

Stronger Somerset – *for stronger children’s services*

| We will take a fresh strategic approach focused to enable every child to achieve its very best and to live well | Our alternative delivery model will give strong and singular focus on children and young people, and deliver improvements at greater pace | Schools and colleges will be at the heart of local children’s services systems |
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| <p>Ofsted and CQC inspections have identified the need for significant improvement in key services, notably children’s social care and those for children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>Whilst children social care services have improved, momentum needs to be accelerated and inequalities in outcomes for a significant number of children must be robustly addressed.</p> <p>The Stronger Somerset approach to children’s services is underpinned by a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvent how we work together • Make sure that ‘no child is left behind’ – we will prioritise inclusion • Ensure that children have seamless journeys through services, universal, targeted and specialist (and do not have to repeat their family stories to different professionals) • Implement an agreed practice model to underpin not only children’s social care practice but also that of the wider children’s workforce, including schools, drawing on evidence and experience elsewhere (eg Hertfordshire). | <p>We will create a new alternative delivery model (ADM) – a stand-alone legal entity, jointly owned by, and with accountability to, the two new unitary authorities.</p> <p>The ADM will deliver all children’s services, including social care, education and learning and youth offending responsibilities, working with health, schools, colleges and voluntary sector partners.</p> <p>The ADM will give the fresh start that is needed, giving strong and singular focus on children and young people, and to deliver improvements at greater pace and with better momentum.</p> <p>We will have one director of children’s services, working with a lead member for each unitary authority.</p> <p>Schools would be at the heart of local service delivery, with social workers linked to every school in Somerset.</p> <p>There would be single local safeguarding children partnership arrangements across the county.</p> | <p>Establishing one delivery organisation to deliver services across the two unitary authorities would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote consistency in service quality and standards across the county • Take a place-led approach, so that services are well connected to local communities, schools, colleges and other providers • Deliver family, community and wellbeing deals to focus attention on specific local issues – for example, high rates of school exclusion. <p>While all services would operate to common standards, quality assurance, and have integrated management, we will use population, evidence and performance data to shape strategic commissioning and delivery, responding to local need.</p> <p>Schools and colleges will be at the heart of local children’s services systems. Stronger Somerset will pioneer new ways of drawing on best practice to enable schools to work closely together and with other services, for example through basing social workers in schools but also in driving up attainment for children from disadvantaged groups.</p> |