

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda  
Item No.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (People)

To  
**Cabinet**  
On  
**17 January 2019**

Report prepared by: Brin Martin, Director of Learning

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## Area inspection of Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s)**  
**Cabinet Member: Councillor Boyd**  
**A Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)**

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### 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to brief Cabinet on the outcomes of the SEND Area Inspection conducted in October 2018, and to secure Cabinet's approval for the improvements that have already be put in place to bring about the necessary changes.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the findings from the inspection report, including both those areas that were indicated as strengths alongside those areas that show significant concern.
- 2.2 That Cabinet note the requirement for the Local Authority and the Clinical Commissioning Group to joint produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA).
- 2.3 That Cabinet note and approve the proposed actions contained within the report that will ensure the necessary improvements are made.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 Since 2016, all Local Areas have been subject to inspection to see how they have implemented the SEND Education Act 2014. Following a joint inspection of the Southend "Area" provision for SEND in October the final inspection report has been published.
- 3.2 This inspection area consisted of the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group, Southend Hospital Trust, Essex Partnership Trust and all schools/settings.
- 3.3 In their report, OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission found a number of strengths in provision, but have also identified areas where improvements will be

required. Like a number of Local Areas nationally, we will be jointly required to produce a WSoA to indicate how together we will make the necessary changes. This needs to be completed and approved by OFSTED/CQC by March 2019.

- 3.4 The week long inspection in October involved speaking with officers; clinicians; practitioners and stakeholders; parents and learners; and visits to a number of schools and settings.
- 3.5 In summary, whilst they clearly found that since 2017 there has been some progress made in leading and implementing the SEND reforms, overall, since 2014 the pace has been too slow.
- 3.6 They also reported that leaders need to do more to build upon their collaboration between the respective organisations to jointly commission services to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Specifically, more should be done to listen to and act upon the views of families and children with SEND, and promote what is on offer through an accessible Local Offer website.
- 3.7 Inspectors did however recognise the more recent improvements and planning by the area, and also that the local area had accurately assessed its own strengths and weaknesses. Several of the individual services came in for suitable recognition of the high quality support they offer.
- 3.8 The local area has already started to address the areas identified for improvement, ahead of the timescales set by inspectors.
- 3.9 The summary of the report concluded that “the inspection raises significant concerns about the effectiveness of the local area”, and that (quotations from report):
  - 3.9.1 The emerging leadership of the SCCG, public health, the local authority and education providers has not developed quickly enough to ensure precisely coordinated priorities, accountabilities and joint commissioning to improve the outcomes for children and young people.
  - 3.9.2 The local offer does not provide a service that is fit for purpose to meet the obligations in the code of practice. Local partners in health, social care and education, including schools, are not proactive in promoting co-production of the local offer. They are not ensuring that the local offer is adapted according to the views, needs and achievements of the children, young people and their families.
  - 3.9.3 Leaders have not worked together to ensure that EHC plans provide a meaningful multi-agency approach to meeting children and young people’s academic, social, health and care needs. There are no clear accountabilities between agencies to make sure that children and young people’s outcomes are well assessed, planned for, met and reviewed.
  - 3.9.4 Leaders have not developed a strategic partnership that makes sure that children and young people are in provisions that give them good-quality, full-time education. This particularly includes those educated at home, in post-16 provisions, and in out-of-borough provisions. Additionally, within

the local area, too many pupils access part-time education for too long. Leaders of the local area do not know the extent of the impact of part-time programmes on the outcomes for children and young people. This lack of information is detrimental to the work of joint commissioning.

## **Written Statement of Action**

Under the governance of the Success For All Group reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board, strategic leaders from key agencies have established a task and finish group to draft the WSoA for sign off. In light of the findings above, it is now essential that these key strategic leaders from Education, Social care, Public Health and the CCG collectively and visibly own and drive both the production of the WSoA and more importantly implement the delivery plan to improve outcomes. The group has met several times to start the drafting process. In addition, officers have met with senior officials from the Department for Education and National Health Service who have both approved the actions that the Area has already undertaken and offered additional support.

### **4. Other Options**

No other options considered

### **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

To robustly and rapidly drive forward the improvements required as an Area

### **6. Corporate Implications**

#### **6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map**

The necessary improvements align closely with several of the 2050 outcomes, in particular related to school and life ready.

#### **6.2 Financial Implications**

To bring about the necessary improvements will require reshaping of the Area provision, including aligning staff more closely to the priorities emerging from the WSoA. Once this has been drafted and approved, a clear and costed plan can be considered.

#### **6.3 Legal Implications**

Meeting our statutory obligations for learners with SEND.

#### **6.4 People Implications**

N/A

#### **6.5 Property Implications**

N/A

## 6.6 Consultation

As part of the WSoA and the improvements beyond that time, co-design as identified by the inspection will be significantly strengthened as a result.

## 6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

N/A

## 6.8 Risk Assessment

Failure to make the necessary changes would incur a risk that the Local Area, including the Local Authority would be subject to a re-inspection ahead of the scheduled period.

## 6.9 Value for Money

N/A

## 6.10 Community Safety Implications

N/A

## 6.11 Environmental Impact

N/A

## 7. **Background Papers**

None

## 8. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Inspection Report