

The in-depth People Scrutiny Review of SEND assessed progress against the action plan devised in response to the LGA peer review recommendations of the Council's SEND and Children with Disability(CWD) Service. The table below provides an update on the current position in relation to those recommendations. The table captures those actions that.

- Have been completed.
- Are business as usual for the Council's SEND and CWD service.
- Will be incorporated within the new Area SEND Strategic Plan that the Area SEND Partnership is required to produce and publish within 30 working days of the publication of the Area SEND inspection report; and
- Those specific outstanding actions to be undertaken by the Council.

	Completed Actions
	Consider the level of seniority of the chair of the Resource Allocation Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Chairing arrangements in place with effect from 1/02/22
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider moving the SENDIASS service outside the SEND/CWD service. New line management arrangements in place.
	Review and refresh the Area SEND Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review completed and new 4-year strategy endorsed in the early part of 2023 by key partners via Education Board and Council Cabinet • Mid and South Essex (MSE) ICB due to endorse by Autumn 2023
	Business as Usual (BAU) - Ongoing Work
	Portfolio Holder (PFH) sample casework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed quarterly sampling of casework by PFH.
	Reduce the number of "refusal to assess" at initial stages of EHCNA decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to review data and process mapping for panel assessment and procedures and monitor DNA levels.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor the effectiveness and issues associated with the Hub as a source for holding all papers.
	<p>Update the threshold of need document for Children's Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threshold document for all Children's Services, launched in July 2021, is under review with partners and there will be changes. Aim is to introduce the new threshold document in Autumn 2023
	<p>Incorporate learning from complaints as part of the quality assurance system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Education, Inclusion and Early Years to review all complaints routinely and feed any actions required as a result into the SEND Strategic Partnership Board to inform the service and offer across Southend going forward.
	<p>Strengthen the early help offer for children with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase resource identified and allocated to the Short Breaks offer. Resource increased for 2023/24. Build into the Area SEND Strategic Action Plan a focus to strengthen the Early Years offer and additional resources to deliver this offer.
	<p>Introduce specific training for staff working in SEND on Neurodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First round of training completed for Council SEND staff in post when the training was provided. Neurodiversity training to be provided (as part of the SEND service staff induction programme) to ensure new staff joining the Council's SEND Service undertake and complete it. Refresher training to be provided for all Council SEND staff every 2 years.
	<p>Expectations and Aspirations - Actions to be included within the Area SEND Strategic Action Plan</p>
	<p>Increase the pace of support and challenge to schools in the graduated response and ensure clear system wide understanding of the graduated response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the successful Alternative Provision applications by schools which will be confirmed July 2023 Southend SEND Strategic Partnership Board and Education Board to review and monitor the impact of this funding on the wider graduated in schools. Identify other inclusion projects to support the graduated offer and improve outcomes for children with SEND.

	<p>Develop clear timescales and outcomes measures for the joint commissioning roadmap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a Joint Commissioning Roadmap be taken forward as part of the Council's response to any recommendations arising from the inspection of SEND services undertaken by Ofsted in March 2023.
	<p>Carry out an audit of children and young people where neurodiversity is a possibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director, Education, Inclusion and Early Years, with partners to review the number of open/closed cases over the last 12 months. • Following the review identify how the learning and information from it feeds into the Area SEND Strategic Action Plan and the identification and commissioning of future services.
	<p>Build trust with parents and carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that parents and carers and professionals receive clear and reliable information about how to access the range of support and services that are available. • Increase the pace of improvement to increase trust and confidence in the offer. • Increase and improve consistency of co-production to develop individual EHC plans. • Identify if / how to develop a trauma informed approach for those families who are angry and distressed about their previous experience.
	<p>Expectation and Aspirations - Actions to be undertaken by the Council</p>
	<p>Training and support for councillors to increase knowledge and awareness and to ensure that they fully understand the SEND system as a whole and how practitioners have a part to play in supporting good outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That appropriate basic SEND awareness training for councillors is co-produced with the existing Councillor Development Group as part of a suite of 'essential' training activities for completion during each term of office for all councillors and that priority be given for members of People Scrutiny Committee to undertake such essential training and other relevant training opportunities available across the municipal year. • Once the training package has been co-designed ask Democratic Services to ensure that a regular rolling training programme is scheduled as part of the wider member training programme with training session offered twice per year as essential training for councillors. • That appropriate 'Five-Minute Guides' be developed for all Children's Services including SEND services, to help councillors to understand the Council's SEND system.

Conclusion

Given the update above there will be no further specific reviews of the above table on the LGA peer review recommendations. Any monitoring / oversight of the outstanding actions above will be through updates and reports on the Area Strategic SEND strategic action plan to the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership, the Southend Health and Well Being Board (HWBB) and to the Department for Education (DfE).

Existing business as usual performance monitoring arrangements of Council SEND Services, and feedback from the teams within the Council that lead and deliver the Councillor training offer.

It is proposed that a mid and end of year for information report on the Area SEND offer is provided to the Council's People Scrutiny Committee.