

**CABINET- 31 JANUARY 2023****CABINET RESPONSE TO THE : DRAFT INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS STRATEGY**

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**Recommendations:**

1. In order to transform the lives of Surrey children and young people aged 0 to 25 with additional needs and/or disabilities, the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning is asked to ensure the Surrey Inclusion and Additional Needs Partnership Strategy 2023-26 reflects the following recommendations before it is referred to Cabinet for agreement:
  - (a) Use the evaluation criteria listed at paragraphs 50 - 60 of the [Area SEND inspection handbook](#) as a guide to set clear goals, thus benefiting from this document's extensive consultation process involving parents, teachers, children and young people and other stakeholders.
  - (b) Goals outlined in (a) should have specified measurable targets that make it easy to identify whether progress is being made. Targets should incorporate the following:
    - i. Commitments set out in the Safety Valve Agreement;
    - ii. Learnings from the Home to School Travel Assistance learning review;
    - iii. Action plan resulting from the Additional Needs and Disabilities Partnership's self-evaluation;
    - iv. Human Resources action plan to ensure issues such as EHCP timeliness are not affected by staff shortages.
  - (c) Present the Strategy in a way that allows any parent or young person to identify measurable targets at a glance.
  - (d) Regarding the Governance Structure laid out in the Strategy, aim to avoid any gap in accountability by:
    - i. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each level of governance and who is accountable to whom;
    - ii. Identifying precisely how each level will work towards achieving recommendations 1 a-c;
    - iii. Explaining how organisations within the same pillar will work together to achieve recommendations 1 a-c, for example the three groups forming 'Joint Commissioning, Sufficiency & Evaluation';

- iv. Ensuring any parent or young person can identify at a glance where different responsibilities sit within the structure.
- (e) Ensure that the website and other digital platforms are used to good effect by:
- i. Developing the webinar series for families on the statutory assessment process so it is an example of best practice;
  - ii. Developing webinars on assessment criteria for SENCOs to enable them to give well-informed and up-to-date advice.
2. That Cabinet agree the Surrey Inclusion and Additional Needs Partnership Strategy 2023-26 subject to the changes recommended in 1.
  3. That until further notice the Director for Education and Lifelong Learning reports, at every formal meeting of the Select Committee, on progress made towards and barriers against achieving recommendations in 1.

### **Liz Bowes, Chairman - Children, Families, Lifelong Learning Select Committee**

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#### **Cabinet Response:**

1. I thank the committee for supporting the adoption of the Inclusion and Additional Needs Strategy 2023 – 2026. The feedback and recommendations have been carefully considered, with updates made to the strategy document to strengthen references where appropriate, and activities included in implementation planning.
2. The Director of Education and Lifelong Learning looks forward to bringing relevant data to CFLLC Select Committee meetings to demonstrate progress and impact, and to share any barriers to making progress with the delivery and impact.
3. In terms of the specific recommendations set out in Recommendation 1 (a-e), response to these are set out below.
4. **Recommendation 1 (a):** The 10 evaluation criteria from the Area SEND framework and handbook have been considered throughout the strategy and used to identify relevant key performance indicators. All evaluation criteria in the Area SEND inspection handbook have been accounted for in the strategy.
5. **Recommendation 1 (b):**
  - i. We are on track in delivering all of the nine Safety Valve Commitments; Early Help and Inclusion, EHC Assessment and Decisions, Schools' Skills and Capacity, Team Around the School

Pilot, Specialist Placement Bandings, Joint Commissioning Strategy, Capital Expansion, Preparation for Adulthood, Partnership Accountability. These are tracked by DfE on a quarterly basis.

- II. Education and Inclusion are represented at the Home to School Travel Assistance Oversight Board to ensure alignment with strategy and practice. There are eleven 'SEND' relevant recommendations in the Home to School Travel Assistance Learning Review. Each is being monitored and discharged via the Oversight Board.
  - III. There is a strategy action plan in development. This piece of more detailed work is currently being completed and will confirm the measurements. The action plan should be ready for partners to sign off in the first term of 2023.
  - IV. High-profile priority recruitment for the SEN and EP service with a central advertising process has been in place since August 2022. As EP capacity is difficult to increase, both nationally and locally, a review of process and how independent EP advice can be utilised is underway. Fortnightly reporting on staffing capacity, staff movement (leavers/new starters/sick or other leave etc.) and actions (when being advertised, when post will be filled, agency cover, other activity to fill gap, impact etc.) are reported to the Assistant Director fortnightly.
6. **Recommendation 1 (c):** Budget has been identified and secured to produce the published version of the strategy in a way that complies with accessibility requirements, as well as an easy read version. This will include the outlined key performance indicators. Two suitable companies have been identified (both have produced documents for SCC recently) that can fulfil the request. An accessible version will be available in February and an easy-read version by March. The easy-read version will be produced taking feedback from young people with additional needs, as well as the parent / carer forum.
7. **Recommendation 1 (d):** The Additional Needs and Disabilities ("AND") Partnership and its overall accountability is now set out much earlier on in the strategy, with the addition of slide 3: "The AND Partnership Board will exercise partnership accountability for the delivery of the strategy."

I – III. The "AND" Partnership has overall accountability. All the other groups and boards identified will report in to the AND Partnership. Slide 25 (previously slide 24) has been updated to clarify: "The AND Partnership Board will exercise partnership accountability for the delivery of the strategy. Each of the delivery governance groups will take responsibility on behalf of the partnership for delivery of the strategic priorities and report back to the Partnership Board on progress and impact. Where there are multiple groups contributing to a strategic theme, they will work collaboratively to ensure that all priorities are covered effectively."

As an example, within the Joint Commissioning, Sufficiency and Evaluation theme, the 'SEND' Sufficiency and Commissioning Group will be responsible for oversight of the commissioning priorities set out in the strategy, linking to other groups as appropriate. The 'SEND' Capital Programme Board will be

responsible for delivering additional specialist places. Both groups will report into the AND Partnership with overall accountability.

IV. The above additions enable any parent or young person to easily identify that the Additional Needs and Disabilities Partnership has overall responsibility, and the other groups that will contribute to the priorities in the strategy. The Easy Read version will ensure that this information is accessible.

**8. Recommendation 1 (e):**

- I. Face book live webinars have been rolled out in partnership with Family Voice Surrey to cover the following topics:
  - The role of the SEN Case Officer
  - Education health and care needs assessment process
  - Draft plan
  - Final plan
  - EYEs demonstration to families
  - Annual and interim review
  - EYEs
  - Tribunals
  - Ordinarily Available
  - Personal Budgets and Direct Payments
  - Transition
  - Annual Review paperwork – changes and reasons
  
- II. In addition to the webinar series, the county-wide SENCo Network has been re-established in partnership with SAfE, who have also been commissioned to develop and deliver a programme of Inclusion and SEN professional development to school staff.

A further programme of webinars is planned to be published on the Local Offer website, including on the new Ordinarily Available Provision guidance, to include assessment criteria which will be relevant for both families and professionals.

**Clare Curran**  
**Cabinet Member for Education and Learning**  
**31 January 2023**