

## **Summary**

### **Southend SEND Area Partnership Network event 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

#### **Introduction**

On behalf of the SEND Area Partnership, the SEND Local Offer Team and the Parent Carer Forum (Southend SEND Independent Forum – SSIF) agreed to host an information event for parent/carers and stakeholders on the SEND strategy and strategic action plan.

The event took place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023. It was held in Committee Room 4a which has a capacity of 140 guests. Refreshments were provided, along with information packs for each delegate.

Key area leaders from education, health and social care attended and provided information on planned partnership activity.

#### **Desired outcomes**

It was anticipated that parents/carers and stakeholders would;

- understand the local area Inspection outcome published in June 2023.
- understand the area partnership's priorities through the development of the SEND Strategy
- be informed on the area partnership's 3-year improvement plan following the publication of the SEND strategic action plan in July 2023
- be informed about the SEND Network and how to become involved in future activity.
- have an opportunity to provide feedback on future topics and their experience of the SEND system

#### **Attendance**

Places were available through an Eventbrite booking link. 130 places were made available. Bookings reached capacity quickly and a waiting list was held.

25 cancellations were made in the days leading up to and including the day of the event. Anyone on the waiting list was given a space after cancellations.

In total 141 places were booked.

74 people attended the event who had booked a place. On the day 4 people arrived who did not book. They were given a place.

Total attendance was 78 people. (55 were parents/carers, 18 were professionals and 1 young person attended with their family).

#### **Presentations**

Philomena Johnson Chair of SSIF provided an overview of the role of the Parent Carer Forum and how, as strategic partner they work in collaboration with the Southend SEND Area Partnership to represent the voice of parents and carers, and how they have

contributed to, and ensured that consultation feedback shaped the priorities and actions in the area's strategy and strategic action plan.

Each delegate was provided with a hard copy of the SEND Strategy 2023-26. Caroline McCarron, Deputy Alliance Director Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System and Allette Pryce Social Care Service Manager Southend-on-Sea City Council provided an overview on how the draft strategy was developed and based on family and stakeholder feedback gathered over 2021 – 2022 and detailed the consultation and additional feedback that was obtained which shaped the final published SEND strategy. Delegates were signposted to the Local Offer webpage where feedback, comments and questions could be made about the strategy.

Gary Bloom Head of SEND Southend-on-Sea City Council gave an overview of the new inspection framework and how inspectors evaluate the area partnership, but also how they obtain information on the experience for families and children and young people of the SEND system, through surveys, case studies, visits to provisions and a meeting with SSIF. An overview of the inspection outcome following the visit in March 2023 and the recommendations was also provided.

Liz Hunt Director of Education, Inclusion and Early Years Southend-on-Sea City Council spoke to the published SEND strategic action plan, updated and published following the Inspection recommendations. A copy of which was provided to each delegate. Delegates were provided with specific information on recommendation 6 and how the area partnership plans to address those actions. During the session delegates were invited to answer some questions on the proposed actions in recommendation 6 using an electronic feedback form.

Philomena Johnson Chair of SSIF and Louise Chiles SEND Local Offer and Co-production Officer Southend-on-Sea City Council led a session on how the feedback from SEND families through the strategy and Inspection, demonstrating the need to widen and strengthen this area. Delegates were provided information on how SSIF and the Local Offer team aimed to increase voice and engagement through the launch of a SEND Network and the range of activity it would undertake to ensure the local community is better informed, opportunities for co-production are strengthened, and the voice of local families, groups and stakeholders are captured, fed back, and heard across the Partnership. An electronic feedback form was used to gather feedback from the audience on priorities for SSIF seminars. Delegates were also invited to join the Network mailing list.

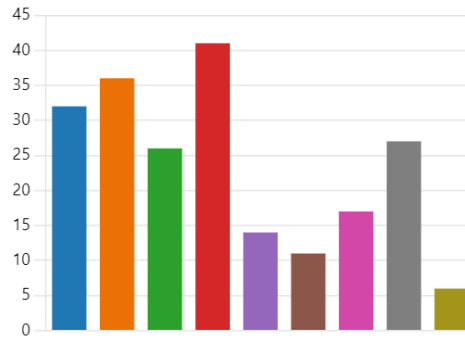
Delegates were invited to provide additional feedback on their experience on the SEND system if they wished and were provided with a feedback form which could be completed either electronically or on paper. There was an option for delegates to provide their feedback in person if preferred.

### **Feedback gathered.**

The feedback gathered during the event would support the next phase and stage of some priority actions.

- Recommendation 6, action 1 – Question '*Which roadmaps should be prioritised?*' 70 respondents voted:

● Health assessment pathways	32
● Early identification in schools	36
● Support plans and reviews	26
● Education Health and Care Nee...	41
● Transitions - children to adult so...	14
● Transitions - starting school	11
● Transitions - getting ready for s...	17
● Transitions - post-16 education ...	27
● Other	6

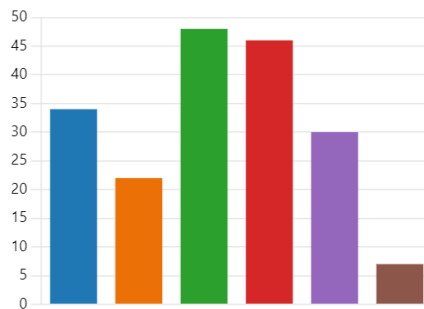


Priorities identified:

- 1) EHCNA,
- 2) Early identification in schools
- 3) Health assessment pathways

- Recommendation 6, action 3 – Question ‘What are your 3 most preferred formats to receive information?’ 70 responses voted:

● Videos	34
● Leaflets	22
● Online - text/written	48
● Images, charts and pictures	46
● Easy read	30
● Other	7

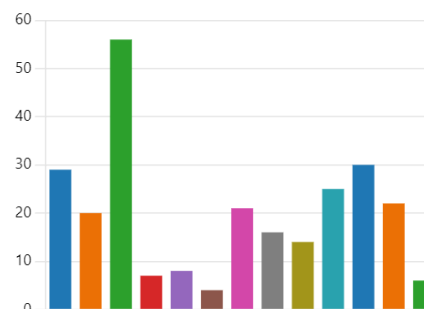


Preferences identified:

- 1) Online (text/written)
- 2) Images, charts and pictures
- 3) Videos

- Recommendation 6, action 6 - Question ‘How do children and young people with SEND have their voices heard in Southend?’ select all that you feel apply. 70 responses voted:

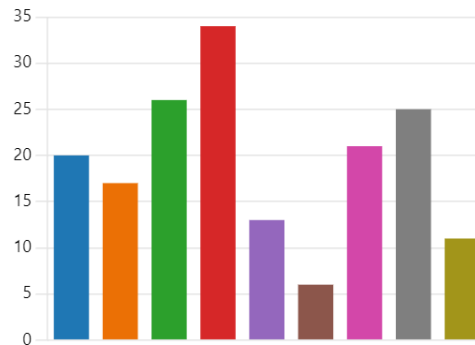
● Classroom teachers	29
● Support assistants	20
● Parent/carers	56
● School Council	7
● SEND Youth Forum	8
● School nurses	4
● Health professionals	21
● Social workers	16
● Friends	14
● Advocacy groups	25
● In Education Health and Care Pl...	30
● At reviews	22
● Other	6



- 1) Via parents carers,
- 2) In EHCP's
- 3) Classroom teachers.

- Recommendation 6, action 5 – Question ‘What topics should we prioritise for SSIF Seminars?’ select the 3 most important ones. 60 responses voted:

● Health assessment pathways	20
● Early identification in schools	17
● Support plans and reviews	26
● Education Health and Care Nee...	34
● Transitions - childrens to adult s...	13
● Transitions - starting school	6
● Transitions - getting ready for s...	21
● Transitions - post-16 education ...	25
● Other	11



Priorities identified:

- 1) EHCNA
- 2) Support plans and reviews,
- 3) Transitions - post 16

Delegates were invited to provide additional feedback on their experience of the SEND system using a feedback form which could be completed electronically or on paper, during or after the event. 14 responses were submitted. Some common themes were identified:

- Lack of confidence in the SEND system as a result of failures and delays
- Strengthened information that is clear and concise in one central place
- Parental voice and the system hearing what families want and need

**Other comments made using the electronic feedback form during the sessions highlighted some other common themes:**

- Greater emphasis needed on hearing voice of the child
- More training for teachers in SEND
- Impact on wellbeing and more support for carers
- The need for SEND childcare and activity clubs for school holidays
- Support for preparing for adulthood

### Next steps

Those that booked but were unable to attend, have been contacted and given an opportunity to share their experience through the feedback form.

The feedback gathered will help to inform our priorities for the coming year. Much of the feedback echoes the same themes that we have obtained over the last 15 months, through development of the Strategy, consultation and Inspection feedback.

As such the strategic action plan already aims to address much of those issues with specific actions and milestones for improvement.

SSIF seminars will be shaped by the feedback obtained and further evidence on the impact of the system can be gathered and reported upon.

Consideration will be given to a roundtable event with health, education and social care colleagues to work with parents and carers to identify gaps in the system.

Whilst not directly outlined in the action plan there is a need to consider how the area partnership will address the continued request for families to have increased SEND childcare, leisure and activity clubs in Southend.

3 respondents requested a follow up conversation and details have been passed to area leaders to respond.

All delegates who booked to attend have been provided with further details on the SEND Network and have a copy of all of the event slides.

Carron Jacobs

SEND Project Officer