

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	<b>SEND Improvement Update</b>
Meeting date	23 January 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This paper provides an update on the progress to date and work being carried out across the BCP place with regards to the improvements required in the Local Area SEND system. It provides an update of work across the partnership with regards to a new SEND Improvement Plan and associated Performance Scorecard. The Performance Scorecard will both identify and evidence the performance areas and improvement metrics that can demonstrate that the partnership is making sustainable improvements.</p> <p>Since 2021 the BCP Local Area SEND Partnership has been subject to a Written Statement of Action Plan (WSoA). The WSoA outlined eight improvement areas following the local area SEND Inspection July 2021. Since this time, progress against the WSoA plan was reviewed by a partnership SEND Improvement Board (SIB). During the July of this year, DfE Officials reviewed the progress of the SEND Improvement Board against this plan and determined that the pace of change was too slow and further that too many children were experiencing delays in service provision. It noted that the SEND partnership within BCP place needed to do more to refocus its efforts and secure solid sustainable improvements for children and young people with SEND. A new SEND Improvement Board Chair was arranged with John Coughlan arriving to support the improvements needed in Autumn of 2023.</p> <p>Over the last 14 weeks (Sept – mid December), a thorough review has taken place involving all senior stakeholders across the SEND partnership. This has sought to identify what must happen to ensure the necessary changes for the SEND system in BCP.</p> <p>The SEND partnership is now in the final stages of agreeing a new Improvement Plan, this has identified eight new strategic areas of attention. Progress against this plan will be monitored through a performance scorecard which will hold key partners to account. It is recommended that this panel receives a termly update of progress against this improvement plan so that there is transparency of the actions and improvements realised for children and young people with SEND in BCP.</p>

<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) The report is read and accepted as evidence of the work currently being carried out across the wider partnership within BCP place for its SEND Services.</b></li> <li><b>b) The Improvement Plan when agreed by the Department for Education is shared with the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</b></li> <li><b>c) That the BCP SEND Partnership Scorecard when agreed by the Department for Education is shared on a termly basis with the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</b></li> <li><b>d) That the Local Authority Progress report of December 2023 is acknowledged with the improvements identified as outlined in this paper.</b></li> </ul>
Reason for recommendations	To ensure that the Children's Services Oversight and Scrutiny Committee is regularly informed of the progress made for SEND Services across the BCP partnership.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Richard Burton, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director for Children's Services
Report Authors	Sharon Muldoon, Interim Director of Education and Skills
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Update

## Background

- Over the last 14 weeks the SEND Partnership has been working with DfE and NHS Advisors to create a new SEND Improvement Plan. A partnership review of the Governance arrangements of the SEND Improvement Board took place during July and August 2023 to review the progress made to date against the historic Written Statement of Action Plan (WSoA).
- This review identified that a new approach was needed to ensure that sustainable progress was made for SEND Services within BCP. Furthermore, a recent DfE review of the partnership found that that the progress made to date was too slow and that a renewed focus was needed.
- A full diagnostic of the Local Authority system was commissioned to better understand the current situation for Local Authority SEND services and this commenced during September and was finalised at the end of October. The findings of this diagnostic has now informed the critical actions which are needed both within

the LA SEND services and across the wider SEND landscape in BCP, so that sustainable changes can be made.

4. The diagnostic was presented to the SEND Improvement Board on 27 October 2023 (Appendix 1). Eight new strategic priority areas were agreed. These were: Leadership, Management and Governance, Communication and Coproduction, Early Identification and Intervention, Inclusion, Pathway, Sufficiency, Preparation for Adulthood and Managing Resources. This was presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 21 November 2023.
5. A draft of the new Improvement Plan was discussed at the SEND Improvement Board on 15 December 2023 and is currently being finalised and will be issued to the Department of Education during January.
6. Associated with the Improvement Plan is a set of key performance indicators established for each of the priority areas. These indicators are grouped into a SEND Partnership Performance Scorecard. This scorecard covers a range of SEND outcomes measures, for example, from across the schools system e.g. SEND Support metrics on exclusion, attendance, attainment and exclusion, to Local Authority measures such as the timeliness of Education Health and Care Assessments or Annual Reviews and for measures from Health i.e. access to CAMHS services. This scorecard will also be issued to the Department of Education during January.
7. Alongside this strategic programme of work, the SEND Service within the Local Authority has been working on an accelerated improvement programme. The purpose of this programme has been to make the necessary improvements in quality and timeliness of its Education Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) and Annual Reviews. Appendix 2 provides an update report on the progress being made; this was shared at the December SEND Improvement Board. This is provided for information. Local Authority Officers continue their focused work on these areas.
8. The BCP SEND service has also been working with DfE Advisors reviewing the current High Needs Block forecast and has been invited to join the Safety Valve Programme. A separate Overview and Scrutiny Session has been planned to discuss this on the 3 January 2024.

On the 4 December 2023, senior officers from the Local Authority, alongside John Coughlan, BCP's SEND DfE SEND Improvement Board Chair, held a Breakfast Meeting with Head Teachers. The purpose of this session was to share the findings of the Local Authority Diagnostic and discuss the work being carried out on the new SEND Improvement Plan. A series of follow on workshops have been arranged to ensure that there is the required co-production and engagement with Schools to support the Improvement Plan's progress.

### **Options Appraisal**

9. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Summary of financial implications**

10. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Summary of legal implications**

11. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Summary of human resources implications**

12. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Summary of sustainability impact**

13. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Summary of public health implications**

14. Public Health colleagues are involved in the work of the SEND Improvement Plan and are therefore appropriately engaged.

**Summary of equality implications**

15. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Summary of risk assessment**

16. N/A - this report provides an overview of the work of the SEND Improvement Board and Improvement Plan

**Background papers**

None

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – SEND Local Authority Diagnostic Overview and Scrutiny Presentation – November 2023

Appendix 2 – SEND Improvement Board – Local Authority Update