

**CABINET – 25 FEBRUARY 2025****PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions:****Question (1): Gareth Leighton**

A recent Coroner's report stated that: "A failure by Surrey County Council ... to ensure that [a Young Person]'s Education, Health and Care Plan contained sufficient and updated information about [risks of harm], such as to enable the [education establishment] ... to understand and meet [their] consequential needs and manage the consequential risk." Could the Cabinet describe what process changes and monitoring have been implemented by the office of the Chief Executive to ensure that identified risks of harm, the consequential needs, risks and funding required to mitigate against these risks and needs are fully and accurately documented in all SCC EHCPs to prevent further tragic cases and ensure no other Surrey young person with an EHCP becomes the subject of a Coroner's report?

**Reply:**

Surrey County Council has been fully committed to take action to ensure that tragic cases such as the case referred to in this question are prevented as far as possible. An internal review of this case has confirmed that the young person's Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) did refer to historic suicide ideation history, and that education needs, outcomes and provision were appropriate for the majority of time that the plan was in place. Nevertheless, the EHCP needed to strengthen the self-harm and suicide ideation references as these concerns became more prevalent. The EHCP was not updated to include current levels of concern as the relevant information was not shared between health and education at that point.

Actions that have been put in place since this tragic death which include all guidance to the SEND service to ensure that children who are at risk of self-harm have this concern clearly recognised, and that provision stipulates the need for a risk assessment and safety plan. Training has been provided to SEND staff regarding how to escalate safeguarding concerns.

Health colleagues attend multi-agency moderation meetings to ensure that the most up to date health information is known to the SEND service and is accurately reflected in an EHCP. There is a single central IT system which enables education to be aware of social care involvement where there are safeguarding risks. There is a Designated Social Care Officer who provides a link between the SEND service and Social Care and leads a team who assess the care needs of children so that safeguarding work can be undertaken if required for children not otherwise open to Social Care.

Across the county council there is greater awareness about links between ASD and suicide ideation through mandatory training for all staff. We are determined to do all that we can to avert such tragic deaths, however, sadly despite these measures it may not always be possible to prevent a young person's death by suicide.

**Clare Curran****Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning****25 February 2025**

This page is intentionally left blank