

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Executive Director of Children's Services
Relevant Executive Member:	Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture
Submitted to:	Executive
Date:	5 March 2025
Title:	SHiFT Programme Progress Update
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Safe and resilient communities
Key decision:	No
Why:	Report is for information only
Subject to call in?:	No
Why:	Report is for information only

Executive summary

The report provides details of partnership work to date between SHiFT and Middlesbrough Council. SHiFT is a national charity that aims to shift practice to improve outcomes for children and young people who are involved in, or at risk of, involvement in crime. This report sets out the progress to date with children and young people invited for SHiFT support, along with evidence of positive impact of the Programme so far.

The report requests Executive notes the progress made in relation to our partnership working with SHiFT, acknowledging positive impacts for children and young people to date. SHiFT Executive Report on 20th December 2023 committed to provide an update to Executive on the following actions:

- SHiFT Practice created with recruitment and induction of new staff team.
- SHiFT Practice launched in line with Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government grant funding deadlines.
- 27 young people identified and invited to work with the SHiFT Practice, with work to develop trusting relationships with their SHiFT Guide and emerging positive impacts on their safety and wellbeing.
- Local SHiFT Board created to support effective partnership governance.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update Executive on the three-year partnership with SHiFT, a national systems change charity working alongside Children's Services within the Council. SHiFT Middlesbrough has started work across the first of two, 18-month Programmes with children and young people caught up in, or at risk of, cycles of crime and exploitation.
- 1.2 The costs of the partnership are supported by the sum of £600,000 which SHiFT secured from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, alongside match funding of £600,000 from the Council, invested over three financial years.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Executive notes progress to date on the following:
- 2.2 A SHiFT Programme has been established in Middlesbrough, with a new staff team successfully recruited, trained and working with children and families.
- 2.3 SHiFT Middlesbrough launched in line with Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government grant funding deadlines. A formal launch event was held in September 2024 and Middlesbrough's Elected Mayor attended as a key speaker alongside Keith Fraser, Chair of the Youth Justice Board.
- 2.4 27 children and young people were identified and invited for SHiFT support. Children and young people have been building trusting relationships with their SHiFT Guide and there is good evidence of emerging positive impacts on their safety and wellbeing as a result of this work.
- 2.5 A Local SHiFT Board has been created and is meeting regularly to provide effective partnership governance with Joe Tynan, Executive Director for Children's Services, as its Chair.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

- 3.1 While this report is for information only, it is important that Executive are kept updated on the work of SHiFT. SHiFT is an innovative organisation, founded in 2019, with a track record for delivering exceptional outcomes that break the destructive cycle of children and young people caught up in, or at risk of, crime.
- 3.2 SHiFT Middlesbrough provides 1-1 intensive support for 27 of the most vulnerable children and young people in Middlesbrough. Children and young people identified for SHiFT are those for whom, despite the efforts of other professionals, 'business as usual' responses have not been able to make the difference needed and where concern about their wellbeing is high and escalating. For over a quarter of the children SHiFT Middlesbrough is working with, their vulnerabilities and professional responses to their management to date, mean that they were, at the start of SHiFT's work, accommodated in high-cost placements, often a long way from home and not making the difference desired to improve the child's situation. For all children there are concerns about

increasing risk, vulnerability, and the negative impacts this can have on their living arrangements.

3.3 The total cost of the partnership to Middlesbrough Council is approximately £11k per child for an 18-month Programme of intensive individual support, which includes working with everyone important to a child's world. This represents good value for money given the highly complex needs of this vulnerable group and the intensity and expertise of the work SHiFT is delivering. Within the SHiFT cohort there are eight looked after young people whose weekly placement cost range between £3k to £23k as of the end of period nine (December 2024). SHiFT Guides work alongside existing professionals, including Social Workers, providing a level of intensity that Social Workers are not resourced to be able to deliver. SHiFT has an evidenced track record for delivering exceptional outcomes and in year cost savings and cost avoidance through, for example, reducing reliance on high-cost placements, avoiding children being remanded in custody, and supporting children to return to mainstream education from alternative provision.

4. Background and relevant information

4.1 SHiFT – National picture

4.2 SHiFT has a strong and growing track record of exceptional practice that is breaking cycles of crime with and for the most vulnerable children. Headlines from SHiFT's national evidence of impact to date, for children with a SHiFT Guide 12-18 months include:

- 41% reduction in proven offences.
- 58% reduction in reported missing episodes.
- 51% reduction in arrests

4.3 Economic analysis of SHiFT's work conducted in 2022 that for each child considered, costs avoided in the next five years by breaking cycles of crime now ranged from £1.8m to £164k. For every £1 spent on SHiFT £8 is saved over 5 years.

4.4 SHiFT Middlesbrough

4.5 Within the council plan under Safe and Resilient communities the SHiFT programme spans both the promotion of new ideas and community initiatives and also reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

4.6 SHiFT Middlesbrough has been working with children and young people since July 2024. The Practice is already making evidenced positive impacts with and alongside these children and young people, including as of September 2024 for the three months prior:

- 17 (out of 27) children had no arrests, 22 children had not committed any proven offences and 21 children had not been missing.
- Children's Social Care involvement had reduced for four children and four children had now moved back to Middlesbrough, two of whom were previously in custody and two were living in placements out of area.
- Guide's ratings of mental health had improved for six (out of 27) children and Guides assessed that the negative consequences of substance use had reduced for eight (out of 27) children.

- Guides had supported children to access education, training and employment by arranging for children to attend open days, assisting with their applications, and taking them to interviews.

4.7 Annual Evaluation

4.8 There will be an annual partnership review presented to the Local SHiFT Board in June 2025. The review consists of three section which include:

- Practice activity review – summary of key themes and trends from throughout the year that relate to the SHiFT Commitments on People, Practice, Progress and Partnership.
- Child, family, and professional feedback – thematic analysis feedback from children, families and professionals about their experiences with SHiFT gathered through interviews and focus groups.
- Data analysis – analysis of local monthly survey data providing insight into progress for children against baseline data.

4.9 The annual partnership review findings will be reported back to Executive in September 2025.

4.10 A selection of child stories have been provided as Appendix One to this paper to give greater insight into how SHiFT Middlesbrough is working with children, young people, and families and making a positive difference in their lives. Personally identifiable information has been changed to protect children’s identities.

5. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

5.1 There are no alternative recommendations in this update report.

6. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	Specific targets for cost savings have been established and are monitored as part of the Preventing Care Starts and Placement Sufficiency project monthly at the Children’s Thematic Transformation Board, alongside broader impact data, on a quarterly basis through Middlesbrough’s Local SHiFT Board.
Legal	No new legal considerations
Risk	In relation to risk that practice does not deliver benefits as intended, the Partnership Agreement provides for termination of the partnership on notice or without notice in exceptional circumstances. Key mitigations in relation to operational risk to children/families and associated reputational risks include regular oversight through the Local SHiFT Board chaired by the Executive Director of Children’s Services to ensure the

	<p>Programme is delivered as intended and any emerging issues are swiftly addressed.</p> <p>SHiFT meets all Charity Commission governance requirements, with a Board of Trustees (who meet quarterly) and specialist sub-Committees. SHiFT has a clear, regularly reviewed and communicated safeguarding policy and Critical Incident Notification Process.</p>
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no human rights, equality or data protection issues arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no climate change / environmental issues arising as a result of the recommendations in this report.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	SHiFT is working with looked after children and young people and care leavers to improve their outcomes and mitigate risk factors.
Data Protection	A Data Protection Information Agreement is in place to ensure a compliant framework for sharing Council data with SHiFT.

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Further update required on progress	Executive Director of Children' Services	September 2025

Appendices

1	Appendix One: Children Case Study
2	
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
SHiFT Initial Executive report	SHiFT Executive Report	20th December 2023

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