

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY & SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 24 JANUARY 2019

SUBJECT OF REPORT: SEND – ENGAGEMENT WITH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND ALSO PROGRESS WITH TRANSITION TO EHCP

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: WENDY PACKER

KEY DECISION: N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider and engage with the actions that are being taken to address the SEND strategy

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

Between 14th and 18th May 2018, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the North Somerset local area to judge its effectiveness in implementing the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The report of this inspection was published on 6th July 2018. As a result of the findings of the inspection, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) determined that a Written Statement of Action is required to address areas of the significant weaknesses in the local area's systems and practices. North Somerset Council (NSC) and NHS Bristol North Somerset & South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (BNSSG CCG) have produced a written statement of action which addresses they points. The statement of action is being monitored by the Department of Education and the NHS England.

Both statutory partners are also committed to engaging with North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together, our local parent carer forum, in developing our plans to address the issues identified by the inspection team and to involving children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers directly in the activity we undertake to improve services

2. POLICY

The People and Communities response to the Local Area Joint Review

3. DETAILS

A statement of action has been co-produced and is available on our Local Offer website. The Local Authority have a year to implement the proposed changes. The process will be monitored by the DFE and NHS England who will do 4 visits over the year. We had our first visit in December which went well.

In relation to the transfer of statements to EHC plans this has now been completed. North Somerset no longer has any children or young people on statement of special educational needs. They have all been transferred over to Education Health Care plans.

The main areas of development have been broken down into 8 sections.

- the lack of strategic direction and planning by senior leaders across the local area to implement the SEND reforms through an effective SEND strategy
- the lack of capacity within the local area to implement the SEND reforms effectively
- the standards achieved and the progress made by children and young people who have SEN and/or disabilities
- the lack of a designated medical and/or clinical officer
- the variability of EHC plans, including the variable contributions from health and social care, and the processes to check and review the quality of EHC plans
- The underdeveloped arrangements for joint commissioning
- the often fractured relationships with parents and carers, lack of co-production and weak engagement and collaboration
- the lack of systems to track outcomes, including exclusions, for children and young people who have SEN and/or disabilities across the partnership.

The Statement of Action addresses all these areas and sets out North Somerset's response to addressing these points. The statement of action is being driven forward by the SEND Board which has representatives from all stakeholders within North Somerset. The actions are all time sensitive and have identified Officers, from across the Local Authority and the CCG responsible for their delivery.

The Vulnerable Learners Service has been renamed the Education Inclusion Service. The SEND team has had its capacity increased to deal with the increase in EHC requests. The number of EHC assessments being completed within 20 weeks has increased since April 2018. New systems are being jointly co-produced and new guidance and pathways will be coming out shortly to help parents and different services work together to make the EHC process more joined up.

There is now a clinical designated officer for Health who is now attending the SEND Panel to help with making decisions on EHC plans and provision. The SEND Strategy continues to be developed and once it has been co-produced will go out to consultation.

The quality of EHC plans is being addressed with new guidance and new systems being developed to support this. Once these have been designed and agreed they will be made available on the Local offer website.

4. CONSULTATION

The SEND Strategy which is being co-produced.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Restructuring of the Education Inclusion Service to build in capacity to provide the EHC assessment service and to implement the SEND strategy for North Somerset.

Costs

Increase in staff – costs and positions still being determined

Funding

Central funding

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

Not meeting the timescales set out in the Statement of action.

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

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9. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

10. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

AUTHOR

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to CYPS Panel 11th October 2018:

<http://apps.n-somerset.gov.uk/cairo/committees/comidx199-2018.asp>