

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Children, Learning & Inclusion Working Party

Date: Thursday, 19th January, 2023

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor L Burton (Chair)
Councillors B Beggs, T Cowdrey, T Cox, M O'Connor and M Terry

In Attendance: G Bloom, M Marks, L Minnis, R Polkinghorne and S Tautz

Start/End Time: 7.00 pm - 8.30 pm

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Hooper.

2 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(a) Councillor B Beggs - Minute 3 (SEND Strategy 2022-2025) - Family member has special educational needs and disabilities and is in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan.

(b) Councillor T Cowdrey - Minute 3 (SEND Strategy 2022-2025) - Family member has special educational needs and disabilities; Employed as a social worker and practice educator at SEND school within Southend-on-Sea.

(c) Councillor T Cox - Minute 3 (SEND Strategy 2022-2025) - Family member has special educational needs and disabilities and is in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan; Family member is a pupil of Shoeburyness High School.

(d) Councillor M O'Connor - Minute 3 (SEND Strategy 2022-2025) - Family member has special educational needs and disabilities.

3 SEND Strategy 2022-2025

The Working Party reviewed the draft Southend Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Strategy for 2022-2025 developed by the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership, which had been referred back to the Cabinet for further consideration by the full Council at its meeting on 15 December 2022.

Members considered the issues raised on the draft SEND Strategy by the People Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 29 November 2022, with a view to making recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children, Learning and Inclusion for appropriate revisions to the draft Strategy prior to it being referred back to the Cabinet or further consideration.

The Working Party recognised the achievement of some co-production activity to inform the development of the draft SEND Strategy as part of the SEND Summit in

2021 and with the Parent Carer Forum through a number of wider engagement and consultation events but considered that a greater emphasis on co-production would be required to be demonstrated by the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership in the delivery of the Strategy.

Resolved:

- (1) That the following recommendations be made to the Cabinet Member for Children, Learning and Inclusion, with regard to the draft Southend Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy for 2022-2025:
 - (a) That, whilst recognising the achievement of some co-production in the development of the draft SEND Strategy, the reference in Section 1 ('Introduction') of the Strategy to the document having been 'co-produced' by the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership, be amended to reflect that the development of the Strategy had been informed through public engagement, consultation and some co-production by the Partnership, and that the Partnership was committed to increasing the level of such co-production over the lifetime of the Strategy and beyond.
 - (b) That additional detail be included within Section 1 ('Introduction') of the draft SEND Strategy to set out the role and responsibilities of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership (currently highlighted within Section 4 ('The Southend SEND Partnership') of the document).
 - (c) That increased detail be added to Section 1 ('Introduction') of the draft SEND Strategy, to appropriately reflect the work already undertaken by the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership and parents and carers of children with SEND, to develop the draft Strategy.
 - (d) That reference be included within Section 1 ('Introduction') of the draft SEND Strategy, to reflect the aspiration of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership to increase the level of co-production around the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Strategy and in the delivery of the local SEND services offer, with parents and carers of children with SEND.
 - (e) That reference be included within Section 3 ('Local Context') of the draft SEND Strategy, to reflect the aspiration of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership to increase the number of resource bases in mainstream schools to meet need, on a co-production basis.
 - (f) That reference be included within Section 3 ('Local Context') of the draft SEND Strategy, to reflect the types of services provided and to be developed as part of the 'graduated' local SEND offer, but that the detail of specific service delivery be set out within a delivery plan for the Strategy.
 - (g) That the draft SEND Strategy be simplified throughout where appropriate and that details of specific service delivery and schools etc., be 'signposted' through the use of appropriate hyperlinks to other resources and websites of partner organisations.

- (h) That reference be included within the draft SEND Strategy, to reflect the intended regular review of progress against the delivery of the Strategy by the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership, with the oversight of the Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF).
 - (i) That the production of the draft SEND Strategy in accessible formats in order to engage a range of audiences, be considered once the Strategy has been formally agreed and adopted by each of the partners of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership.
 - (j) That the definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities currently set out within Section 2 ('What Are Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?') of the draft SEND Strategy, be reviewed as part of the first regular review of the Strategy by the Strategic Partnership Board of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership.
 - (k) That the current reference within Section 3 ('Local Context') of the draft SEND Strategy, to all new referrals to children's social care being received through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for assessment against statutory thresholds, be removed from the Strategy in view of the potential connotations of such approach.
 - (l) That the commitment of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership to undertake appropriate co-production approaches in the delivery of the priorities of the draft SEND Strategy, be included within Section 8 ('Developing Our Actions') of the Strategy.
 - (m) That appropriate explanation be provided within the draft SEND Strategy, to clarify the use of the table of actions set out in Section 9 ('Making It Happen – What We Will Do') of the Strategy.
 - (n) That the reference in Section 9 ('Making It Happen – What We Will Do') of the draft SEND Strategy to the 'embedding of the graduated response with a range of supportive materials which set out 'our' expectations of how children and young people's needs should be met within mainstream schools and local services', be amended to read 'the' expectations of how children and young people's needs should be met.
 - (o) That the commitment of the Southend SEND Strategic Partnership to undertake appropriate co-production approaches in the regular review of progress against the delivery of the SEND Strategy, be included within Section 10 ('measuring Impact and Progress') of the Strategy.
- (2) That the Council's existing ' Co-Production Charter' be circulated to the members of the Project Team for the joint in-depth scrutiny project for 2022/23.

Chair: _____