of underperformance in Ofsted inspections and as a result has been required to establish an arm's length independent trust to manage its children's social care.

There has been a significant commitment by the council and the Department for Education (DfE) to deliver change. Children's Commissioner Malcolm Newsam was appointed in October 2016. This has provided a focus for the delivery of an improved service.

An improvement programme has been built upon the work of the Commissioner and of the service. It positions the authority, and subsequently Sandwell Children's Trust, to make the necessary changes.

The improvement activity required to deliver safe and effective services for children and young people in Sandwell is driven through an evolving improvement plan, overseen by the Council, the Commissioner, Ofsted, the DfE and the new Sandwell Children's Trust Board.

Education, Skills and Employment

Chris Ward - Director: Education, Skills & Employment



Education, Skills and Employment (ESE) drives Sandwell's focus on educational attainment and achievement, early learning, school improvement, support for children and young people with SEND (special educational needs and disability), skills and employment services.

ESE have a range of universal and universal plus services which target the most appropriate support to children, young people and their families. We also have statutory services which are subject to inspection.

Acting as the champion for children, young people and their parents and carers, ESE are strategic leaders in the raising of standards in the borough's schools, whilst supporting all sectors of education to develop the skills and connections they need to drive their own success.

ESE faces several financial challenges such as the removal of the Education Services Grant; the creation of the Sandwell Children's Trust, which will have a further impact on ESE services; school funding (de delegations) that will cease in 2019/20; and Facing the Future savings 2019/2020. A total of over £5m reduction in funding is expected.

ESE will need to restructure services and change the delivery models of services to ensure financial pressures can be met. We will need to work differently with schools through Schools' Forum to secure the services schools want for the future, whilst ensuring the Council can still meet its statutory duties and responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, we remain committed to working in partnership with all our stakeholders including young people, parents, carers, teachers and elected members, to provide the best opportunities for all our young people in Sandwell.



Section 3

The priorities detailed in this section represent the key areas of focus for Children's Services and will ensure that the service remains focused upon our principal objective to create safe, strong and resilient children and families. We will meet our priorities by delivering our improvement objectives.

Priority 1

We want our Children's Services to be aspirational, we will ensure that children in Sandwell are safeguarded and that adverse childhood experiences are minimised.

We will:

- increase the uptake of pre-school child care places by our most disadvantaged families
- increase the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development prior to entering formal education
- deliver the requirements of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) reform agenda
- continue to improve post-16 performance across the borough to increase opportunities for young people to access further and higher education
- We will develop a confident leadership with one voice
 - o Establish stronger strategic leadership within the council and across the partnership system that creates the conditions for strong partnership working and practice
 - o Establish strong communication system between the council, commissioner and leaders of the future Trust arrangements
 - o Review, consolidate and strengthen existing governance arrangements ensuring there is a growing culture of listening to the views of children and families providing constructive challenge.
 - o Develop effective governance transition arrangements between the local authority, its partners and the Sandwell Children's Trust
 - o Appoint to and support the development of our leaders and managers
 - o Review and refresh existing quality assurance arrangements, including the role and effectiveness of audit
 - o Implement a strengthened member development programme to support our role as corporate parents

- We will become an employer of choice
 - o Attraction – attract high-calibre candidates through an effective attraction campaign online and through advertising vacancies
 - o Selection – to assess and select suitable candidates through methods which provide speed (fast turnarounds) accuracy (quality, experienced, and skilled new starters) and simplicity (cutting out waste)
 - o Recruitment – to provide new starters with employment offers at the earliest opportunity and provide an effective introduction via regular communication and support prior to starting with the council
 - o Learning and development to be informed by and supportive of the improvement priorities
 - o Continuous Professional Development
 - o Children and Families Workforce Development
 - o Wellbeing Promotion
 - o Focus on maintaining our staff
 - o Retention of staff and managers

- We will develop effective partnerships
 - o The establishment of formal joint Trust arrangements
 - o Establish formal partnership arrangements to deliver the ongoing improvement of services for children and support the transition to a Trust
 - o Confirm joint priorities with key child care agencies
 - o Confirm key partners including school leaders, police, health, probation, community, voluntary and faith sectors necessary to develop and deliver the strategic plan, and operational services to support and improve life chances of vulnerable children in Sandwell
 - o Work with families and other partners to ensure that we place children, young people and families at the heart of future developments
 - o Ensure an active commitment from all partners to work together to ensure the discharge of our corporate parenting responsibilities and that there are effective services for our looked after children
 - o Reach agreement on future funding arrangements for the Trust and partnerships
 - o Collaborate to support innovative future development both locally and across the region with partner organisations
 - o Support and develop joint training for the multi-agency workforce
 - o Work collaboratively to reaffirm and building upon what works well across the partnership
 - o Identify and agree areas of weakness and those requiring improvement



Priority 2

We want every child in Sandwell to be healthy and active. We will work with partners across health and social care and the third sector to provide activities and opportunities to improve outcomes for our children across health and social care.

We will:

- deliver high quality social care practice
 - o ensure staff, managers and stakeholders including children, young people and families, understand the developments and timescales leading to formal joint Trust arrangements
 - o work with families and other partners to ensure that we place children, young people and families at the heart of future developments
 - o identify and agree areas of weakness and those requiring improvement
 - o focus on key areas of practice including assessment, case planning, visiting and chronologies
 - o deliver services within a culture of 'High Challenge, High Support' aimed at developing professional accountability.
 - o embed monthly peer auditing across standards
 - o embed Signs of Safety and other social work models that underpin good practice
 - o ensure a culture of continuous learning and development for all levels of the service
 - o seek and build upon feedback from our service users and partners,
 - o further develop the role and skills of our Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Chairs to strengthen our practice and good outcomes for children
 - o strengthen the role of the Principal Social Worker and the supporting practice improvement team



Priority 3

We want every child to have a good school place in Sandwell. We will work to provide additional school places to meet our growing population needs and work with schools to raise education standards.

We will:

- increase the proportion of schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted, particularly in the secondary sector
- improve pupil progress rates for all pupils, including vulnerable groups, to deliver improved GCSE outcomes
- increase the proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels in all phases

Priority 4

We want every child in Sandwell to have the very best start in life. We will work with partners and the community to improve school readiness.

We will

- will increase the uptake of pre school child care places by our most disadvantaged families
- increase the quality of pre school and Early Years provision across the borough
- increase the proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels in all phases
- deliver the requirements of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reform agenda





Priority 5

We want children in Sandwell to be better prepared for adulthood. We will work in partnership with schools to develop the curriculum to ensure that our children are prepared for their life ahead.

We will:

- increase the proportion of schools and academies rated good or better by Ofsted, particularly in the secondary sector
- improve pupil progress rates for all pupils, including vulnerable groups, to deliver improved GCSE outcomes
- increase the proportion of pupils achieving the highest levels in all phases
- deliver the requirements of the SEND reform agenda
- continue to improve post 16 performance across the borough to increase opportunities for young people to access further and higher education
- encourage schools and academies to develop the best possible curriculum models to better prepare young people for adulthood

Priority 6

Every child should be aware of career opportunities that are available in Sandwell. We will work with schools and local businesses to forge greater links to ensure that our young people are aware of future opportunities, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the West Midlands Combined Authority

We will:

- continue to improve post-16 performance across the borough to increase opportunities for young people to access further and higher education
- work with schools and employers to develop the skills necessary for work and to improve the opportunities for young people to access apprenticeships and permanent employment
- will support individuals who are unemployed or economically inactive back into work
- will support individuals on lower incomes
- will look at the opportunities brought by the development of the combined authority to increase employment in the borough
- will encourage businesses to link closely with schools to enhance the curriculum and increase employment motivation in our young people



Priority 7

Sandwell Children's Trust will make the necessary arrangements to protect and safeguard the welfare and best interests of all children and young people living in or visiting Sandwell. Through the creation of a Children's Strategic Partnership the Trust will work with the Local Safeguarding Board and other partners to deliver quality services that meet the needs and demands of vulnerable children and their families.

- We will deliver a social care organisation which is fit for purpose
 - o Workforce Database
 - o Windows 10 pilot (and any subsequent rollout)
 - o Refurbished Trust Headquarters and family conference facilities
 - o Implementation of outcomes of Business Support review
- We will develop robust performance management systems
 - o Deliver Impress phase 2
 - o Ensure that Business Object reports are fit for purpose
 - o Run a series of workshops for managers to equip them to use reports as a management tool
 - o Continue to provide support to managers, whilst developing a culture of self-reliance
 - o Ensure that up to date and relevant demographic data is available
 - o Continue to run performance challenge boards to ensure individual service areas and managers are held to account, that issues regarding poor performance are addressed and innovative practice celebrated.
 - o The Principal Social Worker will report regularly to the Improvement Board, the Director and the Director of Children's Services to ensure strong communications, and a clear line of sight across the service and to senior managers.



Section 4: Whole Budget 2018/2021

Divisional Planning

Director:
Jim Leivers

Divisional Context:

Children's Services provides Social Care, Early Help, Education, Skills and Employment support for the children and young people of Sandwell. The service consists of three interconnected areas: Children and Families (Children's Social Care), Early Help, Education, Skills and Employment. From 1 April 2018, the Children's Social Care element of Children's Services will be delivered by Sandwell's Children's Trust which is independent to the council.

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Director of Education and Employment	6,885	7,510	7,516	7,516
Education Support Services	2,273	2,496	2,641	2,643
Learning Improvement	3,520	2,993	3,201	3,203
Inclusive Learning	3,356	3,066	3,095	3,098
Director of Children's Services	5,243	5,473	5,520	5,527
Sandwell Children's Trust	42,409	48,779	49,705	49,944
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	63,686	70,317	71,678	71,931
* Staffing Levels:	492	476	476	476
* Total FTE	359	344	344	344

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Employees	13,173	13,168	13,588	13,588
Premises	1,392	1,112	1,114	1,115
Transport	2,950	2,932	2,936	2,940
Supplies & Services	7,595	6,901	6,910	6,919
Third Party	42,409	48,779	49,705	49,944
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0
Capital Charges	18,387	24,743	24,743	24,743
Total Gross Expenditure	85,906	97,635	98,996	99,249
INCOME:-				
Specific Grants	2,856	1,527	1,527	1,527
Partner Contributions	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	10,509	10,470	10,470	10,470
Other	8,855	15,321	15,321	15,321
Total Income	22,220	27,318	27,318	27,318
* Net Target Budget	63,686	70,317	71,678	71,931
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	19,460	17,408	16,498	15,512
* Staffing Levels:	540	542	531	527
* Total FTE:	438.4	435.77	426.52	422.52

Section 4: Whole Budget 2018/2021

Learning Improvement

Service Manager:

Andrew Timmins

Divisional Context:

School Improvement provides challenge and support for all phases including primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral units. The team is made up of around 9 school improvement advisers.

Post 16 Education includes a number of areas including Employment and Skills, Connexions and Adult Services.

Early Years covers all aspects of work relating to children up to the age of 5 including nursery funding for 2 year olds.

Area Education Officer oversees education visits and the admin support team for school improvement playing a key part in providing advice to schools on aspects which are not curriculum or performance related.

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Employees	6,516	6,465	6,671	6,671
Premises	146	45	45	45
Transport	58	83	83	83
Supplies & Services	1,780	1,421	1,423	1,425
Third Party	0	0	0	0
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0
Capital Charges	62	62	62	62
Total Gross Expenditure	8,562	8,076	8,284	8,286
INCOME:-				
Specific Grants	1,474	1,461	1,461	1,461
Partner Contributions	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	3,568	3,622	3,622	3,622
Other	0	0	0	0
Total Income	5,042	5,083	5,083	5,083
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	3,520	2,993	3,201	3,203
* Staffing Levels:	202	200	200	200
* Total FTE	172	169	169	169
* Total FTE:	438.4	435.77	426.52	422.52

Director of Education and Employment

Service Manager:

Chris Ward

Divisional Context:

The Director of Education and Employment is responsible for the delivery of the following key services:

- Education Support Services
- Learning Improvement
- Inclusive Learning

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Employees	172	181	187	187
Premises	0	0	0	0
Transport	0	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	349	11	11	11
Third Party	0	0	0	0
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0
Capital Charges	18,022	24,378	24,378	24,378
Total Gross Expenditure	18,543	24,570	24,576	24,576
INCOME:-				
Specific Grants	1,080	38	38	38
Partner Contributions	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	1,723	1,701	1,701	1,701
Other	8,855	15,321	15,321	15,321
Total Income	11,658	17,060	17,060	17,060
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	6,885	7,510	7,516	7,516
* Staffing Levels:	2	2	2	2
* Total FTE	2	2	2	2
* Total FTE:	438.4	435.77	426.52	422.52

Section 4: Whole Budget 2018/2021

Education Support Services

Service Manager:

Sue Moore

Divisional Context:

Education Support Services encompasses 5 discreet service areas all of which contribute to the education directorate's objectives of learning support and school improvement across Sandwell. These service areas are:

- School Organisation and Development (which has a responsibility for forecasting pupil numbers and planning and providing new, quality school places)
- Attendance and Prosecution (which supports pupils, families and schools in improving attendance)
- School admissions and appeals (undertakes a coordinating role between all admission authorities, assisting parents in making realistic preferences and supporting the appeals process)
- Education Benefits (supporting families and schools in assessing free school meal eligibility and entitlement to transport) and Residential Centres (providing residential placements for children at 4 out of borough centres)

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Employees	4,288	4,486	4,629	4,629
Premises	264	259	259	260
Transport	362	319	319	320
Supplies & Services	881	858	859	860
Third Party	0	0	0	0
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0
Capital Charges	225	225	225	225
Total Gross Expenditure	6,020	6,147	6,292	6,294
INCOME:-				
Specific Grants	28	28	28	28
Partner Contributions	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	3,719	3,623	3,623	3,623
Other	0	0	0	0
Total Income	3,747	3,651	3,651	3,651
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	2,273	2,496	2,641	2,643
* Staffing Levels:	168	168	168	168
* Total FTE	134	133	133	133
* Total FTE:	438.4	435.77	426.52	422.52

Inclusive Learning

Service Manager:

Kevin Rowland

Divisional Context:

Inclusive Learning supports vulnerable children and young people to achieve positive outcomes and engage in learning. In order to achieve this, it provides a number of key services. These include:

- Inclusion Support provides advice guidance, information and support to parents, carers and schools regarding children and young people who may have a broad spectrum of special educational needs
- Exclusions Service enabling the local authority to dispatch its statutory responsibilities in relation to the exclusion of school aged pupils
- SEN Home to School Transport

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Employees	1,217	783	808	808
Premises	63	63	63	63
Transport	2,521	2,521	2,524	2,528
Supplies & Services	342	175	175	175
Third Party	0	0	0	0
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0
Capital Charges	0	0	0	0
Total Gross Expenditure	4,143	3,542	3,571	3,574
INCOME:-				
Specific Grants	274	0	0	0
Partner Contributions	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	513	476	476	476
Other	0	0	0	0
Total Income	787	476	476	476
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	3,356	3,066	3,095	3,098
* Staffing Levels:	29	14	14	14
* Total FTE	24	12	12	12
* Total FTE:	438.4	435.77	426.52	422.52

Section 4: Whole Budget 2018/2021

Director of Children's Services

Service Manager:

Jim Leivers

Divisional Context:

Director of Children's Services includes the following key services:

- Director of Children's Services
- Children's Centres
- Other Commissioned Services
- Youth Services

	Target Budget 2017/18 £'000	Target Budget 2018/19 £'000	Target Budget 2019/20 £'000	Target Budget 2020/21 £'000
Employees	980	1,253	1,293	1,293
Premises	919	745	746	747
Transport	9	9	9	9
Supplies & Services	4,243	4,436	4,442	4,448
Third Party	0	0	0	0
Transfer Payments	0	0	0	0
Capital Charges	78	78	78	78
Total Gross Expenditure	6,229	6,521	6,568	6,575
INCOME:-				
Specific Grants	0	0	0	0
Partner Contributions	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	986	1,048	1,048	1,048
Other	0	0	0	0
Total Income	986	1,048	1,048	1,048
* Grand Total Annual Budget:	5,243	5,473	5,520	5,527
* Staffing Levels:	91	92	92	92
* Total FTE	27	28	28	28
* Total FTE:	438.4	435.77	426.52	422.52

Living our values and behaviours in our work

Putting our behaviours into practice

Trust | Show respect, make a personal impact, being open and honest

This behaviour means:

Show respect
Being aware of your impact on others and your use of resources. Valuing openness, listening to and understanding other people's views. Actively promoting equality and diversity. Working to minimise any harm in the working environment.

Personal impact
Taking ownership of your work, decisions, performance and development. Having a 'can do' approach and attitude.

Open and honest
Displaying high levels of personal integrity and ethical behaviour. Being truthful, honest and realistic. Giving reasons for your decisions and actions. Not getting carried away.

Examples of good performance:

Valuing difference. Encouraging ideas. Being open and non-judgemental. Controlling emotions. Demonstrating sensitivity. Balancing courage and consideration when challenging others.

Being reliable and accountable. Seeing things through to completion. Using initiative. Focusing on performance and accuracy. Being willing to learn.

Being sincere, trustworthy and reliable. Focusing on what is right – not who is right. Encouraging free-flowing conversation.

Unity | Focusing on customers, working with a team, communicating effectively

This behaviour means:

Customer Focus
Always thinking about what customers get from us. Reaching out to customers, listening to them and understanding their needs. Helping them make decisions about the services they need.

Team Worker
Working well with colleagues, forming effective partnerships (both inside and outside the council). Working fast. Achieving shared goals by working across disciplines.

Communicate Effectively
Encouraging two-way communication choosing the optimum time, style and approach to ensure effectiveness.

Examples of good performance:

Connecting with, and involving others by listening and talking to them. Giving sound advice. Following up on customers' requests. Seeking ways of helping customers. Sorting out problems promptly and professionally.

Creating a positive team spirit. Accepting responsibility for your own performance. Agreeing personal objectives (specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and timely) in consultation with others. Delivering results on time and to the required standard.

Using language that is clear and understandable. Keeping people informed and up-to-date. Being accurate and on time when you get or provide information. Questioning and listening effectively. Adapting your approach and style to meet the needs of the people you are communicating with.

Below are **good examples** of what our **behaviours** look like in practice. They are not all the ways we should behave but they help us to **understand** better what is expected from us as employees. Your manager will discuss the **values** and **behaviours** that are **essential** to your job role.

Progress | Being open to change, focusing on performance, getting team results

This behaviour means:

Open to Change
Seeing change as an opportunity, being receptive to new ideas. Adjusting to unfamiliar situations, demands and changing roles.

Performance Focus
Planning and organising your work so you meet deadlines (within the resources available to you). Consistently and successfully meeting objectives.

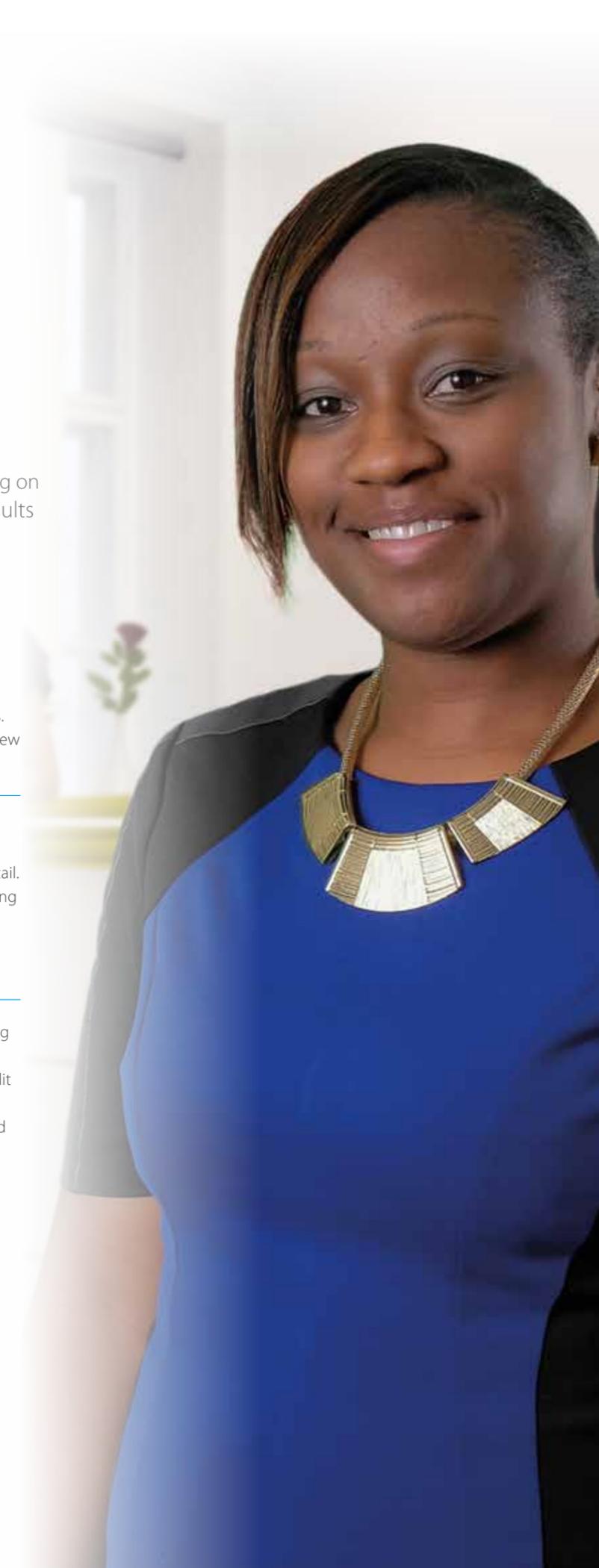
Team Results
Working with others to reach a common goal. Sharing information and supporting each other in a positive way.

Examples of good performance:

Thinking about how to improve. Being flexible and adaptable. Seeking performance improvements. Being open-minded about new ideas and proposals

Prioritising and planning. Working to high standards. Paying close attention to detail. Being conscientious and going further than expected ('the extra mile').

Recognising and appreciating the contributions of other team members. Sharing credit for success. Sharing skills, knowledge and encouraging others.





www.sandwell.gov.uk/vision2030