

CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
15 JULY 2021	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Wendi Ogle Welbourn, Executive Director, People and Communities	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Lynne Ayres - Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Skills and the University	
Contact Officer(s):	Jonathan Lewis – Service Director (Education) Toni Bailey, Assistant Director (SEND & Inclusion)	Tel. 07592612380

UPDATE ON WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION & JOINT SEND STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Jonathan Lewis Service Director (Education)	Deadline date: 19.07.21 (Date of next Joint SEND Strategy partnership meeting)
<p>It is recommended that the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commend the efforts of the multi-agency partners in achieving progress towards the completion of workstreams across the Written Statement of Action 2. Support and acknowledge the Joint SEND strategy key aims, and 3. Confirm support for the Phased approach to the Joint SEND Strategic Action Plan with specific focus on Phase One which is being run between May 2021 and May 2022 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to Children and Education Scrutiny Committee following a request from the Scrutiny Committee for an update on progress on the items included in the report.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide additional or background information regarding the Written Statement of Action and the SEND Strategy requested by the Committee at its Annual Work Programming session held on 15 June 2021.

2.2 This report is for the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1 Functions determined by Council:

Education, including:

- a) University and Higher Education;
- b) Careers; and
- c) Special Needs and Inclusion.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy / Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Update on Written Statement of Action (WSOA)

A Joint SEND Area Inspection was undertaken in June 2019. This inspection provided feedback on the effectiveness of the LA in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The inspection team was led by an HMI (lead inspector) from Ofsted and includes children services inspectors from the CQC. The inspection included discussion with children and young people with SEND, parents and carers, as well as local authority and National Health Service officers. The inspection also included visits to a range of providers to discuss how the reforms from 2014 have been implemented and meetings with leaders from health, care and education, reviewing performance data and evidence about the local offer and joint commissioning arrangements.

Following the Joint Area SEND Inspection of Peterborough, a Written Statement of Action was required in order to address the following areas of development highlighted by the inspection:

- Ofsted and CQC said: “Joint planning, including commissioning, and intervention are not sufficiently well established to make sure that all agencies and services play an active role in meeting the requirements of 2014 disability and special educational needs reforms.”
- Ofsted and CQC said: “There is no quality assurance framework for the local area’s work for children and young people with SEND. Intended outcomes for children and young adults are not targeted, measured or evaluated well enough to inform leaders about the impact of the work to implement the reforms effectively.”
- Ofsted and CQC said: “The current arrangements for the DCO (Designated Clinical Officer) in relation to the implementation of the reforms do not allow the postholder to fulfil the obligations of the role sufficiently.”
- Ofsted and CQC said: “Early support is well embedded for children in early years, but does not follow through in all areas of the lives of children and young people as they get older. It takes too long for children, young adults and families to get the support they need.”
- Ofsted and CQC said: “The provision for young people aged 18 to 25 is not sufficiently developed to make sure that young people have the full range of opportunities and support that they need as they move through into adulthood.”

These five areas were the focus for the WSoA and a plan for addressing the identified areas was designed and submitted to the DfE and CQC in order to show how Peterborough can improve in these highlighted areas. (Please see Appendix 1)

A revisit is normally expected 18 months after the initial inspection, however, due to the COVID 19 situation these timelines have been extended and we are now expecting the revisit sometime between July and September 2021, although the dates are not yet confirmed.

In the meantime, Multi – agency partners from Education, Health and Social Care been engaged with the DfE and CQC through interim visits to monitor the progress of the actions highlighted in the WSoA. The following sections detail the press made in each section or workstream.

4.2 **Work-stream 1 : Joint Planning and Commissioning including intervention**

Senior accountable sponsor: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn

Highlights on specific area identified by Ofsted and CQC :

The Joint SEND Commissioning Strategy is now in the final stages and going through governance. We have strengthened joint planning and commissioning of services between education, health and care e.g. joint commissioning of therapies and child and adolescent mental health services. There is a robust needs analysis in place that ensures we know where gaps are and we have plans in place to address these gaps. We have arrangements in place to address the quality of independent provision and commissioners work with providers to address any areas of improvement.

There are no areas from this workstream that are RED (meaning they have not been actioned). Many of the actions are complete, but there are some actions that have been impacted by the shift in priorities due to the Covid Response, however, these are all detailed in the WSoA in the appendix.

Assessment: ON TRACK

4.3 **Work-stream 2 : SEND Quality Assurance**

Senior accountable sponsor: Toni Bailey

Highlights on specific area identified by Ofsted and CQC:

A QA officer with single focus of SEND has been successfully appointed and has been in post since January 2020. This is a joint post across both PCC and CCC. A quality assurance framework for SEND has been written and is now being implemented. This framework incorporates existing QA arrangements as well as a four-level mechanism for auditing EHCP effectiveness across all agencies. This four-level auditing approach ensures we are sampling the quality of EHCP's, which includes the quality of advice across education, health and social care and the development of action plans to support improvements when identified.

Most areas in this workstream have been completed and there are no RED actions that would cause concern. There are some areas that have been impacted by challenges in the installation of a new data system, that has required longer than first expected and there is also an impact on some actions due to the COVID 19 response.

Assessment: ON TRACK

4.4 **Work-stream 3: Role and Arrangements for the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO)**

Senior accountable sponsor: Marek Zamborski

Highlights on specific area identified by Ofsted and CQC :

There has been a significant increase in the children's commissioning team and recruitment has been completed to ensure that the SEND DCO is able to fulfil the obligations of the role sufficiently.

There are no RED areas in this workstream and all but 3 actions are complete, with outstanding actions due to be completed by July 2021.

Assessment: ON TRACK

4.5 **Work-stream 4 : Getting Support Early**

Senior accountable sponsor: Raj Lakshman

Highlights on specific area identified by Ofsted and CQC :

There is an effective early support training offer now being implemented through virtual platforms, which included the successful completing of level 3 early years SENCo Awards with 24 practitioners from early years providers. Settings are now required to undertake 2-year progress checks and a new App has been launched '50 things' which has been downloaded by more than

600 families. The App provides support and guidance for families who have complex needs children in the home. Parenting programmes are being promoted through the Local offer with a newly devised leaflet now available.

The early help dashboard is now live and is now helping to analyse, more quickly, completed early help assessments, including identification of those children and young people who have SEND needs.

There are no RED areas for this workstream, however, timescales for accessing health services have been impacted by the COVID situation, while this is easy to explain and has been accepted during interim visits by the DfE and CQC there remains a need to show impact in this area during the revisit.

Assessment: ON TRACK

4.6 **Work-stream 5 : Provision and Opportunities for young adults aged 18-25**

Senior accountable sponsor : Debbie McQuade

Highlights on specific area identified by Ofsted and CQC :

Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) pages have been further developed on the Local Offer and now include easy read versions for young people to actively participate. A post 16 curriculum has been completed and has been implemented across SEND and has been implemented with an update ready for launch in Sept 2021.

3 Additional Transition posts have been secured within the SEND team to focus on EHCP's for children and young people moving towards transitions into PfA.

There are no Red areas within this workstream, however, there are areas that are still to be completed. This is due, in part, to a focus on true co-production with family forums (family voice) and young people, which has taken longer to achieve due to the COVID situation.

Assessment: ON TRACK

- 4.7 Feedback from the DfE and CQC following the interim visits has been wholly positive with the recurring theme being we need to now gather evidence of the impact of our actions on positive outcomes for children, young people and families. We have been lucky enough to have had the support of the DfE and CQC to undertake some 'deep dives' in each of the workstreams to help us identify how we can capture the impact effectively and in a robust fashion, so that during the scheduled revisit we are able to communicate how the situation has changed in respect to the areas of development identified.

It has been agreed that a separate report detailing the impact of the COVID pandemic would be a useful additional report. Feedback from revisits in other areas that have highlighted the need to outline how the change in priorities from across health, social care and education have impacted on the range and timescales with regards to elements of the WSoA and this is being compiled to complement our impact reporting

This is our focus for the next stage of the response and we hope to have a fully completed impact report, with case studies and narrative to demonstrate the progress made by the end of July 2021.

4.8 **Update on the Joint SEND strategy**

In 2020 a Joint SEND strategy was developed for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire titled 'Make SEND Everybody's Business'. The strategy was created following extensive and comprehensive co-production with all stakeholders including parent carers and young people and the resulted in three main themes being agreed to as the focus for the strategy:

- 1. Make SEND Everybody's Business**
- 2. Identify and Respond to Needs Early**
- 3. Deliver in the Right place at the Right Time**

The strategy in full can be accessed through the following link and is included in Appendix 2 to this report:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/SEND%20Strategy%20-%20Final%20Nov%202019.pdf>

4.9 To support the strategy, we launched a Joint Pledge for all stakeholders to sign up to. This was launched in January 2020 with artwork created by young people, chosen from many entries into a competition, to represent 10 main areas of focus:

- **Welcome Everyone**
- **Celebrate Success**
- **Trust Each Other**
- **Aim High**
- **Create opportunities**
- **Value Individuality**
- **Build Confidence**
- **Be Honest**
- **Listen**
- **Be Positive**

The poster with the winning art work can be found using the following link and is included in Appendix 3 to this report:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Our-SEND-Pledge.pdf>

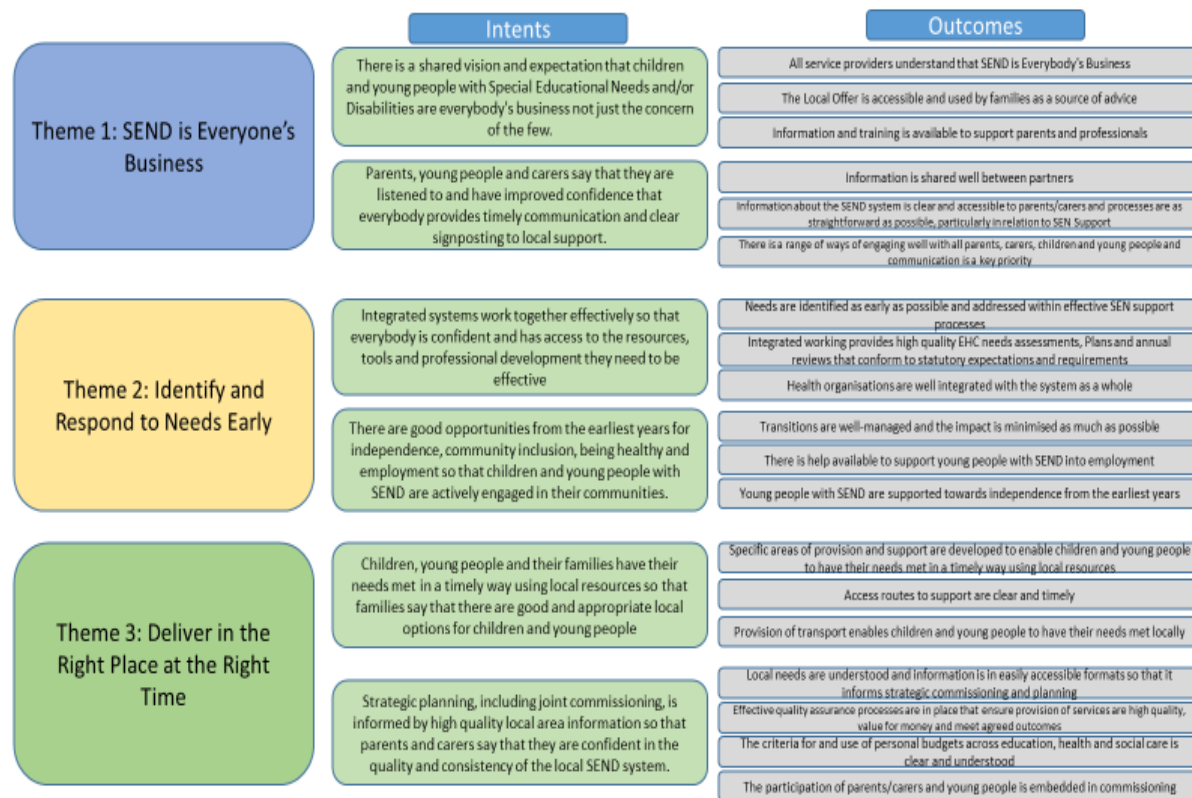
The Pledge Document can be found following this link and is included in the Appendix 4 of this report:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-send-pledge-march-2020.pdf>

We have started to collect sign up from schools and settings to the pledge and currently have 85 settings from across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire signed up to deliver the pledge. We have, however, recognised that the impact of the COVID pandemic has shifted focus from the strategy and the pledge, so we are engaged, through the SEND Communications Board, in a strategy to update stakeholders on the progress made.

The art work from the poster competition is currently being digitalised to enable a virtual gallery to be created that will be added to Libraries websites across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. However, we hope to hold some physical exhibitions when restrictions are lifted to re-engage a wider community with the pledge.

4.10 The Joint SEND strategy is a large document so we have created a quick reference image to enable us to share the Themes, Intents and Outcomes of the Strategy. This is named The Joint SEND Strategy on a Page (a PPT which is larger is included in the appendix) :



4.11 In order to ensure that the outcomes are focussed from the strategy a Joint SEND Strategic Action Plan was co-produced with the wider stakeholders. This action plan was very large in order to ensure that all aspects and voices were captured and respected. The impact of COVID, and to some extent the focus on the Written Statement of Action, resulted in a period of refocus and reprioritising which resulted in the Action Plan not being refined into a working document.

This does not mean that areas were not being addressed. Different areas have been working on their own development plans fed by the larger Strategic Action plan, but there was a need to pull together the format into a working document that could be easily monitored and implemented.

The Joint SEND Strategic Plan has been reviewed and refined between March and April 2021 and a Phase approach has been agreed, with **Phase One** areas agreed again through co-production as the following:

1. **Local Offer**
2. **Communications**
3. **Getting Support Early / Access to SEND Support**
4. **Legal Compliance**
5. **Role and arrangements for the DCO**
6. **Provision and opportunities for young adults aged 18-25**
7. **Joint planning and Commissioning**
8. **SEND quality Assurance**

The full detail of the Joint SEND Strategic Action Plan is a useful reference point to ensure that we maintain focus on the valuable co-production invested in from the outset, however, in order to make the plan more manageable and to create focus for Phase One projects a separate Phase One Action plan has been created.

The Phase One Action Plan will be led by a lead sponsor, a senior manager who will be the accountable role in terms of ensuring appropriate levels of action and impact are happening. They will also provide a focus for reporting and maintain the drive and commitment to support impact measures that benefit children, young people and their families/ carers. The lead sponsor will be

supported by a group of delivery partners who will be responsible for the operational support of actions across the multi-agency landscape that is supported by the strategy.

Phase One will run from May 2021 until May 2022.

In March 2022 an annual review conference will be held led by the AD SEND & Inclusion. This conference will celebrate the achievements to date of Phase One and agree, in partnership with all stakeholders, and maintaining the principles of genuine co-production, the focus areas for Phase Two which will be launched in May 2022.

- 4.12 The Phase One Action Plan is attached to the Appendix for reference.

The senior accountable sponsors are beginning to gather together the delivery partners to focus on the key milestones agreed to enable impact to be measured and be fed back to stakeholders through the SEND Partnership Groups and to the Joint SEND Partnership Board. This is providing the appropriate governance to ensure that progress is made across the Phase. The SEND Communications Group has agreed a cycle of communications that include fully accessible and easy read versions to ensure that updates are regularly provided.

Further updates on progress will be available to this committee once Phase One has been allowed to fully embed with the delivery partners identified.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 N/A

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 The successful completion of the Written Statement of Action in time for the scheduled revisit will enable Peterborough to demonstrate better outcomes and systems for the benefit of children, young people and families and will enable the position with the DfE and CQC to be reset positively with no additional scrutiny in place and confidence restored.

The SEND strategy has obvious overlaps with the WSoA focus. This is important linked work across both Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and the Phased approach leading to annual review ensures that the action plan remains relevant and focussed on the needs of both authorities.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is important to recognise the extent of commitment and additional work and effort provided across all services in order to achieve the very positive outcomes within the Written Statement of Action.

Additionally, it would be very useful to have the support of the committee with regards to the Joint SEND Action Plan and the Phased approach to demonstrate 'buy in' and advocacy for the approach.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The report outlines the response to the Written Statement of Action.

The alternatives to the Phased approach considered all included managing a document too large to be workable and too difficult to keep up to date and relevant. Learning from the COVID situation has led us to focus on more manageable options that can be quickly reviewed to take account of changing priorities.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 Some areas of the Written Statement of Action and Joint SEND Strategy will require funding, but these are being monitored closely and any identified needs will report into the corporate finance team where necessary.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 *None*

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 None directly, but we have provided advice and support to schools and all stakeholders on developing an equality impact assessment during reopening to ensure all groups are considered in this process.

Rural Implications

- 9.4 The impact of actions from the Written Statement of Action and joint SEND Action Plan will have equal effect across the Local Authority.

Carbon Impact Assessment

- 9.5 The Carbon Impact Report has been completed and there is no impact to report

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1 *None*

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 *Appendix 1 – Written Statement of Action*
Appendix 2 – [SEND Strategy](#)
Appendix 3 – [SEND Pledge Poster](#)
Appendix 4 – [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SEND Pledge – March 2020](#)
Appendix 5 – SEND strategy on a Page
Appendix 6 – Joint SEND Strategic Action Plan – Phase One