

Meeting: Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Commissioning Team)

Date: 4 March 2019

Wards Affected: All

Report Title: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2016-20

Is the decision a key decision? No

When does the decision need to be implemented? March 2019

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1. Proposal and Introduction

- 1.1 This is a mid-term review of Torbay's SEND Strategy 2016 – 2020.
- 1.2 This SEND Strategy 2016-20 sets out the Local Authority (LA) strategy for improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across the local area. The Local Authority has led the strategy and recognises that its success lies in the effectiveness of the partnership between all stakeholders. The strategy sets out what the local area will aim to achieve through partnership arrangements between the LA, educational settings, parents/carers, children and young people, other agencies and services in health and social care, including adult services and the voluntary sector.
- 1.3 The SEND strategy is a key element in delivering aspects of the Torbay Children and Young People's plan for 2014-2019 and Torbay's Strategy for Achieving Educational Excellence Everywhere for 2016 to 2020. These plans aim to give all children and young people the best start in life so they are safe, happy and healthy to reach their full potential.
- 1.4 Through the adoption of this strategy it is our intention to further join up help across education, health and care, from birth to 25. Ensuring help is offered at the earliest possible point, with children and young people with SEND and their parents fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve. This will help lead to better outcomes and more efficient ways of working.

1.5 The following report provides an overview of what has been achieved from the introduction of the strategy and sets out the future direction through a new action plan.

2. Reason for Proposal and associated financial commitments

2.1 Priority areas for action

Through the process of self-evaluation, the local area has identified key strategic priorities. There is much to do and the planned actions have been selected to reflect the ambition of the area and to ensure there is aspiration in what can be achieved.

The local area is committed to deliver these with rigour and a relentless pace to bring about sustained outcomes in a timely manner.

The strategic priorities will be supported by an action plan, created in partnership with all stakeholders within the local area. The aim being to focus on working in partnership with agreed accountability and governance.

The following paragraphs set out what has been achieved against each priority area:

Priority 1: Integrated Agency Working

Agencies will work together effectively to improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Social Care has implemented a single point of contact (SPOC) to respond to all requests for statutory EHC assessment within a timely manner. Leaders have taken on board DfE good practice examples to ensure that an assessment of need is offered in each case and are working with the SEN Team to develop the quality of the information provided.

Health have implemented a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to respond to all assessment information and have recently put in place quality monitoring procedures to strengthen the timeliness and quality of information provided. Timeliness has significantly improved in the last 12 months and work is ongoing to ensure this is sustained.

An Early Identification process between health and social care has been implemented for children with SEN. This will enable the immediate holistic needs of the child and family to be considered in relation to their SEND and consideration of their future individual needs. It will also enable health, education and social care services to plan for the future needs of the Local Area, for instance the number of places that will be needed in a special school or the adaptations that will need to be made to a mainstream school.

A Joint Funding panel is now in place which will secure sufficient high quality care placements for looked after children and children in need in their areas and to ensure an appropriate response to children with complex needs, some of whom will be in care. This will also capture any gaps in provision and monitor emerging needs of children and young people. Placements and packages of care will include in-house, the independent sector and the voluntary and community sector.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Steering Group has been put in place and is responsible for:

The development of effective local arrangements for the commissioning and delivery of responsive, integrated services; and, fulfilling the duty under the Children Act (Section 10) to promote co-operation between Torbay Council and local partners.

Priority 2: The Local Offer

Partners and service providers will meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities as part of the Local Offer.

Substantial work has been undertaken, coordinate by SEN to ensure that the Local Offer is populated with useful interactive content which meets the needs of young people, parents and professionals. This can be evidenced by the Early Years Resource pages which is one of the top number of hits in the FIS directory.

More work needs to be done to ensure that the Local Offer can be used to identify gaps in provision across Education, Health and Care and to ensure that the views of children and young people with SEND and their families are at the heart of this.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership group will consider the intelligence gathered from children and young people with SEND and their families to ensure that service meet the needs of the local area.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment now include SEND.

Children and Adult Services are working closely to ensure that an effective transition is planned for young people from the age of 14. Adult Service are investing in Children's Services to address need an earlier stage and reduce the complexity of services that young will when they reach 18.

Priority 3: Joint Commissioning

Joint commissioning arrangements will contribute to the right services being in place for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities within Torbay.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Steering Group has been put in place and is responsible for:

- The development of effective local arrangements for the commissioning and delivery of responsive, integrated services; and, fulfilling the duty under the Children Act (Section 10) to promote co-operation between Torbay Council and local partners.
- The intelligence gathered from the local area, using consultation and feedback mechanisms such as the local offer will be used to inform the group's commissioning priorities.

The Joint Funding panel will support an appropriate joined up response for those with complex needs.

The Chair of the Parent Carer Forum is a member of the SEND Operational Leads group and takes part in the monthly SEND Audits. The Head of Service for SEND

and SEND Project Manager regularly meet with the forums to provide updates and share developments.

Priority 4: Co-Production

Clear co-production pathways will enable children, young people and parents to make a significant contribution to identifying and planning the local offer available to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Chair of the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) represents the views of parents and carers as part of the SEND Operational Leads group. The PCF has drawn up a Principles of Participation, Engagement and Coproduction document which has been signed up to by the SEND Operational group.

The purpose of the principles are:

- To enhance and develop the range and quality of services provided for all children across Torbay with special educational needs and disabilities.
- To ensure children and young people's needs and parent/carers views are adequately represented.
- To create Local action plans that will include parent/carers participation and engagement with identified success measures.
- Mechanisms for parent/carers engagement are embedded in common practice - using various ways of communicating.

The PCF will hold Local Area partners to account by using the principles document as a reference to provide challenge on activity.

The SEN Team has enhanced the opportunities for children, young people and their families to take part in the EHC assessment process and co-produce the EHC plan and will continue to build on this as part of ongoing service developments.

The SEND Operational Leads group is working with Play Torbay to develop further opportunities to work with young people by engaging with the Young People's Partnership Trust.

Priority 5: Preparing for Adulthood

Young people moving into adulthood will be offered a variety of opportunities to help them realise their potential.

A transition protocol between children's and adult services has been developed and is in the implementation phase. The purpose of this protocol is to describe how children's services (Torbay Council) and adult services (Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust) will work together to ensure that the young person and their family (or carer's) have a positive experience through the transitions process. The protocol will also seek to describe how other key agencies such as housing; will help young people in their preparation for adulthood.

This protocol is part of a set of documents that will inform and guide young people between the ages of 14 and 25 years of age who come under the responsibility of Torbay local authority.

The twice yearly Torbay Transition Board has been set up and brings together professionals from Education, Health and Children and Adults Social Care to share case information and start planning from age 14 for those who are likely to require

a service from Adult Services. This will be further strengthened by the appointment of a joint funded transition worker.

A vision for post 16 education in Torbay has been agreed and a process piloted to measure the outcomes achieved by young people. Post 16 providers are working with the local area to provide a significant amount of data for all learners taking into account performance against individual learning targets, attendance, and destination data. The LA is working with School's Forum to demonstrate that value for money is being provided.

A joint strategic commissioning group is in place with the aim of improving transition between Children's and Adult Services for children with Special Educational Needs and / or a Disability.

2.2 Next Steps

Significant progress has been made across the key priority areas, however key priority actions still need to be delivered to drive forward practice across the local area. The initial action plan of the strategy has been reviewed and the report contains an updated action that represents the next phase of delivery. This action plan has been created across Education, Health and Social Care and represents the agreed priorities for delivery. The progress towards these actions are subject to regular review by the SEND operational group.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

That the Elected Mayor be recommended:

- 3.1 To note the progress made on the SEND Strategy and agree the revised action plan set out at Appendix 3 to the submitted report.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Original SEND Strategy
- Appendix 2 SEND Strategy Action Plan with RAG rating of progress
- Appendix 3 Updated SEND Strategy Action Plan